



# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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July 24, 2024

## FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION ON THE **MOUNT HERMON MASONIC TEMPLE (DOCUMENTED PROPERTY 68-010-95)** AND ITS ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING FOR CLASSIFICATION AS A HISTORIC SITE

### Procedural Background

April 19, 2024	The Historic Preservation Section accepted the owner's Application for Historic Site Evaluation, in compliance with Subtitle 29-120.01. The property is not listed in the Inventory of Historic Resources.
May 20, 2024	The property owner and the adjacent property owners were mailed 60-day written notice of the time, date, and location of the public hearing (Subtitle 29-120.01).
July 2024	The survey and documentation of the property were completed by Daniel Tana, M-NCPPC.
July 8, 2024	The property was posted "at least 14 days in advance," according to the provisions of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Ordinance (Subtitle 29-120.01) and the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance (Subtitle 27-125.03). Evidence of sign posting and written notice to the property owner are attached.
July 23, 2024	Historic Preservation Commission public hearing.

### FINDINGS

#### *Summary Architectural Description*

The Mount Hermon Masonic Temple, at 4207 Gallatin Street, Hyattsville, is a two-and-one-half story rectangular brick building constructed in 1893 as a meeting place for the Mount Hermon Lodge, No. 179 A.F. and A.M., a local Masonic chapter. The building is a contributing resource within the Hyattsville National Register Historic District and is the only representation of the Romanesque Revival style exhibited in Hyattsville. Capped with an asphalt shingle gable roof, this building has a rectangular footprint seven bays long on the side (east and west) elevations by three bays wide at the front and rear (north and south). The front elevation is embellished with two corner buttresses leading to pyramidal pinnacles and a first and second story that projects out under a small, hipped roof. The first story of the front elevation features a central double-leaf entry with stone quoining surrounding paneled wood doors. Important features of the building include buttresses on each elevation, brick corbelling, three brick chimneys, and a stone insignia of the Masonic symbol "G," which is centered above the façade entrance. The building is currently unused and vacant.

#### *Setting*

The Mount Hermon Masonic Temple is located at the intersection of Gallatin Street and 42nd Avenue, just west of Baltimore Avenue (U.S. 1), in Hyattsville, Maryland. The temple, oriented facing toward the north, sits on a 6,300 square foot parcel (Lot 11, Block A, "Wine & Johnson's 2nd Addition to Hyattsville, MD"). The surrounding area is characterized by mixed-use development that includes religious, commercial, and social buildings as well as single and multi-family

residential buildings, many of which are also contributing resources in the Hyattsville National Register Historic District.

### *History*

The land that would eventually become the City of Hyattsville was part of the land holdings of John Beall, who created the settlement of Beall Town in the late 1720s. Christopher Clarke Hyatt purchased the tract of land that included Beall Town in 1845 after the establishment of the Washington-Baltimore Turnpike (now Baltimore Avenue/U.S. 1) and B&O Railroad's Baltimore to Washington line (in 1835) made the land desirable for development. In 1859, Hyatt purchased approximately 20 additional acres. In 1873 much of the land from Hyatt's 1859 acquisition was platted as Hyatt's Addition to Hyattsville. Two large additions— Wine and Johnson's 1st and 2nd Additions—were platted by speculative real estate developers Louis D. Wine and George Johnson, in 1882 and 1884, respectively. Wine and Johnson's 2nd Addition was approximately 31 acres of land bounded to the east by Baltimore Avenue, to the north by Jefferson Street, to the west by 42nd Avenue, and to the south by Farragut Street.

According to the history of the organization compiled by the lodge, Mount Hermon Lodge No. 179 was created in 1882 under dispensation of the Grand Lodge of Maryland and chartered in November of that year. The membership of the lodge appears to have been all men, based on available documentation of membership at the time from contemporary newspapers and the lodge's own compiled history. The temple was also home to a chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, a "sister organization" that was formed to create a fraternal organization that could include Masons as well as their female relatives. The lodge first met in Bladensburg, renting space in the old schoolhouse there, before moving to Hyattsville in 1885. Louis D. Wine—himself a Freemason—and George J. Johnson offered the lodge a free building site twice—once in 1883 and again in 1891—and the offer was accepted the second time, at which time Wine was made a lifetime member of the lodge. In 1892, Francis H. Smith, Richard S. Evans, and John A. Erdman purchased Lot 11, in Block A of Wine & Johnson's Second Addition from George J. Johnson, Annie E. Johnson, and Louis D. Wine for \$10.00 "for the use and benefit of" the members of Mount Hermon Lodge No. 179, and the property has remained in the ownership of the lodge since then. On May 2, 1893, the cornerstone of the Mount Hermon Masonic Temple was laid in a large and well-attended ceremony. The cornerstone and box were consecrated with corn, wine, and oil, and the ceremonial gavel that had purportedly been used by George Washington in laying the corner stone of the Capitol (and later, the Washington Monument) was used to complete the ceremony. The temple was planned to be ready for occupation by October 1, 1893, and contemporary accounts indicate that the temple was in use by December 1893.

Once constructed, contemporary newspaper accounts and other documentary evidence indicate that the temple was utilized by the members of Mount Hermon Lodge, as well as an assortment of other organizations and purposes. Community events held at the temple included: a 1906 benefit for the Hyattsville town hall building fund; a 1918 recital to benefit the Red Cross, featuring the National Quartet; a 1927 banquet to discuss the incorporation of 28 existing communities into a proposed "Maryland City, Maryland" (not to be confused with present-day Maryland City in Anne Arundel County); a 1932 benefit supper for the Hyattsville Volunteer Fire Department, organized by the HVFD Ladies Auxiliary; a 1932 banquet to honor Mack B. Rowe, organizer of the Allied Colored Democratic Club; a 1933 meeting among a group of pastors who wanted to prevent a referendum on

the overturning of Maryland’s “blue laws;” a 1934 musical to benefit the free wards of the Episcopal Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital; free electric appliance cooking classes in 1938, put on by the General Electric Cooking School of the Maryland Electric Appliance Company; a 1940 local Democratic party rally featuring Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles, Speaker of the House Samuel Rayburn, United States Senator George Radcliffe, and Congressman Lansdale Sasscer; and a 1942 city planning exhibition, “Under the Planner’s Microscope,” presented by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. This utilization by a variety of local groups points to the significance of the temple to the City of Hyattsville and the surrounding communities in its prime, and is particularly important because, as the home of a nineteenth-century Masonic organization whose membership at the time would have most-likely been limited to white men—and their wives, via the Order of the Eastern Star— this opened the space up to use by a broader population.

### ***Significance***

The Mount Hermon Masonic Temple is architecturally significant as the only example of Romanesque Revival architecture in Hyattsville. Since its construction, the temple has been a unique and prominent part of the streetscape. Additionally, the design and construction of the temple—the decorative stone quoining and accents, arched window lintels, brick corbelling, and other embellishments—are excellent examples of early twentieth century architecture and skilled craftsmanship. Contemporary newspaper accounts and other documentary evidence indicate that the temple was not only utilized by the members of Mount Hermon Lodge, but also for other area Masonic Lodges and an assortment of other organizations and purposes, which indicates the significance of the Temple to the City of Hyattsville and the surrounding communities as a gathering space.

### ***Integrity/Degree of Alteration***

The Mount Hermon Masonic Temple has retained its essential character as a historic social building from the period of Hyattsville’s expansion as a streetcar and automobile suburb in the early 1900s. The temple retains much of its original exterior appearance, with the most notable changes to its form—the addition to the south and extension of the first and second stories on the north elevation—having been made nearly a century ago with design, materials, and workmanship matching that of the original 1893 portion of the building. There have also been modifications to the fenestration of the building, including the enclosure of many window openings with brick infill. Fortunately, these modifications have left the original size and shape of the fenestration readable. Additionally, the suburban mixed-use context of the temple remains largely unchanged. Overall, the Mount Hermon Masonic Temple retains a high degree of integrity of location, association, feeling, design, and setting with a moderately high degree of integrity of materials.

Historic Preservation Commission Policy #1-87, “Evaluating Integrity, Degree of Alteration, and Scarcity and Frequency,” states that a property’s integrity should be considered in the context of the scarcity of the resource type it represents, with a less restrictive standard of integrity applied when few or no other similar properties exist in the Inventory of Historic Resources. The Romanesque Revival style is otherwise unrepresented in the Hyattsville National Register Historic District and in only two existing historic sites in the County Inventory of Historic Resources, making scarcity an important factor to consider in this case.

Despite the minor changes that have occurred to the fenestration, the Mount Hermon Masonic Temple demonstrates sufficient integrity to convey its significance as a late nineteenth-century Romanesque Revival social building.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Staff concluded that the Mount Hermon Masonic Temple meets four of the nine designation criteria of Subtitle 29-104(a).

### *Historic and Cultural Significance*

- |             |          |  |
|-------------|----------|--|
| 1. A. (i)   |          | has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the County, State or Nation |
| 1. A. (ii)  |          | is the site of a significant historic event  |
| 1. A. (iii) | <b>X</b> | is identified with a person or a group of persons who influenced society   |
| 1. A. (iv)  | <b>X</b> | exemplifies the cultural, economic, industrial, social, political or historical heritage of the County and its urban and rural communities   |

### *Architectural and Design Significance*

- |             |          |   |
|-------------|----------|---|
| 2. A. (i)   | <b>X</b> | embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction  |
| 2. A. (ii)  |          | represents the work of a master craftsman, architect or builder   |
| 2. A. (iii) |          | possesses high artistic values  |
| 2. A. (iv)  |          | represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction  |
| 2. A. (v)   | <b>X</b> | represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or County due to its singular physical characteristics or landscape |
2. Staff further concluded that, in weighing both the alterations that have been made to the building and the current lack of representation of the resource type within the inventory of Historic Resources, the Mount Hermon Masonic Temple can be found to possess sufficient integrity to convey, represent, or contain the values and qualities for which it is judged significant.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission recommend to the Planning Board and District Council that the Mount Hermon Masonic Temple, Documented Property 68-010-95, and its 0.145-acre Environmental Setting (Lot 11, Block A, “Wine & Johnson’s 2nd Addition to Hyattsville, MD”), be designated a Prince George’s County Historic Site as meeting the following criteria in Subtitle 29-104(a): (1)(A)(iii); (1)(A)(iv); (2)(A)(i); and (2)(A)(v).

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Commissioner **Pruden** moved that the Historic Preservation Commission recommend to the

Planning Board and the District Council that the Mount Hermon Masonic Temple, Documented Property 68-010-95, and its 0.145-acre Environmental Setting (Lot 11, Block A, “Wine & Johnson’s 2nd Addition to Hyattsville, MD”), be designated a Prince George’s County Historic Site as meeting the following criteria in Subtitle 29-104(a): (1)(A)(iii); (1)(A)(iv); (2)(A)(i); and (2)(A)(v). The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Reff**. The motion was approved 5-0.



John Peter Thompson, Chairman

c:

Inventory File 68-010-95  
Josephine Selvakumar, Community Planner, Planning Area 68

*Owner:*

One Seventy Nine Temple Holding Corporation  
P.O. Box 305  
Hyattsville, MD 20782

Donna Schneider, President  
Prince George’s County Historical Society  
PO Box 1513  
Upper Marlboro MD 20773-1513

*Prince George’s County Council:*

The Honorable Wanika Fisher, District 2  
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.  
1301 McCormick Drive  
Largo MD 20774

Elizabeth Hughes, Director  
Maryland Historical Trust  
100 Community Place, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Crownsville MD 21032-2023

The Honorable Calvin Hawkins II, At-Large  
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.  
1301 McCormick Drive  
Largo MD 20774

Donna J. Brown, Clerk  
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.  
1301 McCormick Drive  
Largo MD 20774

*Municipality:*

The Honorable Robert S. Croslin, Mayor  
City of Hyattsville  
4310 Gallatin Street  
Hyattsville MD 20781

*Interested Parties:*

Douglas McElrath, Chairman  
Prince George’s Heritage  
4703 Annapolis Road  
Bladensburg MD 20710

Alfonso Narvaez, Chairman  
Prince George’s Historical & Cultural Trust  
PO Box 85  
Upper Marlboro MD 20773

**CAPSULE SUMMARY**  
**PG:68-10-95**  
**Mount Hermon Masonic Temple**  
**4207 Gallatin Street, MD 20781**  
**1893**  
**Private**

The Mount Hermon Masonic Temple is a two-and-one-half story rectangular brick building, three bays wide by seven bays long, which was constructed in 1893 as a meeting place for the Mount Hermon Lodge, No. 179 A.F. and A.M., a local Masonic chapter. The temple sits on a 6,300 square foot parcel, facing north, where the front elevation is embellished with two corner buttresses leading to pyramidal pinnacles and a first and second story that project out under a small, hipped roof. The first story of the front elevation features a central double-leaf entry with stone quoining surrounding paneled wood doors. Important features of the building include buttresses on each elevation, brick corbelling, three brick chimneys, and a stone insignia of the Masonic symbol “G,” which is centered above the façade entrance. The temple retains much of its original exterior appearance, apart from modifications to the fenestration of the building, including the enclosure of many window openings with brick infill. Fortunately, these modifications have left the original size and shape of the fenestration readable. The surrounding area is characterized by mixed-use development that includes religious, commercial, and social buildings as well as single and multi-family residential buildings in the Hyattsville National Register Historic District, in which the Mount Hermon Masonic Temple is a contributing resource.

The Mount Hermon Masonic Temple is architecturally significant as the only example of Romanesque Revival architecture in Hyattsville. Since its construction, the temple has been a unique and prominent part of the streetscape and the design and construction of the temple are excellent examples of early twentieth century architecture and skilled craftsmanship. Contemporary newspaper accounts and other documentary evidence indicate that the temple was utilized not only by the members of Mount Hermon Lodge, but also for other area Masonic Lodges and an assortment of other organizations and purposes, which indicates the significance of the Temple to the City of Hyattsville and the surrounding communities as a gathering space.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG:68-10-95

### 1. Name of Property

(indicate preferred name.)

historic **Mount Hermon Masonic Temple (preferred)**

other

### 2. Location

street and number 4207 Gallatin Street \_\_ not for publication

city, town Hyattsville \_\_ vicinity

county Prince George's

### 3. Owner of Property

(give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name One Seventy-Nine Temple Holding Corporation

street and number P.O. Box 305 telephone

city, town Hyattsville state MD zip code 20781

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County liber 19941 folio 095

city, town Upper Marlboro tax map 50 tax parcel 0000 tax ID number 16-1816446

### 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: Historic Preservation Section, Prince George's County Planning Department, M-NCPPC

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing    Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<u>  1  </u> <u>  0  </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<u>          </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<u>          </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<u>          </u> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<u>  1  </u> <u>  0  </u> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>
			<u>          0          </u>

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## 7. Description

Inventory No. PG: 68-10-95

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### 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.

### SUMMARY

The 1893 Mount Hermon Masonic Temple is a 2 ½ story rectangular brick building located at the intersection of Gallatin Street and 42nd Avenue, just west of Baltimore Avenue (U.S. 1), in Hyattsville, Maryland. The temple was constructed in 1893 as a meeting place for the Mount Hermon Lodge, No. 179 A.F. and A.M., a local Masonic chapter. The temple is a contributing structure within the Hyattsville National Register Historic District and is the only representation of the Romanesque Revival style exhibited in Hyattsville. Capped with an asphalt shingle gable roof, this building has a rectangular footprint seven bays long on the side elevations, running parallel to 42nd Avenue. The front elevation is three bays wide and is embellished with two corner buttresses leading to pyramidal pinnacles and a first and second story that projects out under a small, hipped roof. The first story of the front elevation features a central double-leaf entry with stone quoining surrounding paneled wood doors. Important features of the lodge include buttresses on each elevation, brick corbelling, three brick chimneys, and a stone insignia of the Masonic symbol “G,” which is centered above the façade entrance. The building is currently unused and vacant.

The building sits on a 6,300 square foot parcel. The surrounding area is characterized by mixed-use development that includes religious, commercial, and social buildings as well as single and multi-family residential buildings, many of which are also contributing resources in the Hyattsville National Register Historic District.<sup>1</sup> Since its completion in 1893, the building has been a valuable resource to the community, used by various groups for hosting events as well as serving as a temporary space for schools and church congregations. It remains a unique and highly visible local landmark.

### BUILDING

The Mt. Hermon Masonic Temple is oriented facing north. Capped with a gable roof, the temple has a rectangular footprint seven bays long. The building was originally built to a depth of four bays in 1893, with three bays added to the south (rear) sometime between 1922 and 1933.<sup>2</sup> The resulting form of the building is a 2 ½ story, three bay by seven bay rectangular brick building. The brick is laid in common bond throughout the building.

#### *North Elevation (Façade)*

The three bays of the north elevation (façade) are divided by projecting brick pilasters with sandstone caps. The façade features the use of a light-colored stone (possibly sandstone) and a projecting two-story addition sheltered by a small, hipped roof. The two bays which flank the central bay are inset an additional 2 ½ wythes, creating tall recessed vertical planes which frame the fenestration. The first floor of each flanking bay has a tall 4/4 wood sash window with a 2-light awning transom window above it, segmental-arched lintels, and decorative carved wood window heads. The fenestration on the second floor of the flanking bays appears to have originally shared a similar form (segmental-arched lintels above vertically elongated windows), but without the transom windows above.<sup>3</sup> The central bay features an identical second story window opening. All three windows on the second floor are boarded up and have been sized

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<sup>1</sup> Baynard, Kristie and Trieschmann, Laura V., “Hyattsville Historic District (Amended and Expanded),” National Register of Historic Places nomination form, § 10, p. 26

<sup>2</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Hyattsville, Prince Georges County, Maryland. Sanborn Map Company, Aug, 1922 and May, 1933

<sup>3</sup> The height from the windowsill to the bottom inner corner of the brick arch on the second floor is roughly equal to the height from the windowsill to the bottom of the transom window on the first floor, suggesting that the second floor may have had the same 4/4 wood sash windows as the first floor, without the transom windows above.



# Maryland Historical Trust

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Mount Hermon Masonic Temple  
**Continuation Sheet**

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down in height with brick infill and new rowlock sills. The first floor of the central bay contains a central entrance with double wooden panel doors and oversized hinges, which is outlined with quoining in the same type of stone as the windowsills, creating contrast with the red brick and further emphasizing the primacy of the front doorway. There is a rectangle of what appears to be plywood—painted to match the exterior wood trim and fenestration—with address numbers affixed to it, which likely fills a space that was once occupied by a transom window. Above the keystone of the front doorway’s arched top, there is a carved stone relief of the Masonic symbol of a compass and square with the letter “G.” Ten courses above this stone relief is a line of three small terra cotta rosettes set into the masonry. The projecting front bay was a later addition, possibly completed at the same time as the three rear bays, as evidenced by an undated photo that appears to be from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> Behind this later addition, the front-facing gable and corner parapets are visible. The gable end has a parapet wall with a wide cornice and a rectangular vertical projection at the peak. The diagonal lines of the gable end are emphasized with decorative brick corbeling, and the three bays of that elevation are also divided by corbelled brick piers. A metal rectangular louvered vent is visible just below the peak of the center bay. At the northeast corner of the temple, between the first and second stories, there is an electrically illuminated sign that bears the insignias and numbers of the Mount Hermon Lodge and Order of the Eastern Star chapters which utilized the space.

### *West Elevation*

The west elevation of the temple faces a municipal park on the abutting parcel. This elevation is seven bays long, with each bay divided by a projecting corbeled brick pier running from the ground level to the eave. There is decorative brick corbeling that runs the length of the elevation just below the eave. Each bay has two stories of fenestration with the same stone sills and brick segmental-arched lintels as the façade, but all openings have been modified with partial or full brick infill. On the first floor, from north to south, the first four bays have approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the original window openings infilled, with glass block laid in a 6 by 6 square shape above. The brick infill of the third bay from the north also contains a rectangular metal louvered vent. The rear three bays—those added during a later building expansion—are fully infilled with brick. On the second floor, each bay has a non-historic one-over-one sash window with brick infill above and below and new rowlock sills. The parcel on which the temple is situated slopes downward from north to south, increasingly exposing the basement level.

### *South Elevation*

The south elevation is relatively plain, with very little embellishment or decorative elements to the brickwork, aside from the corners of the south elevation, which have tall rectangular buttresses that end in flat topped pinnacles. Due to the grade of the lot, the south elevation at the rear of the temple has four stories of fenestration—the basement, first and second floors, and a single window opening in the attic half-story just below the gable peak. The fenestration of the basement and first floors is symmetrical. The basement story has three window openings—the only ones with flat lintels—that are partially infilled with brick below new rowlock sills and glass block above. At the east end of the south elevation is a paneled door—which appears to be a modern replacement, but most likely within an original opening—which provides access to the basement level. The first floor has four window openings; two taller ones in the center, flanked by identical shorter ones on either side. The central window openings are fully infilled with brick, down to the stone sills. The flanking first story window openings are partially infilled with brick below new rowlock

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<sup>4</sup> Damron, Andra and Hyattsville Preservation Association, *Images of America: Hyattsville*, p. 31.

# Maryland Historical Trust

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sills and glass block above. The second story has one central window opening with a non-historic 1/1 sash window, flanked by two smaller window openings of differing size and distance from the central one. To the west of the central window opening, the window opening is partially infilled with brick below new rowlock sills and glass block above. To the east, the window opening is fully infilled with glass block, save for a small area of brick infill between the top row of glass block and the bottom of the arched lintel. The attic story fenestration, located centrally under the peak of the gable, has the same segmental-arched lintel as the other window openings, and is fully infilled with brick.

### *East Elevation*

The east elevation of the temple is very similar to the west elevation, with several notable differences. Within the first floor, the first four bays (from north to south) all have the same type of tall 4/4 wood sash windows with a 2-light awning transom windows as the façade. The fifth and sixth bays (the northernmost two of the rear addition) are fully infilled with brick. The seventh bay is slightly over  $\frac{3}{4}$  infilled with glass block laid above, eight blocks wide by four blocks high.

The second-floor fenestration contains five 1/1 sash windows—on the first, third, fourth, sixth, and seventh bays—with brick infill above and below and new rowlock sills, matching those found on the second story of the west elevation. The fifth bay of the second floor has one fully infilled window opening and the second bay has one window opening infilled at the top, with a non-historic metal door that leads out onto a metal fire escape, which leads to a metal landing at the first story and a ladder which can be lowered to the ground.

Due to the grade, which gets lower from north to south as well as from west to east, the basement story has full-height fenestration on the south three bays of the rear addition and partial openings at grade within the original building. The sixth and seventh (rearmost) bays contain fully infilled window openings which are set into the water table, with stone sills to match the other windows. The fifth bay contains a side door into the basement level, at grade, sheltered by a simple, non-historic gable roofed portico supported by plain, round, black metal columns and clad with asphalt shingles. It is unclear if this entrance is original to the rear addition, or if it was created from an earlier basement window opening. The metal door is non-historic and features a placard with information on the usual meeting times of the Mount Hermon Lodge and Order of the Eastern Star chapters which utilized the space. To the right of the door, there is a metal plaque, painted blue with unpainted bronze lettering, which contains information on the Lodge, including the date that it was chartered. To the right (north) of this entryway, two ground-level window openings have been infilled with brick. Near the north end of the building, just at grade level, lies the building's original cornerstone from 1893, with a carved stone above it noting the rededication of the building in 1993.

### PARCEL

The building sits on a 6,300 square foot lot (Lot 11, Block A), bordered by Gallatin Street to the north, 43rd Avenue to the east, and a small alley to the south, which separates it from a large asphalt parking area located on a separate parcel (Lot 16, Block A).

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## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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### INTEGRITY

The Mount Hermon Masonic Temple has retained its essential character as a historic social building from the period of Hyattsville's expansion as a streetcar and automobile suburb in the early 1900s. The temple retains much of its original exterior appearance, with the most notable changes to its form—the addition to the south and extension of the first and second stories on the north elevation—having been made nearly a century ago with design, materials, and workmanship matching that of the original 1893 portion of the building. There have been modifications to the fenestration of the building, including the enclosure of many window openings with brick infill. Fortunately, these modifications have left the original size and shape of the fenestration readable. These characteristics contribute to the temple's high degree of integrity of design and materials. Additionally, the suburban mixed-use context of the temple remains largely unchanged, contributing to the integrity of location and setting, while the temple's continuous ownership by the Mount Hermon Lodge to date contributes to its high integrity of association.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Mount Hermon Masonic Temple, north elevation, May 11, 2024.

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Mount Hermon Masonic Temple, northwest corner, May 11, 2024.

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Mount Hermon Masonic Temple, partial view of west elevation, May 11, 2024.

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Mount Harmon Lodge Masonic Temple, east elevation, May 11, 2024.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Mount Hermon Masonic Temple  
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Mount Harmon Lodge Masonic Temple, south elevation, July 8, 2024.



## 8. Significance

Inventory No. PG:68-10-95

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 type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

Specific dates	Architect
<b>Construction date: 1893, ca.1930</b>	<b>Builder</b>

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.)

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Mount Hermon Masonic Temple is significant as the only building representative of the Romanesque Revival style within the Hyattsville National Register Historic District. The lodge is also significant as a noticeable local landmark which has been a key part of the streetscape since its construction. It has played an integral role in the social history of Hyattsville, having been utilized by many organizations aside from the Freemasons for fundraisers, political events, educational programs, and as a home for local schools and religious congregations in need of a temporary space. Newspaper reporting from the time of the temple's active use in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shows that several locally significant individuals participated in community events that were held there.

### HISTORIC CONTEXT

#### EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF HYATTSVILLE

The land that would eventually become the City of Hyattsville was part of the land holdings of John Beall, who created the settlement of Beall Town in the late 1720s, a large part of which became what is now Bladensburg.<sup>5</sup> Christopher Clarke Hyatt purchased the tract of land that included Beall Town in 1845 after the establishment of the Washington-Baltimore Turnpike (now Baltimore Avenue/U.S. 1) and the B&O Railroad's Baltimore to Washington line (in 1835) made the land desirable for development. In 1859, Hyatt purchased approximately 20 additional acres.<sup>6</sup> Martenet's 1861 Map of Prince George's County labels the area just north of Bladensburg as Hyattsville and shows Hyatt's residence and general store (labeled "CC Hyatt Residence" and "Store & P.O.") as well as a small group of other residences.<sup>7</sup> In 1873, much of the land from Hyatt's 1859 acquisition was platted as Hyatt's Addition to Hyattsville.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> McGuckian, Ellen S., "Hyattsville Historic District," National Register of Historic Places nomination form, §7, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Baynard, Kristie and Trieschmann, Laura V., "Hyattsville Historic District (Amended and Expanded)," National Register of Historic Places nomination form, § 8, p. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Martenet, Simon J., Martenet's Map of Prince George's County, Maryland.

<sup>8</sup> "City of Hyattsville: The Bicentennial and 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary," p. 5.

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### WINE & JOHNSON

After Hyatt's Addition was platted, other developers followed suit. Two large additions—Wine and Johnson's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Additions—would be platted by speculative real estate developers Louis D. Wine and George Johnson, in 1882 and 1884, respectively. Unlike Hyatt, Wine and Johnson built houses on some of their lots in order to enhance the marketability of their land.<sup>9</sup> The increase in development and the promise of more to come spurred residents of Hyattsville to seek incorporation from the Maryland General Assembly, which approved municipal incorporation on April 7, 1886.<sup>10</sup> Wine and Johnson's 2<sup>nd</sup> Addition was approximately 31 acres of land surrounding a large parcel that contained Ravenswood Mansion (located approximately between the present location of Saint Jerome's elementary school building and convent). The subdivision is roughly bounded to the east by Baltimore Avenue, to the north by Jefferson Street, to the west by 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, and to the south by Farragut Street.

### MOUNT HERMON LODGE

According to the history of the organization compiled by the lodge, Mount Hermon Lodge No. 179 was created in 1882 under dispensation of the Grand Lodge of Maryland and chartered in November of that year.<sup>11</sup> The membership of the lodge appears to have been all men, based on available documentation of membership at the time from contemporary newspapers and the lodge's own compiled history. The temple was also home to a chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, a "sister organization" that was formed to create a fraternal organization that could include Masons as well as their female relatives.<sup>12</sup> The lodge first met in Bladensburg, renting space in the old schoolhouse there, before moving to Hyattsville in 1885. Louis D. Wine—himself a Freemason—and George J. Johnson offered the lodge a free building site twice—once in 1883 and again in 1891—and the offer was accepted the second time.<sup>13</sup> In 1892, Francis H. Smith, Richard S. Evans, and John A. Erdman purchased Lot 11, in Block A of Wine & Johnson's Second Addition from George J. Johnson, Annie E. Johnson, and Louis D. Wine for \$10.00 "for the use and benefit of" the members of Mount Hermon Lodge No. 179.<sup>14</sup> The next year, on the evening of May 2, 1893, the cornerstone of the temple was laid in a large and well-attended ceremony. Inside the cornerstone was a box that contained "a copy of the state and county papers, numerous coins, a roster of the lodge, and names of the following building committee: Francis H. Smith, president; Harry B. Major, secretary; Louis D. Wine, treasurer; Francis Gasch; R.P. Evans; and

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<sup>9</sup> Baynard, Kristie and Trieschmann, Laura V., "Hyattsville Historic District (Amended and Expanded)," National Register of Historic Places nomination form, § 8, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> "Laws of the State of Maryland, made and passed at a session of the General Assembly, begun and held at the City of Annapolis, on the Sixth Day of January, and ended on the Fifth Day of April, 1886," pp. 702-709.

<sup>11</sup> Mehring, Arnon L. and Shaw, Harry B., "An Outline of the History of Mount Hermon Lodge, No. 179 A.F. & A.M.," 1932, accessed via the Mount Hermon Lodge No. 179 A.F. & A.M. website, "History" page, July 11, 2024 (<http://www.mastermason.com/mh179/history.html>).

<sup>12</sup> Grand Chapter of Maryland, Order of the Eastern Star, "Membership Eligibility," accessed July 11, 2024 (<https://www.oesmd.org/membership-eligibility/>).

<sup>13</sup> Mehring, Arnon L. and Shaw, Harry B., "An Outline of the History of Mount Hermon Lodge, No. 179 A.F. & A.M.," 1932, accessed via the Mount Hermon Lodge No. 179 A.F. & A.M. website, "History" page, July 11, 2024 (<http://www.mastermason.com/mh179/history.html>).

<sup>14</sup> Liber JWB 21:148, George J. Johnson, Annie E. Johnson, and Louis D. Wine, Grantors to Francis H. Smith, Richard S. Evans, and John A. Erdman, Grantees, February 23, 1892, Land Records of Prince George's County

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Eugene A. Fowler.” The cornerstone and box were consecrated with corn, wine, and oil, and the ceremonial gavel that had purportedly been used by George Washington in laying the corner stone of the Capitol (and later, the Washington Monument) was used to complete the ceremony.<sup>15</sup> According to *The Evening Star*, “nearly all the citizens of the town, including many ladies” attended what was “one of the most impressive [occasions] that Hyattsville has ever known.”<sup>16</sup> Over 100 Freemasons from other lodges were in attendance, representing 26 different lodges from seven different states.<sup>17</sup> The temple was planned to be ready for occupation by October 1, 1893, and contemporary accounts indicate that it was in use by December 1893.<sup>18</sup>

### MOUNT HERMON LODGE PERIOD OF OWNERSHIP (1892 - 2024)

The property transferred ownership from George J. Johnson, Annie E. Johnson, and Louis D. Wine to Mount Hermon Lodge in February 1892 and has remained in its ownership since then. The earliest available Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show that the property was improved by a brick building (the original three bay wide by four bay long structure) with a two-story frame addition extending to the south from the rear elevation.<sup>19</sup> This configuration appears to have remained largely the same until at least 1922, as shown in the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of the area from that year.<sup>20</sup> At least one photo—taken from present-day Gallatin Street to the northwest of the temple—exists showing the front of the temple in its original form. By 1933, the rear frame addition had been replaced with a 2 ½ story extension of brick construction, and the small front portico had been replaced with a brick two-story front extension. These alterations to the building may have been completed in late 1925, according to the lodge’s history narrative as presented on the organization’s website.<sup>21</sup> The form of the temple from the 1933 Sanborn map has remained largely unchanged in the over 90 years since its publication, with previously described changes to the fenestration happening over time.

### HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Contemporary newspaper accounts and other documentary evidence indicate that the Mount Hermon Masonic Temple was utilized by the members of Mount Hermon Lodge, as well as other area Masonic Lodges and an assortment of other organizations and purposes, including: a 1906 benefit for the Hyattsville town hall building fund;<sup>22</sup> a 1916 meeting to protest the removal of the principal from a local public school;<sup>23</sup> a 1918 recital to benefit the Red Cross,

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<sup>15</sup> *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), May 3, 1893, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Mehring, Arnon L. and Shaw, Harry B., “An Outline of the History of Mount Hermon Lodge, No. 179 A.F. & A.M.,” 1932, accessed via the Mount Hermon Lodge No. 179 A.F. & A.M. website, “History” page, July 11, 2024 (<http://www.mastermason.com/mh179/history.html>).

<sup>18</sup> *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), December 23, 1893, p.16.

<sup>19</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Hyattsville, Prince Georges County, Maryland. Sanborn Map Company, July 1906.

<sup>20</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Hyattsville, Prince Georges County, Maryland. Sanborn Map Company, August 1922.

<sup>21</sup> Mehring, Arnon L. and Shaw, Harry B., “An Outline of the History of Mount Hermon Lodge, No. 179 A.F. & A.M.,” 1932, accessed via the Mount Hermon Lodge No. 179 A.F. & A.M. website, “History” page, July 11, 2024 (<http://www.mastermason.com/mh179/history.html>).

<sup>22</sup> *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), December 2, 1906, “Woman’s Magazine Section,” p. 6.

<sup>23</sup> *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), August 20, 1916, Sunday Evening Edition, p. 16.

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featuring the National Quartet;<sup>24</sup> a 1927 banquet to discuss the incorporation of 28 existing communities into a proposed “Maryland City, Maryland” (not to be confused with present-day Maryland City in Anne Arundel County);<sup>25</sup> a 1930 operetta organized by a youth group from the First Presbyterian Church;<sup>26</sup> a 1932 benefit supper for the Hyattsville Volunteer Fire Department, organized by the HVFD Ladies Auxiliary;<sup>27</sup> a 1932 banquet to honor Mack B. Rowe, organizer of the Allied Colored Democratic Club;<sup>28</sup> a 1933 meeting among a group of pastors who wanted to prevent a referendum on the overturning of Maryland’s “blue laws;”<sup>29</sup> a 1934 musical to benefit the free wards of the Episcopal Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital;<sup>30</sup> free electric appliance cooking classes in 1938, put on by the General Electric Cooking School of the Maryland Electric Appliance Company;<sup>31</sup> a 1940 local Democratic party rally featuring Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles, Speaker of the House Samuel Rayburn, United States Senator George Radcliffe, and Congressman Lansdale Sasser;<sup>32</sup> a 1942 city planning exhibition, “Under the Planner’s Microscope,” presented by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission;<sup>33</sup> and a 1945 meeting of the Hyattsville Kindergarten Association to try to find a location for the 1945-46 school year.<sup>34</sup>

This utilization by a variety of local groups points to the significance of the temple to the City of Hyattsville and the surrounding communities in its prime. The temple is also architecturally significant due to its uniqueness as the only example of Romanesque Revival architecture in Hyattsville. Since its construction, the temple has been a unique and prominent part of the streetscape. Additionally, the design and construction of the temple—the decorative stone quoining and accents, arched window lintels, brick corbelling, and other embellishments—are significant examples of early twentieth century architecture and skilled craftsmanship.

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<sup>24</sup> *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), May 3, 1918, p. 8

<sup>25</sup> *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), November 2, 1927, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), March 27, 1930, p. 18.

<sup>27</sup> *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), September 15, 1932, p. 10.

<sup>28</sup> *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), December 16, 1932, p. 14.

<sup>29</sup> *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), May 29, 1933, p. 14.

<sup>30</sup> *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), June 5, 1926, p. 13.

<sup>31</sup> *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), October 25, 1938, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), October 14, 1940, p. B-8.

<sup>33</sup> *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), October 18, 1942, p. A-23.

<sup>34</sup> *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), September 19, 1945, p. B (image 23).

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## CHAIN OF TITLE

Liber 19941:095  
July 16, 2004

Mount Hermon Lodge No. 179 A.F. & A.M. GRANTORS, and One Seventy Nine Temple Holding Corporation GRANTEES

Liber 00443:263  
March 26, 1936

Joseph S. Haas, Surviving Trustee GRANTORS, and D. Hazen McLeod, Francis C. Little and Bert H. Wise, Trustees GRANTEES

Liber 00261:139  
February 19, 1926

Deed Daniel L. Morgan and Samuel M. McMillan GRANTORS, and Samuel M. McMillan, George H. Lanhardt and Joseph S. Haas, Trustees GRANTEES

Liber JWB 21:148  
February 23, 1892

Deed George J. Johnson, Annie E. Johnson, and Louis D. Wine GRANTORS, and Francis H. Smith, Richard S. Evans and John A. Erdman GRANTEES

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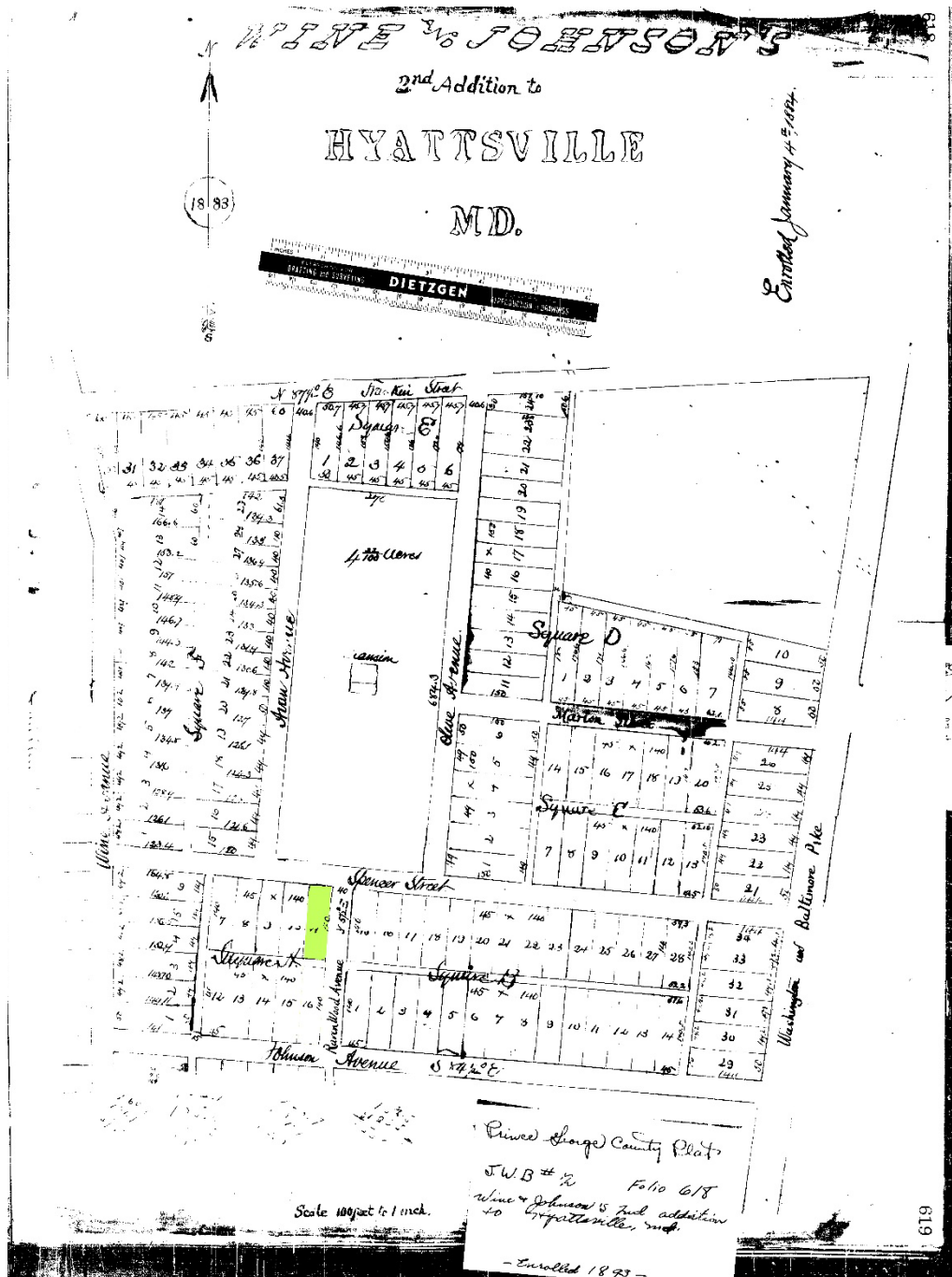


Figure 1. Wine and Johnson's Second Addition to Hyattsville (with subject property highlighted), Maryland, Enrolled January 4, 1884.

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Figure 2. Mount Hermon Masonic Temple, undated, *Images of America: Hyattsville*, 2008.



Figure 3. Detail of Hyattsville with Mount Hermon Masonic Temple location highlighted, "Baist's map of the vicinity of Washington D.C.," 1904.

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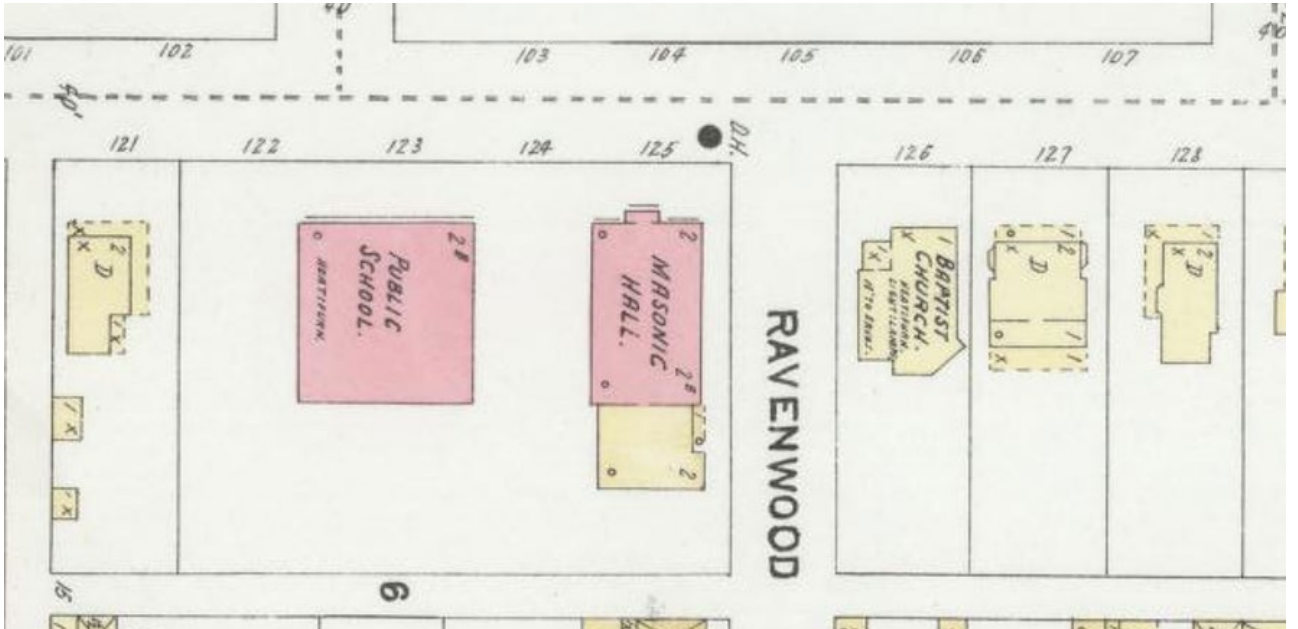


Figure 4. Detail of Mount Hermon Masonic Temple, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Hyattsville, Prince George's County, Maryland, Sanborn Map Company, July 1906.

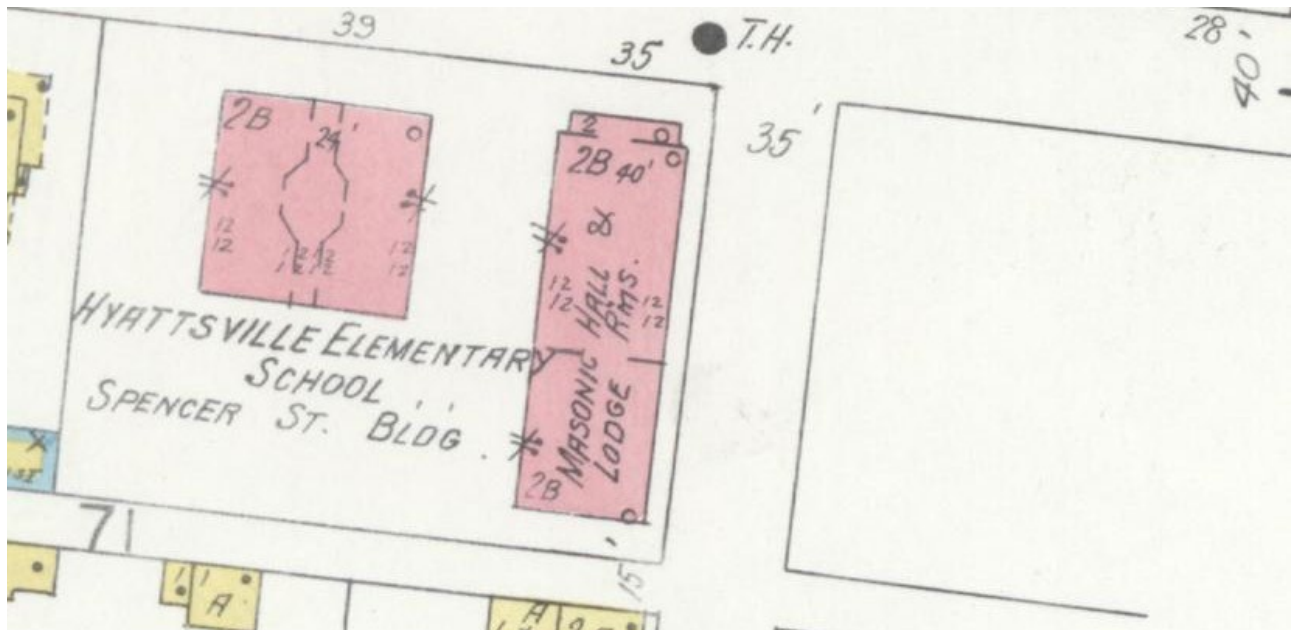


Figure 5. Detail of Mount Hermon Masonic Temple, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Hyattsville, Prince George's County, Maryland, Sanborn Map Company, May 1933.



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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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(<https://www.loc.gov/item/87691445/>)

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Damron, Andra and Hyattsville Preservation Association, Images of America: Hyattsville, Arcadia Publishing, 2008

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(<http://www.mastermason.com/mh179/history.html>)

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Hyattsville, Prince Georges County, Maryland. Sanborn Map Company, July 1906 ([https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn03615\\_001/](https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn03615_001/))

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Hyattsville, Prince Georges County, Maryland. Sanborn Map Company, August 1922 ([https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn03615\\_003/](https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn03615_003/))

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Hyattsville, Prince Georges County, Maryland. Sanborn Map Company, May 1933 ([https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn03615\\_004/](https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn03615_004/))

*The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), May 3, 1893, p. 7 (<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045462/1893-05-31/ed-1/>)

*The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), December 23, 1893, p. 16 (<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045462/1893-12-23/ed-1/>)

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*The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), May 3, 1918, p. 8 (<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045462/1918-05-03/ed-1/>)

*The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), October 14, 1940, p. B-8 (<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045462/1940-10-14/ed-1/>)

*The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), October 18, 1942, p. A-23 (<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045462/1940-10-14/ed-1/>)

*The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), September 19, 1945, p. B (Image 23)  
(<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045462/1945-09-19/ed-1/seq-23/>)

*The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), December 2, 1906, "Woman's Magazine Section," p. 6  
(<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84026749/1906-12-02/ed-1/>)

*The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), August 20, 1916, Sunday Evening Edition, p. 16  
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*The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), November 2, 1927, p. 5 (<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84026749/1927-11-02/ed-1/>)

*The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), March 27, 1930, p. 18 (<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84026749/1930-03-27/ed-1/>)

*The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), September 15, 1932, p. 10  
(<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84026749/1932-09-15/ed-1/>)

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(<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84026749/1932-12-16/ed-1/>)

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*The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.), October 25, 1938, p. 7 (<https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84026749/1938-10-25/ed-1/>)

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 0.145 acres  
Acreage of historical setting 0.145 acres  
Quadrangle name Washington East

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot numbered Eleven (11) in Block "A", in the subdivision known as "JOHNSON & WINE'S SECOND ADDITION TO HYATTSVILLE," as per plat recorded in Liber JWB-2, Folio 618, one of the Land Records of Prince George's County, Maryland; being in the 16th Election District of said County.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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name/title	Daniel R. Tana, Planner III		
organization	The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission		
	Historic Preservation Section, Countywide Planning Division		
	Prince George's County Planning Department	date	July 2024
street & number	1616 McCormick Drive	telephone	301-952-3680
city or town	Largo	state	MD

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  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600