

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG: 65-015

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Rizzo House

other

2. Location

street and number 6911 21st Avenue not for publication

city, town Lewisdale vicinity

county Prince George's County

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Lillian Walker

street and number 6911 21st Avenue telephone

city, town Adelphi state MD zip code 20783-2889

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 8717 folio 988

city, town Upper Marlboro tax map 41 tax parcel D1 tax ID number 17 1950492

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: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Planning Department

6. Classification

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

7. Description

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Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one-paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Rizzo House, located at 6911 21st Avenue in Lewisdale, is a Streamline Movement house constructed between 1948 and 1952. The Rizzo House is unique within its neighborhood, which consists primarily of one-story Ranch houses and one-and-a-half-story Cape Cod houses. Sited close to the road on a sloping lot, the property has minimal landscaping. Mature shrubs and trees border the lot. A paved driveway is located north of the house. A modern prefabricated shed (not surveyed) is located in the northeast corner of the property.

DWELLING

Constructed between 1948 and 1952, the Rizzo House displays architectural elements of the Streamline Movement such as curved corners, smooth surfaces, windows that are contiguous around corners, an emphasis on horizontality, and the use of glass block.¹ Set on a concrete foundation, the two-story, three-bay streamline house has a square-plan. The dwelling is constructed with thin, buff-colored 6-course American-bond brick that emphasizes the horizontality of the structure. The house has a decorative basketweave belt course. A wide, exterior-end chimney is sited on the south (side) elevation. The second story has approximately half the square footage of the first story and is composed of intersecting cubic blocks arranged in a staggered L-shape. The second story is flush with the first-story façade (west elevation) bay; the northwest corner of the second story is recessed from the rest of the façade and a portion of the north (side) elevation. The first story has a flat roof with metal coping, while the second story has a brick parapet topped with metal coping. The southern portion of the façade has a projecting, curved bay creating an inset entrance porch. The curved portion of the bay is faced with stacked header-bond bricks. The main entrance is located within the inset porch, which has a steel support post. The single-leaf wood door contains a round 1-light window and has a splayed concrete lintel. A small glass block window set within a round opening is located to the north of the door; the window has a header surround. A curved wall of glass block is located south of the entrance under the inset porch. The glass block wall has a splayed concrete lintel and a concrete lug sill set upon a section of stacked header-bond brick.

Fenestration on the house is asymmetrical and comprised of rectangular window openings with concrete lug sills that punctuate the walls. Many windows are placed at and are contiguous through the corners. At the time of the 1992 on-site survey, the house displayed the original multi-paned metal-sash casement windows and fixed-light metal-sash windows flanked by multi-pane metal-sash casements. At the time of the 2007 on-site survey, all the metal casement windows had been replaced by 1-light sliding and 1-light fixed vinyl-sash windows.

¹ Lee McAlester and Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1984), 465.

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The southernmost façade bay has a 1-light fixed vinyl-sash window flanked by 1-light sliding vinyl-sash windows. The northwest corner has paired 1-light sliding vinyl-sash windows that turn the corner; a steel pipe provides structural support where the two windows meet. Two 1-light sliding vinyl-sash windows are visible on the exposed basement-level of the north (side) elevation. The first story of the north elevation also has two 1-light sliding vinyl-sash windows.

On the east (rear) elevation, the northernmost first-story bay has a 1-light sliding vinyl-sash window. The central bays of the first story are obscured by a one-story, two-bay, shed-roofed porch. The porch has a single-leaf door with a fixed-light that is topped by a 1-light transom. Jalousie windows enclose the porch on all three elevations. An exterior stair located adjacent to the porch leads to the basement. A half-hipped roof porch with wood posts supports shelters the stair. The southernmost bay of the east (rear) elevation is one story in height and has a 1-light fixed vinyl-sash window flanked with 1-light sliding vinyl-sash windows.

The entire south (side) elevation is one story in height and has three sets of 1-light fixed vinyl-sash windows flanked by 1-light sliding vinyl-sash windows. One window is located west of the chimney and two windows are placed to the east of the chimney. The exposed basement has two 2-light awning windows.

Like the first story, fenestration on the second story is comprised exclusively of vinyl replacement windows set on concrete lug sills. The second-story façade (west elevation) bay, located directly above the entrance, has paired 1-light sliding vinyl-sash windows that are contiguous around the southwest corner. A steel pipe provides structural support where the two windows meet. The second story also has two pairs of 1-light sliding vinyl-sash windows placed in the inset corners that are visible from the façade (west elevation). The windows are contiguous through the corners created by the staggered L-shaped portion of the second story.

On the north (side) elevation, the second-story bay has a single 1-light sliding vinyl-sash window. The southeast corner of the second story features paired 1-light sliding vinyl-sash windows that are contiguous through the corner. A steel pipe provides structural support where the two windows meet.

The interior of the house was not accessible at the time of the on-site survey.

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INTEGRITY

The Rizzo House, designed in the Streamline Movement style, located at 6911 21st Avenue in Lewisdale, maintains a high level of integrity. The house has undergone minor alterations between the time of the on-site survey conducted in 1992 and the 2007 survey. The replacement of the original metal-sash casement windows with vinyl-sash windows has compromised the integrity of materials. The synthetic materials do not convey the same feeling as the original metal windows, detracting from the geometric and streamline feel of the design. Although the feeling has been compromised by the replacement of materials, the house conveys an overall integrity of feeling and association with the Streamline Movement. The Rizzo House retains its integrity of design, workmanship, location, and setting.

8. Significance

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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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input 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 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 type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input 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	1948-1952	Architect/Builder	Iva G. Lieurance
Construction dates	1948-1952		

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 Rizzo House, located at 6911 21st Avenue in Lewisdale, is an excellent and unique example of Streamline Movement architecture applied to residential building types in the Washington, D.C. area. The modest-sized house employs simple geometric forms and detailing like curved, streamlined walls, windows that turn the corner, and the use of glass block that are indicative of the streamline movement. Credited to female designer Iva G. Lieurance, the house appears in the plan book sold by the L.F. Garlinghouse Plan Company of Topeka, Kansas. Lieurance is the only woman credited with designs in the mail-order house movement. The Rizzo House was constructed according to house plan No. 578 in the Garlinghouse plan book which sold for \$20. The dwelling is one of two known examples in the Washington, D.C. area, both of which are located in Prince George's County. The dwelling's high level of integrity conveys its significance as a unique example of streamline architecture designed for mail-order distribution.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The Rizzo House is located in the Lewisdale, Maryland. In August 1946, John C. and Helen S. Lewis platted a 24.15 acre parcel of land located west of Hyattsville as blocks 1, 2, 2-A, 9, 10, 11, and 12 of Lewisdale. It was part of several tracts, which totaled 400 acres, acquired by John and Helen Lewis in 1945. The Lewisdale subdivision was part of Green Hill Farm, a model dairy farm owned and operated by E. Francis and Alwina Bohlen Riggs prior to 1945.²

The platting of Lewisdale is representative of the continued growth Prince George's County experienced after World War II (1941-1945). The increased use of the automobile coupled with the increased number of government workers, spurred the continued settlement of new communities around Washington, D.C. After World War II, development increasingly moved away from the areas already developed around the railroads

² Margaret C. Bohlen to John C. and Helen S. Lewis, Prince George's County Land Records, 801:131.

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and toward automobile thoroughfares, as is evidenced by Lewisdale's location northeast of the intersection of Riggs and Ager roads and the East-West Highway.³

Paris and Josephine Rizzo purchased Lot 24 in Block 10 in the Lewisdale subdivision in 1947.⁴ The lot was unimproved at the time of the purchase. According to an interview conducted with Josephine Rizzo in 1991, her husband saw the L.F. Garlinghouse Plan Company catalog while shopping in Kann's Department Store in Washington, D.C. The Rizzos chose model No. 578 that described itself as "a beautiful modernistic design that may be built of concrete, brick, or blocks."⁵ Rizzo purchased the plans and personally constructed the house with the help of his brother-in-law, Nicholas Marescalo. It took the two men four years (1948 to 1952) to build the house. Outside contractors installed the electrical and plumbing systems. During the same period, Marescalo used the plans to construct a house for his family in Camp Springs, Prince George's County. Rizzo constructed his dwelling of bricks, while Marescalo chose concrete blocks that would be clad in stucco.⁶

The L.F. Garlinghouse Plan Company is one of the oldest mail-order house plan companies in the United States. Lewis Fayette Garlinghouse founded the company in 1906 in Topeka, Kansas. The company, now headquartered in Middletown, Connecticut, still exists and distributes a variety of house plans. The company got its start by constructing over 1,000 houses in Topeka and other towns in Kansas. Garlinghouse published the plans for these dwellings in a catalog called *Bungalow Homes*. In 1907, the Garlinghouse Company hired a female designer, Iva Gay Lieurance. Lieurance had no academic background in design or construction when she went to work for Garlinghouse at age 17. Her career with the Garlinghouse Company spanned almost fifty years, and Lieurance either personally supervised or was responsible for all the company's designs. Lieurance is the only woman credited with design work for the mail-order house movement.⁷

By the end of World War I (1914-1918), the Garlinghouse Company was publishing its growing collection of plans, marketing books, and brochures for lumber dealers across the county. Lumber dealers distributed these publications to builders; Garlinghouse supplied the plans and the lumber companies gained business from builders.⁸ The company continued to construct houses until 1932; that year, the company decided to focus exclusively on their mail-order business and sell plans directly to consumers due to the increasing demand for house plans.

³ Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and Prince George's County Planning Department, *Historic Sites and Districts Plan* (1992), 54.

⁴ John C. and Helen S. Lewis to Paris and Josephine Rizzo, Prince George's County Land Records, 990:299.

⁵ *210 Deluxe Small Homes*, L.F. Garlinghouse Company, Topeka, Kansas c. 1947.

⁶ Howard S. Berger, "Rizzo House," (PG: 65-15) Maryland Historic Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form (1992), 8:1.

⁷ Berger, "Rizzo House," 8:1.

⁸ Garlinghouse Company, "How the Home Plans Business was Born,"

http://www.familyhomeplans.com/document_display.cfm?document_id=12 (accessed July 2, 2007).

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Although the Rizzo House was one of the earliest dwellings constructed in Lewisdale, it did not influence the design or construction of other houses. The rest of the subdivision consists of modest brick Ranch houses, Cape Cods, and Colonial Revival-style houses. Similarly, the modern, streamlined design of the Rizzo House was not typical of the plans sold by the Garlinghouse Company. Generally, the company produced designs mirroring mainstream architectural trends. The design motifs associated with the Art Deco, Moderne, and Art Moderne movements were more commonly found on commercial and office buildings than residential buildings. Consequently, house No. 578 in the Garlinghouse plan books was their sole residential design incorporating motifs from the Streamline Movement as it did not prove popular with mainstream America.⁹

⁹ Howard S. Berger, "Rizzo House," (PG: 65-15) Maryland Historic Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form (1992), 8:1.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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210 Deluxe Small Homes, L.F. Garlinghouse Company, Topeka, Kansas c. 1947.

Berger, Howard S. "Rizzo House" (PG: 65-15) Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form, 1992.

Garlinghouse Company. "How the Home Plan Business was Born."

http://www.familyhomeplans.com/document_display.cfm?document_id=12.

Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and Prince George's County Planning Department, *Historic Sites and Districts Plan*, 1992.

McAlester, Lee and Virginia McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984.

Prince George's County Land Records.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property less than one acre

Acreage of historical setting less than one acre

Quadrangle name Washington West

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Rizzo House, located at 6911 21st Avenue in Lewisdale, Maryland, is bounded to the west by 21st Avenue. Residential lots border the property to the north, east, and south. Since its construction, the Rizzo House has been associated with Parcel D1 as noted on Tax Map 41.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Elizabeth Breiseth and Paul Weishar, Architectural Historians		
organization	EHT Traceries, Incorporated	date	October 2007
street & number	1121 5th Street NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

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Chain of Title

Deed 801: 131
December 31, 1945

Margaret C. Bohlen to John C. and Helen S. Lewis

Deed 990:299
August 27, 1947

John C. and Helen S. Lewis to Paris and Josephine Rizzo

Deed 6394: 937
August 1, 1986

Paris and Josephine Rizzo to Lillian Walker, Beverly Walker, Owen Walker,
and Suzanne Walker

Deed 8717: 988
April 7, 1993

Lillian Walker, Beverly Walker, Owen Walker, and Suzanne Walker
to Lillian Walker

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Photo: Rizzo House, view of the façade (west elevation), looking east.

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Photo: Rizzo House, view of the northwest corner, looking southeast.

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Photo: Rizzo House, view of the east elevation, looking west.

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Photo: Rizzo House, view of the south elevation, looking west.

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Photo: Rizzo House, view of the north elevation, looking southeast.