

**Baltimore City
Commission for Historical and
Architectural Preservation**



**Home of the Friendless
Landmark Designation Report**

June 13, 2023

1313 Druid Hill Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland



Commission for Historical & Architectural Preservation

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Significance Summary

The Home of the Friendless, built in 1870, played an important role in social services in West Baltimore through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was built as a residential institution for orphaned and abandoned white boys, a corollary to the adjacent Home of Friendless Vagrant Girls. It was part of a three building complex that housed between 100-200 children per year. It served as an orphanage until 1931, when the institution moved to the suburbs in northern Baltimore City. From the late 1930s into the early 1960s, the Health Department ran the Druid Health Center in this building, which was the first public health center for Black citizens in the City. The Home of the Friendless is the sole surviving structure from the original complex. While the mansard roof and rear porch are currently missing, the building is stabilized and still conveys its architectural value and significance as a Second Empire-style institutional structure.

Architectural Description

The Home of the Friendless is located in the rowhouse neighborhood of Marble Hill northwest of downtown Baltimore. The brick structure is freestanding, and is three bays wide, 3 bays deep, and was historically five stories with a mansard roof. With the mansard roof currently removed, it is only 4 stories tall, though the full height of the elevator tower remains. It was designed as a Second Empire style and was constructed in 1870.

The front façade is ornate with brick detailing. The first floor of the façade is styled with decorative brick banding, capped with an intermediate wood cornice that is in poor condition and some portions of which are missing. The corners of the building feature decorative brick quoining that wraps around to the side elevations. The brick on the façade is a highly fired brick in a stretcher bond pattern, with thin bread and butter mortar joints. The central bay is detailed with projecting brick quoining on either side of the bay. The first-floor central bay is the entrance to the building, with paired wooden doors and sidelights accessed from 3 stone steps. The upper stories of the main bay feature two arched window openings topped with ornate brick hoods with molded brick detailing. Above the fourth-floor windows is the datestone. The two flanking bays hold paired window openings with brick jack arch lintels and stone sills. All of the windows on the façade are missing or the openings are covered with plywood, but historically held 4/4 light wood windows. The cornice, frieze, mansard roof, and pedimented dormers are removed, and the roof is capped with wood framing and roofing membrane.

The side elevations are built in the common bond pattern and have chimneys that project slightly outward from the brick face. The northwest elevation facing Henry Highland Garnet Park has three bays, and the southeast elevation has five bays, with window openings with brick jack arch lintels and stone sills in each bay. Most windows are missing, but the few surviving wooden windows have six lights. The southeast elevation had a fire escape that was added in the 20th century; this has been recently removed.

The rear elevation is five bays wide and originally had wooden porches and exterior stairs; these were recently removed. However, the ghosting of the stairs and columns remain on the building. There is evidence of alterations to some of the window openings, with brick infill and the presence of metal fire doors.

There is an eight-foot tall brick wall that encloses the majority of the property surrounding the building, with metal gates on either side of the building to access the side yards. The opening of the brick wall at the rear has been widened and is closed off with a chain link fence.

Property History

(This section is from the National Register Nomination for the property, prepared by Fred Shoken in 2002)

1313 Druid Hill Avenue was built as a home for orphan boys in 1870. It was the second of three buildings built by the Home of the Friendless on Druid Hill Avenue south of Lafayette Avenue. A nearly identical home for girls had been completed ten years earlier just to the north. Later, in 1900, a third building housing a hospital for the orphanage was constructed at the corner of Druid Hill and Lafayette avenues.

In the early nineteenth century, industrialization, immigration and urbanization increased the number of needy children and, at the same time, decreased the aid and support that families and small communities traditionally extended to them. Reform movements inspired by Charles Dickens' description of childrens' lives in workhouses, led to large-scale building of separate institutions for children. Orphanages were established to care for children with one or two deceased parents, as well as children who were abandoned or abused. Between 1778 and 1856, twelve orphanages were founded in Baltimore. All were private institutions.

On December 20, 1854, the "Home of Friendless Vagrant Girls" was chartered. Organized by a dozen ladies, the purpose of the institution was to provide "refuge and a Christian home for homeless, friendless and worse than friendless vagrant girls." If parents were "vicious" or utterly destitute, girls became permanent residents of the Home of the Friendless. If parents were virtuous and industrious, but unable to afford support, the girls were received in daily attendance, clothed and provided with one good meal.

Girls were taught "the rudiments of English education, the use of the needle and general housework.... The objective of the organization was to train and prepare the children to enter the service of Christian families." The institution also provided an early form of day care in a "nursery where women who go out to labor by the day can leave their young children and have them kindly cared for." Poor women also found employment in a sewing room for 12 ½ cents per day.

Some of the children brought to the home were enticed from streets by the ladies who established this institution. Others were brought to the home by police officers or missionaries. Sometimes destitute parents brought children to the home. Most of the children came from the streets of Baltimore and about half were foreign born. Each year the Home of the Friendless cared for approximately 200 children. Many were placed in Christian homes, but about half remained in the institution on a continuing basis from year to year.

The Home of the Friendless was supported by donations of money and goods. An annual floral fair was established in 1855 to raise funds. By 1860, the institution began receiving government support in the form of appropriations from the Maryland General Assembly and the Baltimore City Council.

The home opened in a small house on Buren Street, and soon moved to a double rowhouse on Pearl Street where it operated until 1860 when land was purchased at Ross and Townsend streets (today Druid Hill and Lafayette avenues) to build a permanent home (since demolished). The cornerstone was laid on May 28, 1860 and the new Home of the Friendless was opened on April 21, 1861. An undated newspaper clipping identifies that Joseph Kemp (1815-1866) was the architect and William Ortwine, the builder. Kemp is credited with designing the Baltimore Equitable Society and a portion of Camden Station. The newspaper article described the general layout of the building with an office, dining room, kitchen and laundry on the first floor; two school rooms, the matron's room, sewing room and receiving parlor on the second floor; and an infirmary and dormitories on the upper floors.

In 1865, an adjoining lot to the south was purchased for a boys' home. By the end of 1870, a second building, 1313 Druid Hill Avenue, very similar to the girls' home was nearly complete, "two noble piles of stately and distinguished masonry without extravagance and yet without parsimony, admirably constructed and adapted for the successful accomplishment of desired ends." The new building for boys was dedicated in March 1871. The 1871 Annual Report of the Home of the Friendless does not provide any information on the architect of the boys' home, but acknowledges that the William Ortwine, the superintendent of the new building, did not accept payment for his services. By the time the boys' home was built, Joseph Kemp had died. It is possible that William Ortwine simplified the plans of the original girls' home and adapted them for the boys' home.

In 1883, a substantial brick wall encircling the property was completed. By 1907, the Annual Report stated that "our buildings are old and in need of constant repair." The girls' building suffered a fire in 1918, but received nearly \$5,000 in insurance for repairs. To provide a relief from hot Baltimore summers, in 1912 the institution built a summer home at Montevideo in Anne Arundel County. In an era when segregation was the norm within Baltimore institutions, the Home of the Friendless only housed white children; however, the neighborhood surrounding it had become predominately African American by the early twentieth century. In 1909, Booker T. Washington wrote in *The Story of the Negro*, "So far as I know there is no city in the United States where the coloured people own so many comfortable and attractive homes to proportion to the population, as in the city of Baltimore. In what is known as the Druid Hill district of the city, there are, perhaps, fifteen thousand coloured people. For fifteen blocks along Druid Hill Avenue nearly every house is occupied or owned by coloured people. In the later part of the nineties Dr. R. M. Hall, who is one of the oldest coloured physicians and one of the wealthiest coloured men in Baltimore, moved into 1019 Druid Hill Avenue. He was almost the first coloured man to make his home upon that street. Since that time the white people who lived there have moved out into the suburbs and the coloured people have moved in to take their places. I have been told that fully 50 per cent of the coloured people on Druid Hill Avenue own their homes, though, so far as I know, no systematic investigation has been made of the facts." [Note: Booker T. Washington lists "one home for friendless children" - a reference to this building - among the institutions located in the Druid Hill district in Chapter 14 of this book.]

By 1922 the Board and Managers and Trustees "decided to place the property at Druid Hill and Lafayette and at Montevideo openly on the market. It is strongly felt that we should look to the

future and move away as soon as possible from an undesirable neighborhood to the suburbs consolidating the two homes and giving the children more room in every way."

In the mid 1920s, the Home of the Friendless joined other charitable institutions as a member of the Community Fund to raise funds for operations. It acquired property in Mount Washington, but merged in 1931 with another Community Fund agency, the Baltimore Orphan Asylum, to form the Children's Home of Baltimore, Inc. Eventually the institution merged into the Woodbourne Center. Today, Woodbourne serves 5,000 at-risk children and their families providing psychiatric, educational and social work services.

From 1870 to 1931, the years when the Home of the Friendless operated an orphanage at 1313 Druid Hill Avenue, most needy children were institutionalized instead of receiving at-home or foster care. Full orphans, (children who had lost both parents) were always a small minority in orphanages, which primarily housed half orphans, mostly those who were fatherless. During the twentieth century, with the development of welfare programs, widow's pensions, and social security, an increasingly large part of the orphan population remained at home with relatives or a living parent. Improved health care, such as the eradication of tuberculosis, reduced the number of orphaned children in the general population.

By the mid twentieth century, most orphanages turned into shelters for abused, neglected, handicapped and homeless children. Later, improved methods of birth control and the availability of legal abortions further reduced the number of unwanted children. By the 1970s, foster care had become the norm and orphanages as institutions had disappeared.

The Home of the Friendless at 1313 Druid Hill Avenue is a physical reminder of an era when orphanages housed large numbers of children in institutional settings in Baltimore and throughout the United States. The size of the building, the segregation of boys and girls, the racial make-up of the institution and its urban setting are representative of orphanages prior to concepts of civil rights, gender equality and foster care. By the early twentieth century, reformers called for child care facilities in cottage settings far from urban centers. This new philosophy—and a desire to leave a community whose racial demographics had changed—led the Home of the Friendless, later the Baltimore Home for Children, Inc., to relocate.

After the departure of the Home of the Friendless, 1313 Druid Hill Avenue housed a series of public agencies. The federal Works Progress Administration occupied the building in the late 1930s. In 1938, it was purchased by the City of Baltimore for use by the Department of Health, which provided a variety of community health services continuously at this address until 1961, when it moved to a new, larger facility. The city housing department occupied the building until 1992. It has been vacant since that date.

Application of Landmark Designation Criteria

The property meets CHAP Landmark Designation criteria, as follows:

The quality of significance in Baltimore history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, public interiors, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

1. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history; or
3. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The Home of the Friendless, built in 1870, played an important role in social services in West Baltimore through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was built as a residential institution for orphaned and abandoned white boys, a corollary to the adjacent Home of Friendless Vagrant Girls. It was part of a three building complex that housed between 100-200 children per year. It served as an orphanage until 1931, when the institution moved to the suburbs in northern Baltimore City. From the late 1930s into the early 1960s, the Health Department ran the Druid Health Center in this building, which was the first public health center for Black citizens in the City. The Home of the Friendless is the sole surviving structure from the original complex. While the mansard roof and rear porch are currently missing, the building is stabilized and still conveys its architectural value and significance as a Second Empire-style institutional structure.

Maps and Photos

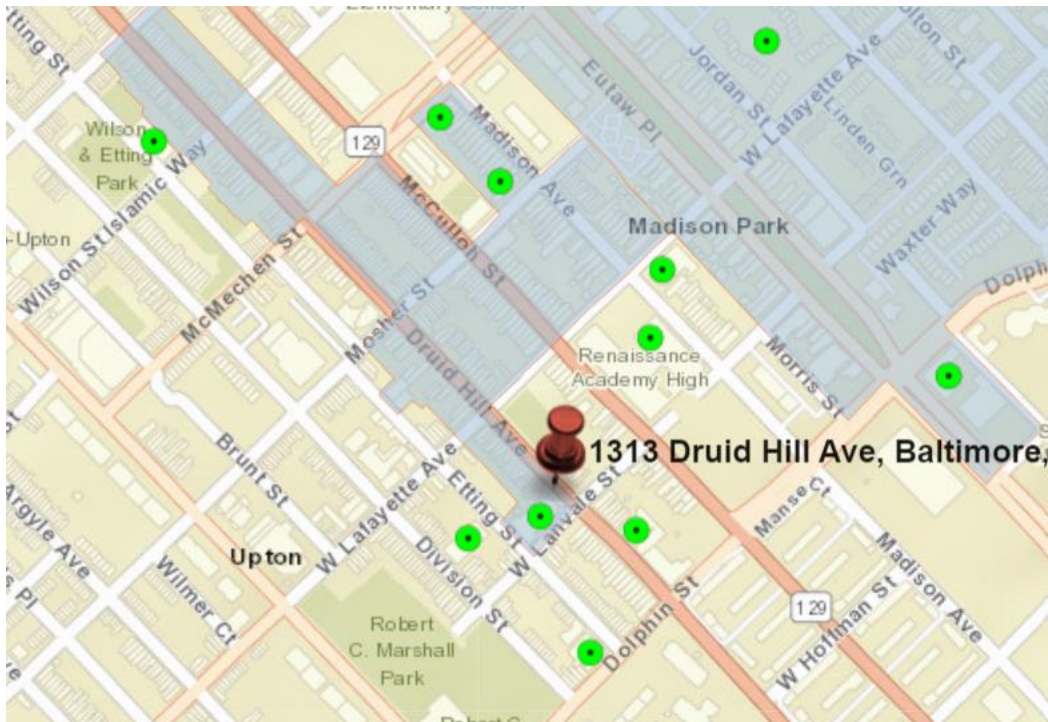


Image 1: 1313 Druid Hill Avenue, Baltimore City View; Green dots are Baltimore City Landmarks, and the blue represents local historic district boundaries.

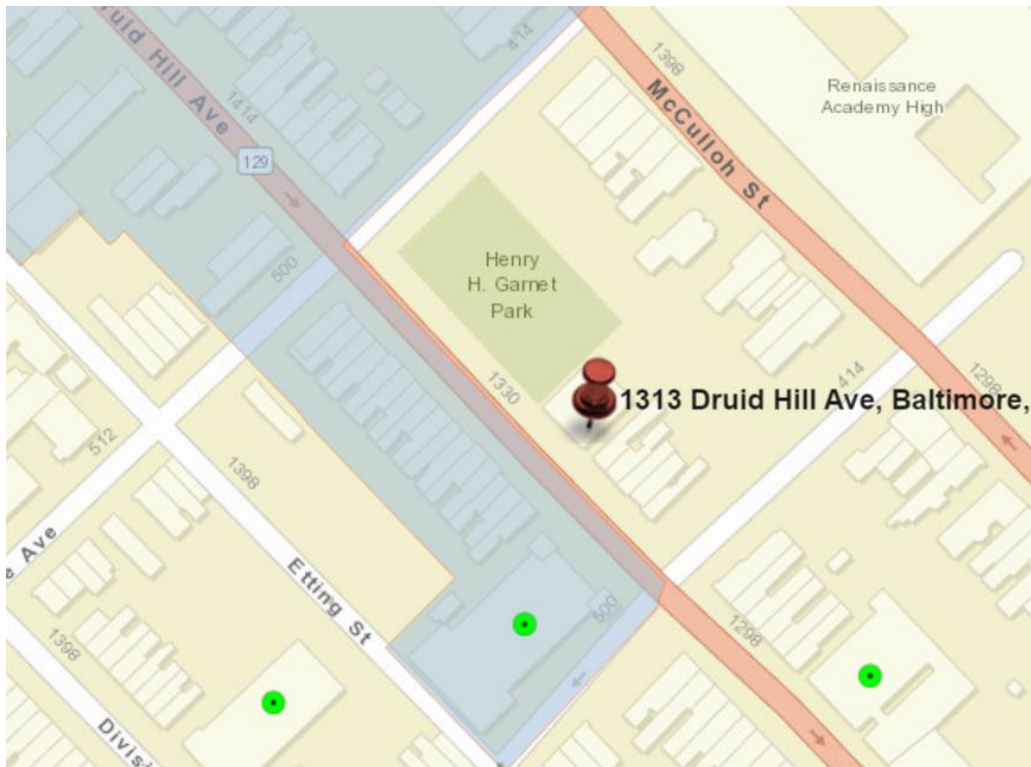


Image 2: 1313 Druid Hill Avenue, Baltimore City View; Green dots are Baltimore City Landmarks, and the blue represents local historic district boundaries.

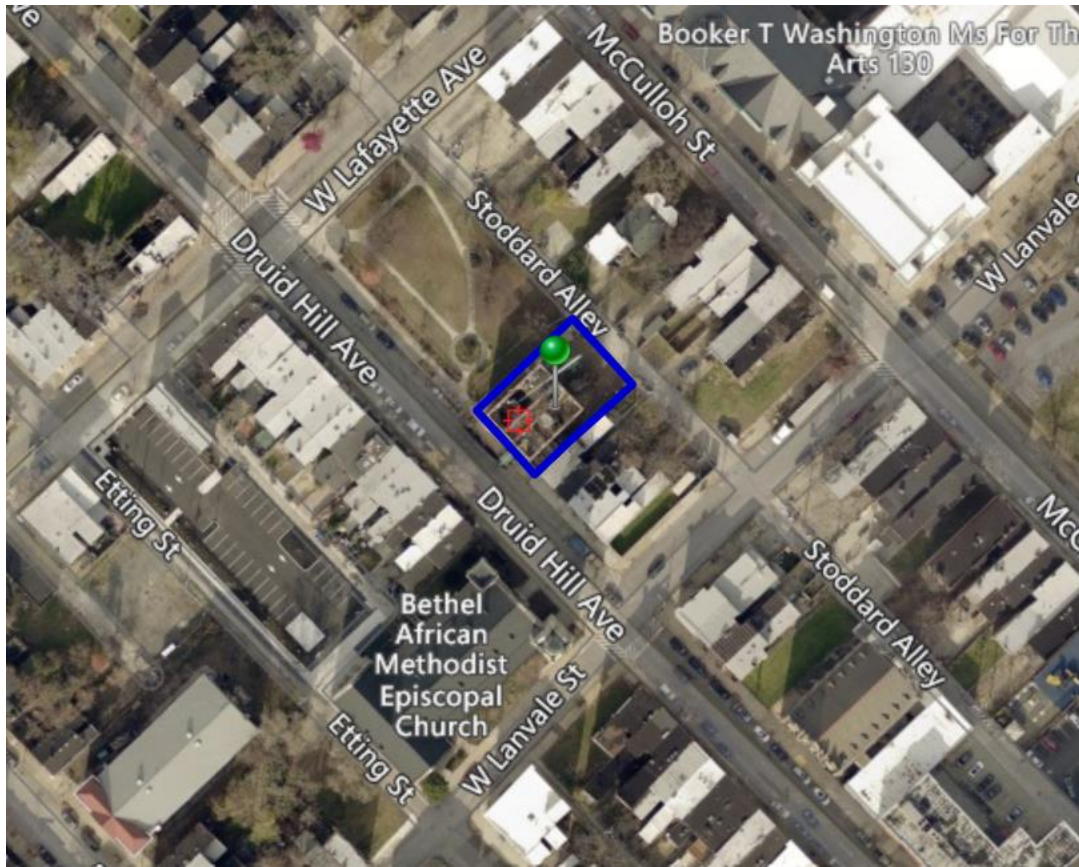


Image 3: Aerial view of 1313 Druid Hill Avenue, Outlined in Blue, Connect Explorer, November-December 2022

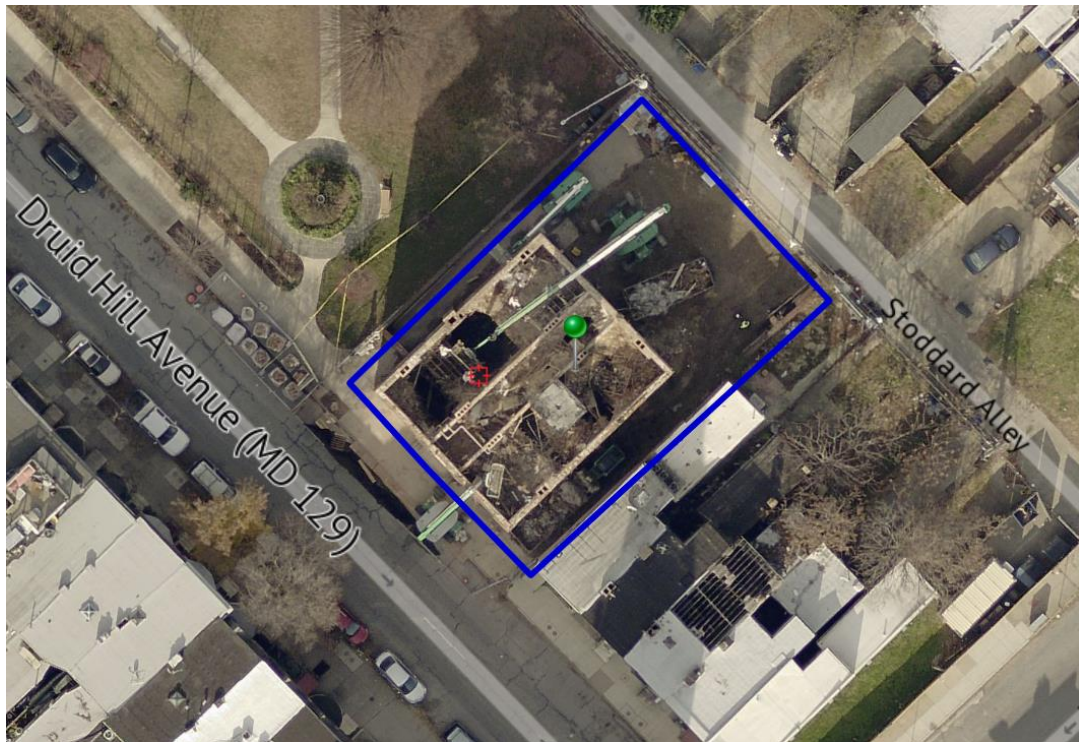


Image 4: Aerial view of 1313 Druid Hill Avenue, Outlined in Blue, Connect Explorer, November-December 2022



Image 5: Aerial view 1313 Druid Hill Avenue from the south, Connect Explorer, December 2022.



Image 6: Aerial view of 1313 Druid Hill Ave. from the south, Connect Explorer, December 2019.



Image 7: Aerial view of 1313 Druid Hill Avenue from the east, outlined in blue, Connect Explorer, December 2022.

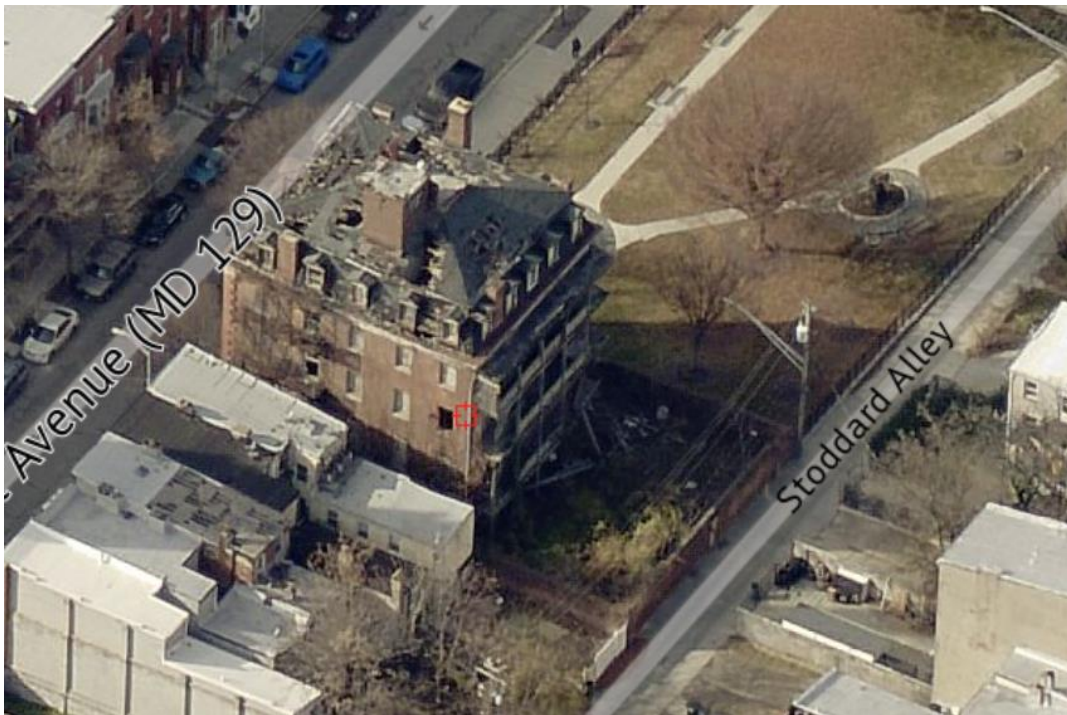


Image 8: Aerial view of 1313 Druid Hill Ave. from the east, outlined in blue, Connect Explorer, December 2019.



Image 9: Aerial view of 1313 Druid Hill Avenue from the north. Explorer, December 2022

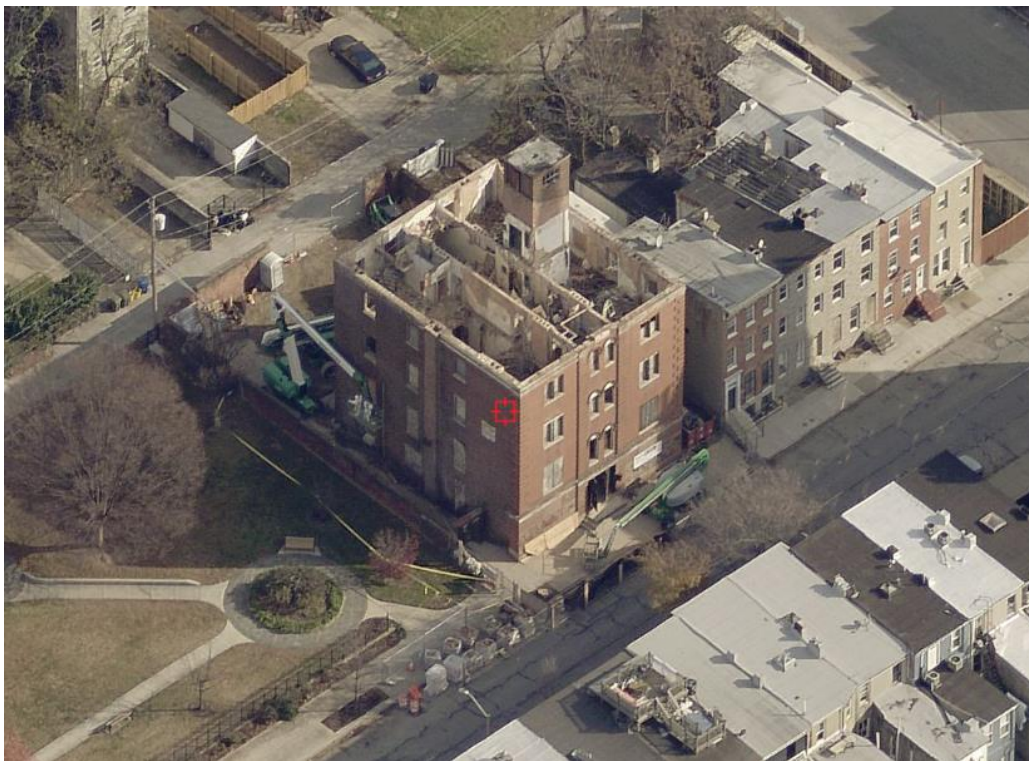


Image 10: Aerial view 1313 Druid Hill Avenue from the west, Connect Explorer, December 2022.

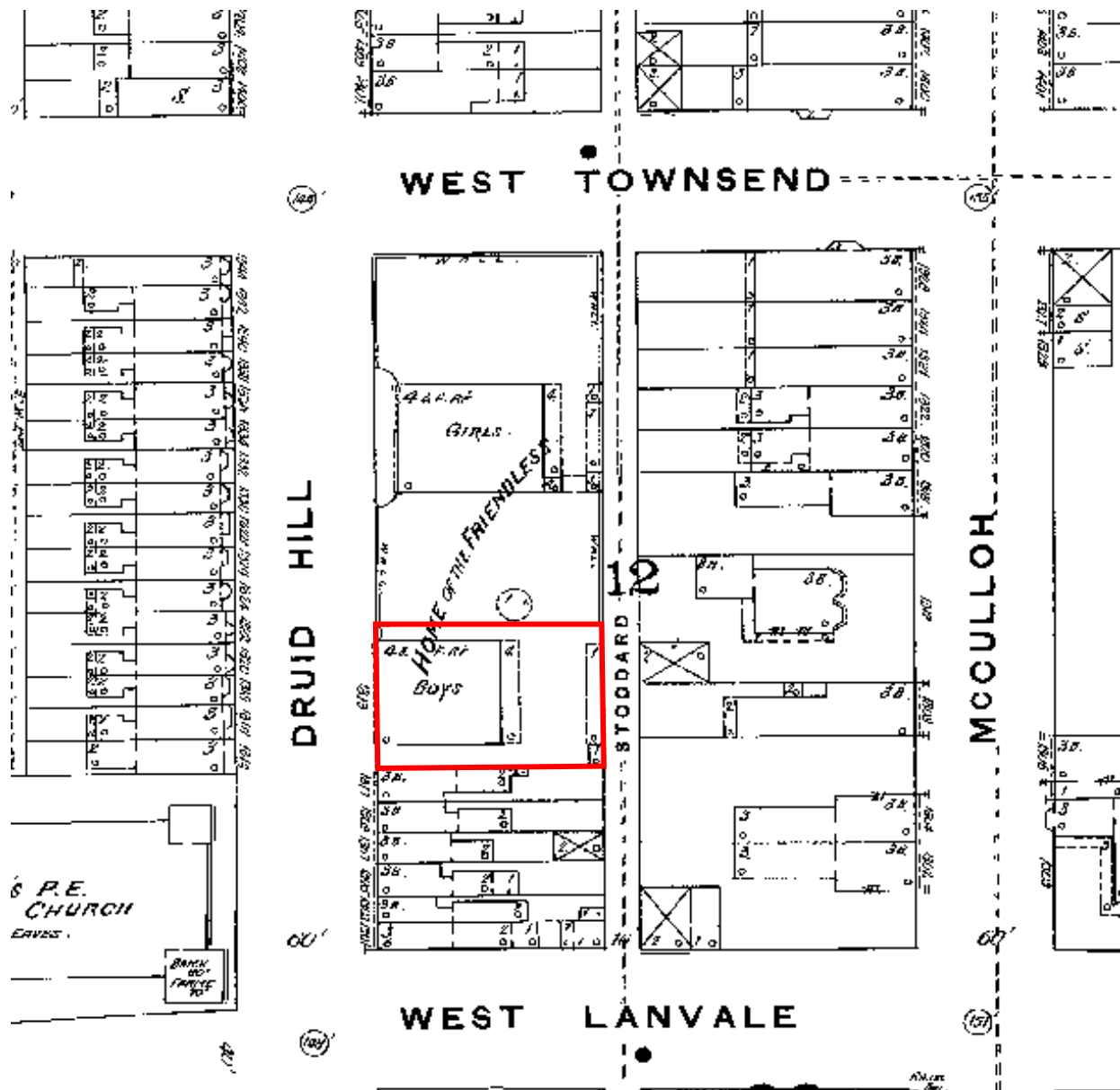


Image 11: 1890 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicts the building as the “Boys” building of the Home of the Friendless complex. (Baltimore 1890 vol. 3, Sheet 106_a)

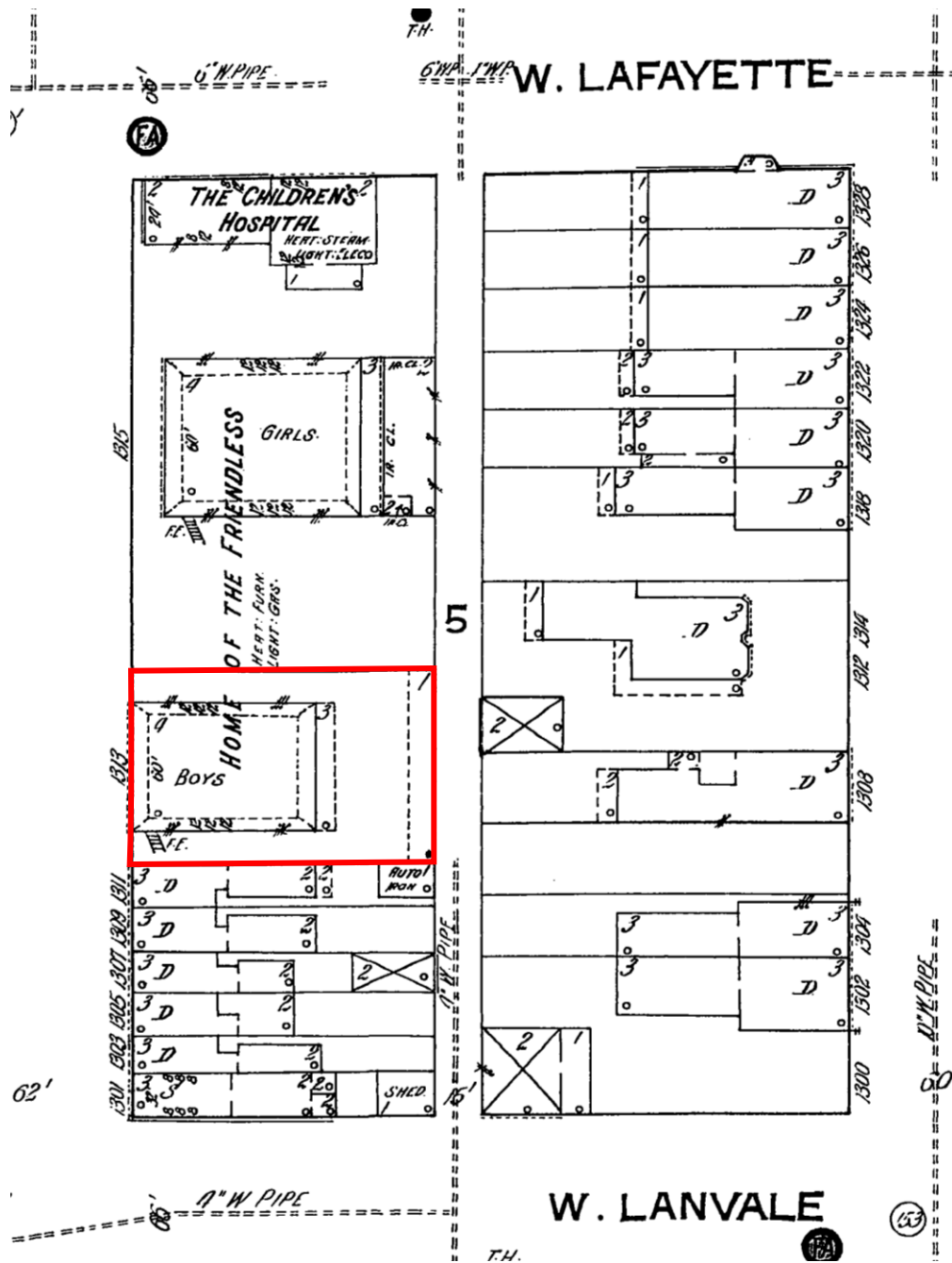


Image 12: 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the building in more detail. (Baltimore 1914-1915 vol. 2, 1914, Sheet 189)

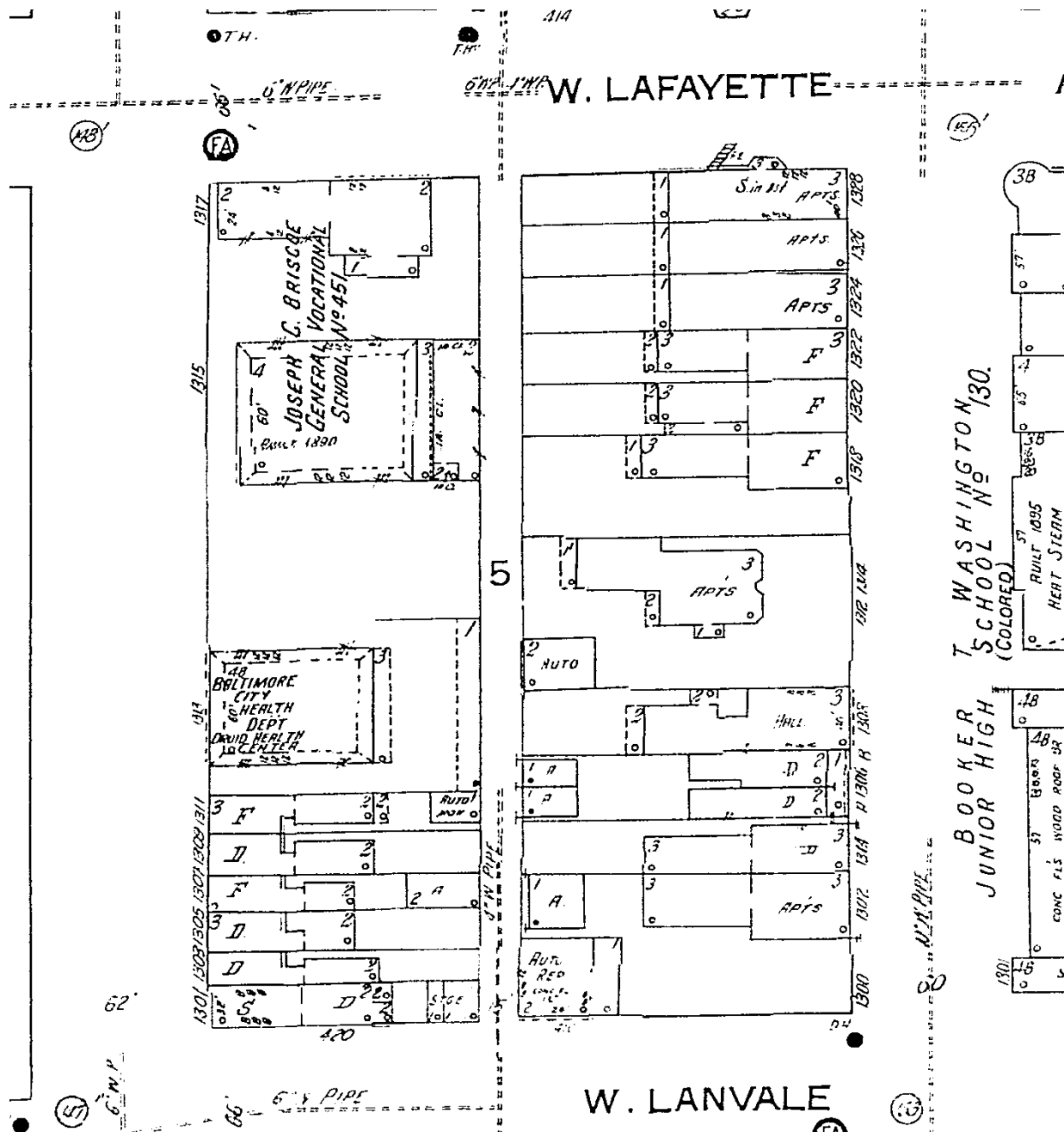
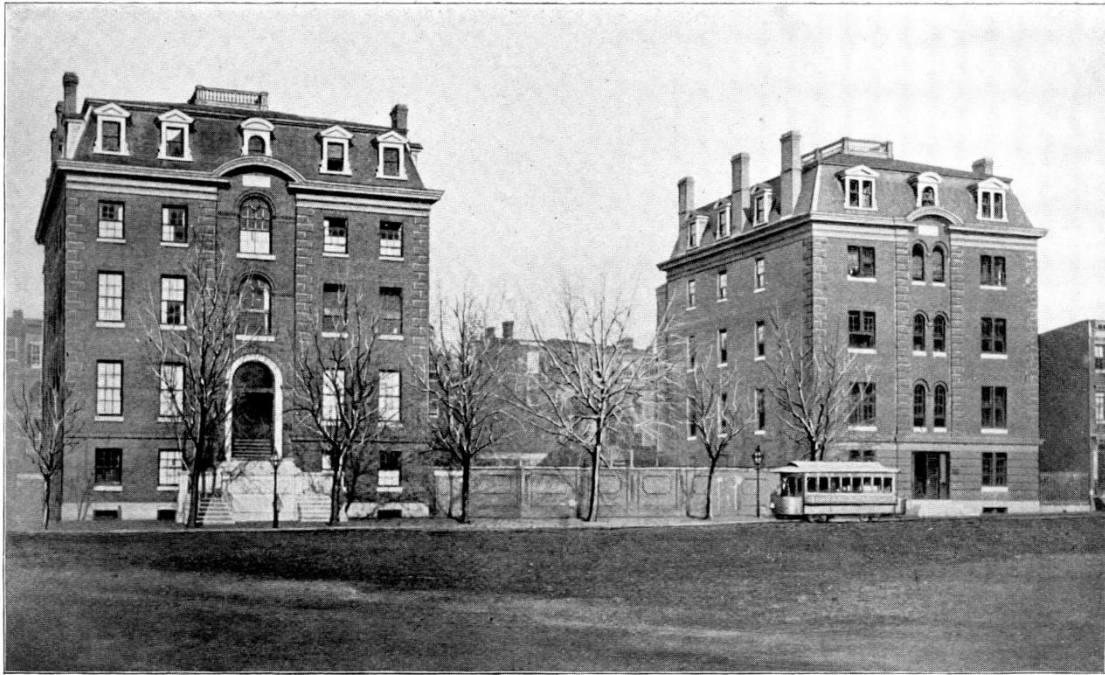


Image 13: 1952 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the building in use as the Druid Health Center. Baltimore 1914-1953 vol. 2, 1914; Republished 1952, Sheet 189



HOME OF THE FRIENDLESS, BALTIMORE.

Image 14: Photo of the Home of the Friendless (on right) with its sister building in 1894. (Home of the Friendless. Message of Frank Brown, Governor of Maryland, to the General Assembly at its Regular Session, January, 1894 (Baltimore: Wm. J.C. Dullany Company, 1894). Maryland State Archives; reproduced in "Medicine in Maryland, 1792-1920" <https://mdhistoryonline.net/2018/06/02/h108/>



Image 15: The façade of the Home of the Friendless in June 2002 (Fred B. Shoken, “Home of the Friendless” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2002))



Image 16: The south elevation of the Home of the Friendless in June 2002 (Fred B. Shoken, "Home of the Friendless" National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2002))



Image 17: The rear [east] elevation of the Home of the Friendless in June 2002 (Fred B. Shoken, "Home of the Friendless" National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2002))



Image 18: Façade, facing Druid Hill Ave.



Image 19: Façade and east elevation.



Image 20: Façade and west elevation.



Image 21: West elevation, viewed from Henry Highland Garnet Park.



Image 22: Rear elevation, viewed from Stoddard Alley.