

## Hyattsville Commercial Area (68-041)

The Hyattsville Commercial Area developed along the Route 1 Corridor as a commercial center for Hyattsville and the surrounding communities. These suburban developments emerged in Prince George's County in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to support the burgeoning population of the nation's capital. Hyattsville is located six miles northeast of Washington, D.C., and thirty miles southwest of Baltimore, Maryland. The Hyattsville Commercial area is included in the Hyattsville National Register Historic District, which is roughly bordered by Baltimore Avenue (U.S. Route 1) to the east, the Northeast Branch of the Anacostia River to the southeast, and the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River to the southwest, with the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad tracks (now CSX Transportation) running north-south along the south/southeastern boundary.<sup>1</sup> The Town of Riverdale Park is located to the north and east, and the Town of Bladensburg is sited to the south. Commercial development is centered around the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and Baltimore Avenue and Gallatin Street.

Hyattsville developed as a railroad suburb in the mid-nineteenth century and expanded with the early-twentieth-century advent of the streetcar and automobile. Anticipating the development of a residential suburb to serve the growing population of the District of Columbia, Christopher C. Hyatt purchased a tract of land in 1845 adjacent to the B&O Railroad and the Washington and Baltimore Turnpike (now Baltimore Avenue) and began to develop town lots.<sup>2</sup> The 1861 Martenet Map shows a grouping of residences, Hyatt's store, and the B&O station stop. The laying of roads, like those constructed in Bladensburg just south of Hyattsville, had not occurred by this time.<sup>3</sup> Hyatt's Addition, which was successfully platted in 1873, was followed by numerous additions subdivided by other developers. The Hopkins map of 1878 shows further development and the platting of additional roads in the community.<sup>4</sup> Despite Hyattsville's advantageous location along the railroad and turnpike, suburban development was slow until the extension of the streetcar lines in 1899. Hyattsville grew throughout the early twentieth century with no less than twenty-five additions, subdivisions, and re-subdivisions by 1942.<sup>5</sup> The end of the streetcar service and the ever-increasing rise of the automobile transformed Hyattsville into a successful automobile suburb, with a commercial corridor stretching along Baltimore Avenue that represents the city's several phases of development.<sup>6</sup>

Hyattsville developed gradually between the initial platting in 1873 to its final addition in 1942. Residential buildings make up most of the community, with a commercial corridor on the eastern boundary along Rhode Island and Baltimore Avenues. Blocks on Rhode Island Avenue south of Baltimore Avenue contain the area's oldest structures, which date to the 1880s. These buildings are typically two-story, smaller brick structures that are sited close to the street. Buildings on Baltimore Avenue to the north were constructed from 1900 through the 1950s and are more substantial in size and have larger setbacks to accommodate the automobile. A number of commercial properties are adjacent to residential neighborhoods. One of the earliest commercial structures, built circa 1889, is located at 5121-5123 Baltimore Avenue. The influence of the automobile on the community resulted in the further commercialization of Baltimore Avenue and Rhode Island Avenue. More than fifty commercial and industrial buildings were constructed along these roads between 1921 and 1954. Styles represented along

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<sup>1</sup> E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., "Hyattsville Historic District (Amended and Expanded)," National Register of Historic Places nomination form (June 2004), 7:1.

<sup>2</sup> E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., "Hyattsville," 8:18.

<sup>3</sup> Simon J. Martenet, "Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland, 1861, Adapted from Martenet's Map of Prince George's County, Maryland" (Baltimore: Simon J. Martenet C.E., 1861).

<sup>4</sup> G.M. Hopkins, "Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, Including the County of Price George Maryland" (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, C.E., 1878).

<sup>5</sup> E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., "Hyattsville," 8:18-20.

<sup>6</sup> E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., "Hyattsville," 8:16.

the commercial corridor include Art Deco, Art Moderne, Colonial Revival, Neo-Classical, Tudor Revival, and International. The commercial resources are one or two stories tall, typically with flat or shed roofs obscured by parapet walls. Many of the two-story commercial buildings have abstracted patterned brickwork as the only element of ornamentation. A few of the one-story resources display elements of the Art Deco, Art Moderne, and Colonial Revival styles.

There are three Historic Sites in the Hyattsville Commercial Area. They include:

- PG: 68-041-02, Prince George's Bank, 5214 Baltimore Avenue
- PG: 68-041-09, Hyattsville Armory (NR), 5430 Baltimore Avenue
- PG: 68-041-40, Hyattsville Post Office (NR), 4325 Gallatin Street

There is one Historic Resource in the Hyattsville Commercial Area:

- PG: 68-041-01, Professional Building (First National Bank Building), 5200 Baltimore Avenue

## National Register Historic District

In 2004, the 1982 Hyattsville National Register Historic District nomination was amended and expanded to include the residential, commercial, social, and industrial buildings that document the development and transformation of the city because of major transportation modes. The historic district, also designated under Criterion A for residential planning, was expanded under Criterion C for its contiguous collection of distinctive architecture that reflects the styles and forms fashionable in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The period of significance for the amended and expanded historic district begins circa 1860, the date of the oldest extant building in the historic district, and ends in 1954, reflecting the National Register 50-year rule. The Hyattsville Historic District as amended and expanded includes 1,374 properties. Of these properties, there are 1,215 contributing and 159 non-contributing primary resources. There are 364 secondary resources (313 contributing and 51 non-contributing). Collectively, this includes 1,528 contributing resources and 210 non-contributing resources. The historic district was also nominated under the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1960."<sup>7</sup>

## Windshield Survey

A windshield survey of Hyattsville was conducted in July 2007. There have been some changes in the commercial area since it was included as part of the Hyattsville Historic District in 2004. Revitalization and redevelopment continues along the Route 1/Baltimore Avenue corridor, including the new 21-acre "Arts District Hyattsville." This new development, located on both sides of Baltimore Avenue between Kennedy and Madison Streets resulted in the demolition of several buildings in the Hyattsville Historic District, including at least two contributing buildings. The Lustine Center/Showroom has been preserved and rehabilitated for use as a community center that will be located in the center of the new development. Despite the demolition of the rear of the building, the Lustine Center remains an important visual landmark in Hyattsville. Arts District Hyattsville consists of new condominiums, rowhouses, art studios, live-work housing, and retail space. Even with these changes, the boundaries of the district have not been significantly compromised and both the district as a whole and the boundaries retain their integrity.

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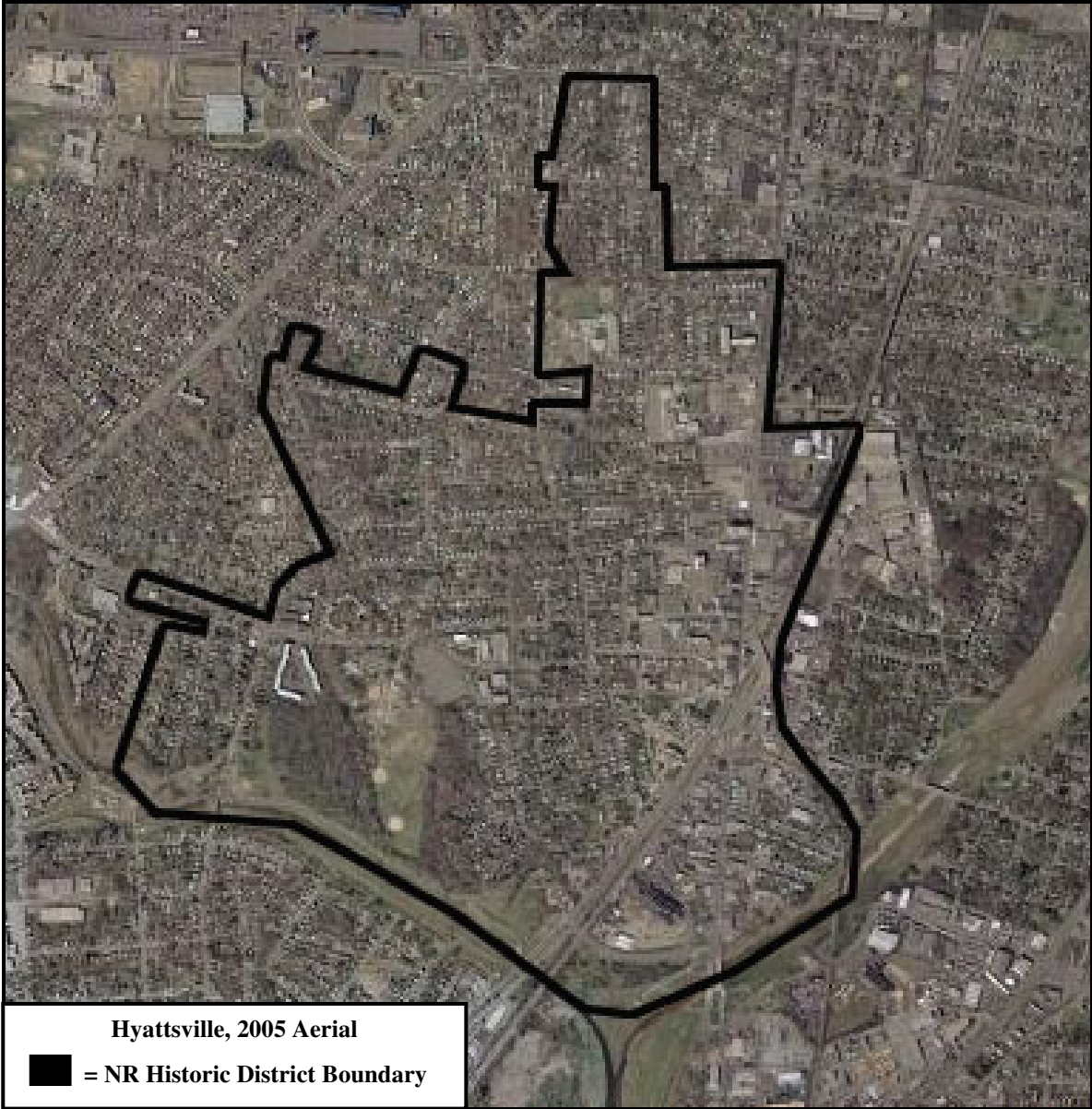
<sup>7</sup> E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., "Hyattsville."

## Local Historic District Evaluation

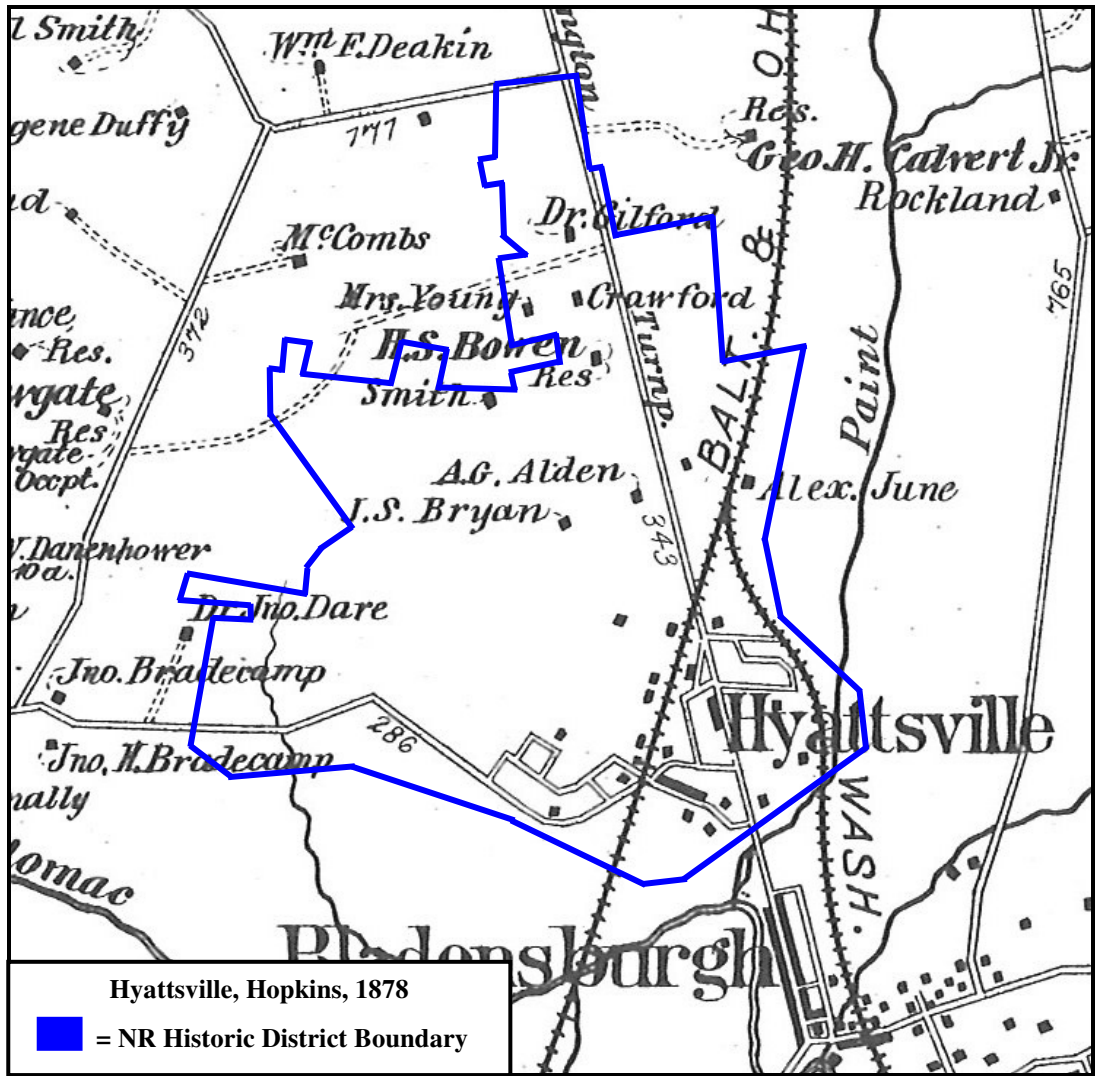
In addition to its listing as a National Register Historic District, Hyattsville merits recognition as a Prince George's County Historic District. The Residential Area and Commercial Area of Hyattsville should be considered as one district, rather than two separate districts. Both the Residential Area and Commercial Area developed as a result of Hyattsville's location, first as a railroad suburb in the mid-nineteenth century and later as a commuter suburb on the Route 1 corridor. Hyattsville represents several Prince George's County Heritage Themes including commerce, transportation, suburban growth, and residential architectural styles. Hyattsville meets the following criteria for designation as a local historic district that includes both the residential and commercial areas:

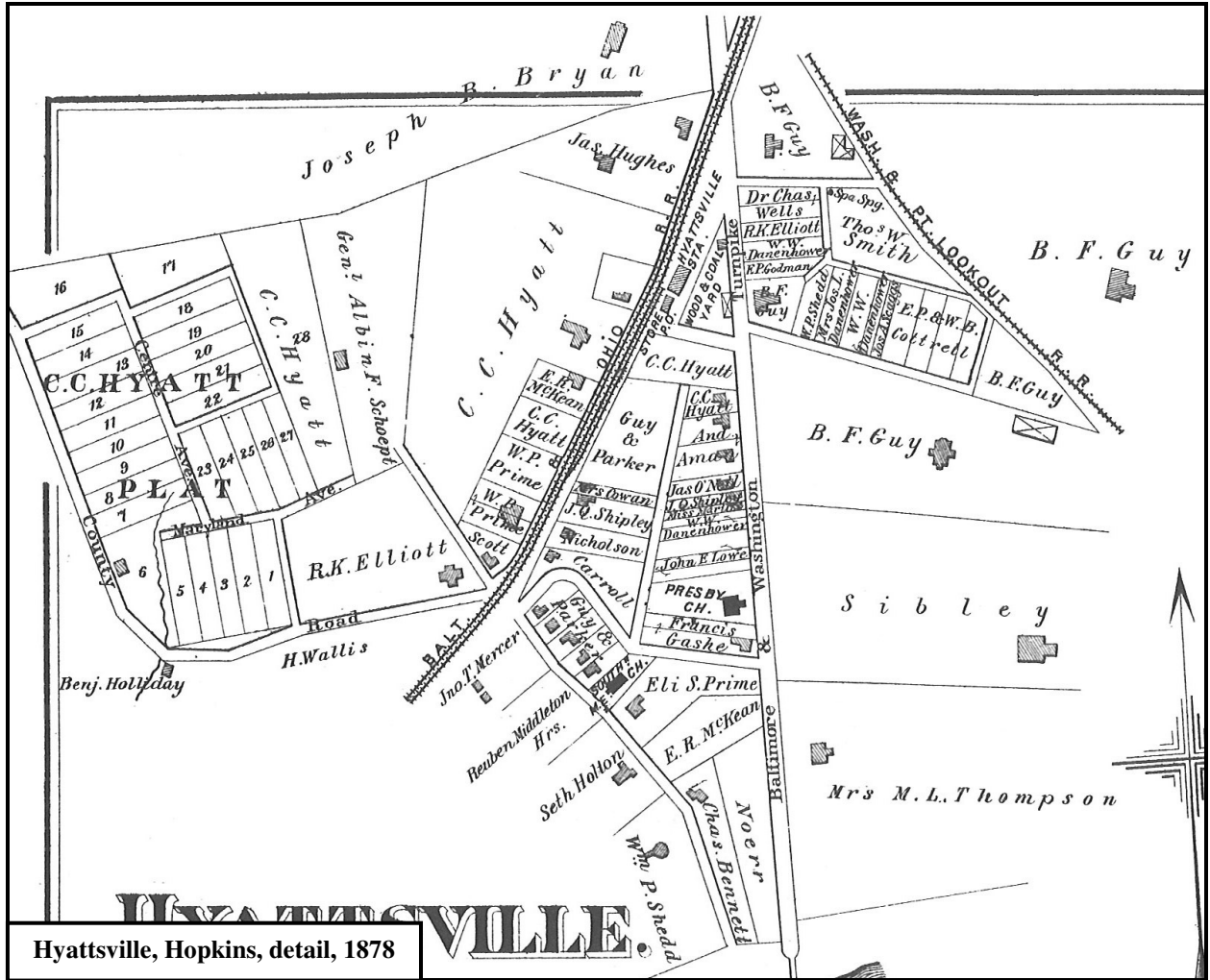
- (1)(A)(i) and (iv) – Hyattsville was initially established in the mid-nineteenth century as a railroad suburb and later expanded with the early-twentieth-century advent of the streetcar and automobile. Hyattsville was an early planned community in Prince George's County that steadily grew from its initial platting in 1873 to its final addition in 1942. Because of its prime location along the railroad line, streetcar line, and on the Route 1 corridor, Hyattsville became a residential and commercial center that supported local residents and surrounding communities such as Edmonston, Brentwood, Bladensburg, and Mount Rainier. Hyattsville remains one of the few communities in Prince George's County whose buildings convey the community's history through its residential, commercial, social, and industrial architecture.
- (2)(A)(i) – Hyattsville contains a collection of buildings that spans from circa 1860 through 2007 and reflect popular styles of that time period. Buildings in Hyattsville present a variety of uses, including residential, commercial, educational, religious, and industrial. Residential architectural styles represented in Hyattsville include Queen Anne, Craftsman, and Colonial Revival styles as well as limited examples of the Shingle, Stick, Italianate, and the Modern Movement. Styles represented in the commercial corridor include Art Deco, Art Moderne, Colonial Revival, Neo-Classical, Tudor Revival, and International.
- (2)(A)(iv) – Hyattsville demonstrates the evolution of style and taste in domestic and commercial architecture from the 1860s through the present. Hyattsville is a cohesive community that still functions as a residential commuter suburb and commercial center in Prince George's County.

Prepared by EHT Tracerics, Inc.  
November 2007

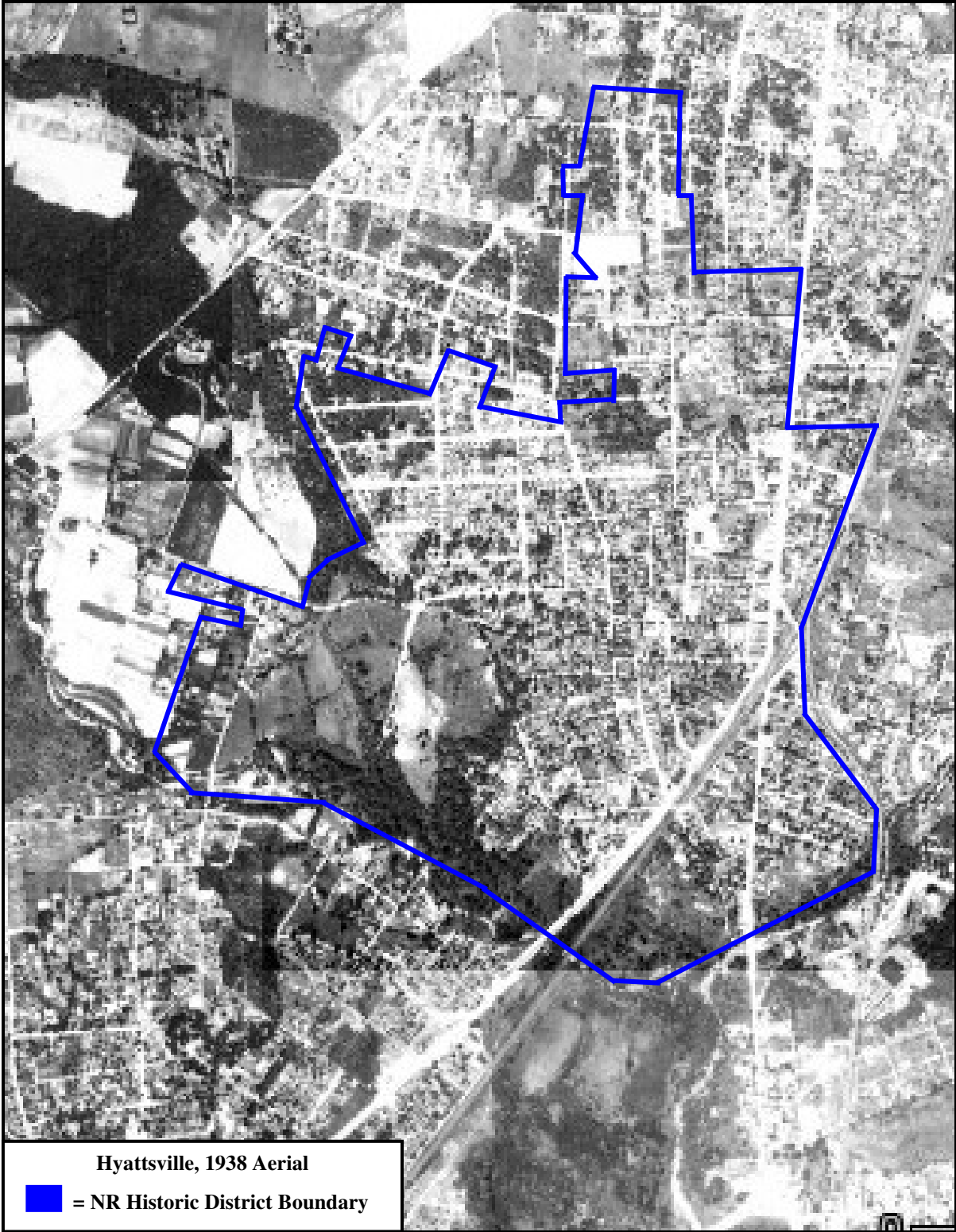








Hyattsville, Hopkins, detail, 1878





Looking southeast, 3811-3809-3805-3801 Hamilton Street (*EHT Tracerics, 2007*)



Looking northwest, 5130 Baltimore Avenue – 4327 Gallatin Avenue – 5200 Baltimore Avenue  
(Professional Building, PG: 68-041-01) (*EHT Traceries, 2007*)



Looking northwest, 5710 Baltimore Avenue, The Lustine Center (*EHT Traceries, 2007*)



Looking southwest, 5710 Baltimore Avenue, The Lustine Center (*EHT Tracerics, 2007*)



Looking southeast, 5309-5307-5305-5303 Baltimore Avenue (*EHT Traceries*, 2007)



Looking southwest, 5326-5324 Baltimore Avenue (*EHT Traceries, 2007*)



Looking southwest, 5300 block of Baltimore Avenue (*EHT Traceries*, 2007)



Looking southwest, 4017 Hamilton Street, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (*EHT Tracerics, 2007*)



Looking southeast, 4017 Hamilton Street, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (*EHT Tracerics, 2007*)



Looking north, 4344 Farragut Street and 5108 Baltimore Avenue (*EHT Traceries, 2007*)



Looking northeast, 4825 Rhode Island Avenue (*EHT Traceries*, 2007)



Looking northwest, 4808 Rhode Island Avenue (*EHT Traceries, 2007*)



Looking northeast, Magruder Flatiron Building (PG: 68-041-14), 5101 Baltimore Avenue (*EHT Traceries*, 2007)