

SQUARE 407 (Commercial Buildings)
Eighth, Ninth, D, and E Streets, NW
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-516

HABS
DC,
WASH,
273-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

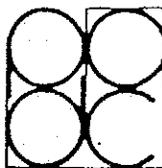
Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HABS
DC,
WASH,
277-

Historic Preservation Program Task 3.1.1 & 3.4.1
BUILDING DOCUMENTATION

Square
407



 **PENNSYLVANIA
AVENUE
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION**
425 13TH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

GENERAL CONSULTANTS	HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM
ANDERSON NOTTER/MARIANI GENERAL PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT	DAVID MCLAREN HART & ASSOCIATES PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT
DEVROUAX & PURNELL ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS	MONK DUNSTONE ASSOCIATES COST ESTIMATING CONSULTANT

INTRODUCTION TO SQUARE 407

Bounded by D and E Streets on the south and north and Eighth and Ninth Streets on the east and west, Square 407 has a rectangular configuration whose dimensions are 406 feet by 200 feet. Two blocks to the north stands the National Portrait Gallery and towards the south is a relatively unobstructed view of the National Archives. Vision to the west is restrained by the Herbert Hoover FBI Building, a composite of massive rectangular volumes. To the east, Eighth Street is marked with tall, powerful buildings, with Lansburgh's Department Store at the northeast corner. Any view of structures to the east is blocked by their presence.

The location of Square 407 in the L'Enfant Plan for Washington is important in that its eastern flank constitutes a boundary for the north-south Eighth Street axis. Eighth Street was of formal and symbolic importance in the Plan, linking the site of a proposed National Church at the rise of land at F Street with the Potomac River to the south.

The initial square division consisted of a symmetrical, rectangular arrangement of eighteen lots. Four lots were located on each of the north and south ends, and five on the east and west sides. By the late 1880's the erection of buildings of varied size began to cause modifications in this configuration. Plat maps reveal that the symmetrical alignment of the lots dissolved as some were merged and others subdivided. The Academy of Music was built between 1887 and 1892 (Baist Plat Maps, 1887 and 1892) on the corner of Ninth and D Streets where three separate lots, (numbers three, four and five) had previously existed. Along the western edge and southeast corner the original lots were split, resulting in a greater number of smaller, irregularly shaped lots. The northern and eastern sections remained relatively unchanged, although the shape of lots on the northeast corner at Eighth and E Streets shifted from that of a rectangle to a square. The commencement of the Twentieth Century saw the reduction of lot ten in the northwest quadrant and the integration of lot seven with the smaller lots nineteen through twenty-two to accommodate a theater. A service alley made structures on the southeast corner accessible from Eighth Street (Baist Plat Map, 1919).

These changes in configuration produced a mix of large and small land divisions, thus establishing major and minor volumes throughout the square. The buildings which occupied the square were representative of the many rich and varied Revival Styles in vogue at the time. The five-story Lincoln Music Hall, which stood at the north-

east intersection of Ninth and D Streets, was the square's prime example of the richness and pomposity of downtown Washington's architecture. The Hall, home of the Spencerian Business College, was a massive structure replete with detailed ornamentation. This intricate, embellished structure, along with other major buildings such as the four-story Lincoln National Bank, the Crandell Theatre and the Academy of Music Hall, contributed to the variety of architectural styles found on the square at the turn of the century. By the 1950's most of these buildings had been demolished, leaving the significant number of empty lots that is still evident.

Throughout its history, Square 407 has attracted enterprises ranging from office and retail practices to entertainment facilities. A late Nineteenth Century handbook, Historical and Commercial Sketches of Washington and Environs, summarizes the building uses and proprietors of Square 407 at the time. Artisans, carpenters, dealers, dentists, manufacturers and tailors are all described, often in rhetorical grandeur and pomposity. On Eighth and Ninth, D and E Streets, shops "large and commodious...conveniently fitted in modern decor" abounded. The Spencerian Business College is also given an impressive review. Its "ambitious" students characteristically acquainted themselves with courses in "the English language, business arithmetic, Spencerian practical penmanship, bookkeeping and business practices" for a tuition of merely fifty dollars.

In the late 1800's many of these craft and professional services occupied single structures. On Eighth Street's northeastern corner there existed an artist, a builder, a lawyer and a restaurateur in one building (1881 Boyd's Directory). Stables were located in the central sector of Eighth Street while an integration of retailers and manufacturers comprised the southern-most section. On Ninth Street, to the south, offices of lawyers, insurance agents and architects were established, while a tailor inhabited the far north. Interspersed among these enterprises was a rich assortment of independent businesses including druggists, physicians, plumbers and seamstresses.

Business activity remained minimal in the early 1900's on Eighth, D and E Streets as the once common livery areas were primarily converted to garage establishments. Most of the commercial development and reorganization proliferated on Ninth Street. To this end, what had been established in the central area of the street as small, independent commercial outfits merged, and became single dominant enterprises. Numerous expansive structures containing theater and music facilities were added to the already existing ones during the first decade of the century. Crandell's Central Theater,

Moore's Garden Theater, The Garden Theater, The Strand Theater, The Academy of Music and the Imperial Palace were all components of a flourishing social environment.

Thus, the entire square was a rich hybrid of commercial and entertainment resources. Gradually, however, the established businesses, theaters and movie houses relocated relative to an environmental decline which began in the 1920's. Properties were neglected and buildings were demolished on original lots one, two, eleven, fifteen and sixteen, as indicated by post-1939 Plat Maps.

From the early 1950's, this sedimental condition has solidified without substantial alteration or demolition, save for the razing of the Central Theater.

Today, sporting and clothing outlets, an adult bookstore, an art and frame store, a parking facility, a power substation and a commercial warehouse constitute the variable make-up of the square.

A six-story 1907 commercial structure built originally as a livery, anchors the east side of the square and offers compatibility to the linear characteristics of those across Eighth Street. In spite of its large volume, the treatment of its facade and the rhythm of fenestration relate well to the historical buildings in the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation District.

Covering the northeast corner in totality is Herman's Sporting Goods Outlet, a three-story Neo-Classical building erected in the early Twentieth Century. This building, together with S.S. Kresge on Square 432, forms an effective framing and transitional form for the taller Lansburgh's Department Store structure.

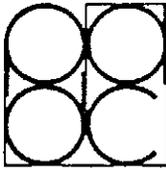
Centrally located on Ninth Street are two Victorian Italianate structures built in the Nineteenth Century. Isolated from all other structures on the square, these two elaborate buildings stand as very fine examples of architecture of that period. Unfortunately they are surrounded by empty lots and by buildings that are comparably insensitive in their facade organization, thereby leaving these structures in a contextual vacuum.

One of two service-oriented structures, a 1957 PEPCO Substation, is situated on original lots fourteen, fifteen and sixteen as well as parts of twelve and thirteen. The other is a 1954 PMI Parking Garage which stands at the corner of Ninth and D Streets covering lots three, four and five. Both offer negligible contribution to the more architecturally significant fabric in the area. Their

design is unsympathetic to the traditional urban environment and their presence encumbers any attempt to unify the components on the square.

Common to most remaining facades are the extensive alterations at ground level. This modernization has greatly diversified the original streetscape creating a pedestrian path marked with storefronts struggling for attention. The absence of landscaping, in addition to the abundance of parked vehicles on vacant lots, compounds the degeneration of the square's integrity.

November 1980



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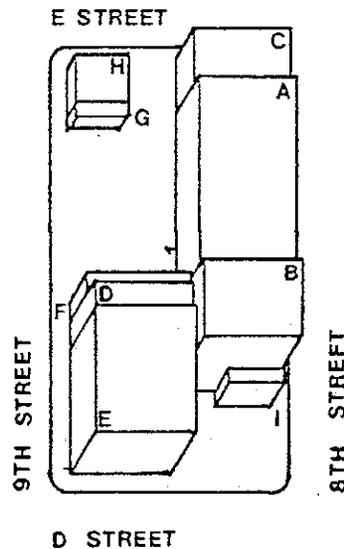
GENERAL CONSULTANTS

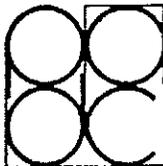
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

**BUILDING EVALUATION
CODE IDENTIFICATION MAP
SQUARE 407**

- A POTOMAC ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY...HABS No. DC-573
- B COMMERCIAL BUILDINGHABS No. DC-518
- C HERMAN'S WORLD OF SPORTING GOODS .HABS No. DC-519
- D PLAYLAND ADULT BOOKSTOREHABS No. DC-522
- E PMI PARKING GARAGEHABS No. DC-523
- F BIG FLIPPER.....HABS No. DC-521
- G RENDEZVOUS.....HABS No. DC-520-B
- H SUNNY'S SURPLUS.....HABS No. DC-520-A
- I NATIONAL ART AND FRAME COMPANY ...HABS No. DC-517





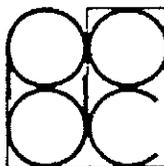
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM
BUILDING PERMIT
SUMMARY

NINTH STREET: BETWEEN D AND E STREETS:

- 407 P.M.I. Parking Garage (407-E):
.11-6-1953, #A49286: Permit to build one five and a half-story concrete parking garage as per plans. Estimated cost: \$200,000.
.1-14-1954, #A57063: Permit to install two basins, 14 floor drains, one fire system, two water closets. Estimated cost \$6,000.
.6-7-1954, #A55433: Permit to install one electric manlift elevator as per plans. Estimated cost: \$5,700.
- 413-415 Playland Adult Books (407-0):
Date of construction, unknown (no Building Permit).
.2-12-1901, #1117: Permit to erect show windows. Architect: A.B. Heaton.
.3-30-1927, #7721: Remove existing show window and board up opening. Cost: \$50.
.1-12-1939, #219,510: Remove existing show window base and put in a concrete slab. Cost: \$50.
.8-24-1939, #225,806: Remove tin roof and apply a four-ply built asphalt slag roof on entire building. Contractor: Dee-Cee Roofing Company. Cost: \$183.
.7-16-1947, #299,095: Remove existing show window base and replace it with two doors. No structural change. Cost: \$150.
- 417 The Big Flipper (407-F):
.12-21-1895, #925: Erect one three-story building of concrete and brick.
.6-29-1914, #5611: Remove show windows, put in a flat roof; replace front with stone and brick.
.8-25-1923, #1683: Permission to construct one bay window on the building line. Cost: \$350.
.6-22-1938, #214,041: Build a one-story brick addition to the store. Cost: \$1,500.
.4-23-1941, #242,802: Permission to recover present cap of show windows with metal reset, and cover base and glass of show window. Cost: \$75.



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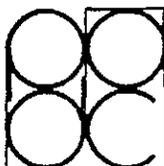
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM
BUILDING PERMIT
SUMMARY

EIGHTH STREET: BETWEEN D AND E STREETS:

- 408 National Art and Frame (407-I):
Date of construction uncertain, pre-1887 (no Building Permit).
.4-3-1915, #3876: Install a fireproof ceiling in the first story
with two inches of approved fireproof material.
.6-16-1931, #143765: Replace condemned rear wall.
- 410-414 Eighth Street-Lansburgh's Warehouse (407-B):
.5-17-1906, #3128: Permit to build one five-story brick warehouse.
Building (Carriage House) height 65 ft., foundation: concrete,
brick facing, flat roof of slag. Architect: H.G. and L.G. Dill.
Contractor: Same. Owner: E. Burgdorf.
.9-21-1907, #1002: Permission to build one six-story structure of
brick and reinforced concrete to be used as a livery. (Mansard Roof)
Architect: Harry Blake. Contractor: J. Dill.
.8-24-1908, #708: Permission to erect one show window. Width: 14'-
8". Protection: 3'-0". Contractor: Dill Bros.
.10-5-1904, #3799: Permit to change hand-powered elevator to electric
power. Mechanic: John A. Miller.
- 422 Potomac Electric Power Company (407-A):
.4-22-1957, #B22543: Build a steel and concrete electric substation.
Cost: \$995,000.

E STREET: BETWEEN EIGHTH AND NINTH STREETS:

- 800 Herman's World of Sporting Goods (407-C):
.1-23-1911, #2359: To build a two-story brick store. Cost: \$150.
.1-4-1921, #3820: Addition of an entirely new storefront, change
first floor level, add new show windows, and make other interior
alterations. Additions: \$55,000. Repairs: \$15,000.
.12-31-1946, #291,375: To make alterations on first, second and third
floors. Cost: \$8,000.
.4-24-1950, #A6572: Erect new columns and beams in the basement.
.2-8-1954, #A51119: Install new show windows, new stairs from first
floor to basement.



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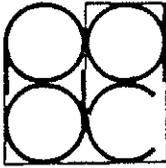
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

BUILDING PERMIT
SUMMARY

- 437 Rendezvous (Part of Riley Building) (407-G):
.3-8-1893, #1259: Permit to build show windows and to rebuild show windows and to make general repairs. Contractor: C.B. Keferstein. Mechanic: F.S. Carmady. Cost of improvement: \$600. Owner: Elizabeth K. Riley.
.5-16-1933, #162,771: Permit to erect one partition. Contractor: Brown. Cost: \$10. Owner: Shannon & Lucas.
.7-26-1938, #215,047: (H. Stephenson Barbershop) Permission to move front to former location on building line. Use brick under windows. Cost: \$75.
- 439 .9-24-1913, #1370: (H.M. Crandal Moving Picture House) Permission to reconstruct colonade on two four-story brick buildings. Size 3' x 40' x 2". Remove walls and carry building on girders, install heating plan. Curtain wall on first floor to be removed and building to be carried on columns and girders. A reinforced concrete floor to be laid. Steel ceiling to be put in place of old one. Architect: W.S. Plagner. Contractor: A.H. Taylor.
.4-18-1918, #2758: Permit to remove a non-bearing partition on the second floor. Cost: \$30.
.11-25-1925, #5218: Permit to convert four-story old theatre into four stores. Install four show windows. Size: one @ 3'-0" x 37' x 3", three @ 3'-0" x 67' x 1½". Architect: Fred P. Pyle. Contractor: Oann, Wick, Rosenburg and Co.
.12-16-1924, #5B24: Permit to put in I beams over show windows and over entrance to the store. Cost: \$200. Contractors: Fred P. Pyle and Dann, Wick, Rosenburg and Co.
.5-8-1925, #10,092: Permit to install one hand-powered freight elevator. Cost: \$350.
- 816 Sunny's Surplus (Riley Building) (407-H):
Date of construction uncertain, possibly 1887 (no Building Permit).
.1-14-1914, #2966: Permit to erect three pairs of storm windows for the Crandal Theatre (five-story building). Architect: W.S. Plagner. Contractor: A.H. Taylor. Cost \$75.



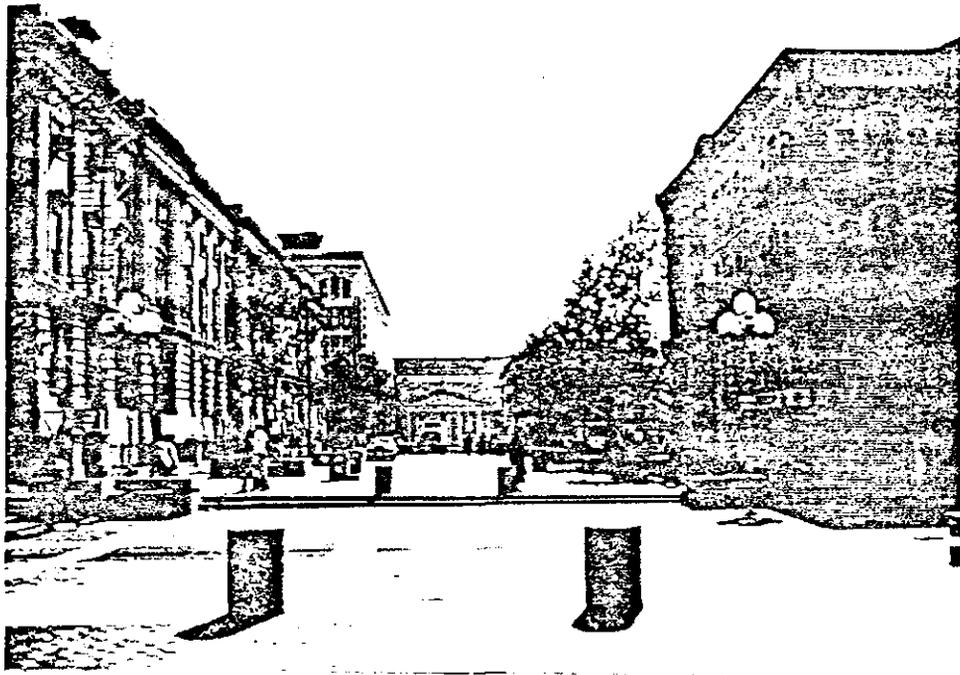
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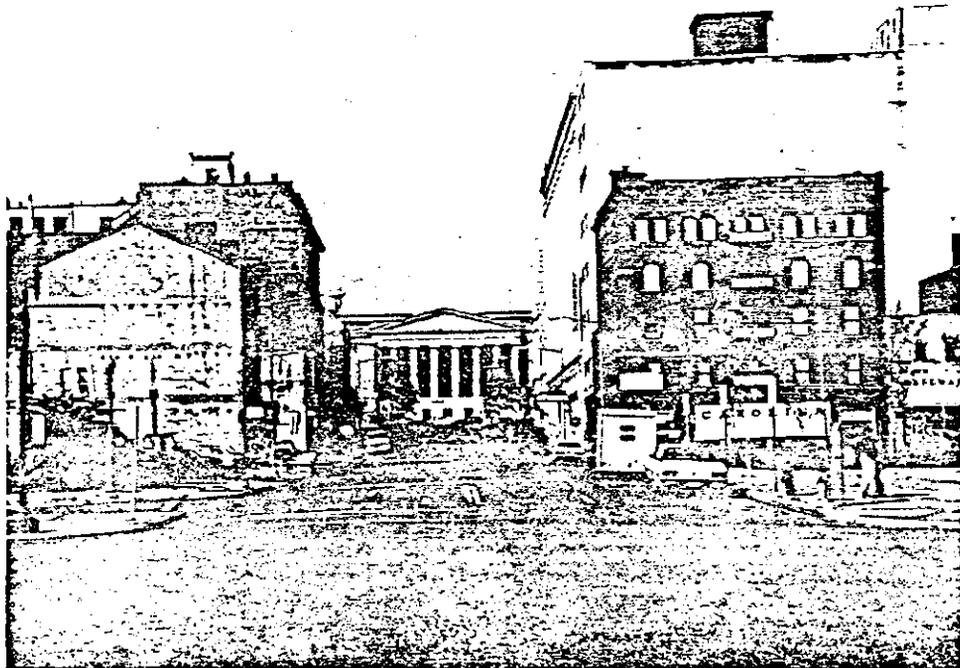
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM
BUILDING PERMIT
SUMMARY

- *.4-22-1914, #4346: Permit to connect show window of property 804 and 806 on south side of E Street. Consists of closing space between shows. Roof of windows not to be disturbed. Contractor: Solomon Lewis and Son.
- .5-17-1926, #9886: Permit to erect one patient gear canvan awning 8 feet above sidewalk. Projection 7 ft., building frontage 20 ft., lunch room in brick building. Contractor: S.E. Hugen.
- .12-17-1926, #5442: Permit to build scaffold and repair brickwork on corner of building. Contractor: J. Horner.
- .4-23-1942, #254215: Permit to remove toilets and kitchen in restaurant. Install partitions. Cost: \$3,500.

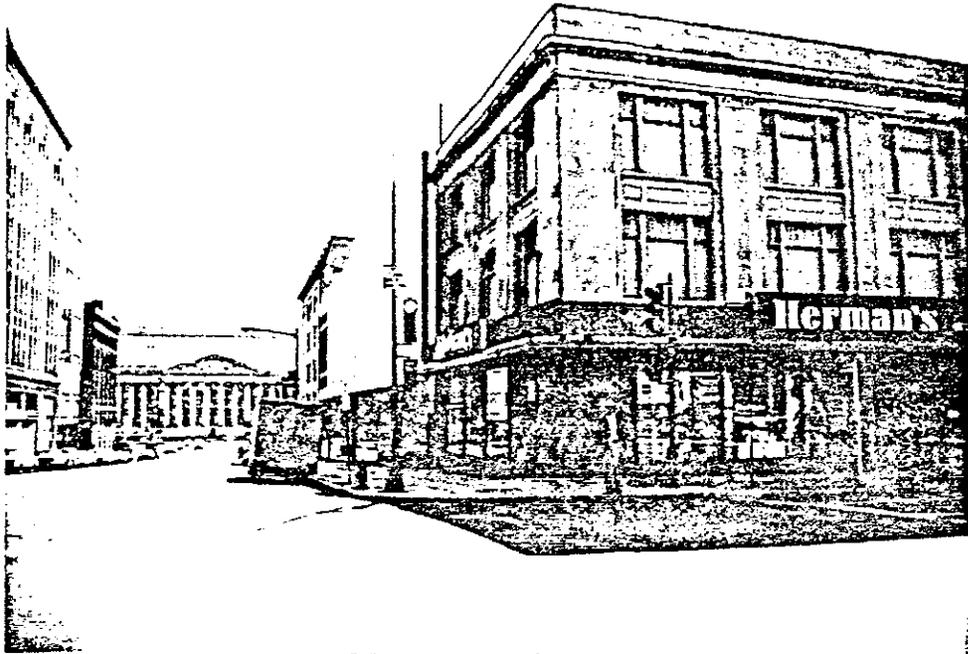
*Due to a repeat of building addresses in 1919, it is impossible to determine if this permit applies to Sunny's Surplus.



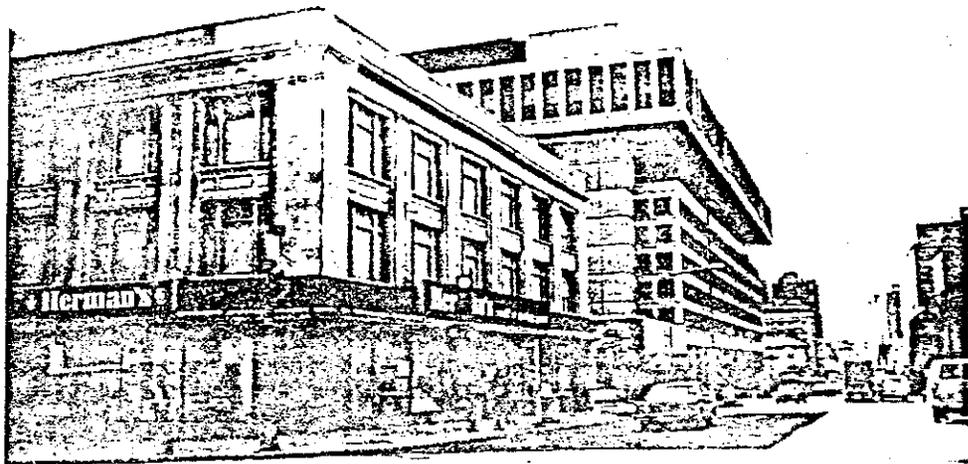
EIGHTH STREET AXIS, VIEW SOUTH FROM THE PORTRAIT GALLERY



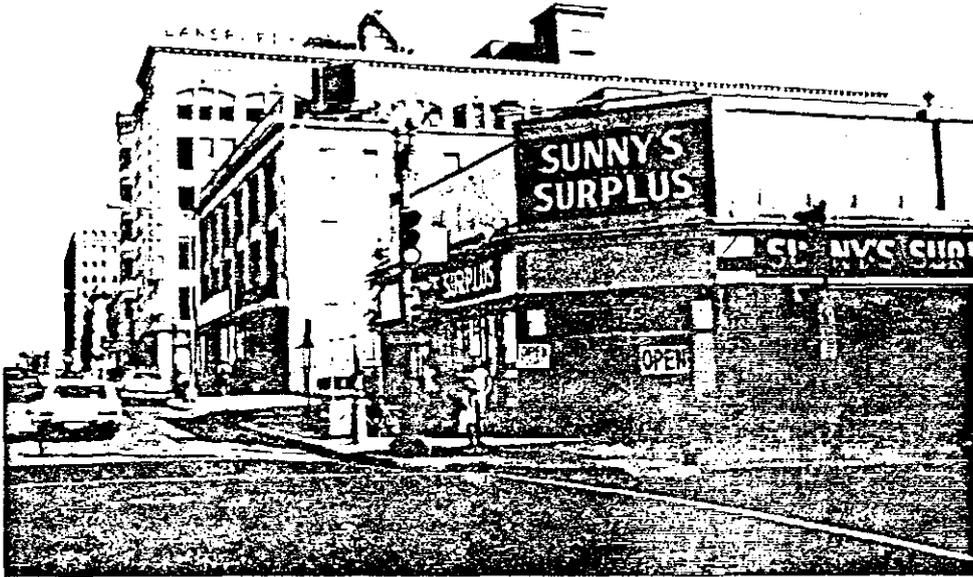
EIGHTH STREET AXIS, VIEW NORTH FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES



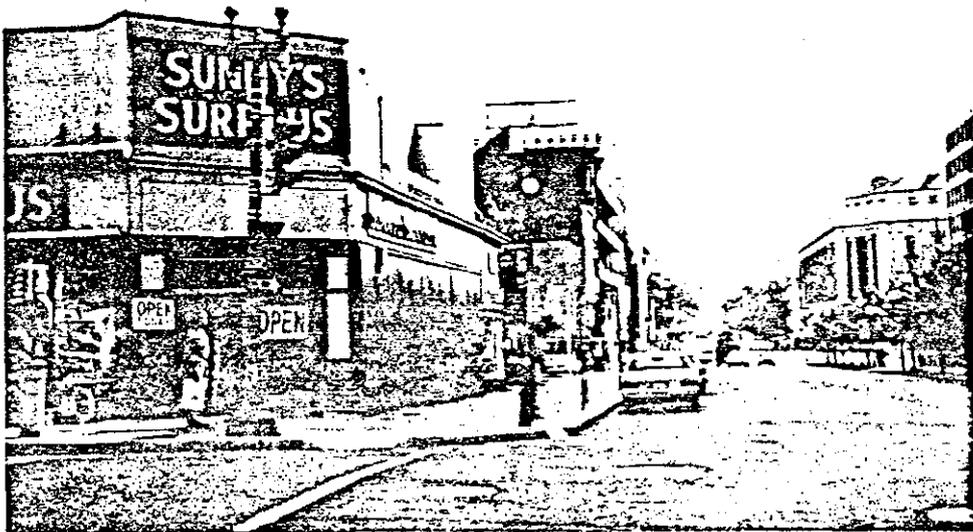
NORTHEAST CORNER OF SQUARE 407, LOOKING SOUTH ON EIGHTH STREET



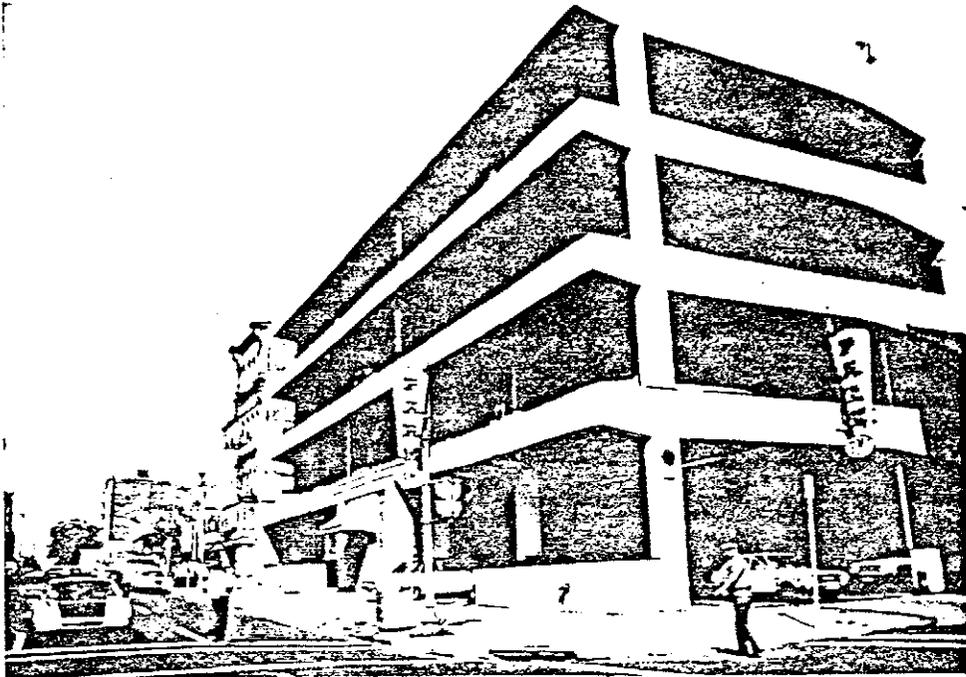
NORTHEAST CORNER OF SQUARE 407, LOOKING WEST ON E STREET



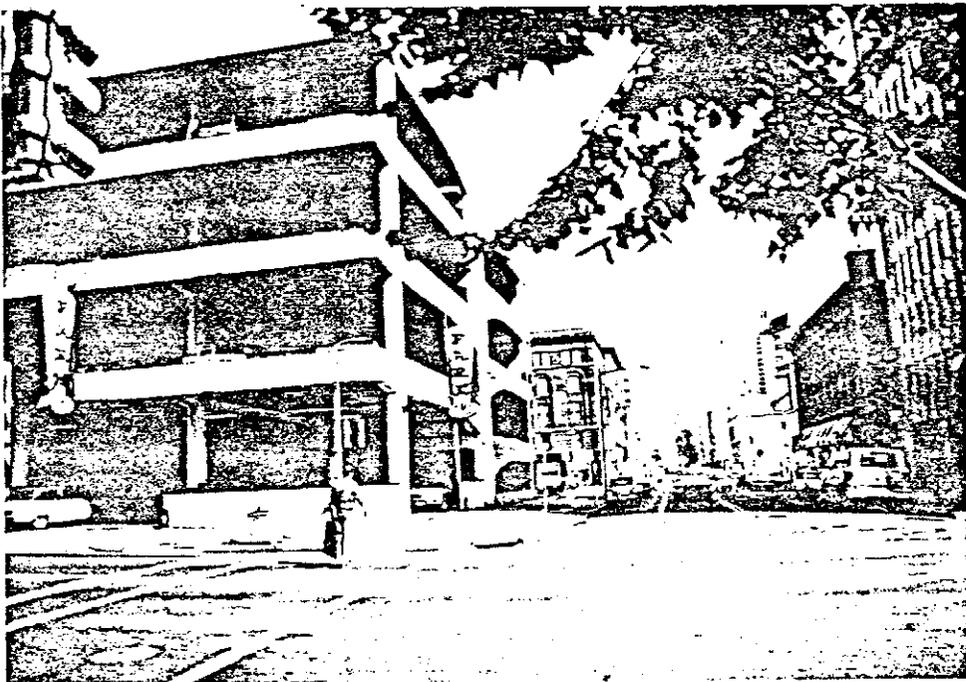
NORTHWEST CORNER OF SQUARE 407, LOOKING EAST ON E STREET



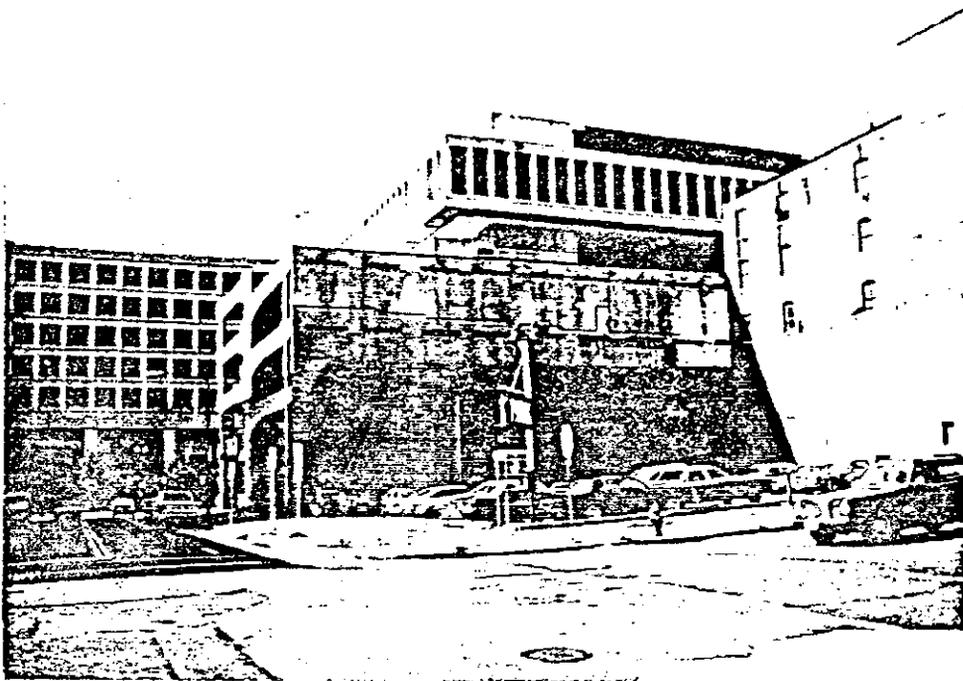
NORTHWEST CORNER OF SQUARE 407, LOOKING SOUTH ON NINTH STREET



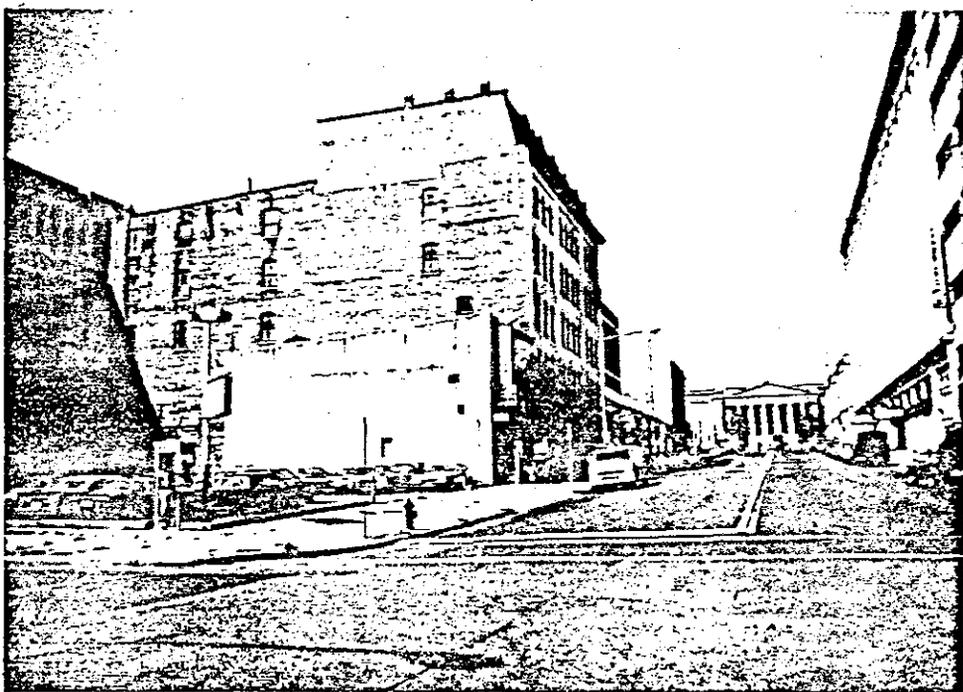
SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SQUARE 407, LOOKING NORTH ON NINTH STREET



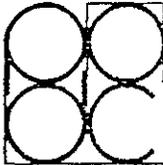
SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SQUARE 407, LOOKING EAST ON D STREET



SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SQUARE 407, LOOKING WEST ON D STREET



SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SQUARE 407, LOOKING NORTH ON EIGHTH STREET



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HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

RELATED PHOTOGRAPHS

For Related Historic Photographs see:

Columbia Historical Society: Wymer Collection
Ninth Street, looking north

Goode, James M. Capital Loses Washington, D.C.; Smithsonian Institution,
1979, p. 356.
Lincoln Music Hall

Slauson, Allan B. A History of the City of Washington, D.C., "The Washington
Post," 1903
Lincoln National Bank, Ninth and D Streets, northeast corner

"The Evening Star," 7/1/1959
Ninth Street, looking south

"The Washington Post," 2/12/1959
Academy of Music, Ninth and D Streets, southwest corner

"The Washington Post," 3/12/1961
Eighth and E Streets, southeast corner

"Washington Daily News," 7/3/1966
Ninth Street, looking south and east

Historic Preservation Program Task 3.2.1.

SUMMARY OF PAST LAND USES AND TENANTS FOR EACH LOT

INTRODUCTION TO SQUARE 407

Square 407 is situated in the approximate center of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation district. It is bounded on the east and west by Eighth and Ninth Streets, and by D and E Streets on the south and north, and has a rectangular configuration. The location of Square 407 in the L'Enfant Plan of Washington is important in that its eastern flank constitutes a boundary for the north-south Eighth Street axis. Eighth Street was of formal and symbolic importance in the Plan, linking the site of a proposed national church at the rise of land at F Street with the Potomac River to the south.

The initial square division consisted of a symmetrical, rectangular arrangement into eighteen lots. Four lots were located on each of the north and south ends, and five on each of the east and west sides. By the late 1800's the construction of buildings of varied sizes began to cause modifications in this configuration. Plat maps indicate that the symmetrical alignment of the lots dissolved as some merged, and others subdivided. The Academy of Music was built between 1887 and 1892 (Baist Plat Maps, 1887 and 1892) on the corner of Ninth and D Streets, where three separate lots had previously existed. Along the western edge and southeastern corner, the original lots were split, resulting in a great number of smaller, irregularly shaped lots. The northern and eastern sections remained relatively unchanged, although the shape of lots on the northeast corner at Eighth and E Streets shifted in shape from rectangular to square. The commencement of the Twentieth Century saw the reduction of Lot 10 in the northwest quadrant and the integration of Lot 7 with smaller lots nineteen through twenty-two to accommodate a theater. A service alley made structures on the southeast corner accessible from Eighth Street (Baist Plat Map, 1919).

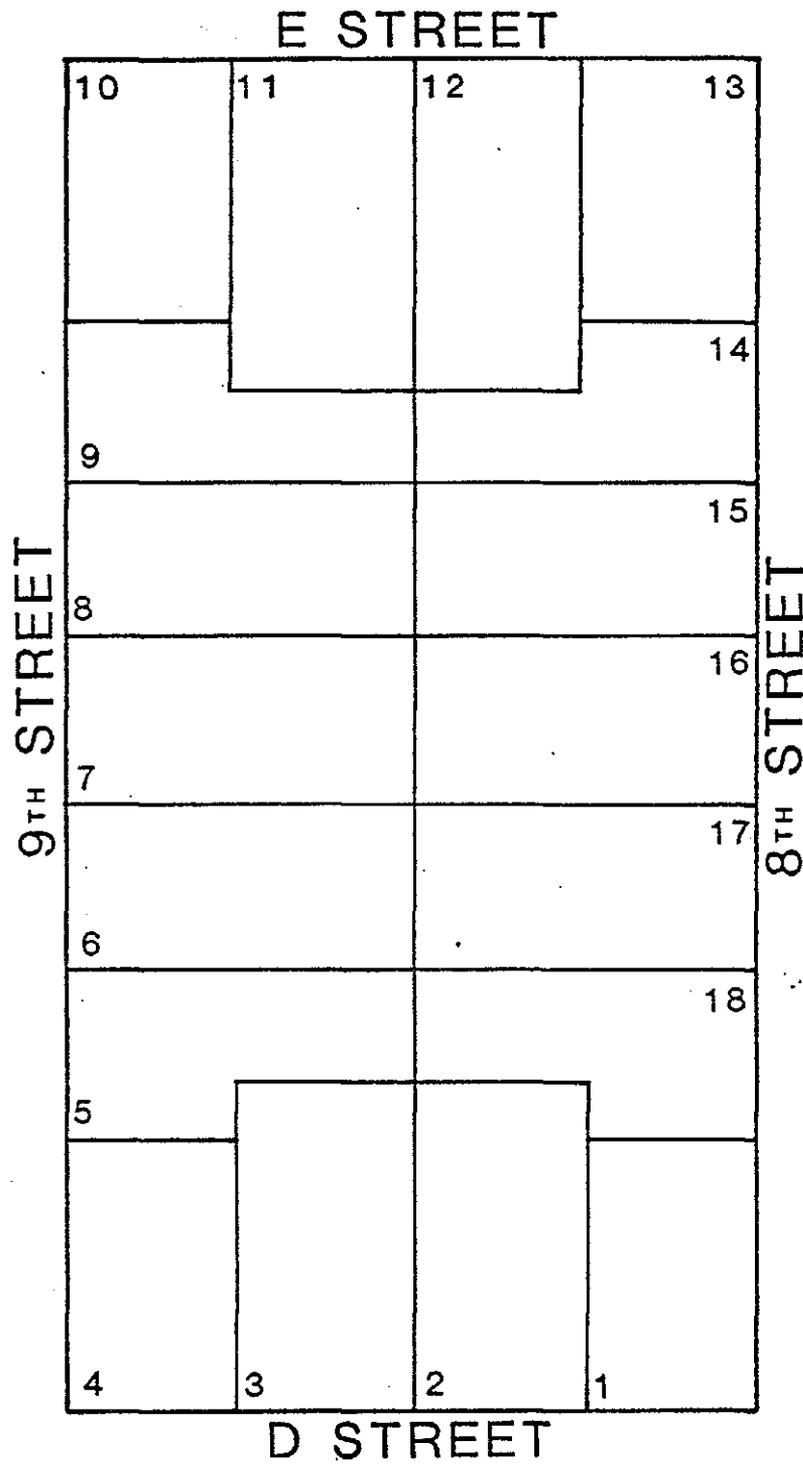
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In the late 1800's many of these crafts and professional services occupied single structures. Stables were located in the central sector of Eighth Street while an integration of retailers and manufacturers comprised the southernmost section. On Ninth Street, to the south offices of lawyers, insurance agents and architects were established, while a tailor inhabited the far north. Interspersed among these enterprises was a rich assortment of independent businesses including druggists, physicians, plumbers, and seamstresses.

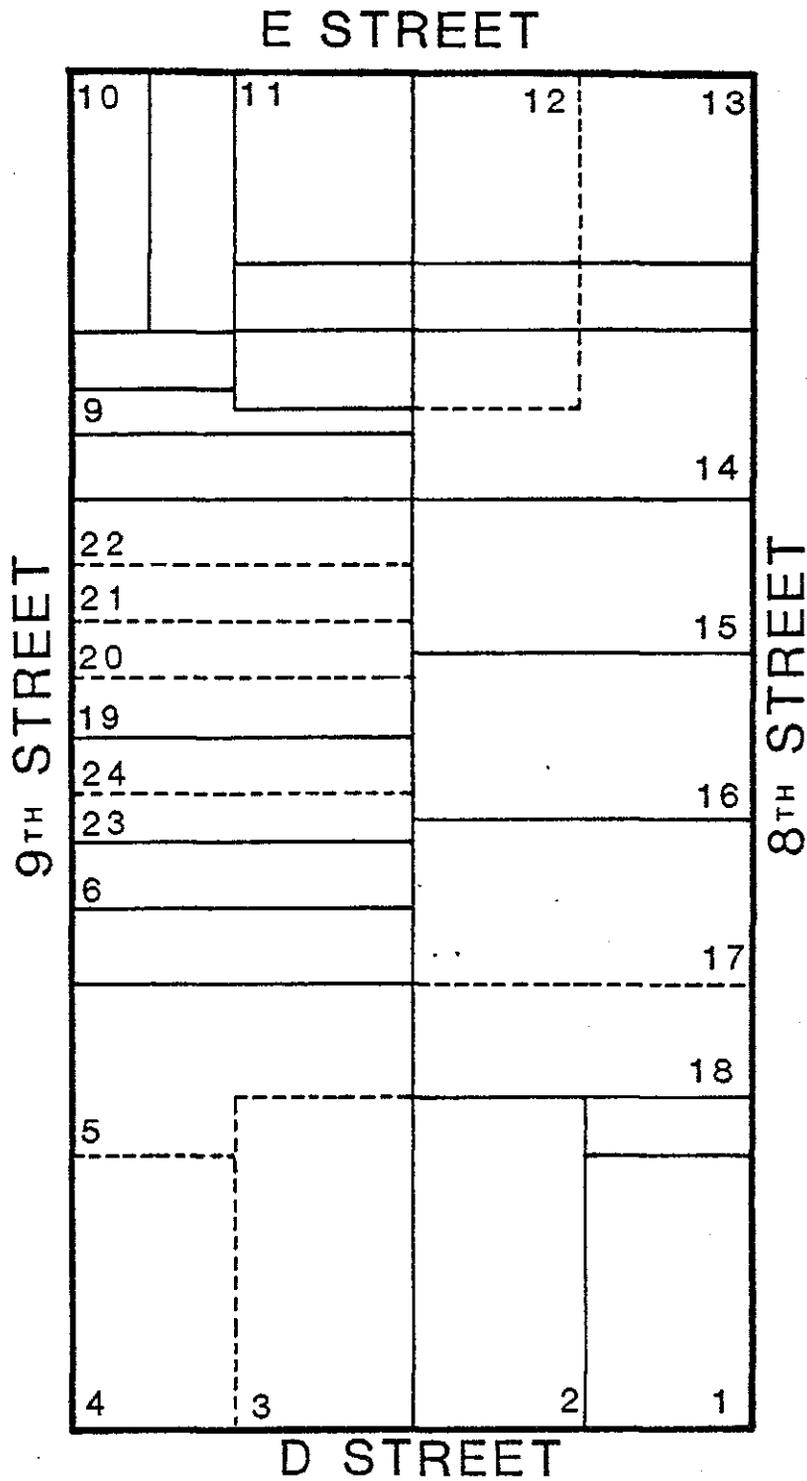
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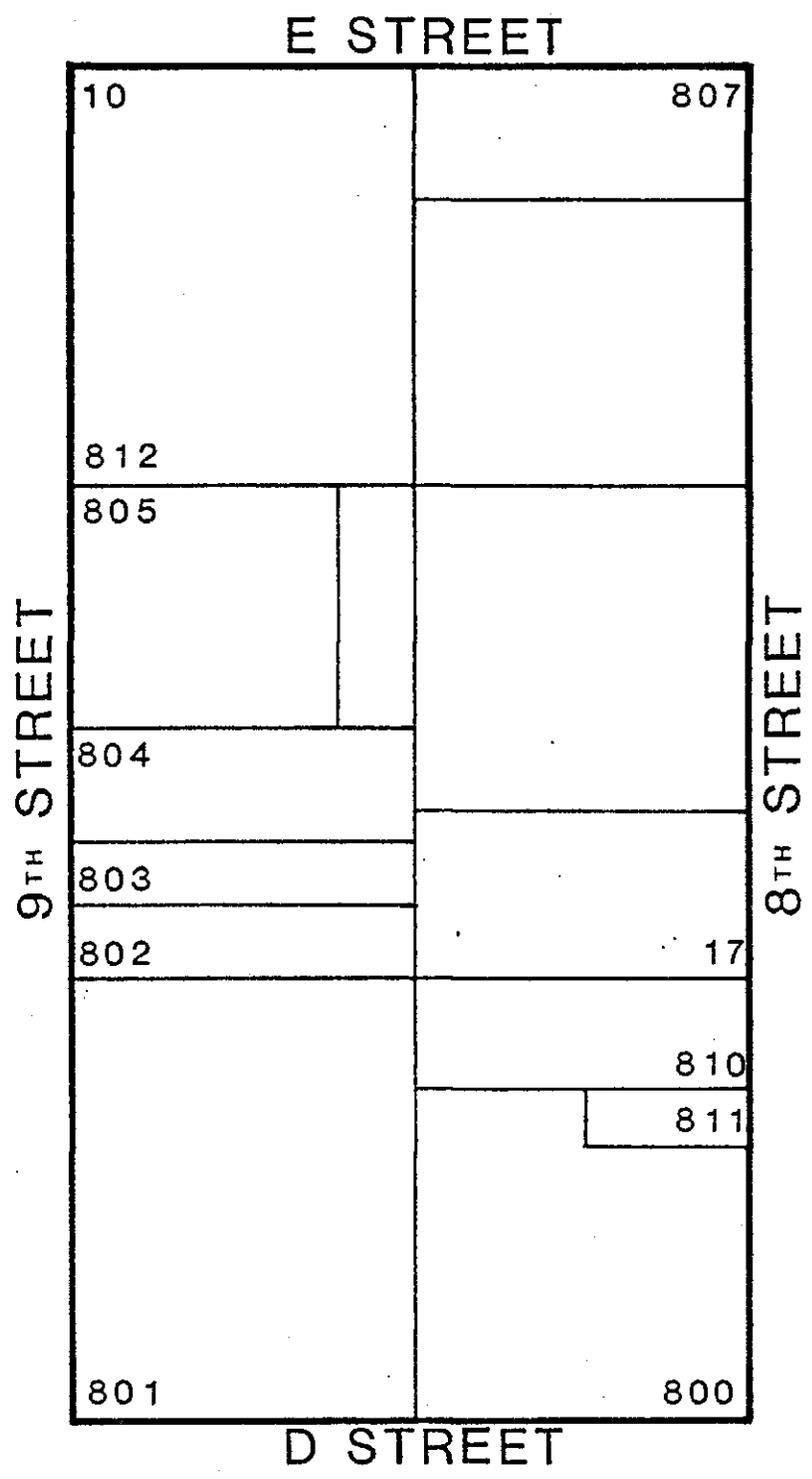
SQUARE 407

BASTERT 1872 PLAT MAP



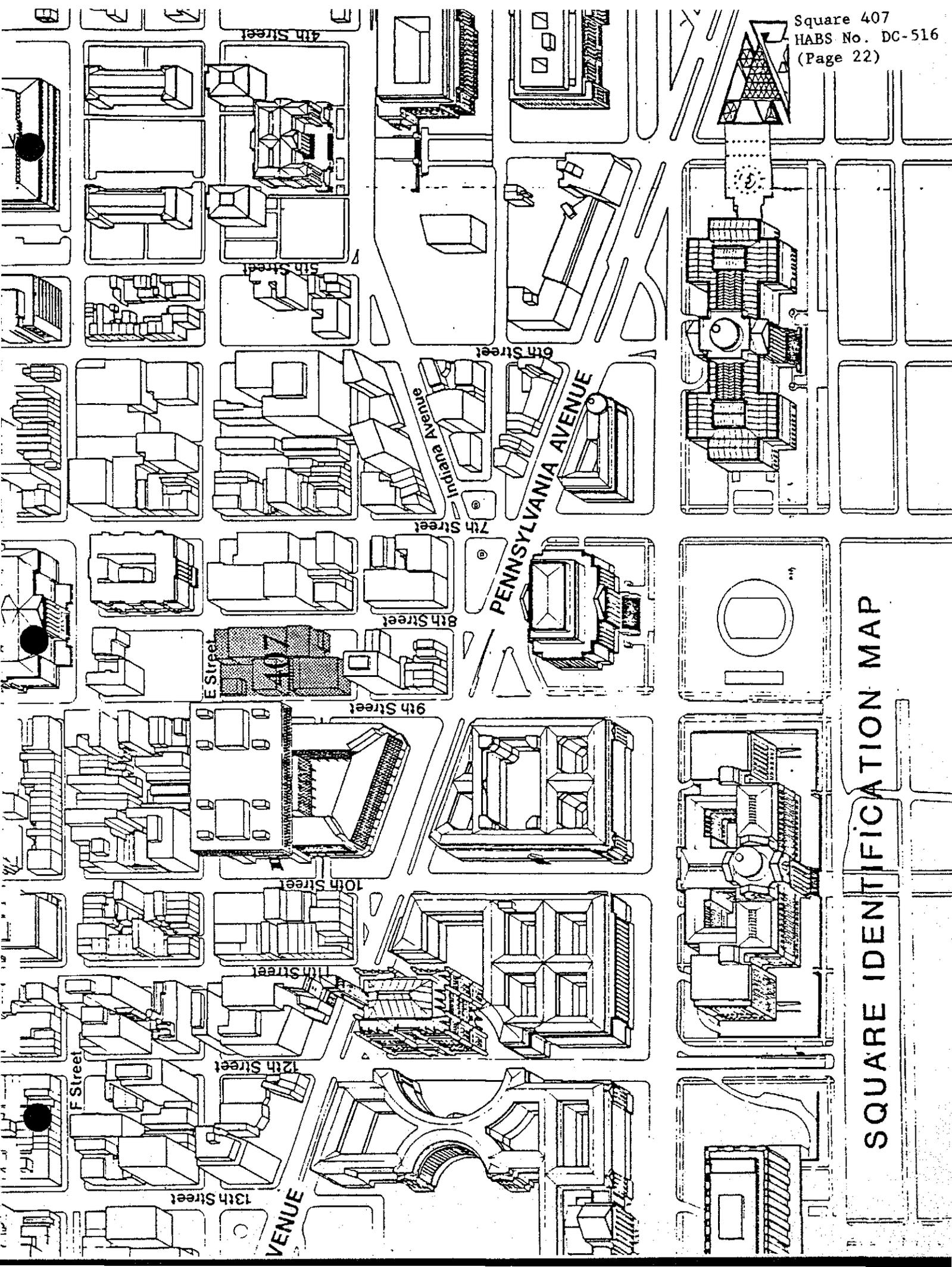
SQUARE 407

BAIST 1919 PLAT MAP



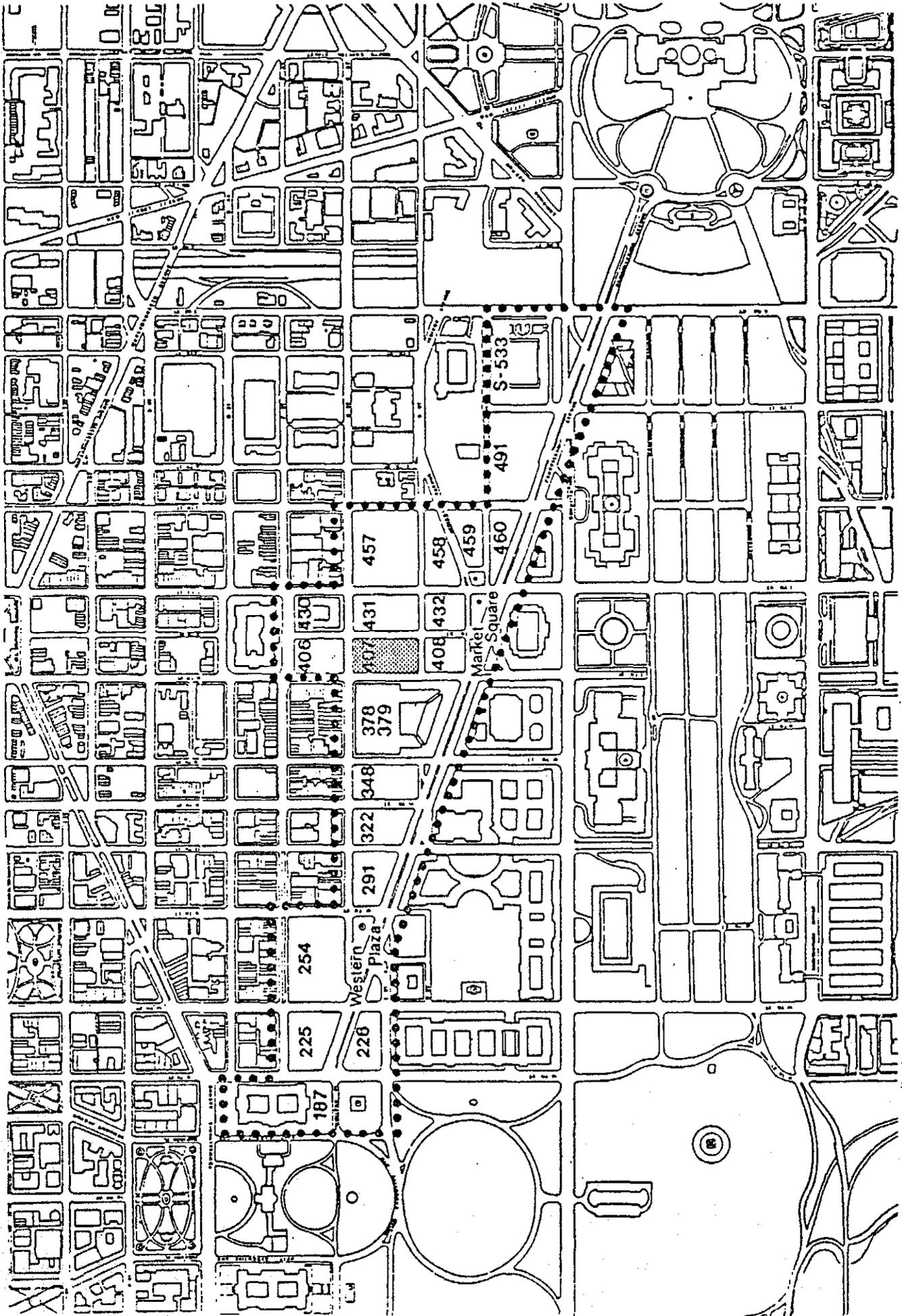
SQUARE 407

PADC PROPERTY MAP 1974



SQUARE IDENTIFICATION MAP

Square Identification Plan



CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

1792	(October 5) Washington first platted
1813	First TAX ASSESSMENT record
1819	Tax Assessment
1822	First CITY DIRECTORY
1824	Tax Assessment
1829	Tax Assessment
1834	City Directory
1839	Tax Assessment
1840	Tax Assessment
1843	City Directory
1844	Tax Assessment
1846	City Directory
1850	City Directory
1853	City Directory
1855	City Directory - first time house numbers were used as part of addresses
1858	First MAP of DC - Baschke
1858	City Directory
1859	Tax Assessment
1862	City Directory - Directories published annually hereafter
1864	Tax Assessment
1869-1871	Tax Assessment
1870	New street numbering system instituted; many early addresses in PADC site changed
1872	Plat Map (Bastert)
1878	First recorded building permit
1878-1879	Tax Assessment
1883-1884	Tax Assessment
1887	Plat Map (Hopkins)
1892	Plat Map (Hopkins)
1893-1894	Tax Assessment
1899-1900	Tax Assessment
1903	Plat Map (Baist)
1919	Plat Map (Baist)
1920	Plat Map (Baist)
1923	Plat Map (Baist)
1924	Plat Map (Baist)
1939	Plat Map (Baist)
1948	Plat Map (Baist)
1957	Plat Map (Baist)

SOURCES

Baist Real Estate Atlas
Bastert and Enthoffer Plat Maps
Boyd's City Directories
District of Columbia Building Permits
District of Columbia General Assessment Records
District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds
District of Columbia Surveyor's Office Records
District of Columbia Tax Records
Hopkins Real Estate Atlas
Polk's City Directories
Property Map for Downtown Urban Renewal Area for District of Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency
Sanborn Insurance Map