

BA-3046
Schwartz Avenue African American Survey District
Towson, Baltimore County
1870-1930

Schwartz Avenue is located in the Ninth District directly above the Baltimore City line. The Maryland Journal on November 25, 1865 lists Schwartz Avenue as a new road in Baltimore County. Richard G. Dunphy of Towsontown built the road for Hooper, Schwederlman, and Schwarz, whom owned adjoining properties on York Road above Govanstown. The road led to the farm of Henry Schwartz, a toy store owner in Baltimore City. Henry Schwartz was the brother of F.A.O. Schwarz, a significant figure in the toy industry.

Twenty-four dwellings are sited along the south side of Schwartz Avenue in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. A few lots in the southern portion of Schwartz Avenue is located in Baltimore City. Sited on the north side of Schwartz Avenue are Forge Park and a large shopping center, which faces York Road. This area has developed extensively during the last half of the 20th century. Architecturally, the historic vernacular dwellings in the Schwartz Avenue African American survey district date from 1870 to the early 20th century. Dating from the 1990s there is one non-historic house in the survey district. This group of dwellings is not uniform in style, forms, or details. A few of the houses feature forms or details that are described as a particular style such as Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival. The houses that can be categorized into a style remain vernacular and are modest examples of that style. The remaining dwellings along Schwartz Avenue do not exhibit any particular style both through its simple form and lack of ornament.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-3046

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Schwartz Avenue African American Survey District

other

2. Location

street and number Schwartz Avenue ___ not for publication

city, town Baltimore ___ vicinity

county Baltimore County

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

name multiple ownership

street and number telephone Not Available

city, town state zip code

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse tax map and parcel: tax map 80

city, town Towson liber folio

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
- Other _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	23	1
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	___	___
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	23	1
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	___	___
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	Number of Contributing Resources	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	previously listed in the Inventory	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	2	
		<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 type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:		

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.

Twenty-four dwellings are sited along the south side of Schwartz Avenue in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. A few lots in the southern portion of Schwartz Avenue is located in Baltimore City. Sited on the north side of Schwartz Avenue are Forge Park and a large shopping center, which faces York Road. This area has developed extensively during the last half of the 20th century.

Schwartz Avenue is a paved dead-end road with a sidewalk along the south side of the street. The small lots along Schwartz Avenue are level and grassy and a few have paved or gravel driveways. Several of the lots are screened with shrubs and trees along the sidewalk and most of the houses are sited within ten feet of the sidewalk. Most of the dwellings take advantage of the long lots and feature long rectangular footprints.

Architecturally, the historic vernacular dwellings in the Schwartz Avenue African American survey district date from 1870 to the early 20th century. Dating from the 1990s there is one non-historic house in the survey district. This group of dwellings is not uniform in style, forms, or details. A few of the houses feature forms or details that are described as a particular style such as Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival. The houses that can be categorized into a style remain vernacular and are modest examples of that style. The remaining dwellings along Schwartz Avenue do not exhibit any particular style both through its simple form and lack of ornament.

Predominantly, the area is made up of nineteen single-family dwellings and four twin dwellings. Ranging from two to two-and-a-half stories in height the dwellings generally measure two or three bays across. Each of the houses is wood frame and most have been reclad either with asbestos shingles, wood shingles, and vinyl or aluminum siding. One house retains its original stucco covering. The dwellings have either random-rubble stone or rock-faced concrete block foundations and many feature one-story porches across the façade. Roof types vary from front gables, side gables, cross gables, hipped, one M-gable roof, one Jerkinhead, and several shed roofs. Many of the houses have brick chimneys and several have replacement chimneys either brick or concrete block. The entries contain single-leaf doors and the historic windows featured are either 2/2 or 6/6 wood-sash.

Sited at 415 Schwartz Avenue, this single-family dwelling is a late example of a Gothic Revival-style house dating to circa 1875. It is constructed of wood frame and covered with stucco with remaining sections made to appear as ashlar stone. The rectangular form with a center cross gable roof is the primary element making the dwelling appear in a Gothic Revival style. The house stands two-and-a-half stories high and measures three bays wide featuring a center entry. Features of the dwelling include 6/6 wood-sash windows on the façade, a center interior brick parged chimney, and a wrap-around porch supported with wood turned posts.

An example of a Queen Anne-style dwelling in the survey district is located at 409 Schwartz Avenue and dates to circa 1910. Rising two-and-a-half stories high this single-family dwelling measures three bays wide and is of wood-frame construction. Capped with a cross-gable roof sheathed with asphalt shingles, this dwelling features a T-shaped footprint with a projecting front bay. The projecting bay on the façade features cut-away corners. A one-story screened porch covers the full-width of the façade. The original weatherboards are covered over with asbestos shingles.

Examples of Colonial Revival style dwellings are located at 421, 439, and 441 Schwartz Avenue. The Constructed circa 1900, this Four Square dwelling at 421 Schwartz Avenue stands two-and-a-half-stories high, measures two bays wide, and is of wood-frame construction. It is capped with a hipped roof covered with asphalt shingles and features an interior-center brick chimney and a hipped dormer on the façade. Covering the first story on the façade is a half-hipped roof porch supported with square wood posts. The windows have been replaced and the house is reclad with German vinyl siding on the façade and asbestos shingles on the remaining elevations. Dating to circa 1920, the house at 439 Schwartz Avenue is similar in height, width, and construction materials to 433 Schwartz Avenue. It is capped with a front-gable roof and is clad with wood shingles. Features include a half-hipped porch on the façade, cornice returns, 2/2 wood-sash windows, and a center-interior concrete-block chimney.

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The dwellings at 417 and 437 Schwartz Avenue were once used as African American schoolhouses. The house at 417 Schwartz Avenue is two stories high, two bays wide, and dates to circa 1910. It features a long rectangular footprint and is capped with a front-gable roof. Across the full-width of the façade is a shed roof porch supported with turned posts and square balusters. Alterations to the house include replacement windows and German vinyl siding covering the original weatherboards. The building at 437 Schwartz Avenue was built in 1908 as the Nazarites' Hall and then used as a school beginning in the early 1920s. Today, this building rises two-stories high and measures three bays across on the first story. The second story is pierced by one doorway. The wood frame building is clad with vinyl siding and features include a full-width porch across the façade, which has a roof balustrade, and it is capped with a jerkinhead roof.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

Specific dates	1870-1930	Architect/Builder	Unknown
Construction dates	1870-1930		

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 reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Schwartz Avenue is located in the Ninth District directly above the Baltimore City line. The Maryland Journal on November 25, 1865 lists Schwartz Avenue as a new road in Baltimore County. Richard G. Dunphy of Towsontown built the road for Hooper, Schwederlman, and Schwarz, whom owned adjoining properties on York Road above Govanstown.(1) The road led to the farm of Henry Schwartz, a toy store owner in Baltimore City. Henry Schwartz was the brother of F.A.O. Schwarz, a significant figure in the toy industry.(2)

In 1877, according to the Hopkins Atlas Schwartz Avenue was approximately five-and-a-half miles north of the Baltimore City line. The small village of Govanstown was directly south about a mile. Depicted at the west end of the road is H. Schwartz, for whom the street was named. Neighboring Henry Schwartz to the east and north of Schwartz Avenue was Mrs. Hooper's property. By 1877, nine lots were platted on the south side of Schwartz Avenue only one without a dwelling.(3) According to Roberta Garrett Carter, a lifelong resident of Schwartz Avenue, in 1876 Elizabeth Sheridan was the first African American to purchase a house on Schwartz Avenue. For six years Sheridan had leased the building prior to buying it.(4)

Built in 1908, 437 Schwartz Avenue (BA-2412) was constructed as the Nazarites' Hall. Members of the lodge met in this building until 1922 when the lodge lost the building. At this time, the organization defaulted on their payments of the property. Oral history describes that this building was used as a schoolhouse, school #159, during the mid-20th century. In 1987, Howard Gray converted it into a residence. The second African-American school in the area, Public School #22 was located at 417 Schwartz Avenue.(5)

The 1915 Bromley Atlas for the area shows fourteen houses, one African-American school, two stores/dwellings, three empty lots, and a large commercial building at the corner of York Road. At the end western end of Schwartz Avenue there was one dwelling on the north side of the street. By this time, Mrs. Hooper sold her property and the St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum was constructed. According to the 1915 Atlas lots increased in size incrementally from York Road to Shady Grove Park development to the west.(6)

The 1930 U.S. Census lists twenty-six African-American families residing on Schwartz Avenue. The names listed in the census include George Lyles, Willis Bowers, Thomas White, James Edwards, William Smith, Amos Fields, and Will Skinner. Interestingly, four families had female heads of households; Mary Johnson, Betty Washington, Lucy Hitchens, and Elizabeth Garrett. The residents predominate from Maryland with several coming from Virginia. Seventeen families owned their property and seven rented. Values of ownership ranged from \$1,000 to \$5,000, and rent was either \$20 or \$30. Occupations of the Schwartz Avenue male residents include chauffeur, laborer at an iron foundry, gardener, building contractor, and one factory porter. The African-American women either did not work or maintained domestic jobs for private families, such as a maid, laundress, or cook.(7)

The community has survived mostly due to its strong cohesive ties to the people that live there. Several people have stated that the

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people on Schwartz Avenue are all part of one family. A community association called the Schwartz Avenue Neighborhood Group exists today and helps seek improvements for the area.(8)

ENDNOTES

1. Louis S. Diggs, *Since the Beginning: African American Communities In Towson*. (Uptown Press, 2000).
2. Loni Ingraham, *The Legacy: Why Schwartz Avenue Must Survive*. *The Towson Times*, (20 October 1993).
3. *Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland*, (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, 1877).
4. Ingraham.
5. Diggs, p. 113.
6. *Map of Baltimore County*. (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley, 1915).
7. U.S. Bureau of the Census. *The Census of 1930, Baltimore County, Maryland*. (National Archives).
8. Ingraham.

OWNERSHIP AS OF NOVEMBER 7, 2002

401A Schwartz Avenue Louis and Gertrude J. Guy and Joan L. Johnson -- tax id # 901352360
Map 80 Parcel 45 401A Schwartz Avenue
Liber 8335 Folio 110

401 Schwartz Avenue Bhupinder Singh -- tax id # 913205650
Map 80 Parcel 46 401 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 14833 Folio 526

403 Schwartz Avenue James R. and Helen L. Guy -- tax id # 904000380
Map 80 Parcel 44 403 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 7791 Folio 406

403A Schwartz Avenue Louis Guy, Jr. -- tax id # 923500990
Map 80 Parcel 38 403A Schwartz Avenue
Liber 9416 Folio 353

407 Schwartz Avenue Vivian D. Maynor -- tax id # 907000260
Map 80 Parcel 59 407 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 16435 Folio 240

409 Schwartz Avenue Jeane C. Guy -- tax id # 912570090
Map 80 Parcel 47 409 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 6800 Folio 616

411 Schwartz Avenue Charlotte E. Ringgold -- tax id #918354320
Map 80 Parcel 48 411 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 6514 Folio 805

413 Schwartz Avenue William W. and Anna Barnes -- tax id # 902000720
Map 80 Parcel 49 413 Schwartz Avenue

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Liber 1503 Folio 300

415 Schwartz Avenue Lark Fisher -- tax id # 914652840
Map 80 Parcel 50 415 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 10241 Folio 493

417 Schwartz Avenue Howard E. and Gladys Guy -- tax id # 907831960
Map 80 Parcel 51 417 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 10168 Folio 142

421 Schwartz Avenue Andrew T. Mcquaid -- tax id # 911151201
Map 80 Parcel 78 529 Sussex Road
Towson, MD 21286
Liber 7331 Folio 768

421 H Schwartz Avenue Charles D. Parrish -- tax id # 911570090
Map 80 Parcel 210 P.O. Box 247
Glen Arm, MD 21057
Liber 6801 Folio 479

423 Schwartz Avenue Kehar and Laura Singh -- tax id # 911570091
Map 80 Parcel 63 6307 Pinehurst Road
Baltimore, MD 21212
Liber 16623 Folio 577

431 Schwartz Avenue Margaret R. Conner -- tax id # 906202232
Map 80 Parcel 159 431 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 15784 Folio 511

433 Schwartz Avenue Gerald Zelinski and Constance A. Humphrey -- tax id # 913920690
Map 80 Parcel 58 433 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 15465 Folio 168

435 Schwartz Avenue A&G Corporation -- tax id # 907291870
Map 80 Parcel 81 11 E. Lexington St. Suite 100
Baltimore, MD 21202
Liber 8362 Folio 731

437 Schwartz Avenue Renee W. and Julian A. Murray -- tax id # 903002890
Map 80 Parcel 57 437 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 12916 Folio 177

439 Schwartz Avenue McCanner Perry and Joyce M. Floyd -- tax id # 923506550
Map 80 Parcel 56 439 Schwartz Avenue
Liber 12380 Folio 389

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441 Schwartz Avenue Map 80 Parcel 2	Charles H. and Mary S. Adams -- tax id # 901130260 1225 Washington Drive Annapolis, MD 21403 Liber 2308 Folio 516
443 Schwartz Avenue Map 80 Parcel 55	Louis and Gertrude J. Guy -- tax id # 910450230 443 Schwartz Avenue Liber 5560 Folio 402
447 Schwartz Avenue Map 80 Parcel 82	Rajabali B. Masoudi -- tax id # 923350260 6909 Linden Avenue Baltimore, MD 21206 Liber 8737 Folio 48
449 Schwartz Avenue Map 80 Parcel 204	Steve A. Fowlkes -- tax id # 902570920 449 Schwartz Avenue Liber 8026 Folio 807
451 Schwartz Avenue Map 80 Parcel 65	Cleancy and Mary Ellen Taylor -- tax id # 912840060 451 Schwartz Avenue Liber 8026 Folio 791
453 Schwartz Avenue Map 80 Parcel 154	Bobby W. and Dorothy L. Carter -- tax id # 91948037 453 Schwartz Avenue Liber 8894 Folio 124

9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 3.0554 acres
Acreage of historical setting 3.0554 acres
Quadrangle name Baltimore East, MD Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Schwartz Avenue is located near Towson in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. The lots on Schwartz Avenue have historically been associated with tax map 80 since their construction.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Kristie Baynard, Architectural Historian		
organization	E.H.T. Tracerics	dat	11/7/2002
street and number	1121 Fifth Street, NW	telephone	202/393-1199
city or town	Washington	state DC	zip code 20001

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
410-514-7600

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Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. A History of Baltimore County. Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

Diggs, Louis S. Since the Beginning: African American Communities in Towson. Uptown Press, 2000.

Ingraham, Loni. The Legacy: Why Schwartz Avenue Must Survive. Towson Times: Towson, October 20, 1993.

Map of Baltimore County. Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men. Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.

Sidney, J. C. Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys. Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. The Census of 1930, Baltimore County, Maryland. National Archives.











BA-3046
SCHWARTZ AVENUE AFRICAN
AMERICAN SURVEY DISTRICT
TOWSON
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

