

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG: 75B-001-01

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Litz-Million House
other	

2. Location

street and number	6074 Old Central Avenue	— not for publication
city, town	Capitol Heights	— vicinity
county	Prince George's	

3. Owner of Property

name	Iconium Baptist Church, Inc.				
street and number	6076 Central Avenue			telephone	
city, town	Capitol Heights	state	MD	zip code	20743-6246

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Prince George's County Courthouse	liber	9741	folio	216
city, town	Upper Marlboro	tax map	73	tax parcel	12-14, 24-26
				tax ID number	18 2068427

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:

6. Classification

[illegible]

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 Litz-Million House is located at 6074 Old Central Avenue in Capitol Heights. The dwelling is sited on the north side of Central Avenue with a deep setback from the street. A concrete sidewalk runs along the property line at the street. The property rises steeply from the roadway and levels at the site where the house was erected. A metal chain-link fence runs the length of the western and northern boundaries of the property. A chain-link fence is located along the south boundary of the property, at the top of the embankment. No fence has been erected along the eastern bounds as the adjacent property is currently owned by the same owner of the Litz-Million House. Large mature trees line the property to the west and dot the parcel to the north. A gravel driveway enters the property from Altoona Street, north of the dwelling. A shed is located on the western bounds of the property.

DWELLING

The Litz-Million House, constructed c. 1906, sits prominently above Old Central Avenue on a solid, concrete foundation. The two-story, three-bay vernacular dwelling has an I-house form. Two additions are located on the north (rear) elevation. The wood-frame main block has been reclad in vinyl siding with vinyl corner boards. A side-gable roof covered with asphalt shingles caps the building. Overhanging eaves and cornice returns elaborate the small original block. Two interior brick chimneys with corbeled caps pierce the roof line of the main block. A third interior brick chimney rises from the first rear addition. All of the window openings contain 1/1, double-hung, vinyl-sash windows set in square-edge, vinyl-clad surrounds.

A two-story, one-bay, front-gable projection dominates the façade (south elevation). This projection contains the main entry opening, which holds a single-leaf, paneled wood door set in a vinyl-clad surround. Symmetrically placed above on the second story is a single window opening. The upper-gable end of the projecting bay features a small, ovular window. The first and second stories of the main block's façade are symmetrically fenestrated. A one-story, full-width re-built porch is located on the façade as well. This porch is set on a concrete-block pier foundation with lattice infill. A double-hip roof covered with asphalt shingles caps the porch. The roof is supported by fluted, non-tapered Tuscan columns and engaged Tuscan columns. The central bay of the porch projects approximately three feet to the south. Concrete steps with metal railing provide access to the porch.

The east (side) and west (side) elevations each contain a single-light, fixed basement window and a window opening on the first and second stories. No window openings are located on the north (rear) elevation of the main block.

The north elevation of the main block features a one-and-one-half-story, full-width, three-bay deep addition. Based on its form and materials, it appears that this addition was constructed in the early to mid-twentieth century. Set on a solid parged foundation, this structure has been clad in the same vinyl siding found on the main block. The front-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and features overhanging eaves and a raking vinyl-clad cornice. An interior brick chimney with corbeled cap pierces the eastern slope of the addition. The

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east (side) elevation of the addition is fenestrated by three window openings. Paired windows are located on the west (side) elevation along with a two-light, fixed basement window. The north (side) elevation features paired, 6/6, double-hung, wood-sash windows set in a square-edge wood surround. An air-conditioning unit has been installed in this opening.

A second addition is located on the north (rear) elevation of the front-gable addition. Based on its form and materials, it is likely that this second addition was constructed c. 1975. Set on a solid concrete foundation, this one-story addition is two bays deep. The addition extends the width of the building and one additional bay to the west. This additional bay is capped by a side-gable roof while the remainder of the addition has a shed roof. Overhanging eaves and a vinyl-clad, raking cornice complete the roof. The addition is clad in the same vinyl siding found on the main block and first addition. The openings hold 1/1, double-hung, vinyl-sash windows that are smaller than those found on the main block and first addition. The façade (south elevation) is pierced by a single-leaf, paneled wood door with nine lights set in a square-edge, vinyl-clad surround. The west (side) elevation is pierced by two small window openings. The north (rear) elevation features five window openings and a single-leaf, wood door with light. The door opening is located in the third bay of the rear elevation. The east (side) elevation contains a small, single-light, casement window.

SHED

This shed is located along the western boundary of the property, near the northwest corner. Based on its form and materials, it is likely that this resource was constructed in the early to mid-twentieth century. The one-story, three-bay shed is one bay deep. Set on a solid concrete foundation, this wood-frame structure is clad in a variety of materials. The façade (east elevation) is clad in German wood siding; the south (side) and west (rear) elevations are clad in wood siding; and the north (side) elevation is covered in wide, board-and-batten siding. A front-gable roof with overhanging eaves, a boxed cornice, and a raking wood cornice is covered with asphalt shingles.

The façade is pierced by a centrally placed, single-leaf, paneled wood door with two-light transom. This entry opening has a square-edge wood surround featuring a small pent roof and pediment with diamond detailing. A concrete slab has been poured along the façade, connecting to the concrete walkways framing the Litz-Million House. Flanking the door opening are two window openings, each set in a square-edge wood surround with diamond-detailed pediment. The southern opening contains a six-light, wood-sash casement window while the northern bay has been covered with plywood.

The south (side) elevation is fenestrated by a 12-light, wood-sash window set in a square-edge wood surround. The surround features a pent roof supported by scrolled brackets and a denticulated cornice. The north (side) and west (rear) elevations have no fenestration.

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INTEGRITY

The Litz-Million House presents a low level of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The rear additions are not visible from Old Central Avenue. The building has been reclad in vinyl siding and the windows replaced with 1/1, double-hung, vinyl sash with vinyl-clad surrounds. Additionally, the prominent front porch has been re-built. With its placement overlooking Old Central Avenue, the Litz-Million House maintains its integrity of setting, feeling, and location. The building no longer functions as a single-family dwelling, having been purchased by the adjacent church, and now utilized as an ancillary resource for the congregation. This has affected the building's integrity of association.

The shed maintains a moderate level of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The building maintains its detailed opening surrounds and original windows (minus one). The shed presents a high level of integrity of feeling, setting, location, and association despite the fact that the Litz-Million House no longer functions as a single-family dwelling. Overall, the shed maintains a moderate level of integrity.

Overall, the Litz-Million House and associated shed presents a low level of integrity.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>Local History</u>

Specific dates	c. 1906	Architect/Builder	unknown
Construction dates	c. 1905, c. 1950, c. 1975		

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 Litz-Million House was constructed c. 1906 at 6074 Old Central Avenue in Capitol Heights, Maryland, on one of the highest points in the community. Capitol Heights, an early-twentieth-century subdivision, was intended for middle-class residents who commuted daily to Washington, DC. This resource is representative of the many single-family vernacular dwellings with I-house forms constructed in the community at the turn of the twentieth century. The dwelling was likely constructed for Louis and Olive Litz, who purchased the property in 1906 from Otway B. Zantzinger. In 1920, Frank and Margaret Kneas purchased the property, living in the dwelling until 1929. Robert and Annie Million purchased the property from Frank K. Kneas in 1929 and resided there until 1994. The current owner, Iconium Baptist Church, Inc., acquired the property in 1994 from the widowed Annie J. Million. The Millions had lived in the Litz-Million House for sixty-five years. The Litz-Million House retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as a single-family dwelling constructed during the first years of the development of Capitol Heights.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Capitol Heights was established in the early twentieth century as a residential suburb located in western Prince George's County, adjacent to the southeastern boundary of Washington, DC. The subdivision was platted in 1904 in three sections by Otway B. Zantzinger, a Baltimore-based businessman.¹ Zantzinger created a subdivision of approximately 4,000 lots on land that was originally a large parcel of woodland. The majority of lots in Capitol Heights were long, narrow, rectangular parcels, approximately 20 feet wide and 100 feet deep.

Zantzinger advertised the new subdivision as "High and healthy. Finest spring water, Plenty of shade. Only one car fare to any part of the city. East Capitol st., Central ave., 55th st., and 61st, run through the property [*sic*]." Lots were priced between \$20 and \$60 and offered for sale with one dollar down, and one dollar a month.² Later advertisements noted that the segregated subdivision was intended for whites only.³ As part of his commitment to the success and growth of the neighborhood, Zantzinger constructed an elementary school at his own expense for Capitol Heights residents. Opened in 1905, the school had over 100 children in attendance in its first year.⁴

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By 1907, Zantzinger had sold over 3,500 lots and more than 1,000 residents had made Capitol Heights their home.⁵

Although the subdivision was not directly located on the railroad or streetcar lines, the adjacent neighborhoods of Maryland Park and Seat Pleasant were served by the rail lines. Residents of Capitol Heights lived within a mile of railroad and streetcar stops. Because of its relative convenience to public transportation and the affordability of the houses due to low construction costs, Capitol Heights proved to be a popular new subdivision. Capitalizing on this popularity, in 1909, Zantzinger platted Greater Capitol Heights, a 400-acre tract of land located on the southern edge of Capitol Heights that included an additional 4,500 lots.⁶ Like those in Capitol Heights, lots in Greater Capitol Heights were approximately 20 feet wide, 100 feet deep, and set on rectilinear blocks.

A review of the 1910 census indicates that residents of Capitol Heights and Greater Capitol Heights were white, had small families, and had working-class jobs that included firemen, salesmen, electricians, plasterers, carpenters, post office workers, merchants, and printers.⁷ The growing community incorporated as the Town of Capitol Heights in 1910 in an effort to improve roads and public services for residents.⁸ Advertisements for Greater Capitol Heights in 1911 boasted of 500 houses, 1,500 people, eight stores, four churches, and a public school.⁹ Other ads promoted the community as “cool and delightful. No Landlord. No Rent. No Building Restrictions. No Malaria. No Mosquitoes. No Sleepless Nights. Pure Water. High Elevation. Perfectly Healthy. Beautiful Shade.”¹⁰ The community was noted as being “Within the one-fare radius” but “nevertheless completely out of the city and an ideal site for the founding of homes by those who have long been forced to see their slender means being exhausted by city rentals.”¹¹ In 1925, Capitol Heights was finally served by a bus line that ferried residents between their neighborhood and Washington, DC.¹² The arrival of the bus line, along with increased ownership of automobiles, resulted in a change of demographics as more African Americans began to move into the once-segregated Capitol Heights in the mid-twentieth century, ensuring the residential stability of the adjoining neighborhoods.

In August of 1906, Zantzinger conveyed the 12,000 square-foot property consisting of Lots 12 through 24 and 24 to 26 in the Capitol Heights subdivision to Olive P. Litz.¹³ According to the deed, the property was conveyed with all land and premises, suggesting that the building designated today as 6074 Old Central Avenue existed prior to the 1906 sale. Thus it has been presumed that the Litz-Million House was a speculative-built house intended to attract the buyers to Capitol Heights.

Olive Litz, born in 1870 in New York, to English immigrants, was a trained nurse. She was married to Louis F. Litz, who was born in 1866 in the District of Columbia, to German immigrants. Louis Litz was a life insurance agent. Olive Litz was an active member of the Capitol Heights community, serving as the financial secretary of the Columbia Heights Rebekah Lodge, No. 50.¹⁴

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In 1919, following a defaulted mortgage, the property was sold to Lena M. Nixon.¹⁵ Nixon, and her husband Thomas, lived in Capitol Heights house at the time of the 1920 U.S. Federal Census with their two young daughters. Lena Nixon was born about 1875 in Germany. Thomas Nixon, born about 1874, was a music hall musician.¹⁶

The Nixons conveyed the property to Frank K. Kneas and his wife, Margaret, in 1920.¹⁷ It is not known why the Nixons sold the property after owning it for just a little more than one year. Kneas, born about 1863, was a plasterer. In 1929, the Kneas family conveyed the property to Robert A. Million and his wife, Annie J. Million.¹⁸ Born in the District of Columbia in 1893, Robert Million worked as a fireman for the railroad. Annie Million, twelve years younger than her husband, was born in 1905 in Virginia. The childless couple married in 1924. The 1930 census assessed the value of the house in Capitol Heights at \$3,500, which was comparable to the neighboring houses. The Millions owned and occupied the Litz-Million House for sixty-five years, when the widowed Annie Million sold the property in 1994 to Iconium Baptist Church, Inc.¹⁹ In doing this, Iconium Baptist Church was able to combine their property adjacent (at 6076 Central Avenue) to the Litz-Million House. The church utilizes the Litz-Million House as meeting space.

¹ Prince George's County Circuit Court, Land Records, Plat Book BB 5:74-76.

² Display Ad, *The Washington Post*, 12 July 1904.

³ Display Ad, *The Washington Post*, 9 May 1906.

⁴ "Capitol Heights School Opens," *The Washington Post*, 13 September 1905, SP4.

⁵ "The Zantzinger Boom," *The Washington Post*, 24 February 1907, 47.

⁶ Prince George's County Circuit Court, Land Records, Plat Book BDS 1:60-65.

⁷ 1910 U.S. Federal Census, Election District

⁸ George D. Denny, Jr., *Proud Past, Promising Future: Cities and Towns in Prince George's County, Maryland* (Brentwood, MD: Tuxedo Press, 1997), 100.

⁹ Display Ad, *The Washington Post*, 23 July 1911.

¹⁰ Display Ad, *The Washington Post*, 20 June 1913.

¹¹ "Easy to Buy Home Site," *The Washington Post*, 11 June 1916.

¹² "News from Suburbs of Capital," *The Washington Post*, 12 April 1925.

¹³ Otway B. Zantzinger and Sarah C. Zantzinger to Olive P. Litz, Prince George's County Land Records, 27:432.

¹⁴ "Suburban: Cottage City" *The Washington Post* (1877-1954), July 27, 1924,

<http://www.proquest.com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/> (accessed February 22, 2009).

¹⁵ Farmers and Mechanics Bank to Lena M. Nixon, Prince George's County Land Records, 148:158.

¹⁶ 1920 U.S. Federal Census, Capitol Heights, Prince Georges, Maryland, Series T625, Roll 674, Page 12B, Enumeration District 100, Image 1069, Lena M. Nixon.

¹⁷ Thomas H. Nixon and Lena M. Nixon to Frank K. Kneas and Margaret Kneas, Prince George's County Land Records, 163:51.

¹⁸ Frank K. Kneas to Robert A. Million and Annie J. Million, Prince George's County Land Records, 326:324.

¹⁹ Annie J. Million to Iconium Baptist Church, Inc., Prince George's County Land Records, 9741:216.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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1910, 1920 U.S. Federal Census (Population Schedule). Online: The Generations Network, Inc., 2007. Subscription database.
Digital scan of original records in the National Archives, Washington, DC. <http://www.ancestry.com>.
Prince George's County Land Records.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property	<u>0.275</u>	
Acreage of historical setting	<u>0.275</u>	
Quadrangle name	<u>Washington East</u>	Quadrangle scale: <u>1:24,000</u>

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Litz-Million House is located in Capitol Heights on a 0.275-acre parcel. The western boundary follows a metal chain-link fence. The northern boundary of the property is formed by Altoona Street. The southern boundary extends along the concrete sidewalk paralleling Old Central Avenue. The eastern boundary extends approximately along a slight depression between the Litz-Million House and the Iconium Baptist Church. The dwelling has been associated with Parcels 12-14 and 24-26 on Tax Map 73 since its construction c. 1906.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Paul Weishar and Maria Dayton, Architectural Historians		
organization	EHT Traceries, Inc. for the M-NCPPC	date	March 2009
street & number	1121 Fifth 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
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

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CHAIN OF TITLE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY LAND RECORDS

Plat JWB
5:676
1885

Plat of Otway B. Zantzinger's Subdivision known as "Capitol Heights".

Deed
27:432
August 18, 1906

Otway B. Zantzinger and Sarah C. Zantzinger to Olive P. Litz.

Deed
148:158
May 17, 1919

Farmers and Mechanics Bank to Lena M. Nixon.

Deed
163:51
August 3, 1920

Thomas H. Nixon and Lena M. Nixon to Frank K. Kneas and Margaret Kneas.

Deed
326:324
Tax Account # 2068427
April 1, 1929

Frank K. Kneas to Robert A. Million and Annie J. Million.

Deed
9741:216
August 17, 1994

Annie J. Million, widow, to Iconium Baptist Church, Inc.
(Lots 12, 13, 14, 24, 25, 26 in Block 24)

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Photo: Litz-Million House, Capitol Heights, view of the façade (south elevation), looking northeast. (February 2009)

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Photo: Litz-Million House, Capitol Heights, view of the façade (south elevation), looking northwest. (February 2009)

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Photo: Litz-Million House, Capitol Heights, view of the north (rear) elevation, looking southwest. (February 2009)

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Photo: Litz-Million House, Capitol Heights, view of the north (rear) elevation, looking southeast. (February 2009)

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Photo: Shed, Capitol Heights, view of the façade (east elevation), looking southwest. (February 2009)