REREADING THE LIBRARY: A CULTURAL CONSERVATION APPROACH TO DETERMINING THE ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ENOCH PRATT FREE LIBRARY, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

by

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The 1932 Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland, marked a turning point in library design by employing architectural features that supported a service goal of inspiring public use, prompting changes in libraries throughout America. Libraries and the Preservation movement share common development patterns, having evolved from narrow cultural agendas to an emphasis on materials, and now addressing broader social issues. Thus, the institution invites an examination of the expansion of the Historic Preservation field from its traditional emphasis on the tangible evidence of the past. A shift in the discipline to a conservation approach predicated upon civic involvement, integrated planning, and impermanent design strategies can preserve our communities as well as the aesthetic features of landmark buildings. The project examines the preservation accomplishments of this cultural and architectural landmark and provides

conservation-oriented strategies to assist the library in remaining a vital center of community connection for the city.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> The library buildings of the future must be a total departure from the buildings of the past. With few exceptions, they have given the people of America the false impression that libraries are aloof, unaware of what is going on in the world, unresponsive to current problems and demands. Their buildings have been palaces for the learned, pretentious, withdrawn, dull, self-sufficient, making no appeal to the average passerby to come inside.[1]
>
> *Joseph L. Wheeler head librarian of the Enoch Pratt Free Library 1926-1946*

Joseph Wheeler's critique of the library buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was reiterated nearly fifty years later by Abigail Van Slyck, whose *Free for All* depicts the institutional strategies that limited "library use by the city's working people, and helped preserve the library as an institution devoted to an elite audience."[2] Wheeler, like many librarians of the time, blamed the buildings. Van Slyck paints a broader picture of how cultural politics tainted the altruistic missions espoused by public libraries. Policies and architecture resulted in the separation of readers from the books, spatial organizations that relegated materials requested by the working class to the basements, and the selection of building sites away from public transportation systems for the central libraries constructed during the City Beautiful movement.

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[1]Joseph L. Wheeler and Alfred Morton Githens, *The American Public Library Building: Its Planning and Design with Special Reference to Its Administration and Service* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 1941), 12-13.

[2] Abigail Ayres Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 99.

Dismantling the perception of elitism that had tainted earlier libraries formed the foundation of the design for the 1932 Central Building of the Enoch Pratt Free Library (EPFL) in Baltimore, Maryland.[3] The EPFL is the earliest free public library system in the United States. From its inception in 1883, its mission has been "to serve all, rich or poor, without distinction of race or color."[4] The building gives form to the belief that service to people -- and not the number of volumes -- gives the library its power.

Contradictions abound, however. The bilaterally symmetrical massing, employment of precious materials, and the visual rhythm established through pilasters and broad openings symbolically tie the building to earlier Beaux-Arts libraries in Paris and Boston.[5] The classically inspired and conservative exteriors of these earlier buildings masked radical transformations to the interior organization of libraries.[6] Similarly, in contrast to the overall disposition of its design vocabulary, the EPFL's downtown location, street level entry, and Exhibition Windows emphasize the intention to bring the people into closer contact with the materials inside the building.

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[3] The majority of the library planning followed principles espoused by Joseph L. Wheeler. The work of local architects Clyde and Nelson Friz and consulting architects Edward L. Tilton and Alfred Morton Githens followed his directives. Donald E. Oehlerts, *Books and Blueprints: Building America's Public Libraries* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 78.

[4] Richard H. Hart, *Enoch Pratt: The Story of a Plain Man* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1935), 49.

[5] William H. Jordy, *American Buildings and Their Architects: Progressive and Academic Ideals at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1976), 333.

[6] The Labrouste libraries in Paris -the Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève (1838_1850) and the Bibliothèque Nationale (1859-68) - were the first to employ iron bookstacks, a device that rapidly spread to libraries through the United States. The Boston Public Library by McKim, Mead, White (1894-1918) was the first lending library. It is the first library with rooms to accommodate circulating books to patrons. Oehlerts, 22, 37.

Attracting library patrons continues to be as significant an issue for the EPFL in 2007 as it was in 1932.[7] But, dramatic changes to the social fabric of Baltimore have taken place. The city's population has diminished by 200,000 since 1932. The inhabitants of Baltimore are now predominantly economically disadvantaged African-Americans.[8] The EPFL's mission proclaimed this group as welcome, but segregation practices limited their use of the library from its inception until the late 1950s.[9] As the building passes the seventy-five year mark, preservation questions are emerging. There are issues familiar to preservationists, including accommodating the current life safety standards and accessibility, maintaining decorative finishes, incorporating emerging technologies, and providing sufficient storage space for the new collections. Perhaps a less familiar challenge is how to preserve an architectural resource as a source of daily enrichment to the city's current inhabitants, rather than serving solely as a landmark on a heritage trail. Robert Stipe argues that "preservation can serve important human and social purposes … of enhancing, or perhaps providing for the first time, a better quality of life for people."[10] To achieve these humanistic goals, preservationists must engage the current social, as well the aesthetic, context to understand the current patterns of use that impact the

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[7] Carla Hayden, "Pratt Library: You, the Users, Decide Our Future," *Baltimore Chronicle*, May 30, 2003, http://baltimorechronicle.com/library2_jun01.html.

[8] Statistics from the 2000 Census show that 21% of the population is below the poverty line. The city's population is now 64.3% African-American. Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance, "Mapping and Census Data," Baltimore Nieghborhood Indicators Alliance. http://www.ubalt.edu/bnia/mapping/citywide_tables.html.

[9] Miriam Braverman, *Youth, Society, and the Public Library* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1979), 233.

[10] Robert E. Stipe, *A Richer Heritage: Historic Preservation in the Twenty-First Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), xv.

continuing operation of historic buildings. If preservationists consider architectural resources as an integral component of a changing social fabric, we may recognize that buildings must evolve along with the community. The diminishing use of the EPFL necessitates rehabilitation strategies that protect essential components of the historic structure while reaffirming the original intentions to inspire connections to its patrons.[11]

Framing the Thesis Question

The development of historic preservation as a discipline shares common themes with the public library movement. Like libraries, preservation initially reflected a narrow agenda, but subsequently evolved to reflect more populist understandings of its mission that included education and responsiveness to the dynamics of "place." The earliest organized efforts attempted to preserve sites representing a selective vision of culture based on patriotism and nostalgia.[12] The large-scale demolitions associated with urban renewal beginning in the 1960s led to efforts to save the work of architectural masters.[13] Identification of architectural features became the means of legally protecting history through preservation ordinances.[14] During the 1970s, preservation groups organized to

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[11]The attendance at the Central Building was at its highest in the 1930s – reaching peak use at 908,066 in 1938. Although library use declined as a result of Word War II, attendance at the EPFL continued to be over 700,000 users until 1960. The use of the EPFL then began to plummet, reaching a low point of 322,000 in the late 1999s. Library use statistics will be presented in more detail in Chapter 5. Pratt Annual and Statistical Reports. Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1926-2006.

[12] William J. Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* (Pittstown, NJ: Main Street Press, 1988), 31.

[13] Richard Longstreth, "The Difficult Legacy of Urban Renewal," *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship* 3, no. 1 (2006), http://crmjournal.cr.nps.gov/02_viewpoint_sub.cfm?issue=Volume%203%20Number%201%20Winter%202006&page=1&seq=1.

[14] Murtagh, 51.

save spaces significant to their own history at a local, regional, and national level. Grassroots efforts overcame arguments that devalued sites or structures for their lack of material "integrity" or architectural "character."[15] Although the types of history and the corresponding types of sites recognized by the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) broadened, the means of protecting "heritage" continues to focus upon stewardship of architectural fabric: tangible remains of a selected past.[16] The growing interest in cultural conservation attempts to take into account the "intangible" qualities that contribute to the social relevance of a historic resource. This interest led to efforts to conserve patterns of living as well as landscapes, buildings, or objects.[17] The approach adopted by the Martha's Vineyard Preservation Trust is an example of this philosophy within preservation. This organization purchases properties with the goal of keeping them in service as farms and performing arts centers rather than museums.[18]

Architectural fabric plays a complex part in preservation. The high quality of construction and materials in historic buildings assists in formulating arguments about the sustainability of preservation. Advocates for the environmental sustainability of preservation assert that not only is there significant embodied energy in the woodwork

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[15]Elizabeth A. Lyon and Richard C. Cloues, "The Cultural and Historical Mosaic and the Concept of Significance," in *Preservation of What, for Whom?: A Critical Look at Historical Significance*, ed. Michael A. Tomlan, (Ithaca, N.Y.: National Council for Preservation Education, 1999), 38.

[16] Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1997), 53.

[17]The National Park Service, in its operation of Ebey's Landing Historical Reserve, attempts to preserve cultural patterns including the active farming of the land.National Park Service, "Ebey's Landing National Historical Resource," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/ebla/.

[18] Martha's Vineyard Preservation Trust, "Martha's Vineyard Preservation Trust," Martha's Vineyard Preservation Trust, http://www.mvpreservation.org/.

and masonry of many historic buildings, but that these materials are also more durable than contemporary materials. Unlike contemporary materials promoted for their energy efficiency, the materials in historic buildings required minimal processing or treatment with chemicals that may be damaging to the environment. Maintaining traditional finishes such as plaster or decorative painting requires the work of skilled craftspeople whose employment, ideally, keeps the economic investment of a rehabilitation project within a community.[19] Aesthetic features may also entice developers to consider historic buildings for adaptive-reuse. The quality of materials and craftsmanship in a historic buildings is often no longer available. Incorporating these features into marketing plans allows developers to distinguish their buildings from the pool of new construction.[20]

The high value placed upon aesthetics in buildings of "primary significance" has led to difficulties in preserving pieces of the social fabric that often serves as "context" to landmark buildings. The history of preservation in Baltimore, both early and more recent, provides painful evidence of this. The Basilica of the Assumption, a National Historic Landmark designed by Benjamin Henry Latrobe in 1806, recently underwent a $34 million restoration. Although visually stunning, the reconstituted edifice came at a significant social cost to the community. The desire to restore early nineteenth-century views of the Basilica from the east led to the demolition of the 1911 Rochambeau Apartments. This contributing resource to the historic district occupied by the EPFL

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[19] Nancy B. Solomon, "Tapping the Synergies of Green Building and Historic Preservation," Green Source the Magazine of Sustainable Design, http://archrecord.construction.com/features/green/archives/0307edit-3.asp.

[20] "Conserving Character," *Seattle Times*, May 6, 2007.

provided critically needed affordable housing.[21] The preservation community protested the decision at the time with little acknowledgment for how values predicated upon aesthetic models of evaluation adopted from architectural history may contribute to these types of actions.[22] When preservationists argue that certain buildings within a historic district are "primary" based upon the quality of their architectural design and retention of original setting, they increase the possibility that property owners will adopt these same values when determining how to protect historic resources. Similarly, when preservation programs focus too narrowly upon the tangible evidence of the past in developing preservation plans, they overlook the fact "urban landscape is …an accretion of social relationships rather than … the product of architectural imagination" and the devastating consequences to the current community of "emphasizing physical fabric over contemporary cultural process."[23]

Thesis Goals and Objectives:

This thesis argues that the current social context of the Central Building of the EPFL is as important as its historic aesthetic features. This dual significance makes it an

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[21] Cohen.

[22]The recent article in *Preservation* magazine is indicative of the response by preservationists to the issue. A full page of a 7 page article on the Basilica restoration is devoted to the Rochambeau issue. Walter Schmau of the Baltimore Architecture Foundation describes the Rochambeau as a "B-plus building that could have played a role in the future of Baltimore's Housing." Schmau's rating of the building based upon its appearance adheres to the architectural history model typically utilized in preservation planning. Schmau's analysis places higher value on its potential for rehabilitation as expensive commercial/residential space than as the existing home to low-income residents. Eve M. Kahn, "The Restoration of the Light," *Preservation*, January/jFebruary 2007, 44.

[23] Douglas DeNatale, "Federal and Neighborhood Notions of Place," in *Conserving Culture: A New Discourse on Heritage*, ed. Mary Hufford (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 63.

example of issues preservationists must address as we recognize how resources contribute to social and architectural history. Although preservationists increasingly recognize that buildings or other resources are important for their historic social context, they continue to protect only the original aesthetic fabric, at times at the expense of the ability to support current social needs. The National Park Service recognizes location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as qualities that contribute to a resource's integrity and eligibility for the NRHP with no consideration for how the building supports the current life of the community.[24] If preservationists seek to protect the ongoing needs of people, we must pay greater heed to the current social context that surrounds historic structures. If the library cannot offer services that bring the community into the library, it is public in name only, regardless of the number of volumes in the collection.

The remarkable nature of the EPFL is its combination of space, people, and services. Each element of this triad has the power to educate, entertain, and inspire. The materials and services provided within the library are tools that foster fuller civic participation. The increasing division of Baltimore along socio-economic and racial lines increases the need to have spaces that bring the community together. Because the library's significance lies not only in its original architectural fabric but also in its connection to and use by the community, the preservation strategies adopted must respect the integrity of each component. Preservation planning must recognize that reflecting the

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[24] U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service. Cultural Resources. National Register, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service Cultural Resources, 1997), 4.

current cultural patterns is essential to maintaining its integrity as a place of civic connection. The integral relationship between the architecture, collection and services, and the surrounding community demands strategies that reinforce the connection among all elements, not just the aesthetic fabric. Many of these connections can be forged through impermanent techniques or phased approaches that emphasize discussion and partnership rather than expensive physical alterations.

A strategy of cultural conservation, that recognizes the need for the patrons to express and experience their tastes and values at the library, will assist the EPFL in affirming its facilities as community centered environments. New services and materials can reinvigorate the interest of a changing community. Changes to the building have occurred and must continue to keep it in service. If preservation plans are tied too narrowly to the existing fabric, the building often cannot accommodate current institutional or community needs. The loss of people utilizing the building is as detrimental as the alteration of specific design features. San Francisco, Chicago, and the British Library in London provide recent examples of libraries that were unwilling or unable to overcome the challenges of modifying their historic buildings for continued use. Although each of these buildings has been adaptively re-used, understanding of its historic use is only possible through interpretation. The immaculate restoration of the reading room at the British Museum kept the architectural fabric in place, but it survived as an exhibit, nearly as disconnected from its context as the nearby Parthenon Marbles. This is not to suggest that adaptive use is not an important strategy in promoting the sustainability of our communities, but if the preservation of the institution, cultural

context, and the historic building depend upon the full participation of people, then strategies must target retaining a connection between the building and its constituents. These strategies must recognize that "culture is not static but is always changing,"[25] and that the library's current constituents must express their values in the aesthetic fabric and the operation of the library. The community's voice must be equal to those of "experts" in the development of new programs, decorative features, and physical adaptations to the building. Changes to the building that respond to these strategies are in keeping with the EPFL's ongoing mission, the original design intention for the building, and the humanistic aspirations of preservation.

Significance of the Study

This project addresses the preservation of a resource of national significance in the history of the American Public Library Movement. The EPFL, Latrobe's Basilica of the Assumption, and the Peabody Library are monuments in a unique cultural landscape that shaped the cultural and intellectual life of America. These resources also play a daily role in the life of another side of this landscape, one splintered by the socio-economic upheavals of the latter part of the twentieth century. The EPFL staff provides good stewardship over their historic building, maintaining it for the benefit of current and future patrons. This project proposes strategies to extend that stewardship so that the care of the individual building contributes to the revitalization of the community. These rehabilitation strategies respect original fabric while highlighting new services, softening

[25] Setha M. Low, "Cultural Conservation of Place," in *Conserving Culture,* 73.

the institutional disposition of the exterior, and fostering dialogue about the library's role in Baltimore civic life. Most importantly, they create opportunities for its patrons to imprint their current character on the building and site as a means of reclaiming this remarkable building and district.[26]

Methodology

This project utilizes multiple "readings" to establish the robust and evolving context of significance for the EPFL. The EPFL is considered as a spatial experience, as a changing collection of materials and services, and as a contributor to a larger district. Each analysis begins with the preconstruction period of the 1932 building and continues to the present to fully enumerate the challenges and the successes of remaining a place of community connection over the past seventy-five years. Visual assessments, historic photographs, and archival data inform the evaluations. Library statistics provide a measure of the effect of changes to the building and services upon the use of the library during each period. Each analysis concludes with an assessment of the impact on the connection between the library and the community.

Incorporating a statement of significance with a condition assessment is a departure from standard preservation practices that considers historic significance, description, and current condition (integrity) separately. This new strategy, by not distancing the object from its current context, recognizes change as a potentially positive

[26] Shalom Staub, "Cultural Conservation and Economic Recovery," in *Conserving Culture*, 240.

force in the ongoing life of the city and, in the words of Ned Kaufman, "history is important, and it is not over."[27]

These multiple "readings" provide the foundation for proposals that could reinvigorate the resource for the benefit of the community. The strategies adopted at other institutions, changes by the EPFL to its services and collections, discussions with library staff and community members, and personal reflections inform the proposals.

This project relies primarily upon archival data about the EPFL facility, collection, and the surrounding district. Personal observations gleaned in field investigations during 2006-2007 supplements contemporary information available from the Baltimore Planning Department, EPFL Special Collections, Maryland Historical Society, and historic preservation groups. Additional data on the rehabilitation/restoration plans of the EPFL gathered through interviews with the library staff provided information on features included in recent renovations, requirements made by preservation organizations, community participation in planning, and strategies to adapt the facility to current community needs. Similar data was solicited from other libraries occupying historic buildings including the Multnomah County Public Library (Portland), the Oakland Public Library, the Oakland African American Library and Museum, and the Village Learning Place, Baltimore, Maryland. The data from the EPFL and the other libraries is cited anecdotally throughout the thesis to illustrate problems as well as innovative approaches in current preservation practice.

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[27] Ned Kaufman, "Moving Forward," in *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States*, ed. Max Page and Randall Mason, 322 (New York: Routledge, 2004).

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is comprised of seven chapters. This introduction establishes the EPFL Central Building as the subject of the study, the issues the investigation raises, and the methodology to examine the issues. Chapter II is a review of existing literature that informs the context for the study. The three subsequent chapters examine the building, the service response, and the neighborhood that surrounds the EPFL. Chapter VI considers possible strategies the EPFL might utilize to reestablish its building as a place of connection in the community. The conclusion evaluates the results of the study and places it within the larger context of the preservation field.

The issues discussed in the individual chapters are presented as follows:

Chapter II: Literature Review

A review of work in preservation theory, Baltimore architectural history, the social and architectural evolution of libraries, previous studies of the EPFL, performance theory, and other strategies that recognize the interconnection between the built environment and social patterns.

Chapter III: An Evolving Spatial Experience

The building is analyzed as an object intended to facilitate social connections through its spatial arrangements and aesthetic treatments. The periodic architectural interventions provide the opportunity to assess the impact of change on the integrity of both the historic fabric and the design intention of facilitating a connection with the community.

Chapter IV: A Collection of Materials and Services

The collection of materials is the most enduring and changing element of the EPFL. Books remain the foundation of the collection, but new technologies and services enhance the library's value to the community. The transformation of the collection provides guidance for changes that coulkd be employed with the built fabric.

Chapter V: A Contributor to a Community

The district surrounding the EPFL Central Building is representative of the types of change occurring in large portions of the city of Baltimore. This reading articulates the larger social changes to which the EPFL must respond in order to meet the needs of its current constituents. Mapping, historic and contemporary photographs, and current planning data supplements the written analysis.

Chapter VI: New strategies

Potential rehabilitation strategies are considered that might reinvigorate the original design intention of bringing the community into the library building. The strategies include new library programs, interpretation, and design interventions. The goal of this chapter is not to provide design proposals but to offer ideas that could be utilized by the library in their future planning.

Chapter VII: Conclusion

The conclusion examines the value of the study, its place in the established preservation methodologies, its applicability to other resources, and further subjects of inquiry raised by the project. This chapter recommends that the EPFL *and* the preservation community adopt a strategy of cultural conservation as a means of dispelling

perceptions of being so rooted in building fabric as to be "aloof, unaware of what is going on in the world, unresponsive to current problems and demands."[28] Advocating for integrated approaches to design, planning, and interpretation that are as deeply engaged in the present human condition as in the rich architectural fabric of the past, this thesis seeks to foster the physical *and* cultural sustainability of our historic buildings and our communities.

[28] Wheeler and Githens, 13.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historic preservation is an interdisciplinary field, influenced by building technology, architectural history, social patterns, best practices within the field, and detailed investigations of resources. The majority of this study relies upon archival research and visual analysis of the Enoch Pratt Free Library (EPFL) Central Building in Baltimore, MD. These investigations are informed by earlier work in architectural history, information science, and historic preservation. A review of administrative practices and architecture reveals the forces that shaped libraries as institutions and buildings. This context is necessary to understand the unique aspects of the architectural program that Joseph Wheeler developed for the 1932 Central Building. Previous studies of the EPFL reveal earlier successes in meeting the goals of that program. Recent architectural and social histories of Baltimore establish the need for an integrated approach between the preservation of architectural works and the social fabric. Since the 1970s, both architects and architectural scholars have expanded their investigations beyond architectural intention to consider how people's use alters the nature of space. The recognition of the interrelationship between people, performance, and the built environment informs the issues raised throughout the thesis. Finally, the recent critiques

of architectural integrity as an appropriate measure for evaluating historic resources are integral to the strategies recommended in this project.

Library Historiography

The "Book Spiral liberates the librarians from the burden of managing ever-increasing masses of material. Newly freed, they are reunited in a circle of concentrated expertise."[1] Rem Koolhaas offers his Book Spiral as the solution to the affliction of proliferating library materials at the Seattle Central Library (2004). If Nicolas Pevsner were to return to his reflections made during the 1970s on library buildings in *A History of Building Type*s, he might argue that the Seattle library is only the latest in a long line of libraries shaped by technological responses to changing and accumulating materials.[2] Although Pevsner's study focuses on libraries constructed before the twentieth century, his argument continues to inform the recommendations for accommodating growth in such recent studies as 2006 in Michael Dewe's *Planning Public Library Buildings*.[3]

In *Buildings and Power* Thomas Markus reminds us that "literacy is both a tool for the extension of knowledge and for domination. . . . A conflict arose when general literacy demanded cheap texts in space accessible to all. Control could no longer focus on the materiality of books and buildings but had to focus on the content of books and their

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[1] Michael Kubo and Ramon Prat, *Seattle Public Library, Oma/Lmn* (Barcelona: Actar, 2005), 38.

[2] Nikolaus Pevsner, *A History of Building Types* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 92-108.

[3] Michael Dewe, *Planning Public Library Buildings: Concepts and Issues for the Librarian* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub., 2006), 200.

organization."[4] Markus is not alone in the view that cultural politics shaped library architecture. Ken Breisch contends that while nineteenth century libraries were promoted as public spaces, the architectural vocabulary often functioned primarily to glorify the munificence of the donor.[5] William Jordy's analysis of the external form, internal organization, and interior decoration of the Boston Public Library combines the technical focus of Pevsner with a social analysis. Jordy reads the Boston Public Library as a response to its surrounding context, the challenge of cloaking storage, circulation desks, and fire protection in the garments of classical antiquity amidst the Beaux-Arts revival sweeping the country at the end of the nineteenth century.[6] Van Slyck revisits these issues nearly twenty years later in *Free to All* asserts, asserting that the architects responded to the trustees' distrust of the working class with monumental features that symbolically reinforced libraries as the dominion of the cultured elite.[7]

Library Administration

Scholars in the fields of architectural history and information science increasingly acknowledge the administrative forces that shaped public library buildings. The Carnegie Building Program is seen as a turning point in library design and administration. George

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[4] Thomas A. Markus, *Buildings & Power. Freedom and Control in the Origin of Modern Building Types* (London: Routledge, 1993), 172.

[5] Kenneth A. Breisch, *Henry Hobson Richardson and the Small Public Library in America: A Study in Typology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 11.

[6] William H. Jordy, *American Buildings and Their Architects: Progressive and Academic Ideals at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1976), 316-365.

[7] Abigail Ayres Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 82.

Bobinski argues that the centralized administration of the Carnegie program resulted in less elaborate library buildings. The public, in turn, felt a greater sense of ownership for these relatively unornamented spaces.[8] Van Slyck shares this view, but also concludes that the desire for efficient operations changed libraries from centers of discourse to facilities oriented to the solitary acquisition of knowledge.[9] The recommendations of Joseph Wheeler and Alfred Githens reflect demonstrated a continued interest in creating efficient and easy to use library buildings.[10] Wheeler and Githens, writing in the 1940s, recommended that libraries adopt spatial structures that reflected their role as information hubs rather than culturally oriented centers.

Studies of library operations validate Van Slyck's argument that policies were as important as the architecture in defining the library as the realm of the cultural elite. Patrick Williams argues that narrowly conceived ideals of culture and literary taste lay at the heart of the debates over materials and service offered by libraries. At the close of the nineteenth century, libraries struggled to address the demands by patrons for popular fiction rather than classic literature. Although library staffs generally believed these materials were inferior and a waste of library funds, some librarians advanced a taste-elevation theory, asserting that popular fiction would instill a taste for more serious,

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[8]George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (1969: American Library Association, 1969), 175.

[9] Van Slyck, 219-220.

[10] Joseph L. Wheeler and Alfred Morton Githens, *The American Public Library Building: Its Planning and Design with Special Reference to Its Administration and Service* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 1941), 13-14.

culturally uplifting materials.[11] Similar debates arose in the early twentieth century over how to respond to the increased use of the library by recent immigrants. In addition to providing materials in foreign languages, library regulations "taught" immigrants how to dress, hold doors, and handle public property. Williams asserts that librarians saw themselves as responsible for teaching immigrants how to "be Americans" as well as how to locate library materials. Rosemary Dumont contends that the library programs of the twentieth century were often as narrowly focused on class interests as in the nineteenth century. During the twentieth century, in part because of the work of the Carnegie Program, the library was reorganized as a middle class institution. Reference programs were particularly popular with donors who viewed these programs as a reward for the working class users toiling to rise to middle class status. Dumont is particularly critical of reference librarians who construed "themselves as instructors in the 'people's university'."[12] The librarians who invoked this higher purpose sought to elevate their professional status with minimal regard for the fact that patrons' interests might be limited to newspaper reading or fiction. Dumont questions the propriety of utilizing public funds for instruction in social values, particularly when those values often reflected narrow definitions of acceptable literary pursuits. Recent debates over adopting digital technologies indicate that colliding value systems continue to create uncertainty

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[11] Patrick Williams, *The American Public Library and the Problem of Purpose* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1988), 9.

[12] Rosemary Ruhig Du Mont, *Reform and Reaction: The Big City Public Library in American Life* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977), 84.

over the mission of the public library, the types of services it should provide, and its role in community life.[13]

Enoch Pratt Free Library History

The existing studies of the EPFL focus primarily upon its early impact on the development of public libraries in the United States. Philip Kalisch's study establishes the importance of Enoch Pratt providing funds for four branches as well as the central building, making it the first library system in the United States. Kalisch asserts that the terms of Pratt's bequest influenced the structure of the Carnegie Library Building program.[14] The work also considers programs instituted by the library in response to the depression and World War II, concluding with the response to urban blight in the mid 1960s. Kalisch's study is reverential rather than critical; some of his sources, including the Pratt Annual Reports, may benefit from a more critical reading. Marion Braverman, writing during the 1970s, included the EPFL in her study of the impact of libraries on young adults, particularly African-Americans. The focus of Braverman's work is the programs for young adults operated by the EPFL between 1932 and 1970. Braverman argues that these services had limited impact upon Baltimore's disadvantaged because they focused upon the cultural enlightenment of patrons already attuned to library services. The EPFL's "Y (Youth) Program" developed services for the city's teenagers and worked with the Baltimore school system, but failed to establish relationships with

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[13] Michael Brawne, *Library Builders* (London: Academy Editions: Distributed in the U.S. by National Book Network Inc., 1997), 13-19.

[14] Philip Arthur Kalisch, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library: A Social History* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1969), 63-65.

organizations such as the NAACP or newspapers that targeted black readers. Although the "Y Program" addressed issues of race, it was often through poetry clubs and writing groups, limiting its message to those interested in literary enlightenment.[15] These studies are valuable in establishing early successes of the EPFL in attaining its goals of reaching out to the community as a whole.

Baltimore History

Architectural studies of Baltimore too often focus only upon its monumental character. *The Architecture of Baltimore: A Pictorial History* surveys the early masterworks in the city by Robert Cary Long, Benjamin Latrobe, and Richard Upjohn. These visual essays on the city, undertaken during the 1950s, are remarkable for their absence of images of African Americans.[16] Even *The Architecture of Baltimore*, written in 2004, focuses upon the work of architectural masters, adding the work of Mies van der Rohe, Pietro Belluschi, and James Rouse to the canon but offering little analysis of how buildings occupied by the working class impacted the spatial structure of the city.[17] More recent scholarship on Baltimore better addresses the diversity of the city. *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History,* reflecting the broad-based interests of the "new history" movement, utilizes the mansions of industrialists, mills, YWCAs, and union

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[15] Miriam Braverman, *Youth, Society, and the Public Library* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1979), 240.

[16] Richard Hubbard Howland and Eleanor P. Spencer, *The Architecture of Baltimore: A Pictorial History*, 1st ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), 282-323.

[17] Mary Ellen Hayward and Frank R. Shivers, *The Architecture of Baltimore: An Illustrated History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

halls to depict the lives of the owners and workers who inhabited these spaces.[18] The work relies on photographs, maps, and oral histories to articulate the failures of preservation, architecture, and urban design to address the heritage of working class and African-American Baltimoreans. Sherry Olson's *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* depicts periods of turbulence that impacted the built and social fabric of the city. Olson focuses upon the effects of strikes, mill closures, and the pollution of the Chesapeake Bay on the working class and ethnic groups in the city. Olson recognizes Baltimore's "strong commitment to maintaining the physical integrity of the built environment. The greater challenge is the sensitive restoration of the social structure."[19] These works establish the need for preservationists to recognize more diverse types of resources and integrate their efforts with other socially oriented initiatives in the city.

Performance Theory and Environmental Design

Beginning in the 1970s, both architects and folklorists began to look at the ways in which human behavior, as well as architectural intention, shapes buildings. In the field of architecture, much of this work focused upon researching how people utilized space to inform design strategies. Social architects Robert and Barbara Sommers expanded acceptable areas of research beyond issues of aesthetics and construction to include how buildings influenced social behavior.[20] John Zeisel pioneered the practice of including

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[18] Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman, *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 254.

[19] Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980, 1997), 385.

[20] Robert Sommer, *Social Design: Creating Buildings with People in Mind* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1983).

observation studies in architectural research.[21] Observing human activity and the "traces" they leave behind --creating informal signage, impromptu partitions, and temporary paths -- informs designers of the social functions that previous designers failed to consider. The work of these architects also considered how cultural differences alter the use of space, recognizing that social practice can dramatically alter identical spatial organizations.[22]

The interest in observing human activity and the built environment was not limited to designers, Architectural historians began to adopt approaches from such diverse fields as anthropology and linguistics to consider architecture as the result of social patterns as well as the intentions of a master designer. In "Toward a Performance Theory of Architecture: Early Tidewater Virginia: a Case Study" Dell Upton called for a new architectural analysis that recognized how social patterns transform established building types.[23] In his 1991 "Architectural History or Landscape History," Upton broadened his argument, recommending that scholars look to the entire cultural landscape. Upton asserts that architectural historians must understand the range of relationships that surround an object: who paid for it, who designed it, who built, who used it, and in what ways they used and reused it.[24] Upton and other scholars considering social patterns alongside architectural intention made profound impacts upon the fields of

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[21] John Zeisel, *Sociology and Architectural Design* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1975).

[22] John Zeisel, *Inquiry by Design: Environment/Behavior/Neuroscience in Architecture, Interiors, Landscape, and Planning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 99-108.

[23] Dell Upton, "Toward a Performance Theory of Architecture: Early Tidewater Virginia as a Case Study," *Folklore Forum* 12 (1979): , 190.

[24] Dell Upton, "Architectural History or Landscape History?," *Journal of Architectural History* 44, 4 (1991).

preservation, American culture, and architectural history. Thomas Carter describes in "Ruins and Renewal" the results when scholars investigated the landscapes of the American West with the range of methodologies called for by Upton. Oral history, architectural recordation, and archaeology revealed larger patterns of human behavior that provided a richer understanding of historic buildings and landscapes.[25] These broad approaches to architectural history are rooted in understanding an object as a representation of the culture of a particular period rather than supporting current social interests. As Susan Garfinkel points out in "Toward A Renewed Performance Theory of Vernacular Architecture", Upton recently warned vernacular scholars to substantially re-imagine their work and their methodologies to keep it a relevant field of inquiry.[26] Garfinkel asserts that the re-imaging process called for by Upton should include a revisiting of his call in 1979 to adopt performance as a method of architectural analysis. In Garfinkel's view, studying architecture from the perspective of "performance" remains viable if we better understand what performances we are looking at and why. Performance includes ongoing patterns of use that change an object as well as the set of practices that resulted in its initial creation. Garfinkel correctly argues that even richer understandings of the built environment will result if "performance" studies look to how objects support ongoing human life.

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[25] .Thomas Carter, "Ruins and Renewal " *Common Ground: Archeology and Ethnography in the Public Interest* 3, no. March 2, 2007 (1998), http://www.cr.nps.gov/archeology/Cg/vol3_num2-3/building.htm (accessed.

[26] Susan Garfinkel, "Toward a Renewed Performance Theory of Vernacular Architecture" (paper presented at the Vernacular Architecture Forum, Tucson Arizona, April 16 2005).

Preservation Theory

Recent preservation theory makes a strong case for the need to develop new methods of recognizing what constitutes historic resources. *Preservation of what, for whom?* brings together opposing viewpoints to examine the criteria for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).[27] Caroll Van West argues that utilizing architectural integrity as a standard in evaluating nominations to the NRHP often has the impact of excluding the heritage of working class and ethnic groups.[28] Although Van West does not address treatment strategies, his article raises the question that if integrity is not a viable standard for identifying historic resources, should it still be the measure for protecting them? W. Brown Morton takes the more traditional view that the artifact in its undisturbed state is the only tangible connection to history.[29] Morton is concerned by rapidly changing perceptions of what is historic and what is significant. If historic resources are restored or altered to support changing understandings of what constitutes their significance, then the direct connection to the past may be irretrievably lost. Neither Van West nor Morton address what might be the appropriate treatment method for resources identified as historic but remaining in active use by a changing community.

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[27] Michael A. Tomlan, "Preservation of What, for Whom?: A Critical Look at Historical Significance," (Ithaca, N.Y.: National Council for Preservation Education, 1998).

[28] Carroll Van West, "Assessing Significance and Integrity in the National Register Process: Questions of Race, Class, and Gender," in *Preservation of What, for Whom?: A Critical Look at Historical Significance*, ed. Michael A. Tomlan, (Ithaca, N.Y.: National Council for Preservation Education, 1999), 112.

[29] W. Brown Morton, "Managing the Impact on Cultural Resources of Changing Concepts of Significance," Ibid., 147.

The view that architectural fabric is the best vehicle to communicate history forms the basis of the most regularly referenced work of preservation theory, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Secretary's Standards).[30] The broad language of the Secretary's Standards affords some flexibility but emphasizes minimal alterations. William Murtagh asserts that this flexibility contributes to disputes over the interpretation of the Standards by preservation professionals and developers. Although Murtagh recognizes that both groups can be overzealous, he depicts preservationists as motivated by humanistic principles, while developers are driven by base economic concerns.[31] This oversimplification does little to resolve questions of how to maintain a building in a way that respects its history and accommodates other humanistic endeavors.

Preservation literature now recognizes the importance of reaching diverse communities but offers little guidance as to how a historic resource could be adopted to better meet that goal. Robert Carper's article "Accessibility and Preservation Conflicts" provides insight into the difficulties of applying the Secretary's Standards to meet other humanist goals. Carper recommends looking for approaches that balance both goals without disturbing historic fabric, such as leaving doors open in historic house museums rather than installing door handles that are accessible for the disabled. Carper's suggestion that adaptive-use projects install elevators only in non-historic portions of a

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[30] United States. National Park Service. Heritage Preservation Services., *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior National Park Service Heritage Preservation Services, 2000).

[31] William J. Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* (Pittstown, NJ: Main Street Press, 1988), 102.

building indicates that preservation philosophy remains inclined to choose historic fabric over ongoing social needs.[32]

The available literature on Baltimore, preservation, the EPFL, and library design establishes the need for this study. The vast amount of literature on public libraries conveys the importance of the institution to both scholars and community members. The architecture, collections, and policies adopted by libraries all reflect an ongoing tension between the desire to serve and the desire to regulate social behavior. Alfred Githens and Joseph Wheeler's 1941 study was influential on library design of the later half of the twentieth century because it considered social function alongside aesthetic impact. The work shows its age in that there is little consideration for attracting users from different social situations. Several studies indicate the influence of the EPFL on American public libraries as well as its early efforts to reach out to the community. Architects and architectural historians have made important contributions to our understanding of the built environment by considering how changing patterns of use alter that environment. This is a practice that preservationists must adopt as they consider how to maintain historic resources as an integral part of today's social fabric.

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[32] Robert L. Carper, "Accessibility and Preservation Conflicts," *CRM* Volume 15, no. 6 (1992), http://crm.cr.nps.gov/results.cfm (accessed February 2, 2007).

CHAPTER III

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ACCESS THROUGH BUILT FORM

> The library should be located in the center of things, on the main traffic stream with the leading stores, banks, and office buildings. It should stimulate everyone to the use of good books and contribute to the business as well as to the intellectual and cultural progress, the enjoyment, and the satisfaction of the community.[1] –Joseph L. Wheeler

During the "progressive" era, librarians began to advocate a new role for the public library, one that emphasized service and information rather than intellectual edification.[2] The efforts to reinvigorate this national symbol of social enlightenment focused upon altering patterns of use. For librarians like Joseph Wheeler, adjusting the policies and collections was not enough: library facilities must adapt to reflect community life.[3] Inspiring new types of patrons to make the fullest use of library services was a critical element of library design during the progressive era, thus reconstituting libraries as a tool for social change. The Central Building of the EPFL embodies not only Joseph Wheeler's philosophy of service but also this period of transformation between

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[1] Joseph L. Wheeler and Alfred Morton Githens, *The American Public Library Building: Its Planning and Design with Special Reference to Its Administration and Service* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 1941), 19.

[2] Michael Harris, *The Role of the Public Library in American Life: A Speculative Essay* (Champaign: University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science, 1975).

[3] Joseph L. Wheeler, *The Library and the Community: Increased Book Service through Library Publicity Based on Community Studies* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1924), 1.

the 1920s and 1940s within American public libraries. Through the construction of the Central Building in 1932, the EPFL hoped to revitalize its place within civic life and cement its influential role among American libraries, begun by it fifty years earlier with the establishment in Baltimore of the first public library system in the United States.

Early History

The Enoch Pratt Free Library (EPFL) began life in an elaborate High Victorian Gothic edifice constructed by entrepreneur Enoch Pratt in 1881. (Illustration 3-1, illustrations are located in Appendix B) In 1882, Pratt offered the city "the land and the main building, valued at $250,000, in addition to $50,000 to be used in the erection of four branch libraries, plus $833,333.33 in cash. The money was to be invested by the city and allowed to accumulate until the income amounted to $50,000 annually. In return, the city was to create an annuity of $50,000 for the support of the institution."[4] Pratt's library lay at the heart of the city; bounded by Baltimore's commercial district to the south, manufacturing facilities to the west, working class rowhouses to the east, and residences of the city's financial elite along Mt. Vernon Place to the north. (Illustration 3-2) This location provided easy access for workers on their way to offices and factories and drew the culturally minded as well. The library rapidly became integral to the cultural life of the city, hosting children's story hours, operating bookwagons, and cosponsoring lectures

[4] Philip Arthur Kalisch, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library: A Social History* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1969), 53.

with the Johns Hopkins University.[5] Branch buildings dispersed across the city spread the EPFL's influence throughout Baltimore civic life.

By 1925, the Central Library needed additional space to support programs and services. In addition to the structure built by Pratt, the central library now occupied three converted rowhouses fronting Cathedral Street. Many patrons and library supporters found the complex confusing and outdated. Baltimore newspaper columnist H.L. Mencken[6] commented that the existing facility was "so infernally hideous that it ought to be pulled down by the common hangman … and thrown into the harbor … along with the bones of the architect who designed it."[7] The Board of Trustees turned down multiple appeals by Director Bernard Steiner for funds to construct another addition on Cathedral Street.[8] The Central Library remained in its existing facilities until Steiner's death in 1926 brought a new vision of library service to the EPFL in the form of its third Director, Joseph L. Wheeler.[9]

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[5] Ibid., 62.

[6] Known for his acerbic prose, Mencken promoted the EPFL in his newspaper column, decrying city spending on baseball stadiums and art museums at the expense of the library. Mencken bequeathed his papers and other items to the EPFL that are now part of the Mencken Collection. Edwin Castagna, *Long, Warm Friendship: H.L. Mencken and the Enoch Pratt Free Library* (Berkeley: Peacock Press, 1966).

[7] *Baltimore Sun*, February 2, 1925.

[8] Bernard Steiner, *Thirty-Ninth Annual Report of the Librarian to the Board of Trustees* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library 1925).

[9] Kalisch, 139.

Joseph Wheeler

Wheeler's belief that the "public library is not an ornament, it is a public service plant" heavily influenced the plans for the building that he convinced the trustees to fund.[10] Trained in Library Science at Brown University and Albany University, Wheeler represented a new breed of librarians who aspired to elevate the influence of public libraries by expanding service rather than the number of volumes. Work with the American Library Association (ALA) War Service Program during World War I enhanced Wheeler's commitment to support a broader range of patrons and interests. Wheeler experimented with these ideas during tenures at libraries in the District of Columbia, Jacksonville, Los Angeles, and Youngstown.[11] In his published work, Wheeler advocated that librarians work closely with community groups to develop services that responded to local concerns. Wheeler brought to Baltimore the philosophy that "library workers have devoted too small a share of their thought to the people and affairs outside their buildings; too much time in getting books ready for use in proportion to the amount of time devoted to getting them used. Probably this is why the possibilities of the public library for social influence are so little recognized."[12]

Many of Wheeler's philosophies were met with apprehension from the Board of Trustees, the architects, library staff, and Baltimore's civic leaders. Disagreement occurred throughout the design process over the building's location and form. The

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[10] "Baltimore's New Library," *Sun Baltimore*, May 1925.

[11] Donald E. Oehlerts, *Books and Blueprints: Building America's Public Libraries* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 133.

[12] Wheeler, *The Library and the Community,* 15.

conflicts reflect the reluctance, particularly on the part of the Trustees, to expand the role of the library. The resulting building attempts to balance established iconography with more idealistic views of the potentials of library service to transform civic life.

Location

One of the first controversies concerned the new building's location. The Trustees proposed moving the library three blocks north to the park-like setting of Mt. Venon Place. (Illustration 3-3) This scheme reflected the influence of the City Beautiful kmovement throughout the United States in the early twentieth century. Detroit, Philadelphia, and San Francisco and other cities utilized their libraries and art museums to form "cultural town squares" sanitized from industrial and commercial concerns. A move to Mt. Vernon place positioned the EPFL at the heart of the district formed by elegant townhouses, the Peabody Institute and Library, and Walter's Art Museum. Wheeler vehemently opposed this attempt to limit the library's use to the city's upper classes. Instead, the public library should be "where the shopping crowds, the employees and the working people who transfer from one street car to another can run in five or ten minutes and exchange their books."[13] Wheeler took his campaign in the press, declaring in an interview in the *Baltimore Sun* that "no matter how beautiful the building itself may be, if its placed somewhere out in the great open spaces it will be a monument of waste."[14] Enlisting public support proved critical because the costs of maintaining the library now outstripped the endowment created by Enoch Pratt's initial gift. A new

[13] "Baltimore's New Library."

[14] "City to Realize Ideal in Library," *Baltimore Sun* 1928.

building required substantial contributions from the taxpayers.[15] The Trustees opted to keep the library in the existing location, perhaps less convinced by Wheeler's populist views than by his argument that the sloping land at "the back of the lot is worth at least $300,000 to Baltimore, for it provides practically an additional usable floor."[16]

Selection of the Architects

Although critical of most existing library buildings, Wheeler recognized the importance of selecting an architect experienced in their design. The EPFL solicited recommendations from other librarians and the American Library Association (ALA).[17] On April 28, 1928, the Trustees announced the selection of Edward L. Tilton and Alfred Githens as consulting architects. The Board based their selection, in part, on the endorsement by the ALA "that no other architects in the country had designed so many library buildings."[18]

Tilton gained fame for his collaboration with William Boring on the Ellis Island Immigration Station in 1900, but his career flourished due to his success designing libraries. Tilton assisted in the work on the Boston Public Library for the office of

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[15] The funding for the new building was provided in part by a $2,000,000 loan from the city of Baltimore. A series of articles in the Baltimore Sun were part of Wheeler's publicity campaign to convince the taxpayers to approve the loan. "Give Baltimore a Real Library," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, April 27 1927.; "The Financing of Library Service," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, October 26 1927.

[16] "Baltimore's New Library."

[17] Carl H. Milam, to J.L. Wheeler, *Letter from the Secretary of the American Library Association Recommending Architects*, May 28, 1927, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[18] William G. Baker, to Mayor of Baltimore William F. Broening, *Letter from President of Library Board Recommending Appointment of Tilton & Githens*, April 28, 1928, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

McKim, Mead, and White before beginning a three year course of study at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris. Tilton's education at the renowned architecture school instilled an understanding of the classical vocabulary that became de rigueur for cultural institutions at the close of the nineteenth century.[19] Upon his return to the United States in 1890, he formed a partnership with Boring before establishing an individual practice. Tilton subsequently specialized in library planning, designing many of the Carnegie buildings and libraries for the United States Army during World War I.[20]

In his individual practice and his later work with Githens, Tilton bridged the gap between the civic image desired by the wealthy philanthropists who served as trustees and the librarians' desire for functional space. One of the earliest examples was in Springfield, MA (1912), where the "Italian palazzo image disguised a first-floor plan that was completely open to public use, and almost without interior partitions."[21] Tilton's work set the stage for the service-oriented features integral in the EPFL's Central Building.

The design by Tilton and Githens for the Wilmington, DE library (1925) so impressed Wheeler that he regularly cited it as the best example of recent library

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[19] Founded by the French government to develop national architectural talent, the school became the most prestigious architectural training program in the world during the nineteenth century. Study at the École virtually guaranteed success in the architectural profession in the United States from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. Oehlerts, 10.

[20] Oehlerts, 72.

[21] Abigail Ayres Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 96-97.

planning.[22] (Illustration 3-4) Wheeler particularly admired the way that the interior arrangements facilitated visibility of all library services by the public. Like the work of architect Paul Cret at the Folger Shakespeare Library (1927), this building adapted an unembellished exterior to the formal composition and rigorous planning promoted at the École des Beaux Arts.[23]

For Wheeler and other librarians of the 1920s, these works embodied the ideals of the modern library –oriented toward public *use* rather than public impression. The EPFL Board appointed Clyde and Nelson Friz as the local architects of record, but it was clear that Tilton & Githens would play a major role in bringing contemporary library planning to Baltimore.[24]

Design Principles

The design philosophy brought by Tilton and Githens was endorsed by a memorandum they received upon their appointment in May 1928 "outlining the principles and general arrangements of the interior."[25] This document reflected the views of Wheeler, the EPFL staff, and the directors of other urban libraries of the need for an

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[22] Joseph L. Wheeler, *Annual Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library*, (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1926), 12-13.

[23]Born in France, Cret immigrated to the United States where he practiced architecture and taught at the University of Pennsylvania School of Architecture. His early work reflects his training at the École but later work shifts to a streamlined classicism. Elizabeth Greenwell Grossman, *The Civic Architecture of Paul Cret* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1-19.

[24] Joseph L. Wheeler, *A Great Library in the Making. Annual Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library*, (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1928), 11.

[25] Ibid.

attractive but not elaborate building arranged to encourage connection to the local community.[26]

This memorandum indicates the importance that the "open plan" would play in the Central Building. In the Wilmington library, Tilton and Githens created an early example of the "open plan", where bookcases rather than walls created spatial separations.[27] (Illustration 3-5) Following the Wilmington example, the EPFL document directed that "the major portion of the main floor will consist of a vast area without interior walls, forming a rectangle having the entry in the middle of one of the longer sides. In this way we shall avoid expensive rotundas, stairs and halls, with all their waste of time and upkeep."[28] In addition to reducing costs, the staff hoped that the "open plan" would encourage interaction among departments.

The entry would be made into a Central Hall intended as "one of the beauty spots of the building."[29] (Illustration 3-6) Busts of local literary figures and murals depicting regional historical events were intended to connect the library services with local

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[26] Wheeler included a copy of a recent article on library design featuring the Wilmington Library from Architectural Forum with a survey asking the staff to identify the space required for their departments including space for staff, reader, equipment necessary, and types of services such as stairs or elevators required. Children's Department Staff, to George Dobbin Brown, *Requirements for New Building - Children's Department*, 1927, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[27] Wheeler and Githens, 144.

[28] Joseph L. Wheeler, *Tentative Memorandum on New Central Building Prepared for the Trustees and Architects*, May 10 1928, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[29] Ibid.

community interests. Although exquisitely decorated, the hall must function primarily as a service center containing the catalogue and charging desks.[30]

Most importantly, library activities must be visible from the street. Potential patrons must experience "the attractive effect of openness and hospitality made by the unobstructed view from the street of the absorbed readers and varied activities on the main floor of the Library, as seen through the long row of large windows in the Cathedral Street façade. How different from the cold impression --- presented by the forbidding masonry of many library buildings --- of being a prison of books." [31](Illustration 3-7)

Throughout the design process, the planning committee struggled to balance motifs traditionally associated with civic buildings with the features that were intended to encourage interaction between the patron and the library. The aspirations for stronger service to the community, reflected in this memorandum, required the architects to integrate local history, architectural traditions, and artistic values throughout the building.

Exterior Design

William Jordy writes that the Boston Public Library "is thrice sanctioned. It is sanctioned, first by the example of Richardson's Marshall Field Wholesale Store … Henri Labrouste's Biboliotheque Sainte Genevieve in Paris, finally by the side elevation of Leon Battista Alberti's San Fecesco (Tempio Malastestiano) in Rimini."[32] (Illustration 3-8) The references to the Boston Public Library, the Basilica of the Assumption, and a

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Wheeler, *A Great Library in the Making,* 13.

nearby rowhouse similarly connects Baltimore's Central Library with national cultural monuments and the local community.

The EPFL abandoned early plans to employ the brick colonial style found throughout Maryland and currently popular among practitioners of the Colonial Revival style.[33] The architects selected instead an Italian Renaissance Revival vocabulary that recalls the exterior of the Copley Square library in Boston. Tilton and Githens emulate the masonry construction, rectangular form, and bilaterally symmetrical massing of the McKim, Mead, and White building, but continue the departure begun in Wilmington from the ornamental embellishments that characterize the Boston edifice. These references to one of the oldest and one of the most recent library buildings in America established the EPFL's place within the national literary landscape. (Illustration 3-9).

The EPFL's exterior also recalls Benjamin H. Latrobe's colonnade for the Basilica that sits directly across from the library on Cathedral Street. (Illustration 3-10) The austerity, if not the details, echoes Latrobe's classical revival vocabulary. Tilton and Githens recommended that Friz "make all the elements of the wall simple in form and large in scale; masses broad and unbroken so far as it possible; windows regular, severe ornament regular, with repeating motives."[34] The flatness of the pilasters allows the

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[32] William H. Jordy, *American Buildings and Their Architects: Progressive and Academic Ideals at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1976), 333.

[33] Wheeler, *Tentative Memorandum on New Central Building.*

[34] Tilton and Githens, to Clyde N Friz, *Enoch Pratt Library Elevations*, March 11, 1929, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

Exhibition Windows to dominate the facade. A repeating ribbon of palmettes at the cornice and below the second story windows constitutes the primary ornament.[35] The architects opted to place the entrance in a triumphal arch rather than behind the projecting portico called for in the early sketches. Rising above the cornice of the EPFL, a limestone pavilion continues the reference to the Basilica's portico. By adopting the classical revival details of the most prominent local building to a form employed at the most famous American library building, the EPFL established its architectural authority within both the local and national landscapes.

The architects originally planned to "set the front line of the main building face back ten or fifteen feet from the sidewalk so that we can have some sort of base or terrace in front of it to give it a more adequate setting."[36] This design strategy, combined with the generous foreground spaces of the Basilica, would facilitate the type of visual connection that occurs in Boston between the McKim, Mead, and White library and H.H. Richardson's Trinity Church. However, this proposal conflicted with the goal of making library activities visible to the community. Wheeler convinced the design committee that such monumental settings represented an outmoded historical model. The 'modern' library must instead emulate banks and department stores which "by placing the

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[35] Tilton and Githens, to Clyde N. Friz, *Enoch Pratt Library*, December 9,1929, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[36] Joseph L. Wheeler, to Samuel H. Ranck, *Letter to Grand Rapids Librarian Describing Sidewalk Setback*, 1927, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

entrances and windows on sidewalk level, extend an invitation to enter which is sadly lacking in our libraries."[37]

The Exhibition Windows proved particularly controversial with the Board of Trustees, library architects, and other librarians who reviewed the early architectural plans proposed for the EPFL. Some feared that the exposure would be uncomfortable for readers who "want intimacy with books."[38] Wheeler successfully positioned the windows as "the opportunity to make a break with the past with the psychological effect of the outside of library buildings."[39] Although department stores furnished the initial inspiration, a nearby rowhouse provided the model ultimately adopted. (Illustration 3-11) George Dobbin Brown, assistant Library Director, encouraged the architects to consider "oriel windows as a leading motif for the first floor fenestration … an attractive one … is to be seen at Mr. Claude B. Hellman's store … it would lend itself ideally to exhibition purposes."[40] The oriel window projects the library's interior outward into the life of the city, connecting the EPFL with Baltimore's vernacular and monumental, commercial, and civic landscapes.

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[37] Joseph L. Wheeler, to Arch Tilton and Githens, *Letter Regarding Modified Plans*, 1928, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[38] Joseph L. Wheeler, *Notes from Discussion between Architects and Librarians Regarding Proposed Library* May 31, 1927, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[39] Joseph L. Wheeler, to Arthur Bostwick, *Letter to St Louis Librarian Regarding June 1928 Plan*, 1928, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[40] George Dobbin Brown, to Clyde N Friz, *Letter to Architect Regarding Mulberry Street Windows*, June 5, 1928, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

Interior

The interior of the EPFL married contemporary services philosophies with the decorative features more traditionally associated with libraries. One of the most radical departures from established library designs placed the adult service areas on the street level. Wheeler hoped that "in contrast to libraries where the public walk 100 to 175 feet, with stairs to climb, before reaching the service counters, this will prove a pleasant relief."[41] Upon entry through the lobby into the building, the patron passed into the Central Hall, finding themselves at the heart of library services with desks for registration and book charging flanking the entry doors. (Illustration 3-12) The information desk that occupied the center of the hall reinforced the area's mission as the service hub for the large building. The card catalogue lined the rear of the room with the Reference Room visible just beyond.

The Reference Room created one of many disputes between Wheeler and the architects over how to integrate the service philosophies within the spatial structure. (Illustration 3-13) Githens found that "like a great wedge, it is driven into the center of the plan, forcing apart the departments ... and distorting the genitale [*sic*] idea of nine departments with their controls grouped closely around the catalogue."[42] Githens and Friz both proposed locating the room at the front of the building, flanked by two entry doors. Although the Reference Room was key to Wheeler's philosophy that the library must furnish patrons with information relevant to their daily lives, he found the location

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[41] Wheeler, *A Great Library in the Making,13.*

[42] Alfred Morton Githens, to Joseph L. Wheeler, *Letter Regarding Architectural Plans*, August 4, 1928, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

suggested by the architects too prominent.[43] This position put Wheeler's vision of the role of reference services and the street level windows into conflict. "It would be unwise to place the Reference Room at the front of the building. It is too noisy. We are trying to get the public to look inside and certainly do not want them to look into the Reference Room, which is supposed to be the quietest study room."[44] The final location -- directly opposite the entry -- maintained its visibility while allowing it to function as a concentrated study center. (Illustration 3-14) The resolution of this issue, as well as similar disputes between members of the planning committee and Wheeler, hinged upon demonstrating that the new spirit of library service emphasized activity and communication rather than solitary intellectual pursuits.

Central Hall Decorative Scheme

The decorative scheme in the Central Hall established the library's prominent role in civic life through the embellishments that reinforced the value of literary enlightenment. (Illustration 3-15) The central open space recalls the role of Italian Palazzos in the rediscovery of culture and learning. The lavish use of Laredo Chiaro marble on the walls, floors, wainscot, and thick columns nearly overwhelms the decorative murals in the hall.[45] Intended to connect the EPFL with regional social and cultural traditions, the selection of the murals' theme was a critical choice for the design

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[43] *The Reorganization of a Large Public Library Ten Year Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library*, (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library 1937), 46-47.

[44] Joseph L. Wheeler, to Tilton and Githens, *Letter Regarding Building Plans*, August 15, 1928, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[45] George Dobbin Brown, to Joseph Lewis Wheeler, *Letter to Wheeler Regarding Female Lounges*, February 26, 1930, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

committee. Early in the planning process, a staff member proposed depicting Maryland's cultural leaders. Portraits of Enoch Pratt, Edgar Allen Poe, and Francis Scott Key would convey the rewards of learning to patrons.[46] The EPFL opted instead to borrow the subject of its decorations from another local landmark.

The stained glass windows of the reading room in the undergraduate library at the Johns Hopkins University incorporate images of "printer's marks". Italian Renaissance publishers imprinted these graphic logos on their work to distinguish their products from imitations by competing printing houses.[47] The EPFL staff chose the same device to remind its patrons of the transformative value of the book, and by association, the library. (Illustration 3-16) In her guide to the EPFL decorations, Reference Librarian Amy Winslow explicates how the printing press "brought the Bible and schoolbooks and volumes of discussion and ideas to the common people. It has changed the thoughts and manners of the world."[48]

At the north and south ends of the hall paintings by Baltimore artist George Novikoff celebrate printing history. Gutenberg reviews the first print from his printing

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[46] S.M. Groes, to George Dobbins Brown, *Memorandum: Suggestions for 10 Panels around Central Hall*, 1932, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[47] Joseph L. Wheeler, to President Harry L. Gage, American Institute of Graphic Arts, *Decorations in Central Hall*, October 28, 1932, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[48] Amy Winslow, *Printers' and Publishers' Marks as Decorations in the Enoch Pratt Free Library Building*, 1933, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore. The frieze band on the south side displays the marks of Maryland printers including Mary Katherine Goddard who operated a Maryland printing house during the American Revolution. The south side honors the work of American printers Benjamin Franklin, Theodore Lowe De Vinne, and Bruce Rogers. A Grecian motif interspersed with the marks of contemporary commercial and university presses adorns the east and west walls. Panels that alternate with the gallery windows depict large versions of the printer's marks of Fust and Schaeffer, Nicolas Jenson, Aldus Manutius, Johann Frober, The Estiennes, Christopher Plantin, The Elzevis, and William Morris.

press in the painting on the south wall. At the north end William Caxton is portrayed presenting Margaret of Burgundy with the first book printed in the English Language in 1475. The murals attempt to convey the value of literacy in everyday life, but are esoteric references to most library users with little visual power. Though a more appropriate theme for a public building, the decorations lack the drama of the Edwin Austin Abbey murals depicting the Legend of the Holy Grail at the Boston Public Library.[49] The paintings reinforce the EPFL's belletristic role but do little to connect it with the ongoing life of the community.

Subject Rooms

The subject areas of the EPFL departed from the monumental reading rooms that separated patrons from the books in nineteenth-century libraries. The street level location demonstrated their accessibility to readers who could freely select materials from the open shelves.[50] (Illustration 3-17) The decorative finishes corresponded with Wheeler's vision of the subject rooms as service centers. The elegant marble floors of the Central Hall transitioned to durable and sound absorbing rubber tiles.[51] Exposed concrete ceiling beams complemented the utilitarian nature of the space with floral stenciling to soften

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[49] Van Slyck, 71.

[50] The EPFL employs a two-tier system for storing books. Materials regularly requested are available on the subject room shelves. Other materials are located in basement stacks that can be accessed by stairs in each subject area.

[51] Joseph L. Wheeler, to Clyde N. Friz, *Schedule of Plastorene Finishes*, June 6, 1932, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

their appearance.[52] Most importantly, the views of the street provided by the exhibition windows reinforced the library's place in everyday life.

Just as the views into the subject rooms from the exterior were intended to draw visitors into the library, the open floor plan assisted the patron in identifying their desired materials. (Illustration 3-18) Screens of columns and bookshelves delineate the individual departments, with reader's desks arranged in rows in between.[53] The subject areas flowed freely across the north and south wings of the first floor, with open vistas that eliminated the need to understand the cataloguing strategy in order to navigate the building.

Each subject area contained a centrally located staff work area positioned to facilitate its easy access by patrons. (Illustration 3-19*)* In his recommendations for these work spaces, Wheeler commented that: "I would like to see a room full of readers, if I were at the head of a department, and I would like the readers to see all of the workers in the workroom."[54]

The uneasy relationship between supervision and assistance reflected in Wheeler's sentiments extends to the configuration of the staff workspaces. The architects incorporated input provided by the EPFL staff through questionnaires and observation by outside efficiency experts into the design for the staff desks.[55] The various studies

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[52] Joseph L. Wheeler, to Buffalo Library Charles E. Rush, *Letter Concerning Ventilation Issues*, June 26, 1929, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[53] Wheeler, *Tentative Memorandum on New Central Building.*

[54] Joseph L. Wheeler, *Some Points for Discussion in Connection with Plans for the Building*, December 2 1931, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[55] Joseph L. Wheeler, to Miss Williams, *Letter Regarding Furniture Study*, September 28, 1931, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

revealed the need for several layers of workspaces. The less experienced employees staffed a large desk open to the subject room. A screened partition provided privacy for the department head, with storage and cataloguing spaces beyond. "These work rooms represent a reservoir of skilled and experienced persons available immediately to the reader according to the type of question, so that the least valuable person will answer the easiest questions, leaving the time of the higher salaried people to be devoted to the more important things."[56] The library staff believed not only that the patrons required continual supervision, but that their interests merited a variety of service levels, and this was subsequently codified by the architects into the spatial structure.

The movable furniture reveals another instance where views of patron behavior conflicted with the ideals of "modern" library service. Wheeler corresponded with the Remington Library Bureau to arrive at the exact blend of function and appearance for the furnishings custom built for the EPFL.[57] (Illustration 3-20) The walnut finishes and leather upholstery illustrate the lasting influence of the "gentleman's library" enshrined by H.H. Richardson in his public libraries in Massachusetts.[58]

The surprisingly traditional qualities of these furnishings raised other issues that showed conflicts between the service goals and more conservative staff views. The EPFL librarians who reviewed the sketches pointed out that these treatments might not be

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[56] Joseph L. Wheeler, to Chester W. Snyder - Blumenthal-Kahn Company, *Memorandum on Lighting Problems*, March 21, 1932, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[57] E. B. Hussey, to J.L. Wheeler, *Library Furniture Designs*, November 5, 1931, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[58] Kenneth A. Breisch, *Henry Hobson Richardson and the Small Public Library in America: A Study in Typology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997).

appropriate in all areas of a public library. The newspaper room furniture raised concerns that:

> some weary old gentleman will lie down on the three 8-foot long recessed seats in the north wall. To prevent this, we suggest that each seat be broken up into four two-foot sections by arms. And the expression 'leather covered' gave us a scare. The seat itself should be of wood … on it should be laid a long cushion of imitation leather, without any cracks or creases in it to become infested by vermin. The janitor can then easily and often wipe off the cushion itself and the seat beneath it. This would seem the only safe type of seat in view of the special clientele of the room.[59]

While open to all, the EPFL adopted design strategies that reflected nineteenth-century views that the library must provide safeguards against its working class patrons. (Illustration 3-21) Not only were the furnishings protected, the architects located the newspaper room in the basement to shield regular patrons from contact with its working class constituents.[60]

Children's Room

The newspaper room patrons were not the only group provided with special accommodations in the EPFL. As recently as 1890, libraries did not admit children, but by 1900 a children's room became an essential element to enourage patronage at a young

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[59] George Dobbin Brown, Illustration to Joseph Lewis Wheeler, *Furniture Lay-out of the Newspaper Room*, November 11, 1931, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[60] For a dissection of spatial segregation by "interest" and by "class" see Van Slyck's description of the arrangements for the Detroit Public Library. Van Slyck, 99.

age.[61] Tilton and Githens repeated the strategy adopted in Wilmington (and many other libraries) of placing the children's room in the basement level. The architects utilized the sloping site to create a separate entrance that ensured the children's noise would not disturb its adult constituents.

A terraced garden paved with slate flagstones and lined with grey dimension stone led from Mulberry Street to the entrance at the rear of the building.[62] (Illustration 3-22) This garden provided an essential transition between the regimented world of the library and the disorders of urban life in which the EPFL's youngest patrons could still behave like children. A bow window connects the exterior garden with an interior fountain that masks the noise of the children and the street. (Illustration 3-23) The ceiling murals depicting children's stories by local artist Paul Roche highlighted the adventures and other worlds that might be experienced in the books.[63] A leaded glass partition provides acoustical privacy for the story telling room while ensuring visual supervision from the librarian's desk. The design for this sanctuary ensured that children would be sheltered from the outside world, and inspired to return, regularly to the world of books

At its small scale, the children's room realized the openness to the community, connection to regional artistic traditions, and correspondence between spatial structure and service philosophy that the EPFL aspired to achieve in its Central Library. Other areas of the building continued to symbolically reinforce conservative ideas regarding

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[61] Oehlerts, 28.

[62] *Guide to the Enoch Pratt Free Library*, 1947, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[63] Ibid.

working class patrons and the types of service that they ought to receive. The building represented one of many steps toward supporting the community-oriented philosophies espoused by Wheeler. Later physical alterations to the building that correspond with the evolving service programs strengthened the EPFL's ability to meet these goals.

1933-1965: Limited Change to the Built Form

Between the time of its construction in 1933 and 1965, the EPFL Central Building changed very little. Constructed at the height of the Depression, the Central Building represents a remarkable civic investment by the citizens of Baltimore. Although little additional financial support was available, the social investment continued with the WPA's assistance in indexing the collection during the late 1930s.[64] (Illustration 3-24)

Despite the limited funds, a significant change to the Central Library occurred during World War II with the completion of the monumental murals that depicted stories from Edmund *Spenser's The Faerie Queene*. Baltimore-born artist Lee Woodward Zeigler submitted sketches during the design phases for the Central Building, but difficulties in securing funding delayed their completion until 1945.[65] The murals cover "more than 1800 square feet, one of the most extensive series of library murals in the United States."[66] (Illustration 3-25) These decorations are an example of the faded,

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[64] Kalisch, 161.

[65] The EPFL murals were privately funded. Ziegler was a nationally known artists responsible for many WPA murals."Lee Woodward Zeigler Papers," Smithsonian Archives of American Art, http://www.archivesofamericanart.si.edu/collections/collections_list.cfm/fuseaction/Collections.ViewCollection/CollectionID/6927/search_letter/Z.

[66] Charles Grosvenor Osgood, *Murals Based Upon Edmund Spenser's 'Faerie Queene'*, 1945, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

esoteric glories of the EPFL, of interest to traditional library users but doing little to forge connections with the larger community.

Although the city's population grew by nearly 100,000 between 1940 and 1950, the increasing use of the automobile began to impact the use of the library.[67] Library Director Amy Winslow attributed a significant decrease in circulation to the difficulty of obtaining parking in the congested neighborhood. In 1953, the library proposed creating a drive-in book return at the back of the building to alleviate the patron's parking problems. The library never implemented this plan due to opposition from the owners of adjacent properties.[68]

In 1954, the EPFL made several changes to the Central Building to address decreasing circulation. The library attempted to maintain the building's appeal to patrons by installing a new air conditioning system.[69] The new ventilation equipment utilized the original ductwork, resulting in minimal visual impact to the public spaces of the library. The EPFL also created a lounge in the Central Hall to accommodate casual reading as opposed to the serious study supported by the Subject Rooms. To bolster use, the EPFL allowed smoking in this lounge -- the first time patrons were permitted to smoke in the building.[70]

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[67] Richard L. Forstall, "Maryland Population of Counties by Decennial Census: 1900 to 1990," US Bureau of the Census, http://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/md190090.txt (accessed February 24, 2007).

[68] *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Report* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1953), 4.

[69] *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Report 1953* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1954), 7.

[70] "Puffs of Smoke Signal New Era Pratt Library Breaks Tradition of 70 Years," *Baltimore Sun*, December 7, 1954.

Dramatic transformations in the city began in the 1950s when the white middle class population began to move into the surrounding suburbs of Baltimore County.[71] Changes in the social fabric of Baltimore, discussed in greater details in Chapters IV and V, would increasingly impact the EPFL's use. A sign that the social unrest extended within the library walls could be seen in the dismantling of the Central Hall lounge in 1965 when police identified its use for "unsavory rendezvous and proposals."[72] The EPFL administration recognized that changing social patterns necessitated modifications to the building but kept the alterations minimal. The combination of comprehensive planning in the original design and financial constraints kept the historic building largely intact even as the institution's influence within the community waned.

Responding to Programmatic Needs: 1986 Renovations

The EPFL staff proposed expansion of the Central Building as early as 1969. Planning committees recommended the construction of a 153,800 square foot wing on the northwest corner of the existing library. The committee's report also recommended reorganization and renovation of the 1932 building.[73] Difficulties in obtaining funding resulted in repeated delays for the project. In 1980, the library commissioned the Becker and Hayes firm to reevaluate the use of space at the Central Library.[74] The staff was

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[71] Forstall, Baltimore Census.

[72] *Baltimore Sun*, February 11, 1965.

[73] *Preparing for the Year 2000 Proposal for an Addition to and Renovation of the Central Library Building*, July 31 1969, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[74] Becker and Hayes, *A Building Survey and Long-Range Physical Feasibility Study for the Enoch Pratt Free Library* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1980).

shocked by the study's recommendation that the library could meet its requirements for additional space by expanding the existing mezzanines in the Subject Rooms instead of by constructing an addition.[75] The firm also proposed reestablishing a lounge in the Central Hall to accommodate the continued requests for casual reading areas. (*Illustration 3-26*) Although the staff felt the Becker Hayes recommendations were insufficient support their patron's needs, the requirements for space anticipated in 1969 undoubtedly were reduced by the larger changes occurring in the city -- between 1970 and 1980 Baltimore experienced its most dramatic population decline from 905,759 to 786, 775. These changes significantly impacted use of the EPFL, with many middle class users preferring libraries in Baltimore County that boasted ample parking and less evidence of urban strife.[76]

In 1983, the EPFL employed the firm of Ayers, Saint to design interior renovations to the Central Building that implemented the Becker and Hayes recommendations. The work, completed in 1986, focused upon restoring the finishes in the Central Hall, life safety upgrades, and created additional space in the Subject Rooms. (Illustration 3-27) Further budget reductions meant postponing many features until a future renovation. The most critical staff needs were accommodated, but the EPFL deferred the majority of the enhancements until additional funding could be obtained.[77]

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[75] Eric Garland, "Has Baltimore Put Its Library on the Shelf?" *Baltimore Magazine*, February 1983.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ayers Saint, *Plan of Action and Addition Central Library* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1983).

The expanded mezzanines extend across the length of the east and west ends of the subject rooms, creating room for bookshelves and study tables. An "entry portal" creates enclosure within the vast subject room, affording a measure of acoustic and visual separation that addressed concerns from staff and patrons, dating to the 1950s, over noise levels.[78] (Illustration 3-28) The portals altered the open character of the room but are removable and support the ongoing use of the building. The architects minimized the impact of the mezzanines by utilizing aluminum cast to replicate the existing iron handrails and walnut veneers that matched the original finishes on the bookcases. Other material changes, such as the replacement of the original black and white rubber floor tiles with mauve and cream vinyl, lack the character or quality of the original but minimally impact the patron's experience.[79]

All of the changes made during the 1986 renovations are in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The work in the Subject Rooms is reversible, distinct from --but compatible with --the existing fabric.[80] The restoration of the Central Hall finishes maintained the aesthetic quality of this important space. The library opted to maintain the Central Hall's original character as a service center rather than creating the lounge, leaving an ongoing need to better accommodate casual reading.

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[78] Emerson Greenaway, *Critique of the Enoch Pratt Free Library Central Building in Response to Questionnaire*, 1951, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[79] Ayers, Saint, *Renovations to Main Library Enoch Pratt Free Library Specifications, Proposals, Contract, Bond for the Construction Of*, (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1984).

[80] United States. National Park Service. Heritage Preservation Services, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior National Park Service Heritage Preservation Services, 2000).

The installation of fire alarms, egress lighting, and a public address system were necessary life safety changes to support ongoing use of the historic building.[81] Primarily reactive, the renovations addressed preventive maintenance, critical life safety issues, and space requirements, but offered little that enhanced the library's position within the community or met secondary staff needs. More substantive alterations that reflected the changes made by the EPFL in its programs in response to Baltimore's radically changing social climate were postponed until further funding could be obtained.

1994: An Eroded Connection with the Community

As a result of the economic decline and social displacements of the 1980s, Baltimore's homeless population now congregated in the neighborhood surrounding the EPFL. The library took several controversial measures to limit the impact on the use of the library by its middle class patrons. The security booth installed in the entry and patrolling guards provided a sense of security for some but enforced the message that certain other patrons were undesirable.[82] The buzzers that controlled access to the men's washrooms heightened the increasingly fortress-like atmosphere. One of the actions that garnered negative publicity was the installation of railings along the edge of the exhibition windows. (Illustration 3-29) The EPFL asserted that the alterations resulted from a comprehensive beautification plan that included installing planter boxes and banners throughout the building. Demonstrators alleged that these "spikes" were installed

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[81] Ayers, Saint, *Renovations to Main Library*.

[82] "Library Railing Riles Homeless in Baltimore: Spiked Barrier Prevents Sleeping on Windowsills," *Washington Post*, June 28, 1994.

to prevent the homeless from sleeping in the window wells.[83] While small and visually unobtrusive, the railings symbolize the degradation of the intention to foster connection between the library and its community. More than just a relic of Joseph Wheeler's views on library design, the displays created for the windows affirmed the relationship between the EPFL and its patrons.[84] Although the railings do not prevent patrons from viewing the displays, they substantially impact the perception of openness to the community.

Children's Garden: Integrating Original Intention with Current Needs

The EPFL's strong relationship with Baltimore's schools helped ensure that the Children's Room remained one of the most active spaces in the Central Building. Although use remained high, over the years, the room's finishes deteriorated, most notably, the murals depicting children's stories that were painted over in the 1950s. During the 1986 renovations the room was repainted, carpet laid over the existing black and white tiles, new light fixtures installed, and a wall removed to facilitate supervision of the hallway. During the 1990s, increased crime in the area made the garden a potentially dangerous place for children.[85] In 2000, the EPFL enclosed the garden to create new areas for children's programs. (Illustration 3-30) One of the new spaces is used for storytelling, with the garden theme continued by incorporating the existing stone

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[83] J. Kauffman, "Demonstrators Rail against Enoch Pratt Railings," *American Libraries* 25, no. 8 (1994).

[84] Kate Coplan, *Effective Library Exhibits How to Prepare and Promote Good Displays* (New York: Oceana Publications, 1974).

[85] Ayers, Saint, *Renovations to Main Library*.

walls. A second room provides amphitheater seating, audiovisual equipment, and a domed ceiling for multimedia presentations.[86]

From the view of architectural preservation, the updates to the Children's Room are largely in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Additions. The use of granite for the exterior walls and similar fenestration ties the work to the main building. The pyramidal form of the glass and copper roofs clearly differentiates the space from the existing EPFL structure and the adjacent rowhouse. The scale of the new work respects the existing buildings. (Illustration 3-31) By incorporating existing materials and other elements in a garden theme, the interior recalls its original use. The generous windows that promote visibility into library activities from the street the addition remains true to the material characteristics as well as philosophical intentions of the original design.

From a community perspective, the children's garden is a mixed success. Some consider the area a wasteful expenditure because it is only accessible during limited hours due to difficulties in regulating the space from the librarian's desk.[87] This problem might be overcome with additional staffing and funding for more regular programming. The garden served as important transition space between the programmed environment of the library and the surrounding urban environment. This reduction in space for unsupervised

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[86] Ayers, Saint, Gross, "Children's Garden Expansion," http://www.asg-architects.com/expertise/culturalFacilities/pratt_child/index.htm.

[87] Jane Shipley, "Why Baltimore Needs a New Public Library," http://baltimorechronicle.com/library2_sep01.shtml.

community use is a significant loss. Despite these limitations, the alteration successfully adapts the existing aesthetic form to current social conditions.

The Annex: Adherence to Material Character but Diminished Physical Connection with the Community

In 2001, the EPFL received the funding to construct the 43,000 square foot addition for the Central Library discussed for over three decades. An indication of the changing patterns of use and continued financial difficulties was that the Annex was 110,000 square feet less than what was recommended in 1969. The long delay meant that new priorities dictated a change from what staff envisioned in 1969 and planned for again in the 1980s. The earlier proposals called for using the addition to expand the existing subject departments.[88] Instead, a variety of departments, many of them never envisioned in 1969, occupy the Annex. The H.L. Mencken Collection, EPFL Special Collections, the Maryland Department, the African-American Department, and a new technology center were selected, in large part, to take advantage of updated electrical and climate control capabilities. Opened in 2003, this unusual grouping of departments mixes the library's oldest and newest services, its most esoteric and its most populist within the most functionally up-to-date spaces.

Although this arrangement segregates the African American Collection from the primary library spaces, it also places it in close proximity to the technology center – one of the most heavily utilized areas of building. The location of the African American Collection on the north side of the building provides the room with diffuse, northern light

[88] *State Library Resource Center*, April 12, 1988, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

that is conducive to reading. However, the distance of the reading room from the information hub in the Central Hall leaves little opportunity to broadcast the collection to the uninitiated patron, a departure from the intention of facilitating connections between departments. (Illustration 3-32)

Painfully evident in the Annex is the convoluted navigation that inspired Joseph Wheeler's dislike of long corridors. These dimly lit hallways extend little invitation to travel from the main building to the reading rooms. These corridors represent a missed opportunity for the EPFL to showcase the services offered in the Annex. Two display cases contain exhibits from Special Collections and the African-American collection. (Illustration 3-33) The cases correspond in scale with those in the main building, but are too small to draw attention within the dark hallway. The important collections and the EPFL's exhibition tradition mandates better utilization of these hallways to connect patrons to the services offered within the Annex.

The architects selected materials for the Annex that successfully blend contemporary treatments with those in the historic portion of the building. The cherry woodwork used in the Annex complements the quality of the walnut furnishings in the Central Building while providing a more contemporary feel. However, missing from both the African American Collection and the Maryland Department are elements that reflect library materials or local interests.

The warmth of the interior spaces contrasts dramatically with the Annex's exterior. The imposing granite and limestone façade stretches halfway down Franklin Street. (Illustration 3-34) This elevation respects the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

in its utilization of materials and a common fenestration pattern to unite the two wings. The lower height of the Annex reflects its secondary importance to the 1932 Building. The return to nineteenth-century organizations that placed the reading rooms and their generous fenestrations on the upper story eliminates the connection between library activities and the community. Fulfilling the functional need to provide light to the shipping department, the pedestrian level windows offer little encouragement to consider the building public.

An architectural device known as a "link" (Illustration 3-35) connects the two structures while making it clear that they represent unique historical periods through its reduced scale and set back.[89] Inscribed on this link, the words of Baltimorean Frederick Douglas "Once You Learn to Read You Will Be Forever Free" attempt to convey the transformative power of the services offered within this building. [90] The distance from the sidewalk, as well as its placement behind an iron gate, hampers the potential to foster connection with the community. This quotation provides the sole indication that the Annex supports functions that might be of particular interest to the significant percent of the population of Baltimore that is African American.

Although exhibiting a different architectural character, the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH), planned at the same time as the Annex but constructed ten years earlier in 1993, contributes to the fortress-like impression of

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[89] Brent C. Brolin, *Architecture in Context: Fitting New Buildings with Old* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1980).

[90] Frederick Douglas was born into slavery on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He lived and worked in Baltimore before his escape from slavery to New Bedford, Massachusetts. "The Life of Frederick Douglas," National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/archive/frdo/fdlife.htm.

Franklin Street.[91] Stretching an entire city block with no public entries, the line of masonry dominates the landscape. (Illustration 3-36) This dramatic departure from Joseph Wheeler's vision highlights the importance of the historical building but at a cost to its role in the neighborhood, failing to provide the "eyes on the street" that create a safer experience for library patrons and neighborhood residents.[92]

The foreground spaces along the Annex are as unwelcoming as the structure's exterior. A few trees furnish the only greenery on a block dominated by grey concrete, limestone, and granite. The small courtyard adjacent to the Annex hints at potential use, but the locked iron gates limits its use to egress during an emergency. Barren of benches or other publicly occupiable space, the north elevation of the Central Library now blends functional requirements with architectural preservation goals but provides little invitation to the community to consider the space its own.

Current Physical Condition and Renovation Plans

The EPFL initiated plans to renovate the original building in 1994.[93] The architects completed construction documents but, because the Maryland legislature has yet to release the funds, no further work occurred.[94] The goals of the rehabilitation "to

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[91] The LBPH is a separate organization from the EPFL but the two share a common shipping and receiving department in the ground floor of the Annex.

[92] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), 35.

[93] Saint Ayers, Gross, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library Renovations and Additions* (Baltimore: Ayers, Saint, Gross, 1994), 3.

[94] The long delay between the development of these architectural plans and the construction means that some reevaluation of features and designs will be required. This will likely entail costly redevelopment of the construction documents. Wesley Wilson, (Director State Library Resource Center), Interview by Jennifer L. Flathman, Baltimore, March 27, 2007.

increase use by providing a broader range of services [and] maintain architectural quality and character of the existing facility in the presence of technological change"[95] remain critical thirteen years later. Library administrators reaffirm the architects' findings that "although growth is expected, it is now clear that an increased emphasis on technology and resource sharing will reduce stack needs and increase computer access needs as electronic storage and delivery of information increases in the next century."[96] Although book storage is now a secondary concern, finding the balance between conveying historic character and manifesting the patron-oriented services is a considerable challenge.

In the Central Hall, the replacement of the card catalog with computers offers the principal evidence that seventy-five years have passed since opening day. (Illustration 3-37) Elsewhere in the building, significant alteration to the decorative treatments occurred, primarily during the 1950s modernizations. The EPFL hopes to replace the flourescent lighting installed in 1958 with new fixtures that "more closely approximate the original."[97] There are other plans to repaint the stenciling in the subject rooms and refurbish the original furnishings.[98]

The goal of expanding user's access to technology throughout the building remains critical. The EPFL opted to place computing centers and other services requiring significant infrastructure investments in the Annex. These decisions reduced the

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[95] Ayers, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library Renovations and Additions*. 3.

[96] Ibid., 7. "Book Value: Administrators and Activists Battle over the Soul of the Pratt," *Baltimore City Paper*, May 6, 1998; Wesley Wilson interview.

[97] Ayers, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library Renovations and Additions*, 14.

[98] Wesley Wilson interview.

implementation cost while protecting the architectural fabric of the original building.[99] The long delay in the renovation means that certain work called for in 1994 may no longer be required due to emerging technologies.[100] In 2007 the EPFL adapted the Annex to accommodate wireless technology. If this technology is successfully incorporated into the Central Building, some infrastructure planned in 1994 to accommodate computing may no longer be required. However, the long waiting lists for computer use indicate that many patrons lack access to personal equipment, necessitating the increased availability of workstations. The provision of these technologies is essential to fostering full participation in an increasingly digital world, a situation acknowledged by the EPFL.

The most critical issues identified by the 1994 report and EPFL administrators are updating its mechanical, plumbing, electrical, and life safety services. Considered pressing in the 1986 and 1994 plans, they remain a source of grave concern for staff and administrators. Fire control systems do not meet current codes. The upgrades to the HVAC system in 1958 are no longer sufficient to cool the building during the Baltimore summers. The excessive temperatures are potentially damaging to the collection and also discourage patrons from utilizing EPFL services. The most intrusive aspects of the infrastructure improvements, creating space for new plumbing and wiring, will be accomplished by tunneling around the basement stacks to ensure the visual integrity of the public spaces. Other efforts to maintain the character of the historic building include

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[99] Ayers, Saint, Gross, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library Renovations and Additions*, 5.

[100] Wesley Wilson interview.

utilizing existing ductwork for the new HVAC system.[101] Addressing infrastructure is undoubtedly essential if the EPFL is to protect the historic building and continue to provide a safe environment for its patrons. The plans proposed by the EPFL reveal a sensitivity to the original design that, when implemented, will ensure that the institution can operate in a building that visually is little changed from its 1932 appearance.

Conclusion

Joseph Wheeler aspired to create a building that departed from the design motifs and spatial organizations associated with earlier public library buildings. The open plan, Exhibition Windows, and street level entry changed the image of the American Public Library.[102] Esoteric decorative treatments and assumptions of patron behavior, based upon nineteenth century class values, limited the intention to create a "modern" library responsive to its constituents' interests. The EPFL resolved many of these limitations through shifts in service and collection policies that will be discussed in the next chapter.

The building retains a remarkably high level of integrity of architectural fabric, despite renovations and the construction of a large addition. Unfortunately, the alterations show greater respect for the aesthetic fabric than for the original intention to foster a connection with the community. Despite the sensitivity of proposed rehabilitation plans, the tangible connection among architecture, services, and the community is in jeopardy. If the EPFL is to continue its role as a provider of an essential social service, then the future planning for the building must reaffirm the connection -- not just to the

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[101] Ibid.

[102] Oehlerts, 133

institution's past --but its present impact on the local cultural landscape. Changes must respect not just the original aesthetic choices but also the potential of new work to communicate the valuable services housed within the building. Strategies for such changes will be addressed in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER IV

RENEWING THE "MODERN LIBRARY": ADJUSTING SERVICES TO THE EVOLVING CULTURAL CONTEXT

> … the library is to some librarians a collection of books, it is to others a dynamic organization whose high function is to render a service … To such librarians, the community and its people, by classes and groups, and even the individual men and women who do or who do not read books, are of as much interest as the books themselves.[1]

Joseph Wheeler brought to the EPFL a vision of library service attuned to the needs of the community. This service philosophy was integrated into the Central Building through such features as the Exhibition Windows and the placement of service counters. Both the building and the collection policies instituted by Wheeler reflected the belief that "a public library is not only a university but it is a great distributing plant, an information service plant, and a business in which the taxpayers' money is invested from year to year.[2] During Wheeler's tenure, the EPFL expanded its collection to provide technical data to inventors, financial reports to entrepreneurs, and information that supported the working person in advancing in his/her career.[3] The acquisition of books and other learning resources reflected feedback from surveys and community studies as

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[1] Joseph L. Wheeler, *The Library and the Community: Increased Book Service through Library Publicity Based on Community Studies* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1924), 9.

[2] "The Business of a Library," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, September 15, 1928.

[3] Joseph L. Wheeler, "The Crowd, the Individual, and the Library," *Atlantic Bookshelf* 1928.

to which materials were currently of value to the patrons.[4] This patron-oriented service philosophy guided the EPFL in adapting its operations to the changing social climate of Baltimore, continually redefining and strengthening the institution's position as a civic nucleus.

1933-1946: A New Vision of Library Service

The EPFL opened its new Central Building in 1933 during the height of the Great Depression in Baltimore.[5] Although budget restrictions forced the library to close on Sunday and to limit the use of the elevators to the infirmed, the EPFL continued to adapt the collection and develop programs that reflected the social issues of the period.[6] The EPFL updated the "Popular Library," the collection that housed the most regularly requested items on open shelves, with materials for the frugal on canning and preserving, vegetable gardening, bee-keeping, and poultry raising.[7] Patrons requested information on applying for patents from the Business and Economics department.[8] Interest in the Roosevelt Administration's relief programs inspired the publication of the "Balance Sheet of the New Deal," an annotated bibliography describing books and materials

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[4] Joseph L. Wheeler, *The Reorganization of a Large Public Library: Ten Year Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1926-1935* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1937), 45.

[5] Jo Ann E. Argersinger, *Toward a New Deal in Baltimore: People and Government in the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 3.

[6] "Library Resumes Sunday Opening," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, September 30, 1937.

[7] *Baltimore Sun*, October 29, 1933.

[8] Wheeler, Enoch Pratt Free Library, *The Reorganization of a Large Public Library: Ten Year Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1926-1935* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1937), 44.

critiquing those programs.[9] The Reference Department was in demand both inside and outside of the building, with telephone service becoming so popular that the EPFL expanded its capacity from one line and 3 extensions at the time that the building in 1933 to twenty extensions within three years.[10]

Developing New Library Patrons

The EPFL, like many libraries of the time, believed that developing a new generation of users was best accomplished by introducing patrons to reading at an early age.[11] Story hours and puppet shows in the new children's room became popular community events.[12] The library developed a Work with Schools department adjacent to the Children's Room to provide staff with easy access to the collection.[13] Bringing books directly to the schools to circulate to children was an arly outreach program[14] The EFPL was one of the first libraries in the United States to recognize the gap between children's and adult's services and to target programs specifically to teenagers.[15] Unlike the libraries

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[9] *Baltimore Evening Sun*, July 22, 1936.

[10] Wheeler, *The Reorganization of a Large Public Library Ten Year Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library 1937), 44.

[11]The expansion of children's programs in public libraries developed in response to the growth in children's books and the desire to expand library use. Elizabeth Henry Gross, *Public Library Service to Children* (Dobbs Ferry N.Y.: Oceana Publications, 1967), 7.

[12] Library, 83.

[13] *Guide to the Enoch Pratt Free Library*, 1947, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[14] Wheeler, *The Reorganization of a Large Public Library*,79.

[15] The Y program and its success between 1933 and 1967is analyzed in detail in Braverman's work. Miriam Braverman, *Youth, Society, and the Public Library* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1979), 179 - 241.

in Cleveland and New York that segregated their teenagers in special rooms, the EPFL placed their Y Program in a corner in the Popular Library. This strategy reflected Wheeler's belief that young people needed special materials but responded positively to being included in the same spaces of the library as adults. Here, librarians hosted discussions on library materials targeted to teenagers. The positive response to Y Program led the EPFL to extend the services to all of the branches in the system.

The War Effort

During World War II most of the population of Baltimore took part in the defense effort through either military service or employment in the plants of Martin Aircraft, Bethlehem Steel, Maryland Drydock, and Western Electric.[16] The EPFL contributed by acquiring materials that covered aeronautics, shipbuilding, and machine trades. The library staff developed a collection of scientific materials to help employees from Martin Aircraft in creating a new synthetic used in the production of bombers.[17] Annotated reading lists on the countries involved in the conflict assisted patrons in understanding where their loved ones were stationed. Gasoline rationing inspired the Y Program to use a horse-drawn book wagon to bring materials to areas with large "disadvantaged

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[16] Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980, 1997), 348.

[17] Joseph L. Wheeler, *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Report 1942-45* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1945).

populations."[18] The Central Building was drafted into service to provide an air raid shelter in the basement stacks.[19]

Table 4.1 Central Building Use Statistics 1926- 1945

	Materials Lent	Registrants	Service Contacts	Central Users	Telephone Contacts
1926	194,085				
1927	383,669				
1928	479,789	10,570			
1929	494,725	10,464,			
1930	483,350	10,452			
1931	551,897	12,665			
1932	655,613	12,537			
1933	834,260	21,224			
1934	816,484	16,575			
1935	804,184	16,185			
1936	796,885	18,715	13,896		10,662
1937	815,361	19,117	12,952		8,737
1938*	908,966	20,363	8223		
1939	894,526	20,509	5670		
1940	901,768	20,622			
1941	797,561	19,146			
1942	730,290	19,146			
1943	616,388	16,535			
1944	627,091	16,603			
1945	676,855	19,197			

Source: Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Reports. Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1929-1945.
*shaded area indicates period of peak use during this era

The programs implemented by the EPFL immediately before the construction of the new Central Building had a dramatic impact upon circulation. The new services and space available in the building contributed to a continued rise in the use of the library. As

[18] Ibid.

[19] *Baltimore Evening Sun*, November 2, 1942.

evidenced by the lending statistics (Table 4.1), the library was a haven to the population of Baltimore during the depression with peak use occurring between 1938-1940. Although use of the library declined during World War II, due in part, to the population's preoccupation with the war effort, the EPFL continued to adjust its programs to changing community circumstances. The EPFL built a collection and service program recognized throughout the world for its quality and innovation.[20]

1945- 1970: The Rise of Outreach Programs

In the post-war period, the EPFL developed outreach programs that addressed social issues within the city that supplemented more traditional services. Providing access to new technologies became an established practice in this period. As the composition of the population changed, the library addressed issues of race in its collections and programs. Despite these changes in service, the EPFL remained focused on reaching the "Baltimoreans who are studying more and reading in a more serious and purposeful way," proclaiming itself as "the university of the people."[21]

Technology

The end of the war brought a new concern about the impact of technology on society. The library held educational programs in 1947 on Atomic Energy that included a booklist entitled "You and the Atom," displays in the Exhibition Windows, and a lecture

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[20] "Renown of Pratt Library Spreads to Soviet Russia," *Baltimore Sun*, February 24, 1935; "Dr. Wheeler's Book Lists Now Go All over Globe," *Baltimore Sun*, June 4, 1939.

[21] *The Library Is a University*, September 1962, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

series "Atomic Energy: Force of Life or Chaos?" in the Central Hall.[22] Despite the uncertainty over the potential impacts, the EPFL incorporated new technologies into the collection. Recordings of classical music and public addresses by political figures were available for use in soundproof rooms adjacent to the Fine Arts Collection or at home.[23] In 1949 the EPFL established a department that lent films to churches and other civic groups. Films for children were added to the collection in 1953.[24] A 1961 article in the *Baltimore Sun* celebrated the EPFL's new service that "will make available to patrons a high-speed duplicating machine for reproducing printed pages or pictures from books or periodicals."[25] The adoption of new technologies began, in part, as an effort to maintain the relevance of library services to a public that was increasingly turning to television as its source of information and entertainment.

Urban Change

The return of soldiers from War World II brought about dramatic changes in the urban fabric of Baltimore. Veterans took advantage of low cost loans from the Federal Housing Authority to purchase homes in the surrounding suburbs of Baltimore County.[26] Federal regulations restricting African Americans from participating in these programs further contributed to the social and racial stratification in the city.

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[22] Kate Coplan, "Atomic Energy Education Project," *Library Journal* 72 (1947): 233.

[23] *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Report 1953* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1954), 3.

[24] "Pleasant Tour of Library," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, February 28, 1967.

[25] "Pratt Offers New Service," *Baltimore Sun*, October 27, 1961.

[26] Deborah R. Weinger, "From New Deal Promise to Postmodern Defeat: Two Baltimore Housing Projects," in *From Mobtown to Charm City: Papers from the Baltimore History Conference* ed. Thomas Hollowak Jessica Elfenbein, and John R. Breihan, 21 (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2002).

The library and other civic leaders grew concerned over the areas of blight developing to the south and west of the Central Building as its traditional patrons abandoned the inner city for the suburbs.[27] The EPFL's Civics and Sociology department responded to questions on city planning and urban renewal. A large model of the proposed Charles Center redevelopment plans was a popular attraction in the Central Hall.[28] The library developed booklists and a lecture series on housing, traffic, and transportation issues.[29]

In the early 1960s, the EPFL began to shift from its philosophy "that providing good reading would assist in reducing the social disorganization of the slum dweller's life by providing him with a recreational and useful activity."[30] The library examined its programs for ways to better serve its disadvantaged patrons.[31] A grant from the Deiches Library Fund allowed researchers from the Johns Hopkins University department of Social Relations to investigate the efficacy of the EPFL. The studies reviewed service to adults, use by students, service to the disadvantaged, and space at the Central Building.[32] The findings published in 1976 confirmed the substantial challenges facing the EPFL in

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[27] Marion E. Warren and Michael P. McCarthy, *The Living City: Baltimore's Charles Center & Inner Harbor Development* (Baltimore Maryland Historical Society 2002), 7.

[28] Charles Center is a large scale urban renewal project implemented in Baltimore in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Charles Center redevelopment is discussed in more detail in the Chapter V of this thesis. *Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library for the Year 1958* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1958).

[29] Edwin Castagna, *Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library for the Year 1961* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1961).

[30] Philip Arthur Kalisch, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library: A Social History* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1969), 202.

[31] Castagna.

[32] Ibid.

light of the fact that "there are no less than 390,000 adults in the city of Baltimore who are not high school graduates. … The adult with limited education and low income has become the rule rather than the exception in this city."[33] The report advised familiar strategies such as developing bibliographies for "readers with limited cultural and educational background … distributed through churches, and other community groups."[34] Other recommendations included addressing the issues of poverty, illiteracy, and race through programs that targeted children and others unfamiliar with library services.

In 1965, the EPFL initiated the Community Action Program (CAP) to meet the needs of urban patrons unaccustomed to library use. A novel component of CAP was the "open-minded use of whatever media of communication (books, films, tapes, filmstrips, pictures, teaching machines, games, music, etc.)" interested patrons rather than materials deemed as suitable for "serious" library users.[35] Funded in part by federal grants from the Economic Opportunity Act, CAP utilized outlets in Fells Point[36] and other targeted areas of the city to introduce patrons to the services available at the Central and other

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[33] Lowell Arthur Martin, *Baltimore Reaches Out: Library Service to the Disadvantaged* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1967), 40.

[34] Ibid., 51.

[35] Edwin Castagna, *Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library for the Year 1965* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1965).

[36]Fells Point is a dock-side, working class community where Edgar Allen Poe died in 1849. It was targeted as an area of blight during the 1960s. The community successfully fought urban renewal plans during the 1960s that would have demolished a large portion of the housing stock in favor of a freeway. Today, the community is fighting efforts to include it in "historic" zoning regulations that are perceived as favoring gentrification. These two very different strategies reflect the respective eras: solve social problems by eradicating the physical environment where the problems exist, and freeze change by establishing heritage districts that celebrate a period when the problems did not exist. "Point Break," *Baltimore City Paper*, February 21, 2007.

branches.[37] Staff participants recognized that changes were necessary to overcome the perception of the library as an institution oriented to the needs of the "middle class."[38] Recruiting staff living in the neighborhood was important to addressing unemployment in the area and increasing the local population's comfort with utilizing CAP services.[39] Patrons could take materials home without the formal charging procedures viewed by many as intimidating because of the requirement to provide personal information. CAP also stocked its centers with "paperbacks, so that for each dollar spent a larger number of books can be bought. In addition . . . the paperback or pamphlet is less formidable to people not accustomed to libraries and books."[40] Programs such as CAP were successful because they recognized that the *ways* in which the EPFL addressed its patrons was as important as the materials themselves in establishing the value of the institution to new groups of users.

Racial Issues

The response by the EPFL to issues of race changed significantly between the early 1950s and the close of the 1960s. In 1954, in reaction to the Supreme Court's ruling on desegregation, the "librarians featured the booklist, 'Americans All,' pointing out the contribution of all races, nationalities, and creeds. At the request of the Baltimore Urban League the Education Department compiled a guide to books on how communities

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[37] Castagna, *Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library for the Year 1965*.

[38] Evelyn Levy, "What Can I Do? Library Service to the Un- and under-Employed," *American Library Association, ASD Newsletter*, Summer 1968.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Martin, 24.

'integrated' white and Negro pupils. . . . Plans were afoot for a series of meetings on intergroup relations to be sponsored jointly by the library and other agencies and aimed at helping community leaders to ease the period of transition."[41] The EPFL viewed itself as an experienced leader in addressing racial issues. Amy Greenway, Director at the time, believed the library's history of "sixty-eight years of service to all groups side by side, in the words of Enoch Pratt, 'to rich and poor, without distinction of race or color' could stand as an example of harmonious intergroup relations."[42] The strategy of integration is evidenced by the choice to include books on Jackie Robinson along with more traditional subjects like Davie Crockett in the 1955 list of featured children's books.[43]

In the 1960s the need for a more active response to racial issues in the city became apparent. Riots erupted in Baltimore two days after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King in 1968.[44] The library responded by making meeting rooms available to the community and placing exhibits honoring Dr. King in the Central Hall.[45] An internal review of the response to the riots and the current social climate in Baltimore highlighted "the need … for concentrated effort on giving library staff a broader understanding of urban change and its implications for the individual. . . . Staff training for working with inner city residents" was perceived as essential if the library were to

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[41] *Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library for the Year 1954* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1954), 3.

[42] Ibid., 3

[43] *Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library for the Year 1955* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1955).

[44] Jane Motz, *Baltimore Civil Disorder April 1968* (Baltimore: American Friends Service Committee, 1968), 5.

[45] Edwin Castagna, *Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library for the Fiscal Year 1967-68* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1968), 5.

respond effectively to its constituents.[46] The EPFL was one of many organizations that recognized the need to rethink the ways in which its programs worked with the community. Throughout the city, progressive voices were expressing concern that "aside from the profound fact that most of the new programs aimed at correcting inner city ills have never had adequate funds, the most important missing ingredient . . . is the way these programs elude real citizen control even though they all claim to have this as a major operating feature."[47] Although the changes in the EPFL collection would not be seen until the 1970s, an important shift in philosophy had occurred from one of celebrating examples of integration to one that more fully recognizing the history and challenges facing the city's population and its different voices. Circulation and registrations at the Central Building in this period spiked in 1961 before beginning to decline throughout the 1960s and 1970s as show in Table 4.2. Although the EPFL did not track the number of users of the Central Building at this time, circulation statistics indicate the decreasing perception by the community of the library's relevance to its needs. Baltimore reflected the national trends of social dissatisfaction in an era of disillusionment that began with the shooting of John F. Kennedy, increased during the Vietnam War, and ended explosively with the assassinations of Dr. King and Bobby Kennedy. The growth of Baltimore's African-American population accompanied a rise of militism in the Black community and rejection of established social institutions

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[46] Ibid.

[47] Motz, 35.

nationwide.[48] These trends would continue as budget crises and social unrest in the city continued during the 1970s.

Table 4.2 Central Building Use Statistics 1952 - 1969

	Materials Lent	Registrants	Service Contacts	Central Users	Telephone Contacts
1952	605,457		127,968		38,807
1953	623,023		122,463		
1954	634,021	52,111	122,577	547,635	44,337
1955	641,915	51,299	137,416		48,005
1956	581,068	52,089	135,815		51,446
1957	682,251	52,661	147,923		55,884
1958	644,053	54,318	147,730		60,612
1959	652,633	51,255	163,760		80.985
1960	711,549	52,204	187,764		88,967
1961	725,463	50,461			80,985
1962	678,664	19,336	189,673		87,005
1963	689,660	19,847	245,432		96,670
1964	686,186	20,246	564,975		147,593
1965	699,193	16,807	613,644		161,370
1966	699,193	16,807	613,644		161, 370
1967	675,459	24,643	552,654		169,870
1968	625,519	20,285	371,546		190,530
1969	612,652	18,591	374,494		207,779

Source: Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Reports. Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1952-1969; [1] Kenneth Chen Shirman, Baltimore Department of Planning, *Pratt Library Planning Study*, (Baltimore: Baltimore Department of Planning, 1979).
*shaded area indicates period of peak use during this era

1970-1989: Bolstering the Social Response Despite Limited Funds

The EPFL emerged from the strife at the end of the 1960s with a desire to actively engage the growing social problems of the city, making it one of many systems in the United States rethinking library services. Declining urban centers and the success of

[48] Harold A. McDougall, *Black Baltimore: A New Theory of Community* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 57.

branch libraries in fulfilling basic services led to a national questioning of the need for central libraries.[49] To reestablish its relevance, the EPFL joined institutions across the country in developing programs that addressed changing urban conditions. The library developed career services that provided job information exclusively for teens. Participants in the College Learners' Advisory Service (CLAS) took courses at the EPFL and earned academic credits through local colleges.[50] Programs looked for ways that the patrons could directly influence library services, such as including school groups in the creation of murals on the south wall of the Children's Room.[51]

African-American Collection

One of the most positive steps the EPFL took in the 1970s was the establishment of a collection that reflected the history of the black population that now comprised over half of the city's population. Previous efforts to appeal to this community had been primarily through annotated bibliographies like "The Blacklist" that featured titles by black authors.[52] In 1971, the EPFL began to identify these materials specifically in the catalog and publicized their availability.[53] Libraries around the United States developed collections reflecting the contributions of blacks not just to literature but to the

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[49] Paxton P. Price, *Future of the Main Urban Library: Report of a Conference in Chicago at the Chicago Public Library, October 26-27, 1978* (Las Cruces, NM: Urban Libraries Council, 1978).

[50] "Pratt Offers Formal Education," *Baltimore News American*, December 14, 1976.

[51] *Enoch Pratt's Gift: From Town Library to State Resource Center*, 1971, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[52] Enoch Pratt Free Library. et al., *The Blacklist*, (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1975).; Edwin Castagna, *Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library for the Fiscal Year 1968-69* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1969).

[53] "A New Emphasis at Pratt; Books on the Black Experience," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, March 31, 1971.

development of local communities.[54] Founded in 1973, the EPFL's African-American collection included books, pamphlets, broadsides, newspapers, serials, recordings, microforms, bibliographies and other resources related to the Black experience in Baltimore and Maryland.[55] The materials were initially only available by special request until space was created within the EPFL's Maryland Department.[56] The collection was then only available for use within the library rather than circulating to the public. Despite these restrictions, the collection was the first of its kind available in the State of Maryland. Johns Hopkins and other regional academic libraries were developing similar services, but they were only open to scholars associated with the institution. Despite the inclusive nature of the holdings, warnings that the "collection is intended primarily for the use of serious readers" on promotional pamphlets likely limited its power to draw more diverse users to the library.[57]

New Programs Despite Limited Funding

For the EPFL, funding shortages as well as demographic shifts mandated changes in service programs. Recognition that a large portion of the population could not read meant that if the EPFL "were to continue to be seen by the city as worthy of the public money contributed for its support, it would have to develop programs to reach those

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[54] Edith Maureen Fisher, "Libraries: An Ethnic Approach," *The Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States*, 1976.

[55] *Enoch Pratt's Gift: From Town Library to State Resource Center*, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[56] The Maryland Department holds material relating to the history and development of the state. The collection includes city directories, photographs, books on the region, materials to assist in researching genealogy, maps, city planning documents, code information, and other local resources.

[57] *Afro-American Collection*, 1973, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

people who weren't being reached in the traditional way through books."[58] Despite the recognized need for new programs, financial support continued to diminish in the wake of the city's declining tax base and nationwide economic recessions. "In 1972, and again in 1975, 1976, 1977, and 1978 Baltimore city reduced its support to the Pratt. In 1975, alone, that reduction amounted to over $400,000."[59] These drastic budget cuts put severe limitations on the ability of the EPFL to develop new services.

If the close of the 1970s was a period of gloom for the EPFL, the 1980s held even fewer reasons for optimism. Articles in the *News American* questioned the library's ability to survive amidst new budget cuts and low staff morale.[60] The Becker-Hayes study, performed in 1980, confirmed that the long anticipated addition to the Central Building would not be constructed in the near future. The report questioned the continued need for a Central Library and went so far as recommending moving the Popular and Children's collections to another downtown site. Despite these difficulties, the staff continued to make changes that attempted to respond to the changing community.

An important step was an expansion of the African-American collection into permanent space on the second floor.[61] Black History Month and other programs attempted to attract a more diverse clientele to the library.[62] Federal library development

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[58] "Pratt Has a Lot More Than Books," *Baltimore Sun*, December 11, 1977.

[59] Ibid.

[60] "The Pratt Library: Can It Serve and Survive?" *Baltimore News American*, February 16, 1981.

[61] Eric Garland, "Has Baltimore Put Its Library on the Shelf?" *Baltimore Magazine*, February 1983.

[62] *Celebrate Black History Month with the Enoch Pratt Free Library*, 1985, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

funds allowed the EPFL to offer adult education classes and a literacy resource center staffed by volunteer tutors, broadening the educational mission and role in the community. The EPFL partnered with the University of Maryland's career planning services department in offering "structured help in contacting job leads, writing effective resumes, making telephone contacts, setting up appointments and preparing for interviews."[63] The EPFL's new focus was not always met with acceptance. The library was criticized for duplicating the work of other social service agencies rather than focusing on its traditional mission of providing books. Library Director Anna Curry[64] defended these changes as the continued development of public libraries from large-scale interpretations of the private studies of wealthy collectors and elite scholars to patron oriented service centers.[65]

> As the community has shifted and become more elderly, less educated, more black, we faced a choice … we could either become a more elitist institution and embrace a smaller and smaller part of the population or we could become more responsive to the needs of others. [66]

The willingness to change and adjust its services can be seen in the establishment of the African-American Collection, CLAS, and partnerships with other social service agencies. However, minimal funding from the city severely limited the impact of these programs.

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[63] *Join Our Job Club*, 1983, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[64] Appointed in 1981, Anna Curry was the first African American Director of the EPFL. Subsequent directors have all been African-American. "History of the Library," Enoch Pratt Free Library, http://www.prattlibrary.org/about/index.aspx?id=1604.

[65] Garland.

[66] Ibid.

The declining use of the Central Building throughout the 1980s (Table 4.3) cannot be attributed to any single factor, but the library's decline was undoubtedly heightened by the inability of the local government, facing its own budget crises, to provide critical funding for an institution struggling to adapt to its changing community.

Table 4.3 Central Building Use Statistics 1970-1989

	Materials Lent	Registrants	Service Contacts	Central Users	Telephone Contacts
1970	556,398*	18,446	364,426		
1971	567,902		382,879		47,662
1972	499,560		363,574		41,481
1973	504,736				
1974	492,426	29,713	401,348		183,349
1975	498,234	28,505	383,398		225,110
1977	478, 754	28,306	92,133	530,156	228,839
1978	463,910	28,934	108,403	550,834	215,914
1979	483,363	28,56	110,640	547,635	226,761
1980	501,202	30,097	120,243	540,207	226,761
1981	491,325	29,314	125,309	513,839	276,213
1982	513,554	30,547	151,245	527,256	325,653
1983	497,835	30,481	153,588	502,925	311,379
1984	488,334		156,473	505,418	42,592
1985	378,586	26,881	158,682	450,302	
1986	376,119	24,511	140,824	400,915	226,545
1987	433,390	28,546	144,485	476,270	219,696
1988	Not available				
1989	436,972	29,813		421,424	

Source: *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Reports*. Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1970-1989.
*shaded area indicates period of peak use during this era

1990-1999: Reaching the Non-Traditional Library User

There was perhaps reason for optimism that funds would be directed to the EPFL when Mayor Kurt Schmoke began to promote Baltimore as "The City that Reads". Hoping to receive additional funding from a city government that estimated thirty percent

of its constituents as functionally illiterate, the EPFL responded with a saying of its own: "the city that reads needs a library that leads."[67] In addition to the slogan, the EPFL developed a plan that responded to its "two major customer bases - residents of the city and those statewide who relied on the EPFL as the designated State Library Resource Center.[68] The report recognized that the library's challenges were exacerbated by a weakened public school system where few of the schools' libraries met state standards and where at least forty percent of the students who entered 9th grade failed to graduate from high school.[69] The library continued to redefine its scope of service to "target specific customer groups as users of Pratt's specialized collections and professional expertise," while continuing to support the traditional library patron.[70] The EPFL's goals included assisting in the city's effort to fight illiteracy, fostering partnerships with the public schools, expanding access to library services through improved technology, and increasing long-term demand for the library through children's services. In addition to its internal planning, the library sponsored town meetings to seek input on ways to improve service. A critical component of these meetings was the inclusion of local community

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[67] Lavinia Edmunds, "Book," *Warfield'*, January 1991.

[68] The Enoch Pratt Free Library was designated by the State of Maryland as the State Library Resource Center in 1971. This arrangement encouraged the sharing of materials between larger systems and smaller libraries in the rural areas. The funding provided by the state has been an increasingly large portion of the EPFL's budget. *Baltimore's Pratt Library: What's in It for You?*, 1979, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[69] *Enoch Pratt Free Library: A Plan for the 1990s*, January 1989, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[70] *A Plan for the 1990s.*

members along with librarians from Detroit, Washington D.C., and Philadelphia whose institutions were facing similar challenges.[71]

In the mid 1990s, the library began to receive better funding from the city and state. The City Department of Finance reversed proposed budget cuts "under the weight of public protest and media comment. Mayor Schmoke made the effort to provide funding; his decision was supported by the City Council."[72] Although limited budgets remained a serious issue, the additional funding enabled the EPFL to act on its goals. As identified in its 1990 plan, many of these service goals focused upon incorporating advanced technology into library services. In 1995, the library enhanced the Juvenile section with computer facilities and staff to assist students with their homework.[73]

Growth of Digital Services

The emphasis on incorporating new technology continued in the adult collections with the establishment of Sailor. This project initially provided the infrastructure to allow shared access within Maryland libraries to databases and cd-roms. The service was expanded to provide free dial-up internet access to all Maryland residents.[74] The library community acknowledged the early successes of the Sailor Project in March 1995 by awarding the EPFL with the James Madison Award for promoting the freedom of

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[71] *Town Meeting City Libraries in Crisis What to Do About the Pratt*, 1992, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[72] *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Report 1995/1996* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1996).

[73] Ibid.

[74]Sailor is not an acronym, but a term chosen to reflect the region's maritime history and metaphors about navigating the digital world. "Sailor Maryland's Public Information Network," Enoch Pratt Free Library, State Library Resource Center, http://www.sailor.lib.md.us/sailor/preface.html.

information.[75] The limited growth in funding meant that the impact of these programs would not be felt for several years.

Table 4.4 Central Building Use Statistics 1991-1999

	Materials Lent	Registrants	Service Contacts	Central Users	Telephone Contacts
1991	426,384*	27,824	528,055	422,515	223,247
1992	425,520	25,520	528,035	549,203	244,029
1993	371,438	19,150	501,870	503,753	216,582
1994	397,596	21,739	456,648	479,178	196,116
1995	352,022	20,981	470,756	423,349	201,849
1996	336,593	20,771	646,035	410,948	228,299
1997	339,041	17,902	676,376		228,427
1998	359,959	21,984	641,758	420,619	234,985
1999	322,040	19,205	627,036		221,326

Source: Enoch Pratt Free Library Fiscal Year Statistical Reports. Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1991-2006.
*shaded area indicates period of peak use during this era

2000-2007: New Avenues for Learning and Participation

The new millennium appears to have ushered in better times for the EPFL. The Central Building was open seven days a week for the first time since the early 1990s.[76] In addition to opening two new program areas at the Central Building, the EPFL expanded its services to the community through digital connections and programs to children and

[75] American Library Association," Recipients of the James Madison Awards," http://www.ala.org/ala/washoff/washevents/freedomofinfo/recipientsmadison.html..

[76] "A Fabulous Return for the Pratt Library," *Baltimore Sun*, September 06, 2000.

young adults. The EPFL continued to make community input a priority through town meetings and focus groups.[77]

Extending Beyond the Library Walls Through Digital Services

The library made advances in expanding access for its patrons to digital services. The EPFL offers Live Homework Help, an online service that connects students to tutors in math, science, social studies and English. This service recognized the needs of the growing Latino population by providing Spanish-speaking tutors.[78] Recognizing the value of its digital infrastructure to promote broader access to ephemera collections and cooperation among heritage groups, the EPFL scanned, cataloged, and publicly hosted items from the Pratt Library, the Fire Museum of Maryland, Maryland Historical Society, and Library of Congress.[79] What was initially developed to commemorate the centennial of the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904, expanded into the Maryland Digital Cultural Heritage Program that now provides scanning and hosting services to libraries and other heritage facilities throughout Maryland. The service received accolades for the quality and design of the web pages.[80] These digital programs maintain a strong connection between the library and its traditional users -- researchers, historians, and school children

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[77] *Building a Stronger Library System for Baltimore Public Meetings on the Future of the Enoch Pratt Free Library*, 2000, Maryland Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[78] Enoch Pratt Free Library, "Live Homework Help," Enoch Pratt Free Library, http://www.prattlibrary.org/home/teensIndex.aspx.

[79] *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Report 2003/2004* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 2004).

[80] The Internet Scout Project, "The Scout Report," The Internet Scout Project, University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Letters and Science, http://scout.wisc.edu/Reports/ScoutReport/2006/scout-060505-re.php.

with access to technology. The EPFL also recently implemented wireless computer access in the Annex and plans to expand this service throughout the Central Building.

The decision by the EPFL to incorporate digital technologies has not been viewed with complete acceptance by the public. Members of the community questioned the use of computers at the expense of established library services.[81] Despite concern that traditional needs have been ignored in favor of glossy technologies, one of the most heavily used areas of the Central Building is the computer lab in the Annex. When the library opens each day there is a line of patrons waiting outside of the building to sign up for computer time. Wireless connections and services that enable patrons outside of the building to access the collection increase the use of library materials without the need for expansion or other alterations to the historic building. These services also assist the library in reaching Baltimore's growing senior population.[82] The waiting lines for publicly provided computers indicate that this is a critical service for the EPFL to expand.

Service to Children

The EPFL continues to implement programs to prepare a new generation to be users of the library and more effective citizens. The space in the new children's garden allows the EPFL to offer new programs for children.[83] "Mother Goose on the Loose" provides children and parents with training in skills that prepare children to attend school,

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[81] Jane Shipley, "Why Baltimore Needs a New Public Library," http://baltimorechronicle.com/library2_sep01.shtml.

[82] Baltimore Department of Planning, *Census News 2000*, (Baltimore: Baltimore Department of Planning 2002), http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/planning/census/censusnews2.pdf.

[83] "Pratt Library Gets Heart Transplant," *Baltimore Sun*, 2000.

including sitting still and recognizing word and melody patterns.[84] In 2005 over 12,000 children and caregivers took part in the Mother Goose programs.[85] The state education department praises the program as being "exactly what Baltimore's kids need" before entering school.[86] Again, adjusting programs to the current needs of the population, rather than accumulating additional materials, proved critical to the EPFL's development in this period.

Participatory Rather Than Remedial Outreach

Another innovative program targets teenagers in an effort to develop job skills and promote involvement with the library into adulthood. The Community Youth Corps (CYC) is a multi-year internship program for teenagers.[87] The EPFL created the CYC based upon feedback from focus groups and surveys of teens, parents, and professionals on how to encourage teen use of the EPFL. Developed in partnership with the Baltimore Public Schools, the program allows participants to fulfill the seventy-five hours of community service required for graduation. Coordinators attribute increased use of the EPFL by teenagers to positive feedback from CYC participants to their peers about their experiences at the library.[88] Contributing to the success is that ongoing "program

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[84] "A Troubling Trend in Education: Baltimore's Kids Are Ill-Prepared to Learn Even before They Get to School," *Baltimore City Paper*, November 10, 2004; *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Report 2002/2003* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 2003).

[85] *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Report 2005* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 2005).

[86] "A Troubling Trend in Education."

[87] *Enoch Pratt Free Library Annual Report 2002/2003*.

[88] Deborah D. Taylor, "Community Youth Corps: Teens as Library Resources," in *From Outreach to Equity Innovative Models of Library Policy and Practice*, ed. Robin Osborne, 45-47. Chicago: American Library Association, 2004.

planning involves interviews and focus groups with teens, parents, youth workers, and library staff."[89] The suggestions of CYC members and other teens led to workshops on personal safety, painting and drawing, and financial aid for college. CYC interns also participate in "Baltimore Speaks Out," where they learn to use audio-visual equipment and to develop collaborative public service announcements.[90] Employment opportunities with the EPFL are available to participants in the program. The CYC is an effective tool not just for increasing the use of the EPFL, but also for developing skills that can be used outside of the library.

Table 4.5 Central Building Use Statistics 2000-2006

	Materials Lent	Registrants	Service Contacts	Central Users	Telephone Contacts
2000	323,365	18,039	607,715	389,396	197,317
2001	370,031	18,055	703,627	440,111	204,046
2002	341,122	18,558	733,935	456,690	235,190
2003	444,623	18,004	826,507		240,423
2004	501,807	20,446	851,029	483,673	220,427
2005	518,204	20,611	773,821	463,306	188,399
2006*	594,606	18,709	823,407	496,116	190,728

Source: Enoch Pratt Free Library Statistical Reports.
Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 2000-2006.
*shaded area indicates period of peak use during this era

[89] Ibid., 47.

[90] "Increasing Resources for after School Programs: Examples of Successful Library Collaborations," Minneapolis Public Library, http://www.mpls.lib.mn.us/minutes/lba081104d2.pdf.

Table 4.6 Use of Other EPFL Services

	SAILOR	EPFL Website User Sessions
1996	9,098,547	
1997	9,244,932	
1998	13,519,156	113,812
1999	30,931,838	452,543
2000	100,868,503	994,091
2001	175,371,898	1,227,361
2002	281,597,619	1,530,328
2003	347,906,952	1,664,641
2004*	437,796,745	1,628,239
2005	328,205,780	1,994,972
2006	391,374,619	3,435,138

Source: Enoch Pratt Free Library Statistical Reports. Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 2000-2006.
*shaded area indicates period of peak use during this era

Conclusion

The new service programs and physical alterations to the Central Building reestablished the EPFL's position within the community after a period of disuse. As Table 4.5 indicates, patronage of the EPFL increased significantly between 2000 and 2006 to levels near 600,000 visitors per year that had not been seen since the 1960s. The increased patronage of the library may be accounted for at least as much by the re-opening of the building seven days a week as by the service strategies, but other statistical measures suggest the positive impact of new programs, particularly digital technologies. The library altered its services to ameliorate social inequalities within the city, as well as to foster increased use of the library services. One critical shift was the development of a substantial collection targeted to African-Americans in Baltimore. This change from earlier practices that provided lists of materials deemed "valuable" instead

created a physical and intellectual hub for this community. The use of advanced technology, in each era of operation, bolstered the interest of both traditional patrons and groups for whom the EPFL's early belletrist emphasis had little appeal. As access to digital materials becomes an increasingly important component of library offerings, the EPFL must expand its provision of these services for Baltimore's disadvantaged. Thinking beyond remedial outreach efforts to programs, like the CYC, that develop job skills and enthusiasm for learning creates life-long contributors to the EPFL and its community. Including patrons in the planning process for services is part of a critical transformation of the library from a programmed to a participatory space.

CHAPTER V

BUILDING CONTEXT STUDY: THE EVOLUTION OF THE EPFL AND ITS NEIGHBORHOOD

Central to the original architectural program was a location within the city that facilitated service to a broad portion of the population. The EPFL chose to construct its "modern library" on the site occupied by its original (1883) building because it lay at the retail, commercial, and residential heart of the city. Joseph Wheeler was adamant that the existing location was preferable to the other eighteen sites considered, particularly those that would have placed the building within a city beautiful setting occupied by museums and other cultural groups, because of its proximity to other services.[1] In the seventy-five years since the construction of the "new" Central Building, the surrounding neighborhood, Baltimore's urban core, experienced dramatic socio-economic changes. The high quality of the architectural fabric, however, led to the inclusion of the neighborhood surrounding the EPFL in multiple National Register Historic Districts. This chapter examines selected portions of the Mt Vernon, Cathedral Hill, and Market Center Historic Districts that constitute the historic context of the library. This context is critical to understanding challenges facing the EPFL and its neighborhood as its social

[1] "Baltimore's New Library," *Sun Baltimore*, May, 1925.

and architectural fabric changed dramatically. These issues are integral to the preservation strategies for the Central Building that will be addressed in the next chapter.

Rather than following the precise boundaries of the historic districts, this chapter focuses on portions of those districts that immediately surround the EPFL's Central Building and correspond with the neighborhood functions identified as important at the time of construction. (Illustration 5-1, illustrations are located in Appendix B.) This study area aligns with the Baltimore census tracts to facilitate the inclusion of demographic data. The social and physical changes occurring throughout the city that the EPFL endeavored to respond to in its built form and service programs are manifested in these areas. Architectural interventions (including preservation) and public outreach efforts that were critical to the evolution of this district are included as context for the conservation strategies recommended in Chapter Six of this thesis.

1933-1950: At the Heart of City Life

At the time of the Central Building's construction, a rich assortment of commercial, industrial, residential, and institutional buildings surrounded the EPFL. (Illustration 5-2, 5-3) The mixture of nearby facilities including the Basilica, Stewart's Department Store, the Women's Industrial Exchange, and the Lexington Market attracted a diverse population to the area, creating an ideal location for a library intended to be not just a "quiet retreat among the books of the past" for the intellectual elite, but a place for

all "to study and to borrow books that help them in their daily work, their plans, their thinking, and their lives."[2]

The Central Building opened its doors during the heart of the depression. During this time, the physical fabric remained intact but the social fabric showed strains. To the southwest of the EPFL, Howard Street lay at the heart of the garment district, lined with elegant department stores, furriers, and jeweler's showrooms, many of which sat empty during the depression.[3] The factories and sweatshops in the surrounding area turned to piecework or let go workers to survive.[4] The crowds diminished at the Howard, Mayfair, Stanley, and Little Theatres, making Howard Street a less energetic entertainment center than during the 1920s, but these businesses remained in operation despite the depression.[5] The Flag, Banner, and Pennant Shop west of the EPFL on Park Avenue (Illustration 5-4) was one of countless small manufacturers that appropriated residential buildings left vacant by wealthy families moving to the park-like neighborhoods of Roland Park, Guilford, and Homeland. Immediately to the south and west of the library lay the shops, restaurants, language school, and fraternal lodges of Baltimore's Chinese community.

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[2] Joseph L. Wheeler and Alfred Morton Githens, *The American Public Library Building: Its Planning and Design with Special Reference to Its Administration and Service* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 1941), 1.

[3] Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman, *The Baltimore Book New Views of Local History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991).

[4] Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980, 1997), 344.

[5] Marion E. Warren and Michael P. McCarthy, *The Living City: Baltimore's Charles Center & Inner Harbor Development* (Baltimore Maryland Historical Society 2002), 5-6.

To the east of the EFPL, Charles Street served as a commercial backbone for the city. After the collapse and reorganization of the Baltimore Trust in 1931, its Art Deco skyscraper sat vacant until its occupation by the PWA's Baltimore headquarters.[6] (Illustration 5-5) Other mid-sized commercial buildings that lined Charles Street housed the vestiges of the insurance companies, law firms, stockbrokers, and banking institutions that formed Baltimore's financial center.

The Basilica of the Assumption was the center of a network of religious institutions including the Cathedral School Calvert Hall College (Illustration 5-6), the Presbyterian Church, and St. Paul's Rectory, and the Unitarian Church. These institutions provided educational and cultural facilities for the diverse ethnic communities that occupied the city's core. These buildings also served as the dividing line between the downtown business district and the residential district to the north. The work of architects like Maximilien Godfrey for the Unitarian Church cemented the architectural character of the Cathedral Hill district, while the social services provided within its walls established the social character that defined the district.

The residential buildings that filled the district were the home to a population as diverse as the building stock. Doctors, lawyers, and other professionals resided in the Rochambeau as well as mid-sized apartment buildings along Cathedral Street and throughout the area. (Illustration 5-7) Chinese families occupied the residential units above their restaurants and laundries along Mulberry and Park Avenue, although their

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[6] Olson, 341.

presence in the neighborhood diminished after the repeal of the Exclusion Acts in 1943 allowed greater social mobility.[7]

Many of the wealthy families that had built the townhouses on Mt Vernon square had relocated to the recently annexed suburbs of Roland Park, Guilford, and Homeland by the 1930s.[8] (Illustration 5-8) The arts district that surrounded the Peabody institute began to emerge during the depression as music, dance, and art teachers opened small studios in buildings around Mt. Vernon Place.[9] The character of the neighborhood began to change from an elite cultural center to one oriented to more eclectic artistic tastes.

Segregation practices in the city meant that the residential sections around the EPFL developed separate cultural patterns. There was minimal opportunity or mobility for most of the city's black population, who were "concentrated in menial and service occupations … lived in the oldest and most congested areas of the city where they suffered disproportionately from unemployment, crime, disease, and infant mortality. There were no black librarians, streetcar drivers, firefighters, or police officers in the entire city."[10] The Roosevelt relief programs provided little assistance for black workers who were often barred from participation in WPA programs by local officials or offered

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[7] Leslie Chin, *History of Chinese-American in Baltimore* (Baltimore: Greater Baltimore Chinese American Bicentennial Committee, 1976).

[8] Amy L. Bernstein, *Baltimore 1797-1997: Bringing Our Heritage into the 21st Century* (Baltimore: Cherbo Publishing Group, 1997), 81.

[9] Baltimore City Directory 1937. (Baltimore: R.L. Polk & Co., 1937).

[10] Harold A. McDougall, *Black Baltimore: A New Theory of Community* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 4.

only the most low-paying work.[11] During the war, segregation meant that residential communities at the edge of the garment district became increasingly crowded as "thirty-three thousand black people arrived in the city, looking for work in Baltimore's war industry."[12] (Illustration 5-9) These new arrivals to the city accepted the most menial positions in Bethlehem Steel's shipyard and Western Electric's plant.[13] During the 1940s, there was little alteration to the existing segregation patterns, but the changes in the population's composition began to dramatically affect the character of the neighborhood around the EPFL and city life by the mid-1950s.

The presence of social and religious organizations including the EPFL, YMCA, YWCA, the Basilica, Unitarian, and Presbyterian churches engendered a sense of community during the war. The district remained largely intact in terms of its population and building stock. The underlying changes to the city's social fabric did begin to affect the areas around Howard Street. The once-glamorous shopping district remained home to department stores and theatres, but north of the EPFL, a different character emerged as war relief organizations, temporary employment agencies, and the Greyhound bus terminal (Illustration 5-10) moved into the neighborhood.[14]

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[11] Ibid., 64.

[12] Ibid., 53.

[13] Olson, 365.

[14] Baltimore Address Telephone Directory. (Baltimore: Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company, 1945).

Spatially and socially, the EPFL held a prominent position within the district, occupying one of the largest lots, positioned to take advantage of potential users moving through the area during their regular course of business. (Illustration 5-11) During the depression, the building provided a haven for those seeking employment opportunities or just a place to sit. Between 1933 and 1936 the newspaper room (that historically catered to the working class) was the only space in the building open on Sundays.[15] WPA workers provided assistance in the EPFL's transition to its new building, particularly in developing the new catalog.[16] During the war, the EPFL joined the defense effort, offering its basement as an air raid shelter. Viewing as part of its mission of responding to the needs of its constituents, the EPFL provided services and spaces in accordance with its perception of patrons' needs, offering the Poe Room for the culturally minded literary clubs, reference rooms and telephone services for the businesses users, and newspaper rooms for the working class.[17] In the next decades, the EPFL's perception of appropriate services altered dramatically as it struggled to remain responsive to the social and physical changes in the district and citywide.

1950-1970: Physical Interventions to Mitigate Social Change

> The automobile transformed Baltimore and the adjacent counties. Suburban Baltimore's County's population jumped from 270,000 to 492,000 between 1950 and 1960. … Most of those newcomers were moving from Baltimore

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[15] Enoch Pratt Free Library, *The Reorganization of a Large Public Library: Ten Year Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1926-1935*, (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1937), 51.

[16] Ibid., 97.

[17] Joseph L. Wheeler, "*Happy Days*," *Maryland Libraries*,27 (1971), 6-7.

> to fulfill the American Dream of owning a home in suburbia and raising their kids amidst lawns and greenery. … Some were leaving for less lofty reasons . . . [18]

The changes in Baltimore began to affect the neighborhoods around the EPFL in increasingly dramatic ways during the 1950s. (Illustration 5-12) At the start of the decade, the district was so congested that the library developed plans for a major expansion.[19] (Illustration 5-13) As the social patterns in Baltimore changed, so did the use of the area around the EPFL. "Suburban housewives – who were important customers- no longer bothered with formal trips downtown. But racial prejudice was also a factor: as more Blacks shopped downtown,"[20] the white population began to favor the shopping malls. In Baltimore, a pattern seen throughout the country developed in which the rising economic status of the urban Black population became a source for concern over "who should or should not be in downtown."[21] The closure of downtown institutions like O'Neil's department store in 1954 became catalysts for larger interventions intended to restore the urban center to its "traditional" clientele.[22]

The other department stores that had once provided casual visitors to the EPFL remained in business, but the furrier, jewelers and other small businesses abandoned the rowhouses that lined Park, Howard, and Charles Streets, redefining the vibrant social

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[18] Warren and McCarthy, 7.

[19] Enoch Pratt Free Library, *Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library for the Year 1953* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1954).

[20] Warren and McCarthy, 7.

[21] Alison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 173.

[22] Warren and McCarthy, 7.

context once occupied by the library. Instead, buildings sat vacant or were demolished to make room for parking. A 1958 study of the district found that "over 2,000,000 square feet of once productive loft and warehouse space in this area now lies vacant. This is almost 6% of all floor space … The high vacancy is paralleled by lowered retail sales."[23] The presence of the EPFL and other institutions in the neighborhood provided stability, but there was an increasing sense of the need for the library -- as a civic nucleus -- to address more directly the changing conditions in the city.

Urban Renewal

In the 1950s, Baltimore's civic leaders shared the belief of public and private groups throughout the United States that physical inventions, whether through the construction of transportation routes or the removal of slum housing, could reinvigorate urban life.[24] Although many of these schemes were well-intentioned efforts to address social issues, there was a darker undercurrent of restoring downtown as the domain of the white middle-class.[25] Like their counterparts in Pittsburgh, Rochester, and St. Paul, Baltimore's business leaders took up strategies emphasizing safety and secure parking aimed at returning the female clientele to the urban cores.[26] The Greater Baltimore

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[23] Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Agency, *Charles Center: A Beginning*, (Baltimore: Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Agency, 1960), 24.

[24] William J. Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* (Pittstown, NJ: Main Street Press, 1988), 48.

[25] Isenberg, 167.

[26] Ibid., 171.

Committee (GBC) formed in 1955 to address declining retail sales in Central Baltimore.[27] The GBC developed a series of development proposals for the area between the Port and the EPFL, which at the time was referred to as the Central Business District (CBD).[28] (Illustration 5-14) The GBC's first effort was to redevelop thirty-three acres beginning in 1959, three blocks south of the EFPL, as Charles Center, one of the first downtown renewal projects in the county.[29] One Charles Center, designed by Mies van der Rohe in 1962, served as the pinnacle of this complex of offices, retail, and cultural facilities. (Illustration 5-15)

Like other urban renewal efforts, these plans operated from the belief that removing the visible evidence of a problem would mitigate larger social issues. Despite the removal of countless historic buildings, Charles Center is widely cited as an example of successful urban renewal. Urban historian Jon Teaford cites Charles Center as "a much admired complex of offices, shops, restaurants, apartments, and a legitimate theater. Instead of bulldozing the entire tract, Baltimore planners retained five existing buildings and incorporated them into the new center. Thus, Charles Center was not a modern monument at odds with the existing city; it was made to fit into the urban context."[30]

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[27] This private group took on such projects as the expansion of the Jones Falls Expressway, the creation of the Maryland Port Authority, the development of a Civic Center, and Charles Center.

Greater Baltimore Committee, *Baltimore: Its Resources, Attitudes, and Expectations*, (Baltimore: Greater Baltimore Committee 1960),11.

[28] An early proposal by Pietro Belluschi recommended a soaring pavilion that would transform the gritty port area into a "lively harbor district". Belluschi's vision was realized by developer James Rouse in the 1980s as Harborplace. Warren and McCarthy.

[29] Isenberg, 175.

[30] Jon C. Teaford, "Urban Renewal and Its Aftermath," *Housing Policy Debate* 11, 2 (2000).

Jane Jacobs admired the project because "the site is in the very heart of downtown, not on its fringes, and it is to be re-used for precisely the things that belong in the heart of downtown-offices, entertainment facilities, a hotel, stores, a transportation terminal."[31] Local preservationists attribute its success to the integration of existing historic buildings into the plan.[32] The impact upon the architectural fabric may have been less significant than the schemes in other cities, but its success in addressing social problems was equally limited. Charles Center primarily benefited its investors. The employees in the offices buildings lived in the suburbs. The only jobs for city residents were "in temporary construction or low-paying services. Moreover, Charles Center was so heavily subsidized that it was a drain on, rather than a benefit to, the city's tax base."[33] The CBD plan proposed changes in zoning that would allow for new commercial and residential construction as well as the growth of institutions like the EPFL. The CBC studies celebrated "the Enoch Pratt Free Library [as] perhaps our finest cultural achievement. It is a magnificent library, well run, and well used."[34] Despite the recognized benefits of institutions like the EPFL in the CBD, the plan recommended changing the neighborhood from its historic character of a mixture of commercial, residential, and institutional buildings to one organized by function. This post-war-pragmatism conflicted with the philosophy behind the design for the Central Library and the finding in 1959 by EPFL officials that "their present CBD location [was] ideal for serving both business and

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[31] Jane Jacobs, "A New Heart for Baltimore," *Architectural Forum*, June 1958, 88.

[32] Warren and McCarthy, 36.

[33] Fee, Shopes, and Zeidman, 233.

[34] *Baltimore: Its Resources, Attitudes, and Expectations*,11.

individual users. Service to business firms has become an increasingly important element in the main library's overall program."[35]

Many of the social service organizations agreed with the city planner's analysis that "heavy volumes of pedestrian and vehicular traffic generated in the core are of little use and, in many cases, may actually be detrimental to the best functioning of many of these institutions."[36] The retreat of facilities associated with the Basilica to suburban campuses dramatically altered the social and physical character of the neighborhood. The Cathedral School, for example, moved to the north Baltimore neighborhood of Guilford. Calvert Hall College's building was demolished and relocated to Baltimore County. On its site, the archdiocese constructed a modernist building that housed public relations and publishing services more in keeping with the office functions planned for the Central Business District.[37] (Illustration 5-16).

Early Efforts to Preserve the Architectural Fabric

By the close of the 1960s, the Historic Preservation movement emerged in the United States, offering its own strategies for urban revitalization.[38] The incorporation of historic buildings in the Charles Center development was an early example of Baltimore's belief in the potential of its existing building stock to contribute to the urban renewal effort. Unfortunately, these early interventions had little effect on the larger

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[35] The Planning Council of the Greater Baltimore Committee, *The Central Business District Plan Downtown Baltimore* (Baltimore: The Planning Council of the Greater Baltimore Committee, 1959), 182.

[36] Ibid., 182.

[37] "Catholics Plan 8-Story Building for Offices," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, October 26, 1962.

[38] Leland M. Roth, *American Architecture: A History* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001), 469.

social disintegration in the city. Office buildings continued to sit vacant, and apartment buildings were often half empty.[39]

In addition to pursuing additional construction and architectural strategies to redevelop the area around the port, Baltimore implemented the Mount Vernon Renewal Project in 1964. "It was the first effort in the country to attempt to use rehabilitation and restoration rather than demolition and reconstruction, as urban revitalization tools. A combination of low-cost home improvement loans and stringent housing code enforcement led to the rehabilitation of 1,900 residential units in the area surrounding the Washington monument."[40] These plans kept much of architectural fabric to the north of the EPFL in place. Although targeted primarily at the middle class, these programs resulted in fewer displacements of the already disadvantaged urban dwellers than the more traditional strategies of renewal projects.[41]

The EPFL remained committed to occupying its historic building. Although both city planning committees and the EPFL administrators envisioned constructing a large addition, the limited library budgets meant that the exterior of the building changed very little from the time of construction. The library underwent a modest interior rehabilitation at the end of the 1950s intended to modernize the library with updated lighting and mechanical systems. Although the footprint occupied by the building did not change, its

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[39] Baltimore City Directory 1964. (Baltimore: R.L. Polk & Co., 1964).

[40] Lenora Helig Nast, Laurence N. Kruase, and R.C. Monk, *Baltimore: A Living Renaissance* (Baltimore: Historic Baltimore Society, Inc., 1982), 38.

[41] Mittie Olion Chandler, *Urban Homesteading: Programs and Policies*, Studies in Social Welfare Policies and Programs, No. 9. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988).

significance within the neighborhood grew as the businesses abandoned the nearby buildings. Not only was the EPFL as critical source of employment, its patrons and employees maintained a pedestrian presence that provided some sense of security and life on the street.

1970-1980: Holding the City Together

The renewal schemes of 1950s and 1960s did little to stem the rising poverty and social unrest in the city. Efforts that focused upon the physical fabric of the city through new developments such as Charles Center or the enforcement of housing codes aimed at preserving structures often adversely affected socially disadvantaged Baltimoreans. These projects frequently resulted in the loss of small centers of employment or housing while offering few alternatives. "Between 1951 and 1971, an estimated 25,000 households were displaced, the vast majority of which were black. The residents who were dislodged doubled up in other slums, creating a concentration of low-income, overcrowded, troubled people that no municipality could effectively serve. Blacks, especially, were displaced from the downtown area and piled into the slums of the north and west."[42] In addition to removing affordable, if run-down, housing options, the architectural interventions, whether through new construction or preservation did little to support the people whose jobs were disappearing as Bethlehem Steel and American Can, mechanized their operations. (Illustration 5-18) The process of modernization meant that "for every $120,000 invested one job was destroyed."[43] 1970 Census Data for the tracts

[42] McDougall, 56.

[43] Olson, 392.

surrounding the EPFL indicate that seventeen percent of the population lived below the poverty line and only eleven percent had completed high school. [44]

The Role of Social Institutions

As the social fabric disintegrated, public and social service agencies became the primary tenants of the buildings surrounding the EPFL. Charles Street, once lined with elegant shops and the most prestigious financial firms, now relied upon the Baltimore Home Ownership Development Office and the American Heart Association to create a pedestrian presence and customers for the restaurants and small businesses that often occupied the ground floors of these buildings.

The success of the Mt. Vernon Renewal initiative meant that adaptive use became a preferred choice for public service facilities. The Government Recruiting Station, Planned Parenthood, and the State Health & Mental Hygiene office were the neighbors of the surviving department stores on Howard Street. The Historical Information Center occupied a rowhouse adjacent to the Walters Art Gallery. In 1979 the Baltimore School for the Arts began to utilize the former Knights of Columbus building. (Illustration 5-19)

Not all agencies recognized the possibilities of adaptive use to meet other social goals. In response to the need for housing for Baltimore's growing elderly population, the Presbyterian Ministries of Maryland constructed a high-rise building that provided affordable senior housing across from the Walters Art Gallery. (Illustration 5-20) Management by the agency ensured that the project did not become a source of "crimes

[44] Government Publications Library, "Historical Census for Baltimore City 1970 Neighborhoods," Johns Hopkins University, http://webapps.jhu.edu/census/.

and social alienation, endangering not only their residents, but their surrounding neighborhoods" like so many of the projects in the city.[45] This project nonetheless distanced its residents from community involvement by raising public services above the street level for "security."

The importance of social service organizations to the survival of the neighborhood continued in the 1980s. The nearly seventeen percent of the population that was unemployed and living below the poverty line in the neighborhood made homes in rowhouses, the Rochambeau Apartments and Westminster Place.[46] Responding to the continued need for increased affordable housing, the archdiocese demolished several houses on Franklin Street in 1980 to make way for Basilica Place, an apartment tower that furnished low-cost housing for senior citizens. (Illustration 5-21) Although the structure looms over the Presbyterian Church designed by Robert Cary Long (1847) its service to the local community continues the cultural character of a neighborhood historically shaped by religious institutions who provided essential support services.

The Citizen's Planning & Housing Association and the Social Security Administration occupied larger commercial buildings along Charles Street. The presence of the EPFL, the Basilica, the former Presbyterian Church, and historic apartment buildings kept the physical character of Cathedral Street intact.[47] Despite the attraction of

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[45] McDougall, 53.

[46] Government Publications Library, "Historical Census for Baltimore City 1980 Neighborhoods," Johns Hopkins University, http://webapps.jhu.edu/census/.

[47] Stewart Baltimore City Criss-Cross Directory, 1985. (Cockeysville, MD: Stewart Directories, Inc., 1985).

new tenants to the historic buildings, the disintegration continued on other blocks. Two of the historic theatres resorted to displaying adult films to remain in operation. Massage parlors and taverns occupied the storefronts once rented by architects and dentists. The Chinese Community continued to abandon their shops and restaurants along Mulberry Street and Park Avenue and relocate to the suburbs.[48] (Illustration 5-22)

Economic Incentives

Baltimore's use of architectural preservation as renewal tool in the Mount Vernon District was now an established strategy throughout the nation. The Federal Government developed incentive programs to encourage the adaptive use as a tool in economic redevelopment through the Tax Reform Act of 1976.[49] The city subsequently established the Mount Vernon Place Historic District as a Certified District for Tax Incentives in 1980. Such programs support owners in financing the rehabilitation work associated with bringing historic properties into contemporary service. These types of incentives can be effective development tools, but Federal restrictions make their use most beneficial "for large rehabilitation projects –those valued at $5 million or more."[50] Projects like the conversion of apartment building into a luxury hotel on Charles Street can bring renewed tourism and commercial life to area. Large commercial projects also benefit residents by creating construction work and ongoing sources of employment once the work is

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[48] Chin, 409.

[49] Murtagh., 58

[50] Jessica Marie Engeman, "Why Place Matters: Historic Preservation, Quality of Life, and the New Economy: A Case Study of the Pearl District in Portland, Oregon" (master's thesis, University of Oregon, 2004), 109.

complete.[51] These programs are important to the life of these historic districts, but offer less benefit to the marginalized residents of the small historic rowhouses in the area or the managers of social service agencies struggling to adapt an antiquated heating system.

In 1987, a mix of commercial, religious, and institutional buildings including the EPFL were nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as contributing resources to the Cathedral Hill Historic District. (Illustration 5-23)[52] Because of the requirement that projects be income producing, tax incentives and other economic development tools offer little value to the religious and social organizations that occupied so many of the historic buildings in the district. Although not eligible for tax incentives, the institutions in the historic district may be able to qualify for state and local preservation development grants as a result of the designation.

Less successful were programs designed to support the economic growth of the neighborhood. The area to the west of the EPFL was regularly promoted for redevelopment, with a combination of architectural and economic programs designed to encourage new investment in the area. (Illustration 5-24) Despite financial subsidies from the city to remain in the district, one by one the remaining department stores closed their

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[51] Donovan D. Rypkema, *The Value of Historic Preservation in Maryland* (Annapolis: Preservation Maryland, 1999), http://www.preservationmaryland.org/pdf/PM_Value_scn.pdf, 1.

[52]The district nomination recognized the early retail history of the district as well as the "architectural quality" of its religious and institutional structures by Benjamin Latrobe, Maximilien Godfrey, Robert Cary Long, and Richard Upjohn. "With few intrusions, the Cathedral Hill District retains the character of a unique mixed neighborhood of churches, institutions, and commercial buildings. Baltimore Department of Planning, *Baltimore City's Historic Districts*, (Baltimore: Baltimore Department of Planning, 2005).

doors. The once vibrant commercial district became increasingly reliant upon non-profit and public agencies to knit together the city's social and physical fabric.

Response to the Homeless

One of the greatest challenges facing the residents and the social services agencies operating in the area during the 1980s was the growing homeless community. Both the state of Maryland and Baltimore City established taskforces to address the issue. The groups recognized that "anyone who travels downtown knows that homelessness exists in Baltimore. Lines form outside of the Franciscan Center and our Daily Bread soup kitchens."[53] The only day shelter in the city opened several blocks from the EFPL.[54] The estimated 1160 homeless persons in Baltimore City in 1985 congregated in the parks of Mt. Vernon Place, relied on area soup kitchens, and took advantage of the other social service agencies in the neighborhood.[55]

The cuts to social service programs through the United States during the 1980s resulted in the unofficial development of the EPFL, along with other urban libraries, into one of the primary sources of support for the homeless. In addition to offering "shelter from extremes in weather, libraries provide[d] bathroom facilities as well as 'normal' library services of value to homeless persons."[56] Recognizing the importance of

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[53]The soup kitchen is located directly opposite the EPFL. Two hours before the kitchen opens the line forms.

[54] Task Force for the Homeless, *Report of the Baltimore City Council Task Force for the Homeless*, (Baltimore: Baltimore City Council, 1983),33.

[55] Health and Welfare Council of Central Maryland, *Where Do You Go from Nowhere*, (Maryland Department of Human Resources 1986),3.

[56] Ibid., 52.

responding sensitively to the people who congregated in the library facilities, state officials organized training sessions for library staff on working with the homeless. The reliance upon the Central Library by the homeless made the EPFL a critical participant "in the development of advocacy and outreach services through coordination with other public and private providers."[57]

Counterposed against these enlightened attitudes were the addition of railings on the exhibition windows, security gates in the entry hall, and electronically monitored restrooms. (Illustration 5-26) Visibly intrusive and diametrically opposed to the vision of inspiring community use that was so critical to the original design, these changes are far more detrimental to the preservation of the EPFL and its goal of being a community-centered institution than the alteration of light fixtures or changes to its interior layout.

As the neighborhood around the EPFL became increasingly reliant upon social service groups and public subsidies, it became apparent that what was needed was an attitude that encouraged public involvement. The city needed to recognize the potential contributions of its residents rather than viewing them merely as recipients of enlightened social programs.

1990-2000: Recognizing the Need for Citizen Participation

The transformation of the district from the thriving retail heart of Baltimore to a social service center continued during the 1990s. The IOOF temple on Cathedral Street was now home to the Baltimore Housing Authority. Social service agencies retained

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[57] Ibid.

offices in Charles Center 1 with the same frequency as prestigious legal firms. The check cashing stores, temporary agencies, and discount chains that lined the once elegant blocks of Howard Street were unofficial partners to Planned Parenthood, Senior Care, and the Baltimore City Commission on the Aging in serving the needs of the growing part of the population that lived in poverty.[58] The construction of the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped increased the spatial prominence of the library facilities in the neighborhood and expanded its ability to provide services to Baltimore's changing population.

The city of Baltimore continued to target the area around the EFPL for revitalization in its new Comprehensive Plan.[59] Despite the earlier efforts of preservation and renewal, new social programs were required to respond to the rising numbers of senior citizens, housing vacancies, and low education rate. The 1999 plan emphasized the need to reinvigorate the area around the EPFL -now branded as the "Westside" - by generating increased activity, enhancing public safety, improving transit service, and creating "much needed open space of passive parks and active plazas."[60] Community meetings encouraged citizen involvement throughout the process. Institutions like the EPFL were perceived as critical "to serve as focal points of community activity and strengthen surrounding neighborhoods. To realize this potential, they must be well-

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[58] In the Mid-Town Belvedere Neighborhood 41% of persons 18 to 24, 17% of those 25-65, and 32% of those 65% lived in poverty. Government Publications Library, "Historical Census for Baltimore City 1990 Neighborhoods," Johns Hopkins University, http://webapps.jhu.edu/census/.

[59] Baltimore Department of Planning, *Plan Baltimore! A Vision for Baltimore: A Global City of Neighborhoods* (Baltimore: Baltimore Department of Planning, 1999),13-16.

[60] Ibid., 16.

located, inviting to the public and designed to enhance the neighborhood fabric. The best way to meet these objectives is to ensure that community residents have input into the decisions affecting their neighborhood facilities."[61]

Despite the inclusive intentions, the city planners neglected a critical stakeholder in developing proposals for the neighborhood. The National Trust for Historic Preservation responded with apprehension to Baltimore's plans for the Westside. The Trust believed the area was "the target of an ill-conceived 'revitalization' plan that calls for the condemnation and demolition of approximately 150 structures, including many that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and have great reuse potential."[62] The Trust placed the Westside on its 1999 list of Most Endangered Places, intending to raise an alarm of the need to include preservationists among the citizens groups in the planning process for the city's renewal.

2000-Integrating a Social and Architectural Response

To protect the historic buildings of Baltimore's Westside, preservationists developed a nomination for the Market Center Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places in 2000. As the result of negotiations with preservation groups, the city's new development plans emphasized the importance of adaptive use and other architectural preservation strategies.[63] The district occupied approximately 24 blocks in

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[61] Ibid., 212.

[62] National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Most Endangered Places," http://www.nationaltrust.org/11Most/list.asp?yr=1999.

[63] Westside Renaissance, Inc., "Preserving Historical Architecture," http://www.downtownwestside.com/revitalization_historicalarchitecture.htm.

downtown Baltimore, its boundary bisecting the Central Library property. The Annex, the Library for the Blind, and the Children's Garden were encompassed within the Market Center District, while the main building lay in the Cathedral Hill District.[64] (Illustration 5-27, 28)

The nomination celebrates the architectural character of the cast-iron fronts, Richardsonian Romanesque loft buildings, and art deco facades that formed Baltimore's commercial district. Architectural character and historic integrity maintain an uneasy balance as the nomination recognizes that although "street facades of numerous buildings were updated with stucco, metal, and tile cladding in the late 20th century …the district retains sufficient integrity to convey its architectural character and historic associations."[65] Other tangible remains of the efforts during the past fifty years to address social and economic disintegration through artwork at transportation hubs are dismissed as "faddish [and] intrusive."[66] (Illustration 5-29) The role the Chinese community played in the district and the remaining architectural fabric is not recognized in the nomination. This shifting of standards of what constitutes "legitimate" historic fabric with integrity in response to what are largely aesthetic values undermines the potential of historic preservation programs to participate in social regeneration.

Support for both the social and architectural fabric remains critical. The city is actively pursuing partnerships that encourage social service groups to adaptively use

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[65] *Baltimore City's Historic Districts.*

[66] Ibid.

buildings throughout the neighborhood and city.[67] (Illustration 5-30, 31) But seven years after the controversy over the Market Center, the area around the EPFL still faces high rates of unemployment and low education rates.[68] Parking lots, discount outlets, and liquor stores remain the primary occupants of Howard and Park Avenue as legal disputes delayed the ambitious renewal efforts feared by the National Trust.

The Homeless Person Representation Agency, the YWCA, United Here, and the EPFL not only provide critical social services, but their occupation of historic and newer buildings has held the physical fabric of the district together. The strongest pedestrian presence is felt between 9:30-10:00 in the morning when the lines form to enter the Bread of Life soup kitchen and the EPFL, when lines stretch nearly half a city block down both sides of Cathedral Street. The Basilica of the Assumption's manicured terraces provide welcome greenery in an area dominated by paving, but the iron gates and security guards create a fortress-like environment that discourages use by the public.(Illustration 5-32) Although the affordable housing furnished by the Rochambeau was demolished to restore Nineteenth Century views of the Basilica's glistening copper roofs, the Archdiocese continues to provide critical community services at the Bread of Life and the 200 rent-assisted apartments in the Basilica Place Apartments.

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[67] A recent announcement of a land trade that will result in the adaptation of Stewart's Department Store for use by the Catholic Relief Services and the construction of new retail and market rate space on Park and Howard Street is an example of new regeneration strategies for the area. "West-Side Project Revived," *Baltimore Sun*, March 28, 2007.: "West-Side Facelift," *Baltimore Sun*, March 29, 2007.

[68] The midtown- Belvedere Neighborhood census figures reveal a neighborhood where only 21% of the population has achieved high school graduation or equivalency, 13% of the families live below the poverty line, and 10% is 65 years or older. Government Publications Library, "Historical Census for Baltimore City 2000 Neighborhoods," Johns Hopkins University, http://webapps.jhu.edu/census/.

Conclusion

A sensitive response to the social and architectural preservation challenges in Baltimore is no easier for the EPFL than for the Archdiocese. Architectural fabric is an important piece of institutional history that helped the EPFL to build its reputation among American Public Libraries. As the EPFL responded programmatically to the changing community needs, its facilities expanded to occupy a substantial area of two historic districts. The importance of social institutions in Baltimore's historic development *is* acknowledged in both district nominations, but it is only the aesthetic fabric that is recognized as requiring preservation. The designs for the Annex and the Children's Garden have shown great deference to the EPFL's aesthetic fabric and current understandings of architectural preservation issues. As the EPFL looks to rehabilitating the Central Building in the next decade, it must respond to the recommendations for the districts it occupies, local and national preservation guidelines, its own history, and the needs of the population it is committed to serving. Perhaps most critically, the EPFL must follow the recommendations from the recent city plan and its own strategies in its service programs to ensure "that community residents have input into the decisions affecting their neighborhood facilities."[69] Proposals and further considerations for how the EPFL might accomplish this task are addressed in the next chapter.

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[69] *Plan Baltimore! A Vision for Baltimore*, 212.

CHAPTER VI

RESTORING THE CONNECTION WITH THE COMMMUNITY

> The library, like any school or store or service, must meet the current needs of its patrons or they will choose an alternative. Library patrons are interested in what the library can do for them now—not what it did for them, or their parents or grandparents many years ago.[1] Dr. Carla Hayden EPFL Director

The challenge of engaging contemporary patron needs rather than remaining rooted in a historic role faces all public libraries, not just the EPFL. The architects of the EPFL's proposed renovation recognize that this difficulty is compounded by use of the historic building: "there are libraries built within the past five years faced with costly renovations and additions to keep pace with the advancing technological and societal shifts. The problem of physical adaptation to changing environments is even more difficult for libraries with older, historically significant buildings in urban settings, such as the Enoch Pratt Free Library. In fact, the EPFL epitomizes the dilemma."[2] Although undeniable obstacles exist, adapting to current patterns of use also presents an occasion to enhance the value of these buildings and institutions within our society. As Shannon Mattern writes in her discussion of recent designs for public libraries, the "architectural

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[1] Carla Hayden, "Pratt Library: You, the Users, Decide Our Future," *Baltimore Chronicle*, May 30, 2003, http://baltimorechronicle.com/library2_jun01.html.

[2]The firm developed the plans for the Annex and the "restoration" concurrently although only the work on the annex has been completed. Ayers, Saint, Gross, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library Renovations and Additions* (Baltimore: Ayers, Saint, Gross, 1994), 1.

design process provides an unparalleled opportunity … to prioritize the institution's values, to reassess its purpose, to reconsider what ideas and ideals it embodies … to materially symbolize these ideas and to reflect these images."

The EPFL must seize the occasion to affirm its facilities as community centered environments rather than waiting for an architectural intervention. In fact, waiting may reinforce a tendency already too prominent among preservation professionals to conserve the built form with insufficient regard for the cultural context. The integral relationship between the architecture, collection and services, and the surrounding community demands strategies that reinforce the connection among all elements, not just the aesthetic fabric. Many of these connections can be forged through impermanent techniques or phased approaches that emphasize discussion and partnership rather than expensive physical alterations.

Proposals made in this chapter advocate continually readapting the historic building to reflect the ever-changing cultural milieu of Baltimore. If the EPFL assumes a philosophy of cultural conservation rather than restoration it may find more success in addressing both evolving trends in library service and its changing constituents. As Mary Hufford argues, "conservation registers the dynamism of cultural resources, implying that, like natural phenomena, cultural phenomena inevitably change."[3] A strategy of cultural conservation acknowledges that care for resources must be guided, as much as possible, *by the communities that rely upon them*. Change must be centered on re-

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[3] Mary Hufford, "Rethinking the Cultural Mission," in *Conserving Culture: A New Discourse on Heritage*, ed. Mary Hufford (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 3.

engaging use through meaningful discussions about the value of this library to its current and potential patrons, not merely on meeting structural requirements or protecting the woodwork.

Building Upon the Existing Response to the Social Fabric

The Central Building is more than a historic landmark with beautiful aesthetic fabric requiring sensitive restoration to invoke its original glories; it is a living resource to the population of Baltimore. The construction of the Annex and changes to services fostered increased use since 2003, but areas continue to be under-utilized, a nearly unavoidable situation as the library was designed to provide seating for 1100 but by 1980 only averaged 450 users per day.[4] The connection to the community that surrounds the Central Building remains tenuous. Business people and artists associated with the Peabody Institute crowd the restaurants on Charles Street while the marble steps on Mulberry Street and Park Avenue provide rest stops for the disadvantaged. The EPFL's interior resembles that of the surrounding neighborhood -- crowds fill the computer rooms, Children's Storytelling Rooms, and the Central Hall but an eerie quiet pervades the long corridors of the second and third floors that house the more traditional library resources. (Illustration 6-1, illustrations are located in Appendix B) The presence of patrolling guards and protective railings throughout the library, while conceived for necessary issues of security and prevention, sends a discouraging message to potential users. The combination of security measures and adherence to the materials and form of

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[4] Becker and Hayes, *A Building Survey and Long-Range Physical Feasibility Study for the Enoch Pratt Free Library* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1980), 70.

the 1932 design contributed to a fortress-like exterior. (Illustration 6-2) The departure from the intention to visually connect the interior of the library with city life presents a far more significant preservation challenge than replacing damaged windows for increased energy performance, which was identified by the architects of the proposed renovations as the issue most likely to require discussion with preservation organizations.[5] The building must reflect both its historic use and current community values about library services to remain in service.

Facilitate Wayfinding through Interpretation and Exhibitions

Changes in operations required continual adjustments to the interior organization of the Central Building. These expansions of departments diminished the organizational clarity of a Central Hall encircled by easily identifiable Subject Rooms. Many alterations, such as the development of the African-American Collection, resulted from a growing responsiveness to changes in the community. Spatially, this collection expanded from labels in the Card Catalog, to a corner in the Maryland Collection, to a prominent Subject Room. (Illustration 6-3, 6-4) Such adjustments represent key periods of institutional history, but library services now extend across multiple floors and wings with no discernible logic to guide patrons. Although staff at a prominently placed desk in the Central Hall provide assistance locating materials, navigating the multi-story building remains a challenge. Addressing the clarity of the spatial organization is a preservation priority, not because it altered the historic building, but because it limits patrons' ability

[5] Ayers, Saint, Gross, The Enoch Pratt Free Library Renovations.

to make full use of the library. Wayfinding issues should not be addressed by resetting the EPFL to its 1932 configuration, but through solutions inspired by other elements that established its historic character. These solutions can be contemporary in character and reversible in a way that respects the historic fabric along with the inevitable need for future adjustments. One of the defining elements of both the Central Building and its service program was the exhibition of materials to inspire greater use of the library. Building upon this tradition by utilizing displays to facilitate wayfinding offers a richer visual experience than the use of signs. These visual associations may also assist the many residents of Baltimore with low levels of literacy or for whom English is a second language. The EPFL already extends the garden theme along the staircase from Central Hall to the Children's Room to draw patrons to its basement services. (Illustration 6-5) A similar strategy of displaying materials relating to nearby services should be employed in directing users to the services in the Annex. The EPFL adopted this concept, in part, by showcasing items related to the institution's founding by Enoch Pratt, local literary icon Edgar Allen Poe, and the African-American Collection. The choice of subject matter is appropriate but the exhibition cases only accommodate small pieces of ephemera. Expanding the materials beyond the cases so they can be presented in greater physical dimension is necessary to make a strong visual connection to space housing the African-American Collection. An example to build on is the exhibition of figures from the National Great Blacks in Wax Museum currently displayed in the African American Department. These have a physical presence "that help to illustrate the rich history of

African Americans in a way that books cannot."[6] Relocating some of these figures to the hallway would be one step in preserving not just the aesthetic character of the building but also the elements that gave the library meaning in the community.

Strengthen Community Connections Through Decorative Programs

An essential element of the architectural program for the 1932 building was the use of murals depicting local events by local artists to establish connections between library service and community life. Financial constraints eroded efforts to continue this practice during more recent EPFL construction projects. Although the EPFL carefully maintained the murals in the Central Hall (Illustration 6-6), features in others areas deteriorated due to budget constraints. The decorative fabric of the Central Building affords numerous opportunities to conserve original fabric, while incorporating new elements that reflect current community interests.

The plans for the renovation of the Central Building include restoring the murals in the Children's Room designed by Paul Roche in 1932 that depict figures from children's classics.[7] (Illustration 6-7) A second set of murals in the Children's Room designed by community groups during the 1970s were also painted over. Although photo-documentation does not exist on the 1970s decorations, restoration techniques may be able to recapture these murals.[8] These materials are as important to restore as artwork

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[6] Enoch Pratt Free Library, "Figures from the National Great Blacks in Wax Museum," Enoch Pratt Free Library, http://www.prattlibrary.org/locations/afam/index.aspx?id=8254&mark=blacks+in+wax.

[7] Wesley Wilson (Director State Library Resource Center), Interview With Jennifer L. Flathman, Baltimore, March 27, 2007.

[8] The creation of these murals was discussed in library publications from the 1970 but library staff is not

from the original design because they represent the EPFL's ongoing effort to use decorative elements to connect with the community.

Another set of murals, also painted by Roche, decorated the Local History room in the area that now houses the Fine Arts Department. These murals depicted scenes from Maryland's history, including the inspiration for the writing of the Star Spangled Banner during the War of 1812. The EPFL plans to use photo-documentation to assist in their restoration. (Illustration 6-8) To complement this record of Maryland history, the EPFL should engage local arts groups to create new decorations that depict communities whose history is not reflected in the existing murals. To maintain the artistic tradition rather revise the history told by Roche, it is important to place this work in adjacent spaces in the building.[9] Such an effort conserves the pattern of public involvement and artistic innovation established in 1932 and continued in the 1986 renovations when Baltimore's 1% for Art program furnished the funds to commission glass panels etched with community scenes in the portals in the Subject Rooms.[10] (Illustration 6-9)

Lee Woodward Zeigler created one of the largest library murals in the United States with his depiction of stories from Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* for the EPFL

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aware of their existence. *Enoch Pratt's Gift: From Town Library to State Resource Center*, 1971, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore., 11.; Wesley Wilson interview.

[9]Bringing the stories of communities whose history has been ignored in historic resources is a significant area of concern in scholarship on interpretation. Most scholars agree on the importance of creating additional exhibits rather than removing materials that relate the history of more dominant groups. Kim Moon, "'Raising Our Sites' Integrating Women's History into Museums," *CRM: Cultrual Resource Management* 20, no. 03 (1997), http://crm.cr.nps.gov/archive/20-3/20-3-14.pdf .

[10] Wesley Wilson interview.

in 1945.[11] Ziegler's work also adorns the St. Paul, Minnesota Central Library, St. Michael's Church in New York City, and W.P.A. projects throughout New York State including the West Point Military Academy. [12] The guide to the murals published by the EPFL in 1945 will assist in their refurbishment.[13] (Illustration 6-10) A restoration of work by this renowned artist would require, and may attract, financial assistance from preservation organizations and civic arts groups. This artwork is important to retaining the connection to the most traditional, belletrist users of the EPFL. Adding interpretive information about the work and the artist's participation in WPA efforts throughout the country gives the somewhat esoteric subject matter broader context and connects it with other WPA work at the EPFL and in the community.

The continual budget reductions experienced by the library administration forced the elimination of features deemed as "extras" from building projects, including murals proposed for the African American Collection and the Maryland Department in the Annex.[14] Enough wall space exists in both rooms to incorporate decorative installations. (Illustration 6-11) Rather than being treated as "extras" or non-historic alterations, these

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[11] Charles Grosvenor Osgood, *Murals Based Upon Edmund Spenser's 'Faerie Queene'*, 1945, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[12] Smithsonian Archives of American Art, "Lee Woodward Zeigler Papers," Smithsonian Archives of American Art, http://www.archivesofamericanart.si.edu/collections/collections_list.cfm/fuseaction/Collections.ViewCollection/CollectionID/6927/search_letter/Z.

[13] Osgood, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.

[14] Although the planning documents call for incorporating murals in the Annex, they were never commissioned due to funding cuts. Ayers, Saint, Gross, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library Renovations and Additions*, 14,18.

efforts, instead, should be viewed as opportunities to utilize methods established throughout institution's history to restore the library's connection to the community.

Reflect Current Patterns of Library Use Through New Programming

Despite adjustments to the services offered inside, the building largely retains the visual character of a 1930s library. Preserving the furniture and decorative treatments maintains the historic character of the building, but responding to current social patterns maintains its *use*. Numerous studies, dating back to the 1950s, identified the need for space conducive to relaxed reading rather than formal study.[15] The prominent position of the Central Hall inspired multiple proposals to develop lounges and shops in this space. As a character-defining feature of the 1932 design of the "open plan," the Central Hall should be left as undisturbed as possible. As evidence of the growing sensitivity to preservation concerns, the 1994 renovation plans propose placing a coffee bar in the former Reference Room at the rear of the Central Hall.[16] This service responds to nationwide trends to encourage dialogue and communication among library patrons, as well as to raise revenues.[17] Adjacent to the technology center, this location bridges the contemporary spaces of the Annex and the original building, facilitating contact between patrons of varied interests. Offering other types of programming in this space such as musical performances or book discussions reduces the commercial character of the café

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[15] Emerson Greenaway, *Critique of the Enoch Pratt Free Library Central Building in Response to Questionnaire*, 1951, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library. Baltimore.; Becker and Hayes.; Ayers, Saint Gross..

[16] Ayers, Saint, Gross, *The Enoch Pratt Free Library Renovations and Additions.*

[17] The libraries in Seattle and San Jose are implementing casual spaces and café services.

and provides a ground level facility for public events. The reuse of this location materially demonstrates an evolution in philosophies about library use. For Joseph Wheeler, the Reference Room symbolized the providing of information as the central function of the "modern" library; today, a café showcases the EPFL's new role as a center of dialogue and cooperative learning.

Expand Community Access Through Rehabilitation

Another means of connecting library use to community interests is by making spaces available for public use. The EPFL offers the Wheeler Auditorium and the Edgar Allen Poe room for community events. Unfortunately, the placement of these rooms on the upper floors limits their use to library operating hours.[18] The Wilmington library converted its Children's Room to a resource center that is accessible through its below-grade entry when the main facility is closed.[19] This solution required minimal alteration to the building while accommodating contemporary needs. (Illustration 6-12) The EPFL should consider adapting the area that housed the newspaper room for training and meeting rooms. The separate entrance encourages use by community members for whom the library is an unfamiliar environment. The distance from the open spaces of the Central Building facilitates use of audio and video equipment. Regular use of this entrance would add a pedestrian presence to Franklin Street.

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[18] The library maintains generous hours 10-8 M-W, 10-5 Thursday-Saturday, 1-5 on Sunday. However, the policy of only allowing community groups to meet when the library is open discourage this usage. The stairs and elevator are placed in the entry hall so these rooms could be accessed without having the Central Hall, Subject Rooms, or Annex open but access to collection spaces on the second and third floors would need to be controlled.

[19] Visit to the Wilmington library by Jennifer L. Flathman, April 2, 2007.

Reestablish Transparency between Library Services and the Community Through Impermanent Decorations

Bringing life to Franklin Street could also be accomplished by enlivening the facades that dominate this often deserted block. (Illustration 6-13) The large expanses of granite on the north side of the EPFL, particularly those on the Annex, could instead be a canvas highlighting community creativity. Any work installed on the historic portion of the building must be reversible to meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards. These Standards also mandate that the features for the Annex should "be clearly differentiated so that the addition does not appear to be part of the historic resource."[20] To meet these requirements, artwork should be a re-conceptualization of the Exhibition Windows for this facade. The need for reversibility encourages regularly changing the "exhibit" to respond to current patron demographics. This continued renewal invites ongoing involvement that enables the public to connect their lives with this library. Installing frames with removable surfaces insures the reversibility of any work. Artists and community groups could incorporate painted, fabricated, or digital pieces depicting local events or projections of the library's interior on these removable surfaces. The impermanence of these displays facilitates their reuse at other community facilities, highlighting the services available at the Central Library. This work builds on the use of murals throughout Baltimore as a means of enlivening facades requiring minimal fenestration for security purposes. Instead of focusing preservation efforts only on the

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[20] United States. National Park Service. Heritage Preservation Services, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior National Park Service Heritage Preservation Services, 2000).

tangible evidence of the past, considering more intangible elements of an institution's history may enable the owners of historic building to adjust to contemporary patterns with minimal intrusion to the physical fabric.[21]

Reclaim the Urban Landscape with Community Participation

Bringing the community back to the library requires diminishing both the monumental appearance of the building and expanding participation in its care. Incorporating plantings on the EPFL's exterior would soften the character of this highly urban setting while providing noise buffers for the building. Landscaping was another feature recommended in the original plans for the Annex in 1988 but not carried out in the final design, most likely due to financial considerations.[22] The difficulty of providing quality outdoor spaces should not be underestimated; safety concerns already forced the EPFL to close the exterior garden of the Children's Room.[23] Any proposal beyond planter boxes or street trees requires the inclusion of library patrons in its design and maintenance to ensure its safety and use. The community garden is one of the most popular features of the Village Learning Place, the branch library saved from demolition by neighborhood groups after budget cuts forced its closure by the EPFL. Here,

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[21]Conservation groups increasingly recognize the importance of retaining intangible traditions such as language, music, and craft traditions. Like other conservation efforts, the work moved beyond the identification of masterpieces to the role the intangible plays in supporting communities. Until recently, the efforts to conserve the tangible and intangible have been separate efforts within preservation. More recently, groups recognize the importance of combining these strategies to support *community* conservation. "What Is Intangible Cultural Heritage," UNESCO, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=32727&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

[22] *State Library Resource Center* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1988), 12.

[23] Wesley Wilson interview.

participation in the design and care for the garden instills an ongoing sense of community "ownership" with their facility.[24] (Illustration 6-14)

An ideal area in which to incorporate a garden at the EPFL is the enclosed court where the Annex links to the main building. (Illustration 6-15) While safety considerations would likely necessitate that this area remain gated, this small space would furnish welcome greenery for library patrons, pedestrians, and the residents of Basilica Place whose apartments overlook Franklin Street. Conceptually, this greenspace would link the EPFL to the terraces in front of the Basilica itself. Including local residents in the development of the garden encourages use rather than distancing the community as the Basilica's manicured lawns hidden behind iron gates appear to do. (Illustration 6-16) Regular use of this garden could reestablish a human presence on Franklin Street. Today, this space exists merely to satisfy fire codes. (Illustration 6-16) Preservation concerns focused upon architectural character alone would only consider how the choice of material for the gates meets design guidelines. A conservation approach instead views these areas as opportunities to integrate thoughtful change in the development of new community resources.

Reconnect the EPFL to Area Transportation Services

From the days of its founding, the EPFL viewed the location of the Central Building as critical to promoting use by community members from all parts of the city and economic situations. The EPFL historically utilized transportation outlets to bring its

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[24] Village Learning Place,"VIP Learning Garden," Village Learning Place, http://villagelearningplace.org/Garden.htm.

services to neighborhoods without a local branch.[25] The bus shelter at the corner of Cathedral and Mulberry Street serves two important bus lines. (Illustration 6-17) Other transportation hubs exist within the neighborhood, including the subway stop at Charles Center and the light rail stop on Howard Street. The EPFL could develop kiosks to serve as promotional tools that also enhance the aesthetic character of these transportation centers. By visibly extending its concern beyond the physical walls of the building, the EPFL could communicate its services without compromising its historic fabric.

Accommodate Growth Through Adaptive-Use

Although emerging technologies diminished the need for expanded book storage and the reading rooms, accommodating new programs and community partnerships may still require the EPFL to obtain additional space. The EPFL owns several existing buildings along the southern portion of Park Avenue and the west portion of Mulberry Street. (Illustration 6-18) Administrative staff already utilizes one of the rowhouses on Mulberry Street. This building is a reminder of the EPFL's roots in a rowhouse that took its architectural character from the local building traditions. The other rowhouses owned by the library would be ideal for services offered outside of the operating hours of the main facility. These buildings could also accommodate programs such as the CYC that make extensive use of audio and visual equipment.

The use of the buildings on Park Avenue would create occupation for one of the most dilapidated blocks in the surrounding neighborhood. These buildings create the

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[25] Enoch Pratt Free Library, *The Reorganization of a Large Public Library: Ten Year Report of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1926-1935* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1937), 88.

eastern boundary to the Market Center Historic District but receive little attention from preservation groups or city planners in the Westside redevelopment plans. By developing a stronger presence on Park Avenue, the EPFL would enhance its patrons' safety and generate foot traffic to the proposed businesses and residences along Howard Street. The alley between the building on Park Avenue and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped could serve as a civic gate between the EPFL and the Westside. (6-19)

The service court between the buildings might be adapted to function as an interior courtyard that provides a contemporary, more eclectic version of the retreat that exists at the Boston Public Library. Such a courtyard would provide controlled casual space adjacent to the proposed coffee bar and offer a rare glimpse for tourists into the private life of Baltimore's rowhouses. (Illustration 6-20)

Any development plans must be prioritized by multiple stakeholders as part of a staged development, but the limited resources available to the EPFL, preservation, and the redevelopment of Baltimore's neighborhoods mandates that organizations seek such opportunities to accomplish multiple humanistic goals.

Reaffirm the Participatory Environment through Public Planning Processes

Beyond any physical interventions, the manner in which the EFPL prepares for changes to its facilities has the greatest potential to preserve its use by the community. The EPFL considers the inclusion of the public in the planning process as an essential element of the success of its new programs.[26] City staff also regard public involvement as

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[26] Deborah D. Taylor, "Community Youth Corps: Teens as Library Resources," in *From Outreach to Equity Innovative Models of Library Policy and Practice*, ed. Robin Osborne, 45-47. Chicago: American Library Association, 2004.

crucial to ensuring that redevelopment plans address citizen concerns.[27] Regrettably, EPFL officials have not yet identified public participation as a priority in planning for the facility. For example, the EPFL did not seek public involvement in the planning for the Annex or the proposed renovations proposed to the main building.[28] The EPFL provides electronic and physical comment cards for making suggestions about the building, but no process exists to regularly include patrons in the long-range planning.[29] This seems like a missed opportunity to reengage the community and encourage long-term use of the library.

Public concern over the lack of community involvement reached its zenith when the Friends of the EPFL was taken over by activists protesting the closure of five branch libraries during the 1990s. Members of the group likened the situation with the EPFL to when the schools "beg for parental and citizen involvement until those parents and citizens become too interested in the process and demand a hand in curriculum and funding decisions. Then the schools cry foul and assert administrative knowledge."[30] If the EPFL strives to truly respond to community interests, it must reinvigorate the dialogue with patrons about their current needs for the building rather than relying solely upon the opinions of experts for preservation decisions.

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[27] Baltimore Department of Planning, *Plan Baltimore! A Vision for Baltimore: A Global City of Neighborhoods* (Baltimore: Baltimore Department of Planning, 1999).

[28] Wesley Wilson interview.

[29] Ibid.

[30] "Book Value: Administrators and Activists Battle over the Soul of the Pratt," *Baltimore City Paper*, May 6, 1998.

The importance of community involvement was reaffirmed during the recent expansion and rehabilitation of the 1924 Roland Park Branch. The EPFL elected to close the branch, citing its aging facilities, without adequately consulting its users. The community again vehemently protested the decision, but its location in one of the city's wealthiest neighborhood's dramatically changed the outcome. The EPFL agreed to save the branch if the community raised the funds for the rehabilitation and expansion. Architect Charles Alexander describes the effort to expand the footprint while maintaining the historic character of the building as a "collaborative process with the community."[31] The EPFL must adopt similar processes at the Central Building and all branches, not just in communities wealthy enough to fund a public process.

When the Maryland Legislature releases the funds to renovate the Central Building, some community involvement will be mandated because the State will furnish the majority of the funding. Preservation statutes mandate consultation with the Baltimore Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) and the Maryland Historical Trust (Maryland's State Historic Preservation Office -SHPO) on changes to historic buildings.[32] However, in these consultations, citizen involvement is frequently limited to public notice about a preservation board meeting to discuss the potential adverse affects of the proposed design. These meetings limit participation to a public comment period, too often leaving the decisions about community resources in the

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[31] "Roland Park Library Expansion," *Baltimore Sun*, August 12, 2007.

[32] Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, *Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland*, (Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 2000), http://www.marylandhistoricaltrust.net/s&g-architect.pdf.., 53.

hands of the enlightened architects, architectural historians, and planners appointed to the board.[33]

In recognition of the need to boost community involvement in preservation decisions, resources are being developed to help organizations expand public involvement. The National Park Service (NPS) updated its guide to community participation with a case study on the Maryland Historical Trust's preservation planning program. Unfortunately, this document and other resources treat consultation with the public on their views about protecting historic resources as a necessary administrative process that is secondary to disseminating information from the experts about existing plans.[34]

Despite their limitations, preservation guidelines provide direction for addressing public concerns regarding the historic fabric *and* the overall use of the building. Now a recognized component of civic building design, public participation ensures that citizens remain, to some degree, involved in the decisions about their history and resources.[35] A successful process requires a *genuine* interest in hearing community interests, rather than

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[33] Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, "Application for Notice-to Proceed Permit Baltimore City," Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/historic/ntp_app.pdf.

[34] This document identifies the first goal of public participation as information dissemination while positioning as "a second major thrust of the preservation planning outreach effort …consultation with the public, especially with those interested in historic preservation or who have the ability to affect it. "Ellen P. Ryan Barry R. Lawson, and Rebecca Bartlett Hutchison, "Reaching out, Reaching In. A Guide to Creating Effective Public Participation for State Historic Preservation Programs," National Park Service, http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/pad/PlanCompan/PublicPartic/RORIsec2.html.

[35] Most libraries including the recent projects in Seattle, Denver, and Phoenix have made citizen participation an important component of the design and planning process. Shannon Mattern, *The New Downtown Library: Designing with Communities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 15.

merely dispensing information about already formulated plans.[36] The dissemination of notices about proposed meetings to an audience beyond known supporters is also critical to its success.[37] The kiosks in transportation hubs proposed earlier in this chapter are one method to facilitate communication about meetings, as are postings to websites and email notices that utilize the digital network so richly developed by the EPFL.

The human network remains the EPFL's most important tool in expanding the dialogue about its facilities and services. A positive step recently taken by the EPFL was the creation of the Pratt Advisory Council that brings together the community, library staff, City Council, Mayor's Office, and Board of Trustees to discuss issues relating to the library.[38] Although the proposed renovations are not likely to commence before 2012,[39] the EPFL should utilize this group to discuss ongoing building issues and identify other potential stakeholders. When the planning resumes for the Central Building's rehabilitation, this group should be consulted as to how to bring community members into the process. This would restore what may be Joseph Wheeler's most important legacy, the need for libraries to reach out to "understand what their community is doing and thinking."[40]

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[36] Bridget Julia Venne, "'Building from the inside out' : A Case Study of Citizen Participation in the Design of the New Eugene Public Library" (bachelor's thesis, University of Oregon, 2000).

[37] Barry R. Lawson.

[38] Enoch Pratt Free Library,"Pratt Advisory Council," Enoch Pratt Free Library, http://www.prattlibrary.org/getinvolved/advisory.aspx?id=173.

[39] Wesley Wilson interview.

[40] Joseph L. Wheeler, *The Library and the Community: Increased Book Service through Library Publicity Based on Community Studies* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1924), 17.

Conclusion

Historic preservation legislation and philosophy may seem at odds with allowing a historic resource the flexibility to adjust to current community needs. As Setha Low argues, "when a place is designed, cultural elements are fixed in the physical environment that may have already changed and no longer represent the people who live in or use that environment. Many of our important historic preservation projects to save a valued building or landscape freeze the taste culture to an environment that may have little to do with the current population's cultural needs."[41] This difficulty is caused, in part, by overly relying upon the tangible fabric as the means of communicating historic significance. As this chapter demonstrates, responding to current needs can be accomplished with sensitivity to the historic fabric by emphasizing communication and impermanence when new features are developed. The use of the term reversible in the Secretary's Standards and throughout the preservation community privileges past use over evolving use, but impermanence recognizes the continual adjustments that our society makes to both our built resources and conservation values. Historic resources will receive their best protection if their current benefit to the community is valued as highly as past benefits.

Conservation of public libraries, even those whose communities have not experienced the radical changes seen in Baltimore in the past seventy-five years, is inherently challenging for reasons beyond the physical concerns that typically preoccupy preservation planners and architects. Despite the longevity of its status as a beloved

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[41] Setha M. Low, "Cultural Conservation of Place," in *Conserving Culture,* 73.

community resource in American cities, "the library is a transitional institution, standing between the commercial and the civic, incorporating both physical and digital media, integrating both physical and virtual spaces."[42] The challenge of conserving these resources can be overcome, in part, by remembering that ultimately libraries are "spaces where past, present, and future notions can 'meet and communicate with each other."[43] Although new facilities may give a city or institution landmark status, in the way that the 1932 Central Building did for the EPFL, it is a responsiveness to current interests that keeps the public coming to the library. Historic buildings can be adapted to current needs, and current needs can be adapted to historic buildings, if the focus remains upon communicating with the public about how these resources benefit their communities.

[42] Mattern, 145.

[43] Ibid., 145.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The adaptation of the American public library to changing cultural patterns regarding learning and public space continually reaffirmed the beloved position these institutions hold in our communities. The intellectual elite who founded libraries in the mid nineteenth century opened the doors to learning and enlightenment for all with the establishment of "people's palaces" at the end of that century in Boston and Chicago. Library benefactors later focused upon local communities with the creation of the EPFL branches and countless libraries funded by the Carnegie donation program. In the mid twentieth century, extension programs changed the nature of libraries from one prized for the number of volumes held to one oriented to providing services. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the construction of "library palaces" in Dallas, San Francisco, Phoenix, and Seattle reaffirmed their place as one of our society's most enduring and evolving institutions.[1] Cultural politics intertwined with the service philosophy and predominant architectural vocabulary of each era to create unique manifestations of this institution.

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[1]Critics of the trend in technology oriented central libraries that expend more money on construction than on books or patron services have dubbed these projects "library palaces". TeleRead, "$100m Eyed for Philly Library Palace," TeleRead: Bring the E-Books Home, http://www.teleread.org/blog/2003_09_14_archive.html#106370511216076456.

In the 1930s, the EPFL demolished its original building to construct Joseph Wheeler's vision of the "modern library". In many respects, the Central Building was the "library palace" of its time, built with the belief that new service programs combined with innovative architectural features could bolster library use and civic life. Like the Directors of twenty-first century libraries, the EPFL staff found that any scheme, no matter how progressive, required continual adjustment to changing values and local concerns.[2]

Directives for the EPFL: Summary of Findings and Strategies

In the seventy-five years since the construction of Baltimore's Central Library, a preservation ethos emerged that recognized the importance of historic buildings in maintaining our architectural, and more recently, our social fabric.[3] The Central Building retains a remarkably high degree of integrity of its architectural features. These minimal alterations can partially be attributed to limited budgets that delayed construction projects until architectural preservation became a preferred revitalization strategy in Baltimore. However, the strength of the EPFL's conservation effort is most evident in the extent to which it adapted themes associated with its original service philosophies and design to the evolving cultural context.

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[2] Shannon Mattern, *The New Downtown Library: Designing with Communities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), viii..

[3] Max Page and Randall Mason, "Rethinking the Roots of the Historic Preservation Movement," in *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States*, ed. Max Page and Randall Mason (New York: Routledge, 2004), 14.

Balancing motifs traditionally associated with civic buildings, such as the elegant decorations of the Central Hall, with elements like the Exhibition Windows that were intended to inspire community connection established a framework for the cultural conservation of the library. The EPFL utilized this framework to create new features such as the portals in the Subject rooms that built upon the original design intentions. The esoteric nature of some of the historic decorations requires careful planning as to how to restore these significant works of art while implementing new features with greater appeal to the current patrons. This may overcome some of the limitations of the previous restoration efforts that, while promoting ongoing use by addressing current practices in library use, emphasized functional requirements and the material characteristics of the original design at the expense of features that encourage the current community to consider the building its own.

The service philosophy implemented by Joseph Wheeler in the 1920s recognized the importance of furnishing information relevant to patrons' daily activities. The EPFL subsequently embarked on a transformation from a place of solitary intellectual pursuits to one oriented to communication and participation. This journey can be read most strongly in the service programs, but plans for the café in the future rehabilitation show that this strategy can be integrated into in the built form.

The library is no longer simply a repository for materials; it is a vehicle to broadcast the voices of its patrons. The EPFL nurtured these voices through the development of the African American collection, training Community Youth Corps members to develop public service announcements, and commissioning local art. These

activities recognize that the city's residents are more than recipients of enlightened social programs and the library's mission to foster their civic participation.

Technology played an important role in the conservation of this remarkable resource, allowing the EPFL to respond to changing patterns about learning and entertainment while protecting its historic building from expensive and intrusive alterations. Digital tools are integral to the library's mission of education and promoting the freedom of information. These are also powerful forces in helping citizens remain active participants in an increasingly digital world. Knowledge of these tools allows the library's patrons to imprint their voices on the EPFL and the city at large.

To bolster this remarkably strong response to the evolving cultural fabric of Baltimore, the EPFL, as it continues its second century of operation, must restore the visible connection between its building and its service to the community. If considered with sensitivity to the building's architectural character, the EPFL's operational history, and the surrounding social context, these changes can conserve the institution's history *and* provide ongoing benefit to the population of Baltimore. Most importantly, the EPFL must involve the community in decisions about the building and its use to a much greater degree. As discussed in Chapter VI, these issues represent not just the next phase of development for the EPFL, but a new era in the preservation movement that marries the protection of architecturally significant buildings to the ongoing needs of the community that relies upon them.

A New Mission for Preservationists

Like the EPFL, preservationists must continually adjust their mission to reflect the conservation issues that face our communities. In 1853, Pamela Ann Cuningham and a group of likeminded women saved Mount Vernon from destruction to serve as a symbol of patriotism and civic identity. Since that time, grassroots and publicly-supported efforts saved architectural and cultural masterpieces from destruction.[4] To expand our heritage protections, preservationists acknowledged the importance of vernacular resources in conveying community history. It is equally important to consider institutional buildings not just as designed environments that are the product of an individual's aesthetic vision, but as living resources that must change along with the social groups that rely upon them.

Critical to preserving these historic environments is preventing a slow decline that leads to their inevitable destruction. This decline is most likely to occur if the community no longer values the service provided within a building. The growth of a formal preservation movement encouraged the retention of historic buildings, primarily through adaptive use and financial incentives. These strategies, discussed in this thesis in the context of the historic districts within which the EPFL lies, contributed to the stabilization of Baltimore and other inner cities suffering massive declines in population in the twentieth century. The occupation of historic buildings, like the department stores, by social service agencies made adaptive use an effective tool in addressing the social and architectural disintegration occurring within the city. Despite the success of these projects, much of the social history associated with these buildings was lost through the

[4] William J. Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* (Pittstown, NJ: Main Street Press, 1988), 14.

change in use. Economic incentives also encouraged property owners to retain the tangible "architecturally significant" fabric. These incentives assisted in the conversion of buildings, such as the YMCA into a hotel, but again, little of the social history remains in evidence, despite sensitive treatment of architectural features. These programs provide little benefit to libraries and other public institutions struggling to keep their buildings in service. These groups must be given other forms of support ranging from grants to variances on building codes to encourage their ongoing use. Unfortunately, due to the focus in these programs on maintaining aesthetic features, they can delay or discourage alterations such as accessible entries that promote the building's ongoing use by the entire community. The resurgence in use of the EPFL after the completion of the Children's Garden and the Annex demonstrates that physical change, sensitively applied, can be an important preservative.

As cultural conservationists are discovering all around the world, social patterns can be as important as built features in preserving history. Finding ways to continue traditions, through the use of regional materials or craft practices, maintains the culture even when a built structure is adapted to support contemporary use. This practice can be applied to institutional activities as well as traditional cultures. Whenever possible, preservation planners seeking to adjust facilities to contemporary needs should look within the institutional and local history to develop strategies that connect to its future use. The EFPL's exhibition tradition enables it to easily incorporate elements of interest to the current community. Readily adjustable decorations contemporize historic spaces or connect new architectural features to the long-standing institutional values.

While new technologies offer especially rich possibilities for historic library buildings, they also facilitate interpretative exhibits that safeguard sensitive ecological or historic sites from signs and other intrusive materials.[5] The preservation community, like the library, is recognizing the potential of these services to expand the types of sites and communities served.

The Need for Change in Preservation Practice

Unfortunately, the charters and guidelines that govern preservation decisions have not made the same evolution in recognizing the value of change in long-term conservation strategies. These guidelines, often rooted in legislation from the 1960s, make a sharp distinction between changes that occurred in the past to support current needs and contemporary adjustments to promote ongoing use.[6] As an example, Article 11 of the Venice Charter for the Conservation of Buildings and Sites stipulates that "the valid contributions of all periods to the building of a monument must be respected, since unity of style is not the aim of a restoration," but Article 13 establishes that "additions cannot be allowed except in so far as they do not detract from the interesting parts of the building, its traditional setting, the balance of its composition and its relation with its

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[5] Daniel J. Cohen, "The Future of Preserving the Past," *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship 2*, (Summer 2006), http://crmjournal.cr.nps.gov/Print.cfm?articleIDN=2381.

[6] The 1966 National Historic Preservation Act governs most preservation decision making in the United States. This act took many of its cues from the Venice Charter of 1964. Murtagh, 151.

surroundings."[7] Thus changes may be celebrated as part of the community's built history, but any further evolution is treated as a disruption rather than a continuation of history.

Much of the dilemma lies not in the preservation standards, but in the language with which preservationists address the community. In attempting to strengthen the legal position of preservation and its standing as a professional discipline, many adopted a inflexible tone. Frits Pannekoek decries the way in which " the articles of the 1964 Venice Charter in particular are today regarded as the conservationists' 'commandments'."[8] The Secretary of the Interior's Standards adopts a similar tone of commandment with proscriptive language and minimal guidance that may discourage the community from taking ownership of the process of protecting its resources.[9]

Practices that position the educated professional as the arbiter of appropriate treatment compound the difficulties. Funding and access to preservation resources is now often limited to projects employing individuals meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Professional Qualifications. As a result of these requirements "professionals no longer advise or counsel— they decide. Important cultural decisions can now be only made by professionals."[10] Preservation is, too often, not an act of the

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[7] "The Venice Charter. International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites," http://www.icomos.org/venice_charter.html.

[8] Frits Pannekoek, "The Rise of the Heritage Priesthood or the Decline of Community Based Heritage," in *Preservation of What, for Whom?: A Critical Look at Historical Significance*, ed. Michael A. Tomlan, 6 (Ithaca, N.Y.: National Council for Preservation Education, 1999).

[9] United States. National Park Service. Heritage Preservation Services, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior National Park Service Heritage Preservation Services, 2000).

[10] Pannekoek, 4.

community maintaining its resources in response to its current concerns, but an evaluation by an outside expert as to its adherence with statutory requirements. This is particularly problematic in the case of libraries, where despite the altruistic mission, a tradition of regulation exists that discourages community involvement. Preservation initiatives may meet aesthetically oriented guidelines but fail to involve the public in the decision making process, ultimately reducing the value of the resource to the community.

Final Conclusion

These goals for the EPFL, library buildings generally, and the preservation profession may be idealistic, but it is commensurate with the values our society ascribes to these endeavors. Public libraries are among our most idealistic institutions, celebrating the transformative power of learning and the necessity of shared resources for a sustainable culture. Libraries encourage architecture that reaches the fullest potential of that art, to engage social needs beyond the purely formal or aesthetic. Preservation recognizes that we can conserve not just our physical resources, but also our communities, by understanding their origins and maintaining their connection to our present day society. If the preservation of historic libraries as truly public buildings is to be a priority, we must strive to restore the sense of community created through these historic buildings as well as their physical fabric.

Changes in the way cultural resources are protected must come from within the preservation community. Preservation professionals must accomplish more than meeting the National Park Service's Standards, instead heeding the call of those like Ned Kauffman who seek a

> return to the origins of the preservation movement, which lie in social commitment, not remedies for wood rot. …a precise, prudent commitment to deep-rooted change in the world outside the profession … a passionate struggle to change how society imagines, preserves, and inhabits its heritage.[11]

Only by rereading historic buildings like the EPFL's Central Library as ongoing social *and* architectural resources can preservationists fully engage this task. Abigail Van Slyck writes that libraries "open vistas into the future. Rather than simply meeting our expectations, they challenge us – to redefine the role of reading in our culture, to reinvigorate social interaction in public spaces."[12] Preservationists face the challenge of treating these buildings not as treasure boxes but as centers for community engagement. An open discourse about their future generates funding for their rehabilitation and, more importantly, reaffirms their place in the public realm. These buildings invite a new type of conservation because, like the book authored by an individual, they will be continually rewritten, by the scholar who scribbles notes in the corners, by the collector who shields it within a plastic cover, and in the conversations and of hundreds who inhabit this

> asylum, platform for uninhibited leaps …
> all this trash and all this greatness,
> burning in time with the slow cool burning,
> burning in the fires of poems that gut libraries,
> only to rebuild them, more grand and Palladian,
> freer, more courteous, with cornerstones that say: Decide for yourself.[13]

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[11] Ned Kaufman, "Moving Forward," in *Giving Preservation a History,* 326

[12] Abigail Ayres Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 220.

[13]Born in Baltimore, Karl Shapiro worked as a page and studied to be a librarian at the EPFL in 1941. Karl Shapiro, "Library, Asylum, Platform for Uninhibited Leaps," *The Bourgeois Poet* (New York: Random House, 1964), 20-21.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF PRESERVATION TERMINOLOGY

Accessibility.
Whether or not a building or environment incorporates features that enable its use by individuals with varying physical abilities. The term is often utilized to indicate whether or not a building complies with Americans of Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Adaptive use.
The process of converting a building to a use other than that for which it was designed, e.g. changing an office building into a hotel. This process is typically accomplished with some alteration to the building.

Design review.
The local process of determining whether new construction or changes to buildings meet the standards of appropriateness established by the local review board and preservation ordinance.

Historic district.
A geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, building, structures, and/or objects united by past events, aesthetic, or physical development.

Interpretation.
The education methods by which the history and meaning of historic resources are explained by use of guides, printed materials, audio/visual technologies, or other means.

Rehabilitation
The act or process of restoring a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration that makes possible an efficient contemporary use, while preserving those features of the property that are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values.

Restoration.
The act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of later work or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

APPENDIX B

ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustration Credits:

Photographs and graphics labeled Courtesy EPFL provided courtesy of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Library/ State Library Resource Center, Baltimore, Maryland.

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ILLUSTRATIONS CHAPTER III

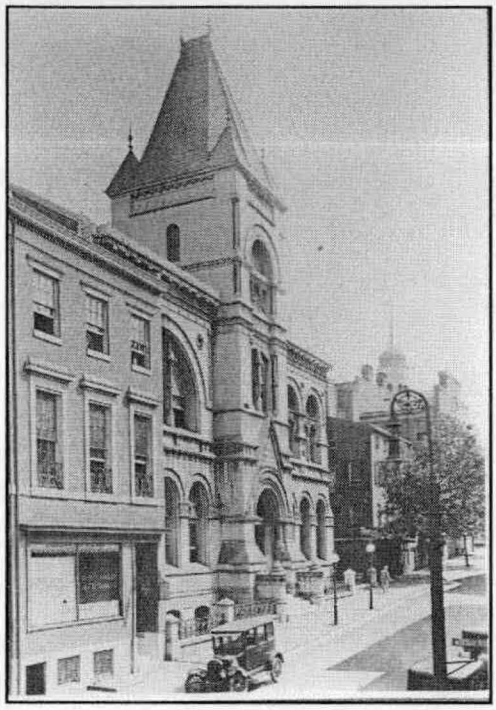

Illustration 3-1 Central Library Constructed by Pratt as viewed in 1930, courtesy EPFL

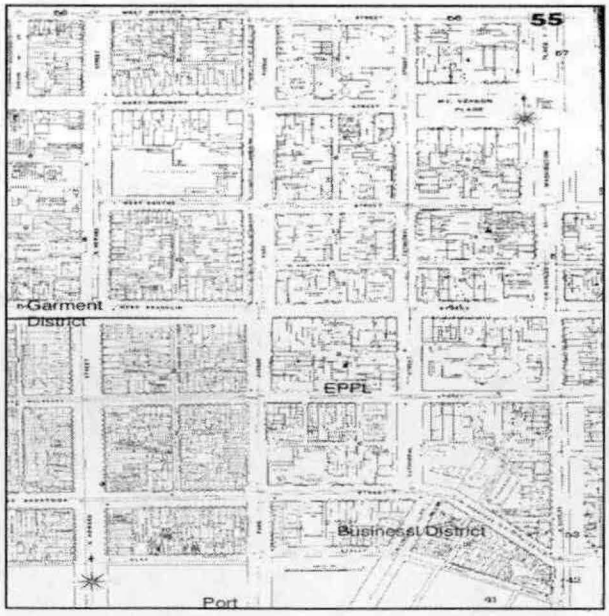

Illustration 3-2 EPFL Central Building Location,
Adapted from 1888 Sanborn Map, courtesy EPFL

Illustration 3-3 Gabrielle de Veaux Engraving of Mt. Vernon Place 1930, Cator Collection, courtesy EPFL

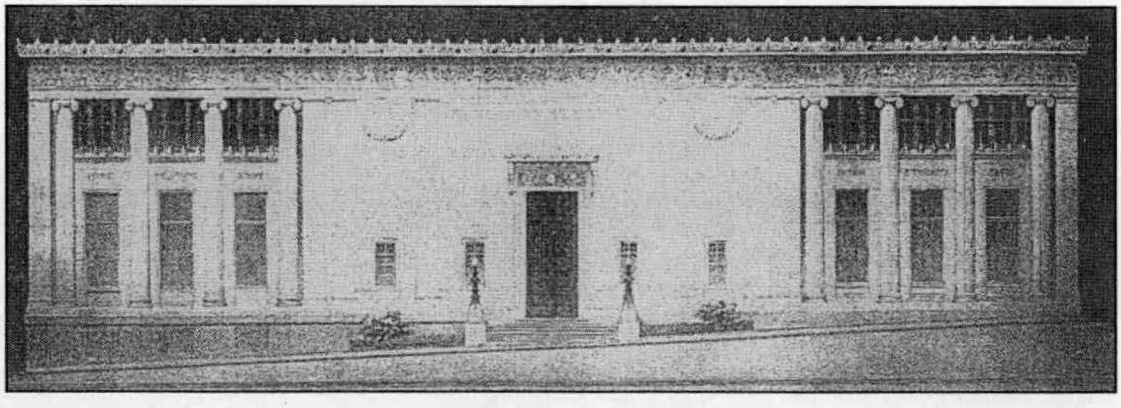

Illustration 3-4 Wilmington Public Library Tilton & Githens The Architectural Review, *March 1922*

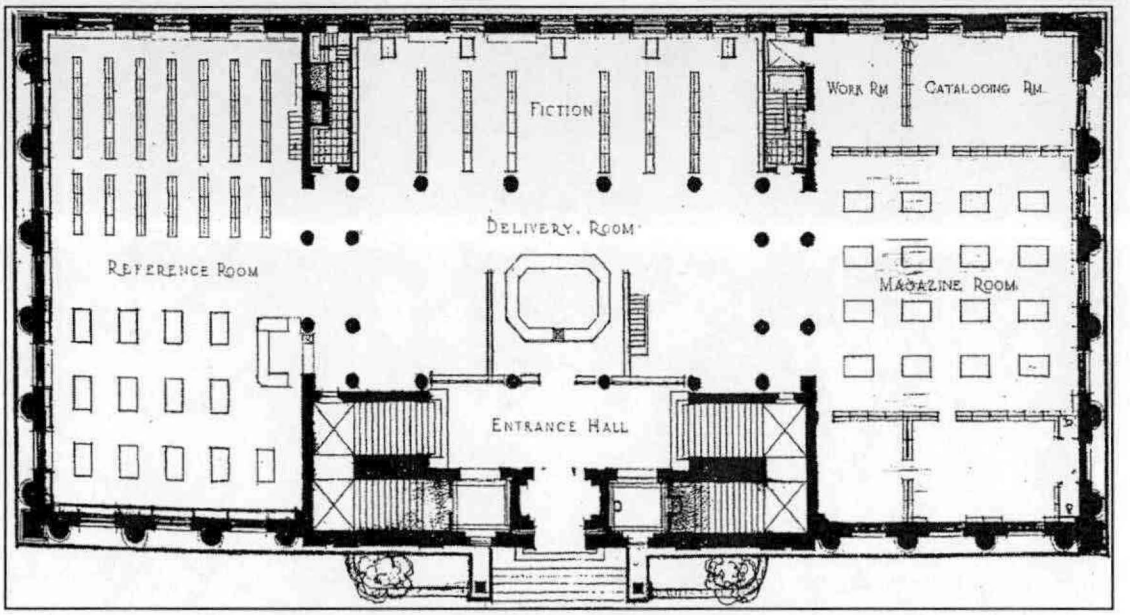

Illustration 3-5 Wilmington Library First Floor Plan, The Architectural Review March 1922

Illustration 3-6 Central Hall Charging Desks 1938, courtesy EPFL

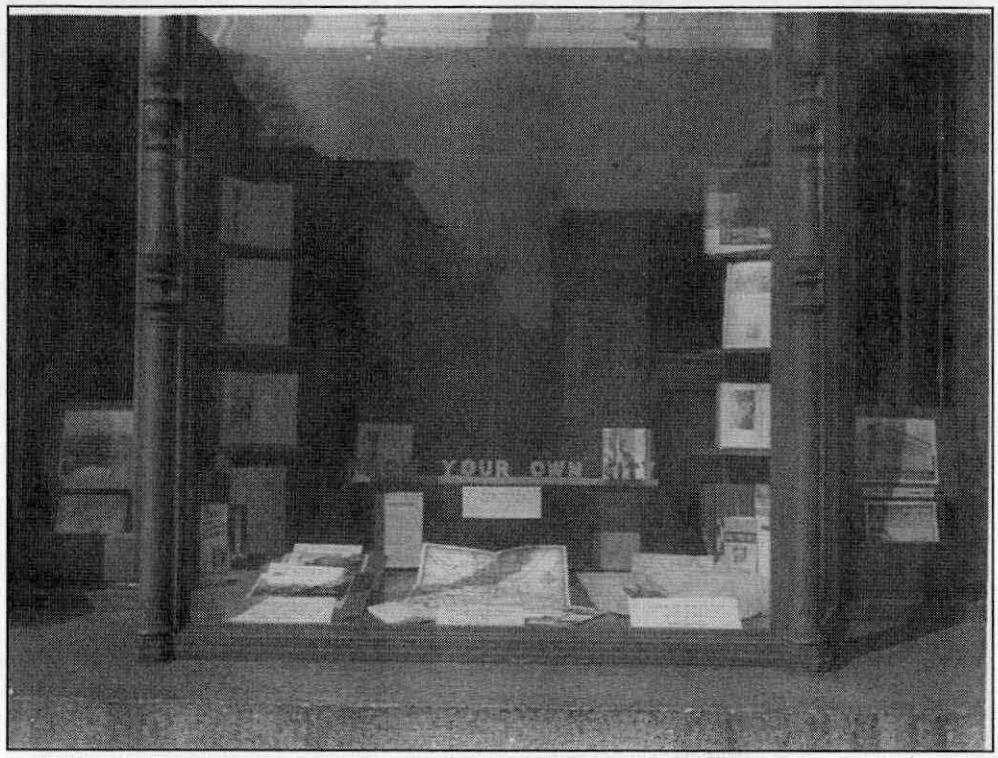

Illustration 3-7 Exhibition of WPA Activities Inviting Patrons to "Know Your City" 1938, courtesy EPFL

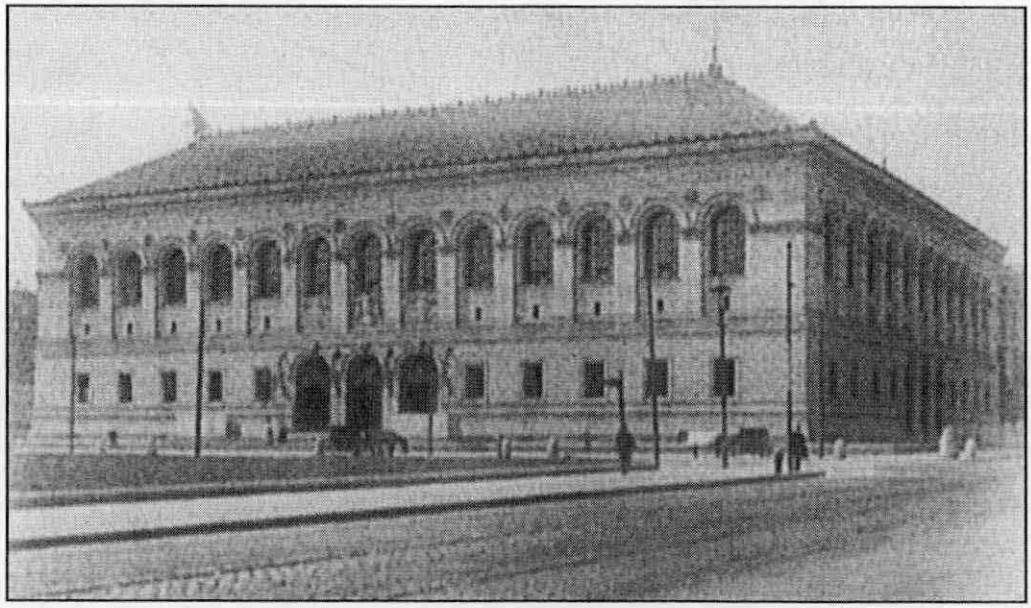

Illustration 3-8 Boston Public Library c. 1906, Library of Congress, Detroit Publishing Company, 1880

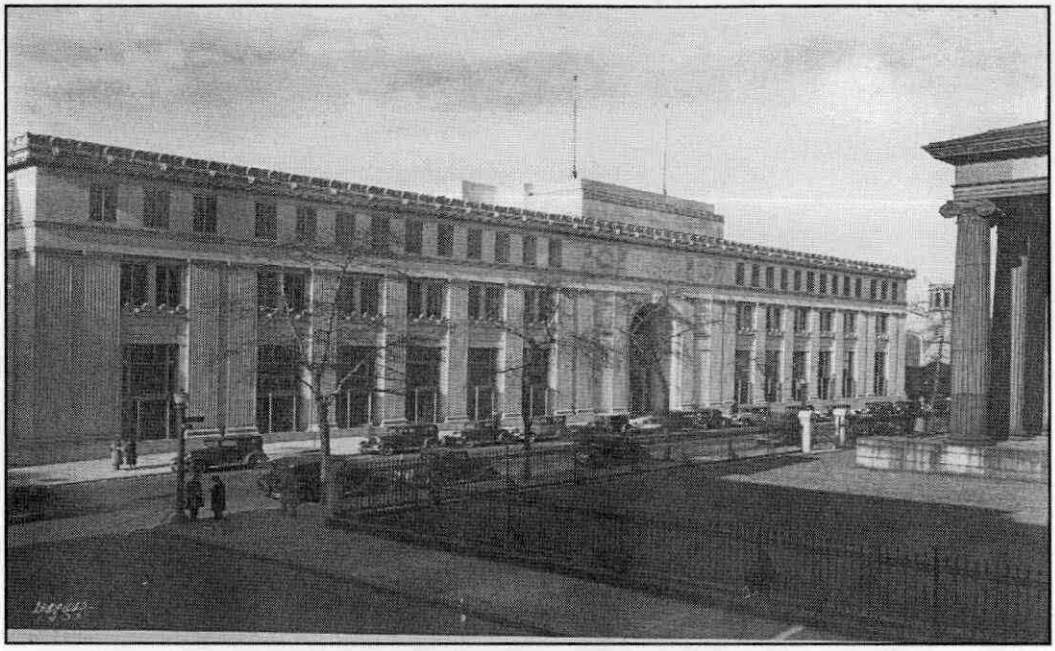

Illustration 3-9 EPFL Exterior 1933, courtesy EPFL

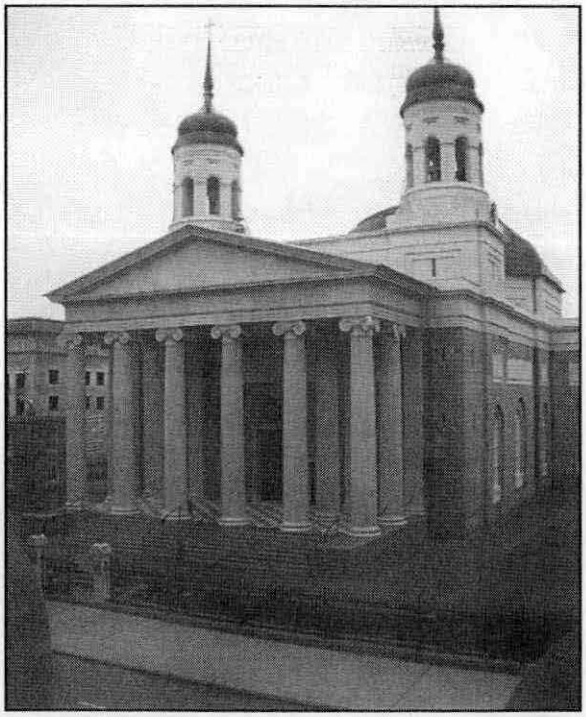

Illustration 3-10 Basilica of the Assumption, Flathman, 2007

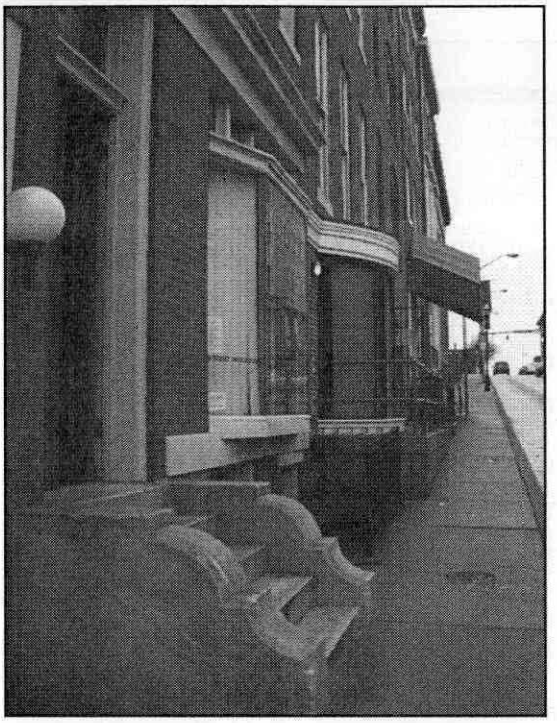

Illustration 3-11 Oriel Window on Mulberry Street, Flathman, 2007

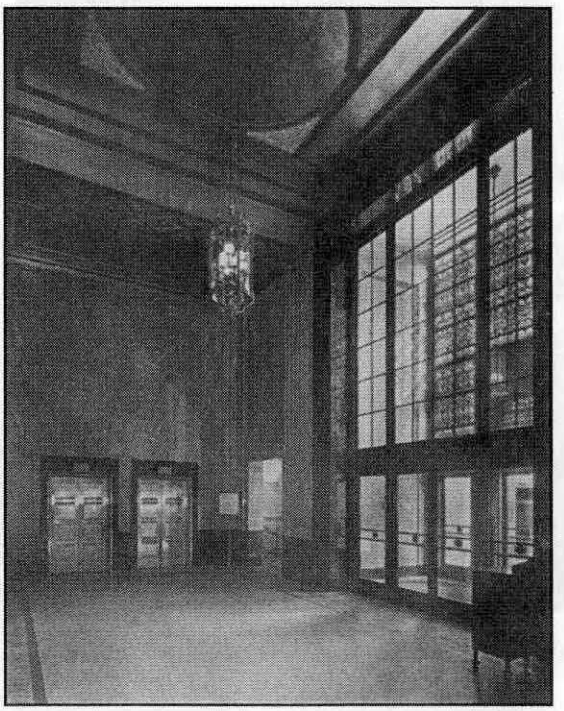

Illustration 3-12 Sidewalk-Level Entry 1936, courtesy EPFL

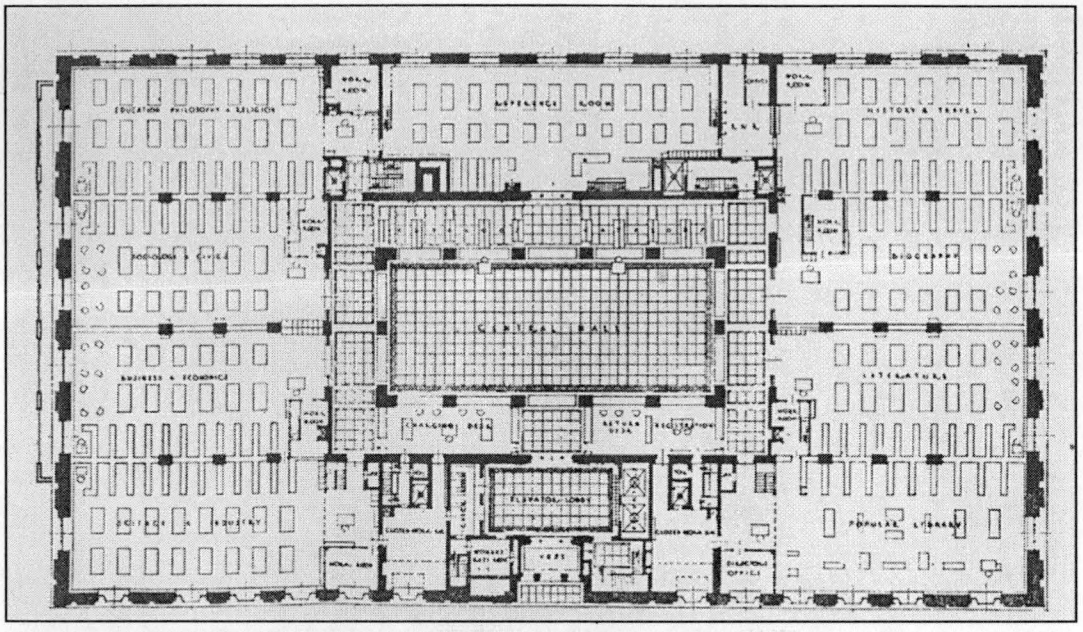

Illustration 3-13 Ground Floor Plan Central Building 1936, courtesy EPFL

Illustration 3-14 Reference Room 1938, courtesy EPFL

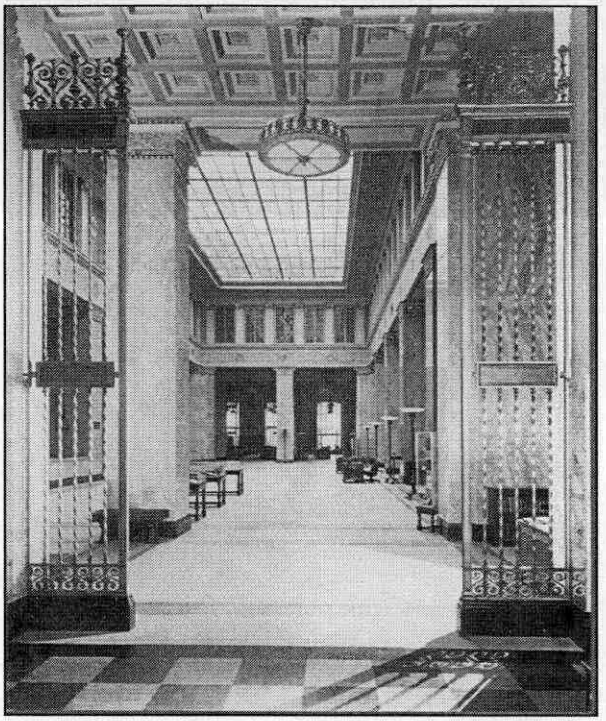

Illustration 3-15 Central Hall looking south, 1938, courtesy EPFL

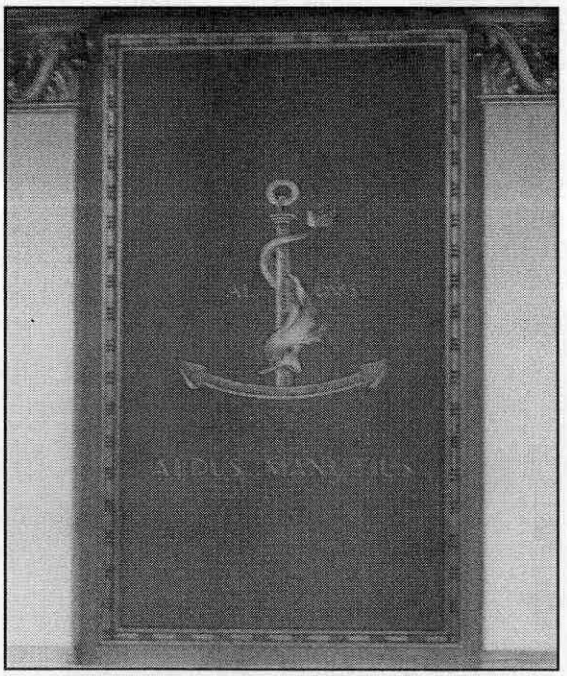

Illustration 3-16 Panel Depicting Printer's Mark of Aldus Manutius, the Inventor of Movable Type, Flathman, 2007

Illustration 3-17 Biography Room 1938, courtesy EPFL

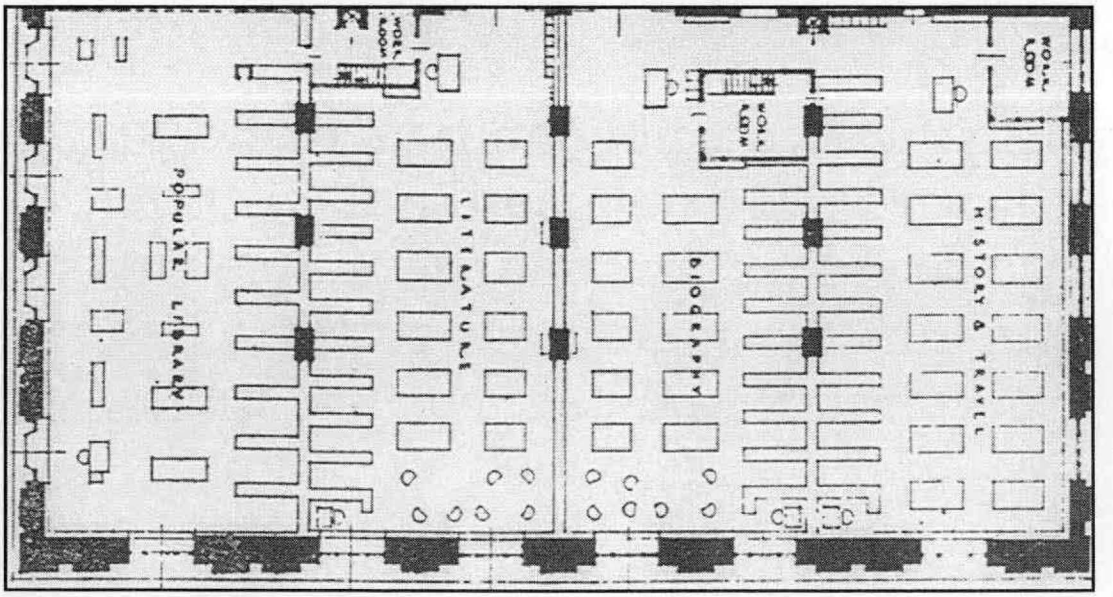

Illustration 3-18 North Subject Room Plan 1936, courtesy EPFL

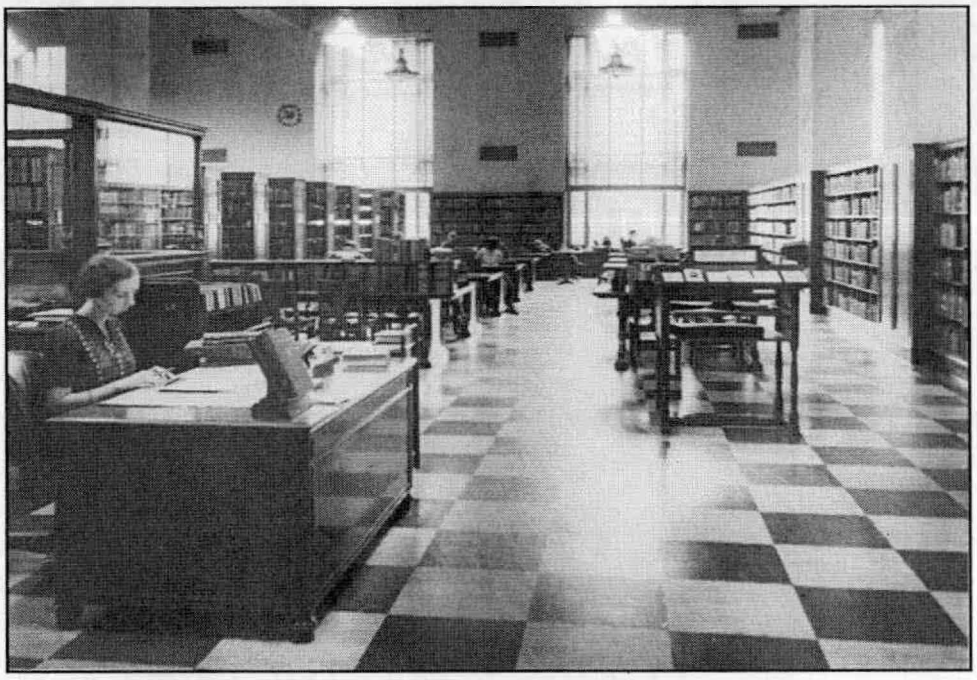

Illustration 3-19 Staff Work Area 1938, courtesy EPFL

Illustration 3-20 Desk Custom Designed by the Remington Library Bureau, courtesy EPFL

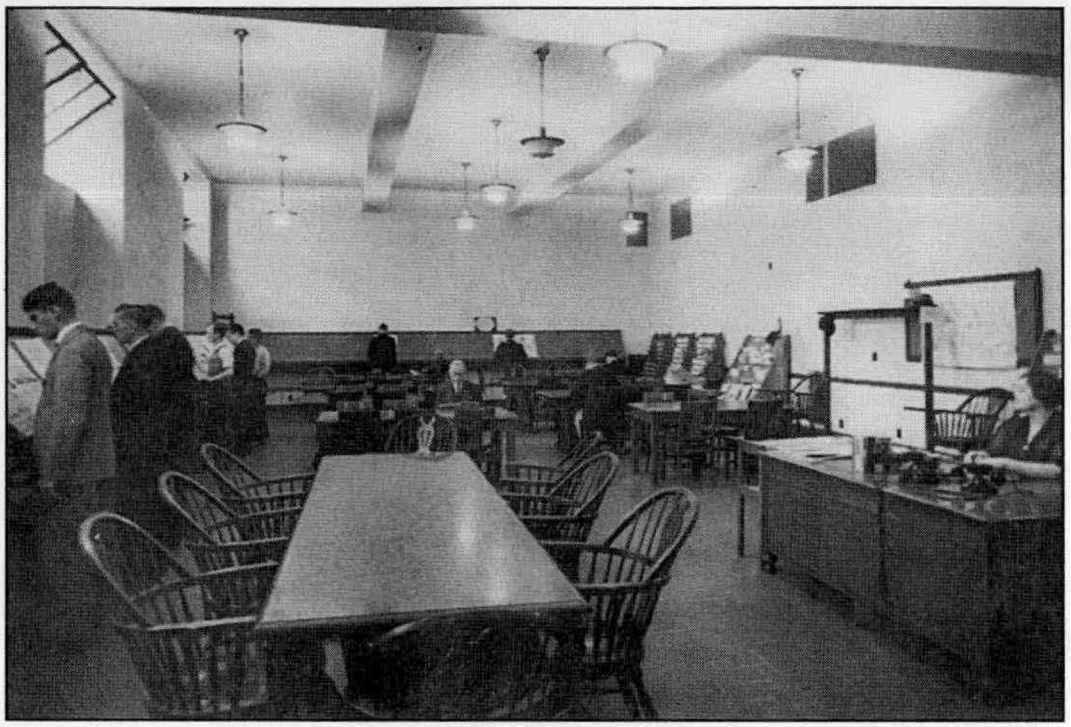

Illustration 3-21 EPFL Newspaper Room C. 1938, courtesy EPFL

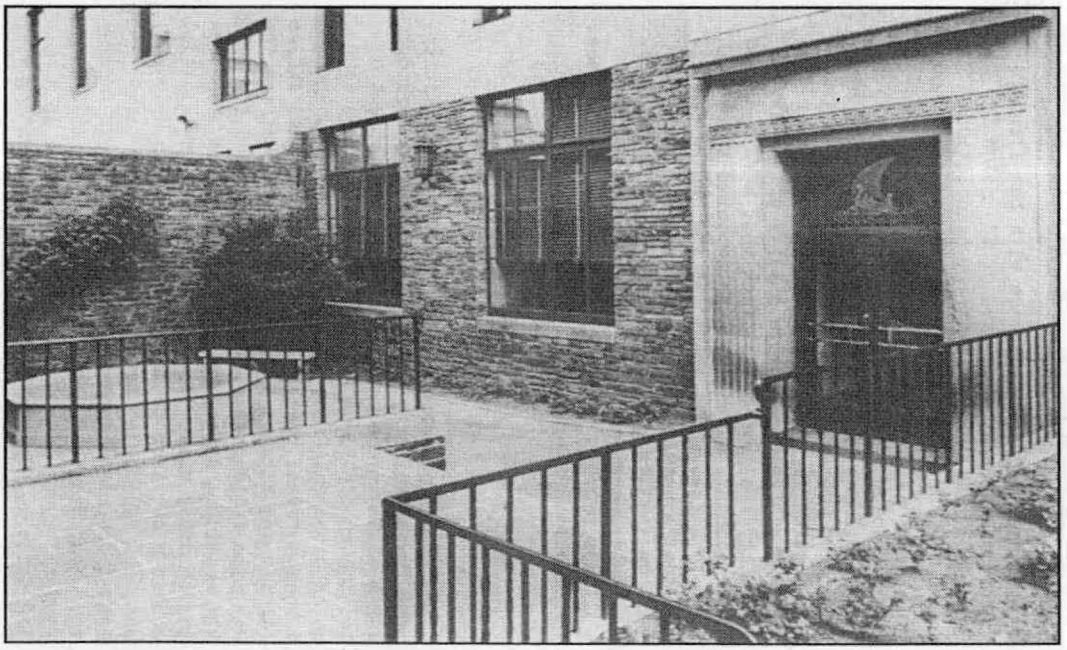

Illustration 3-22 Children's Room Exterior Entrance, courtesy EPFL

Illustration 3-23 Children's Room Fountain, courtesy EPFL

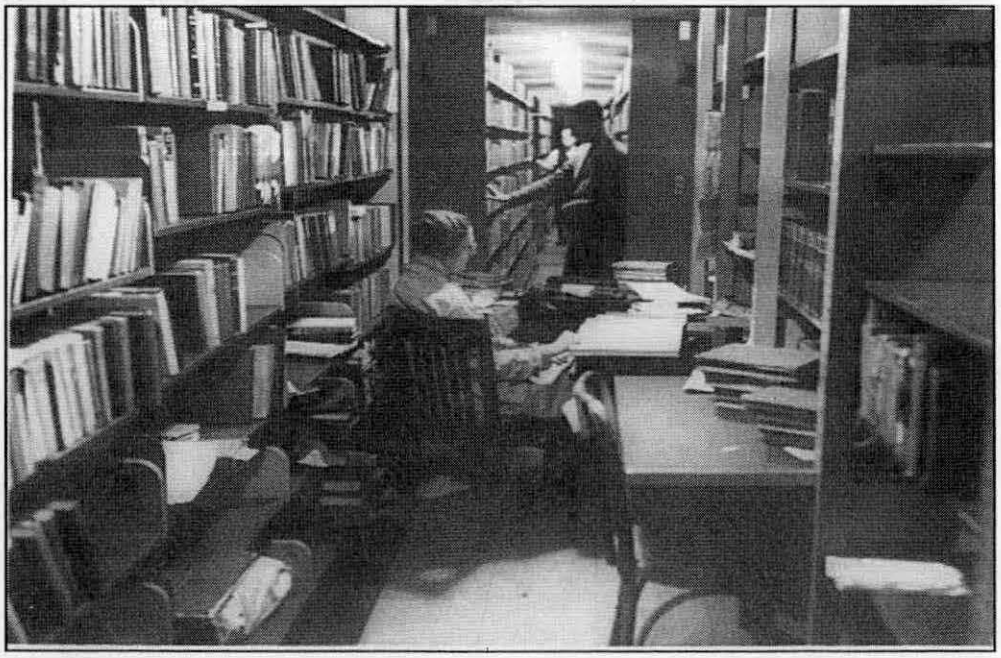

Illustration 3-24 WPA Worker Cataloguing in the Stacks, courtesy EPFL

Illustration 3-25 Faerie Queene Murals by Lee Woodward Ziegler, Courtesy EPFL

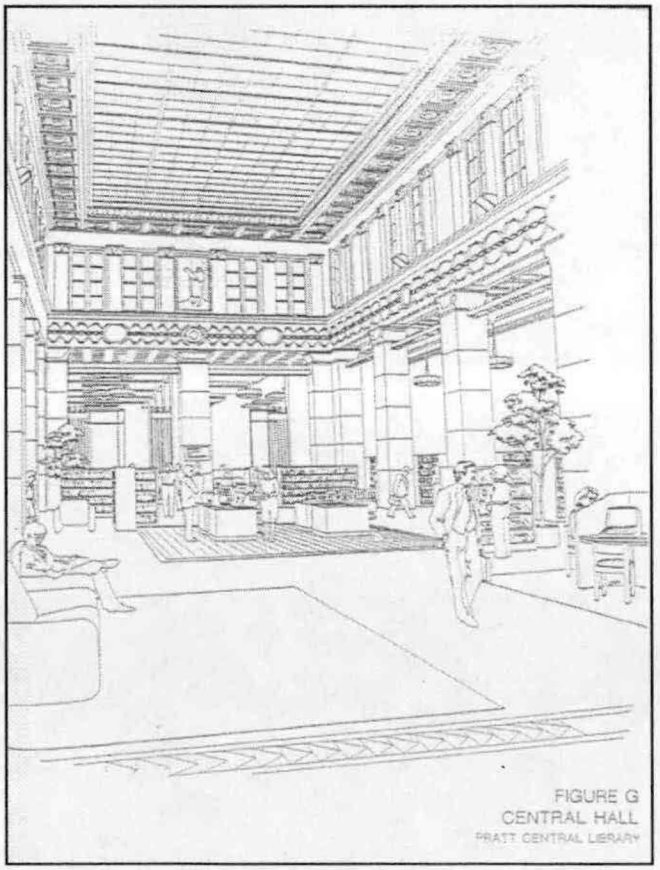

Illustration 3-26 Proposed Central Hall Reading Lounge, courtesy EPFL

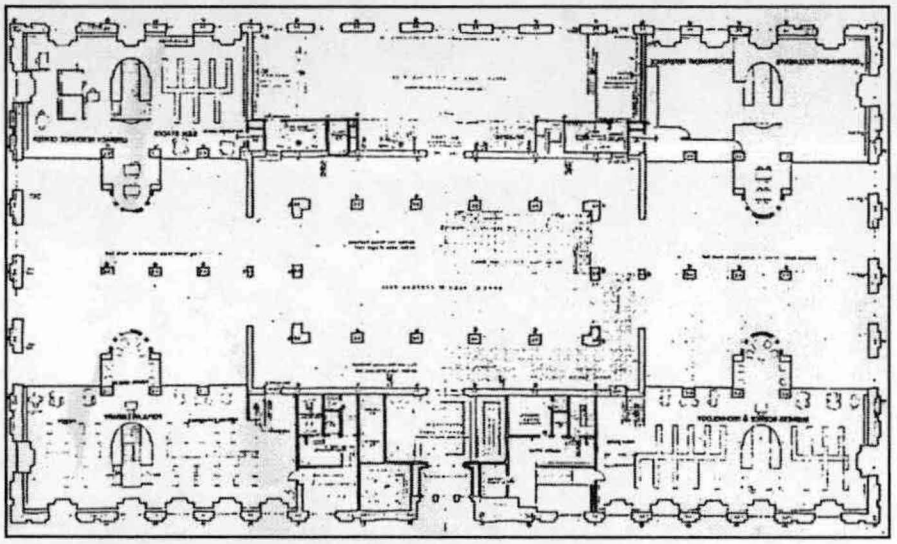

Illustration 3-27 Floor Plan 1983 Rehabilitations, courtesy EPFL

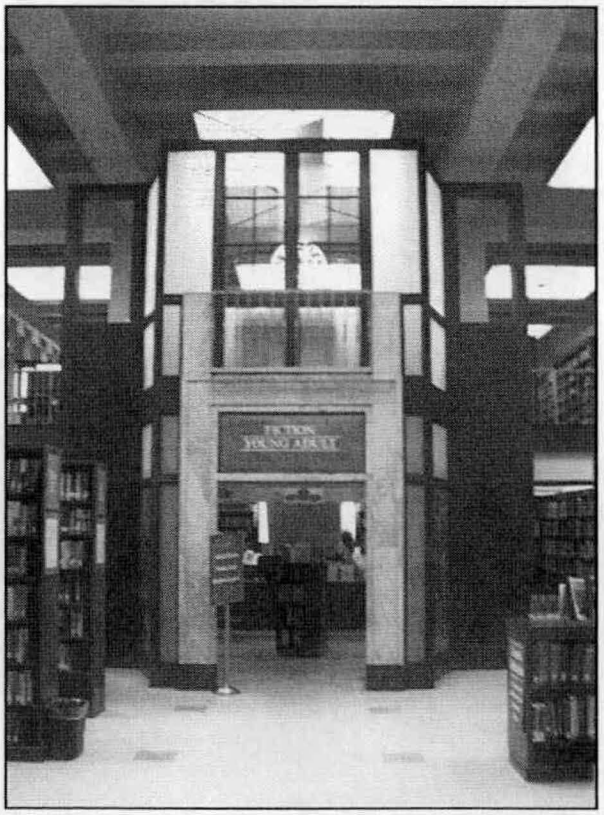

Illustration 3-28 Portal Created in 1986 Rehabilitation, Flathman, 2007

3-29 Decorations or Barriers? Railings on the Exhibition Windows, Flathman, 2007

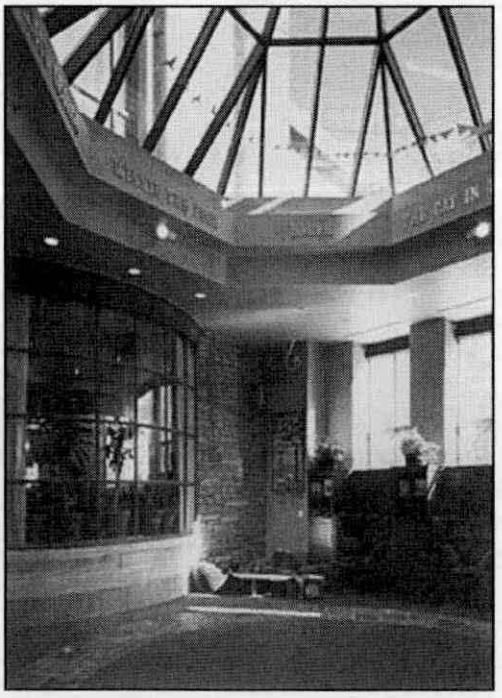

Illustration 3-30 Children's Story Room, Flathman, 2007

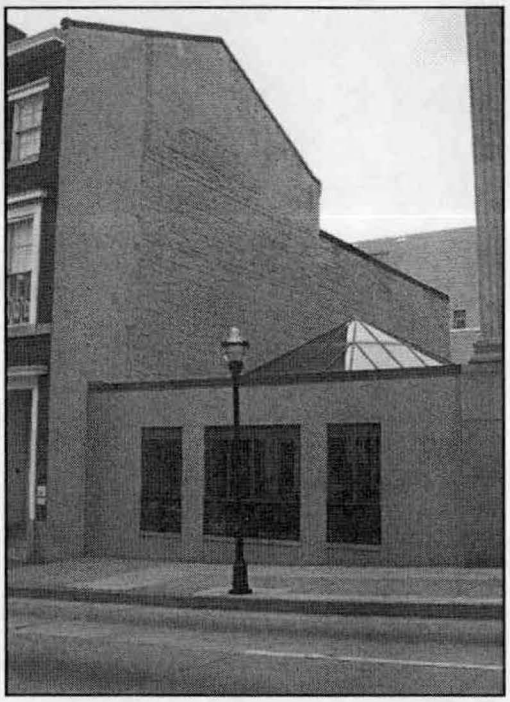

Illustration 3-31 Children's Room Exterior, Flathman, 2007

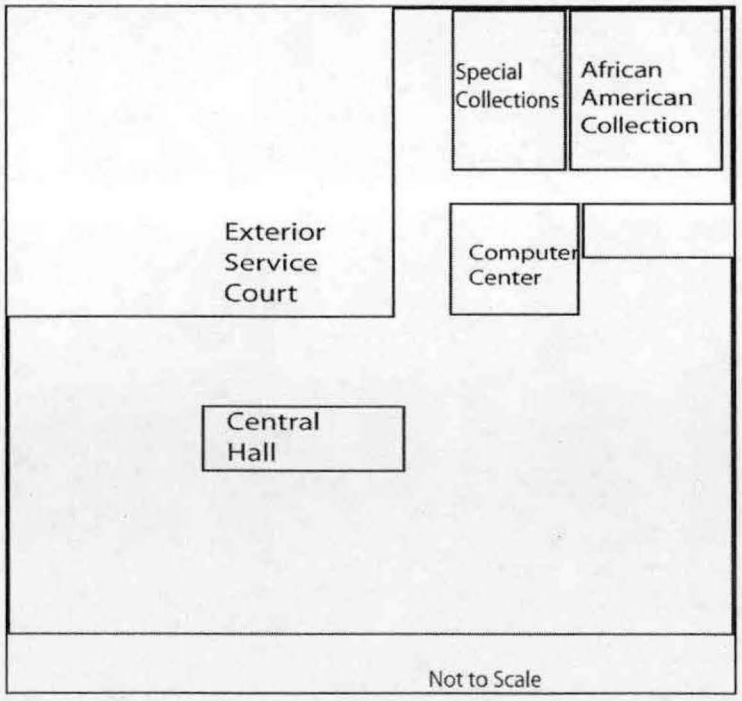

Illustration 3-32 Diagram Showing Location of the African American Collection in relation to the Central Hall, Flathman, 2007

Illustration 3-33 Annex Hallway Looking Toward African-American Collection, Flathman, 2007

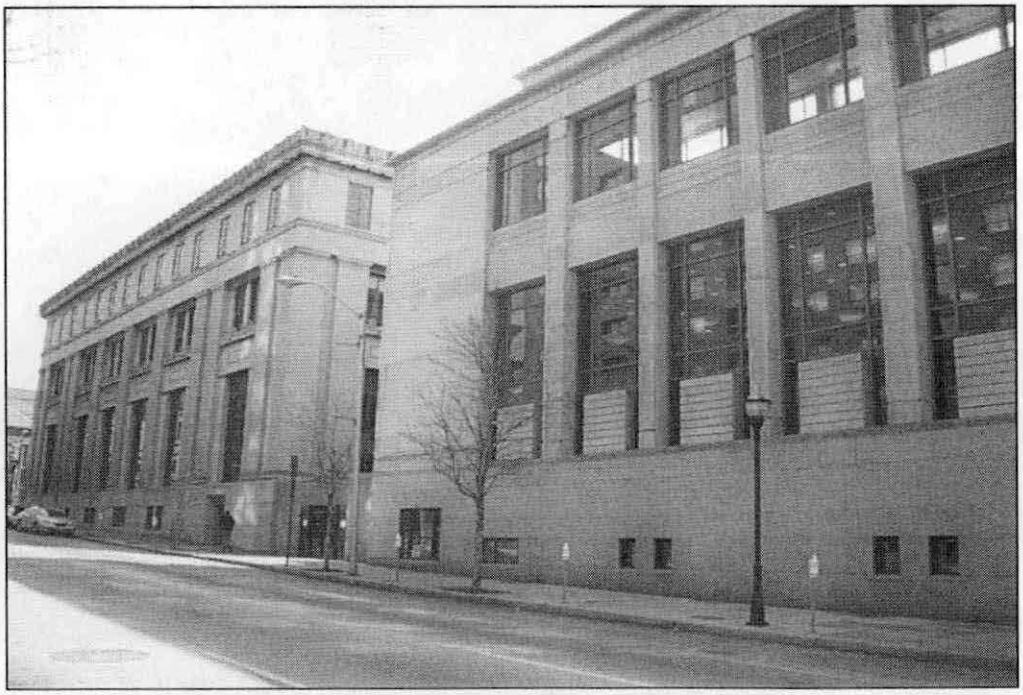

Illustration 3-34 Annex Exterior, Flathman, 2007

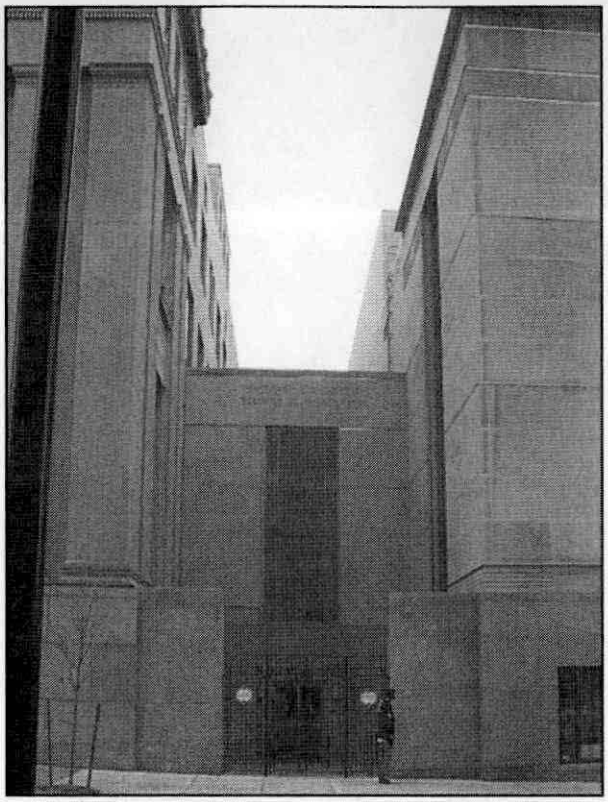

Illustration 3-35 Link Between the Central Building and the Annex, Flathman, 2007

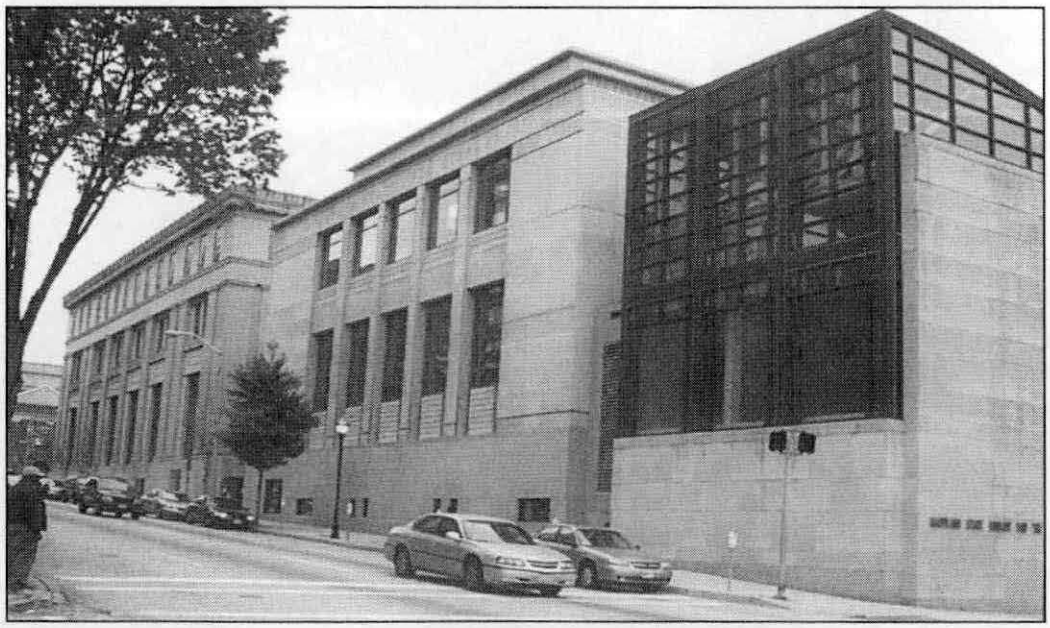

Illustration 3-36 Franklin Street Elevations, Flathman, 2007

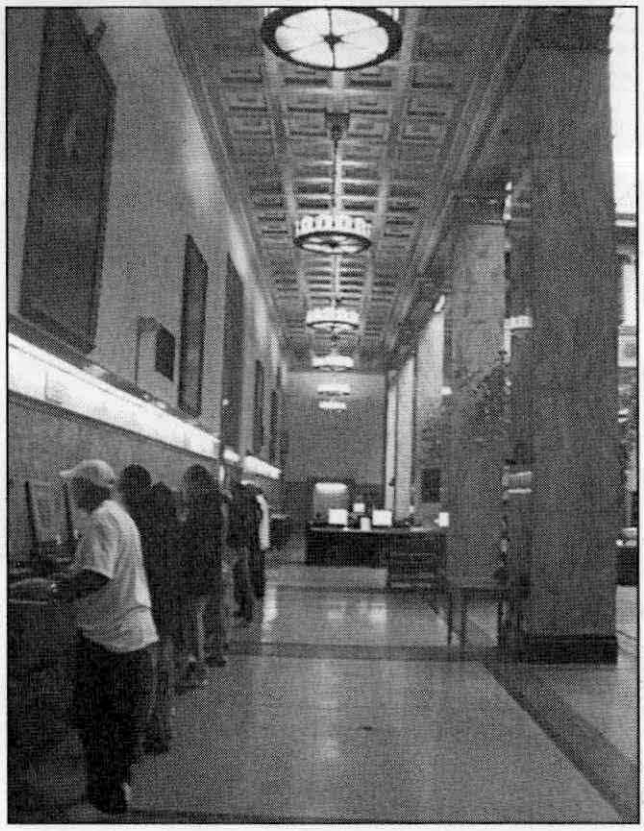

Illustration 3-37 Computerized Card Catalog, Flathman, 2007

ILLUSTRATIONS CHAPTER V

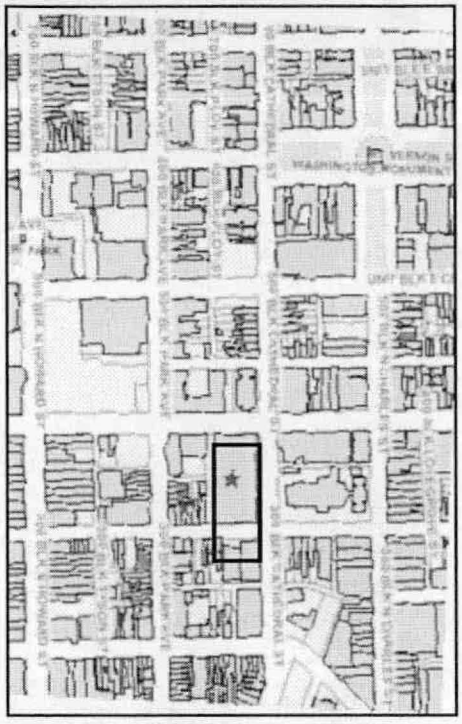

Illustration 5-1 Study Area Map, EPFL in Bold, Flathman, 2007

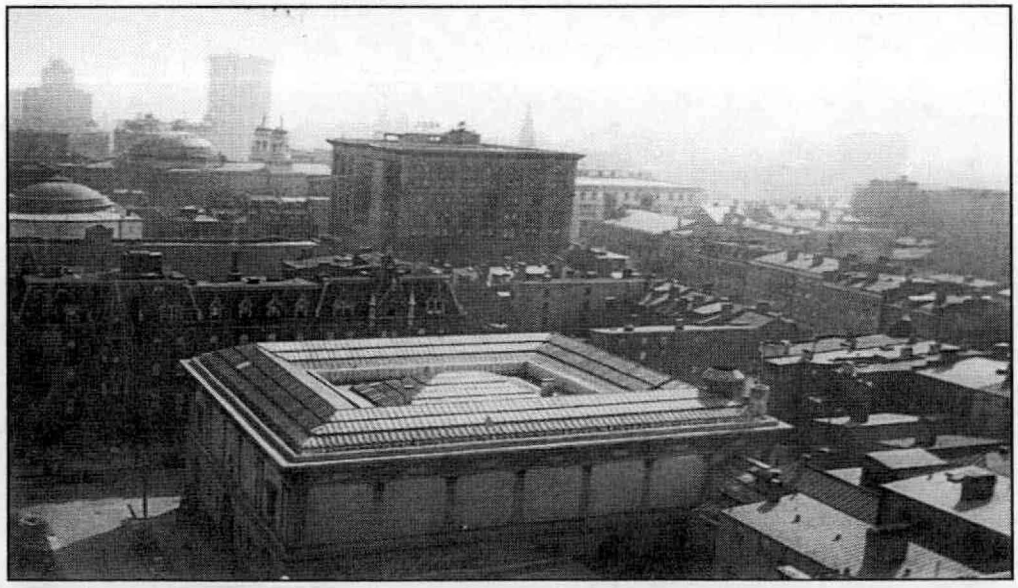

Illustration 5-2 View of the Neighborhood c. 1936, courtesy EPFL

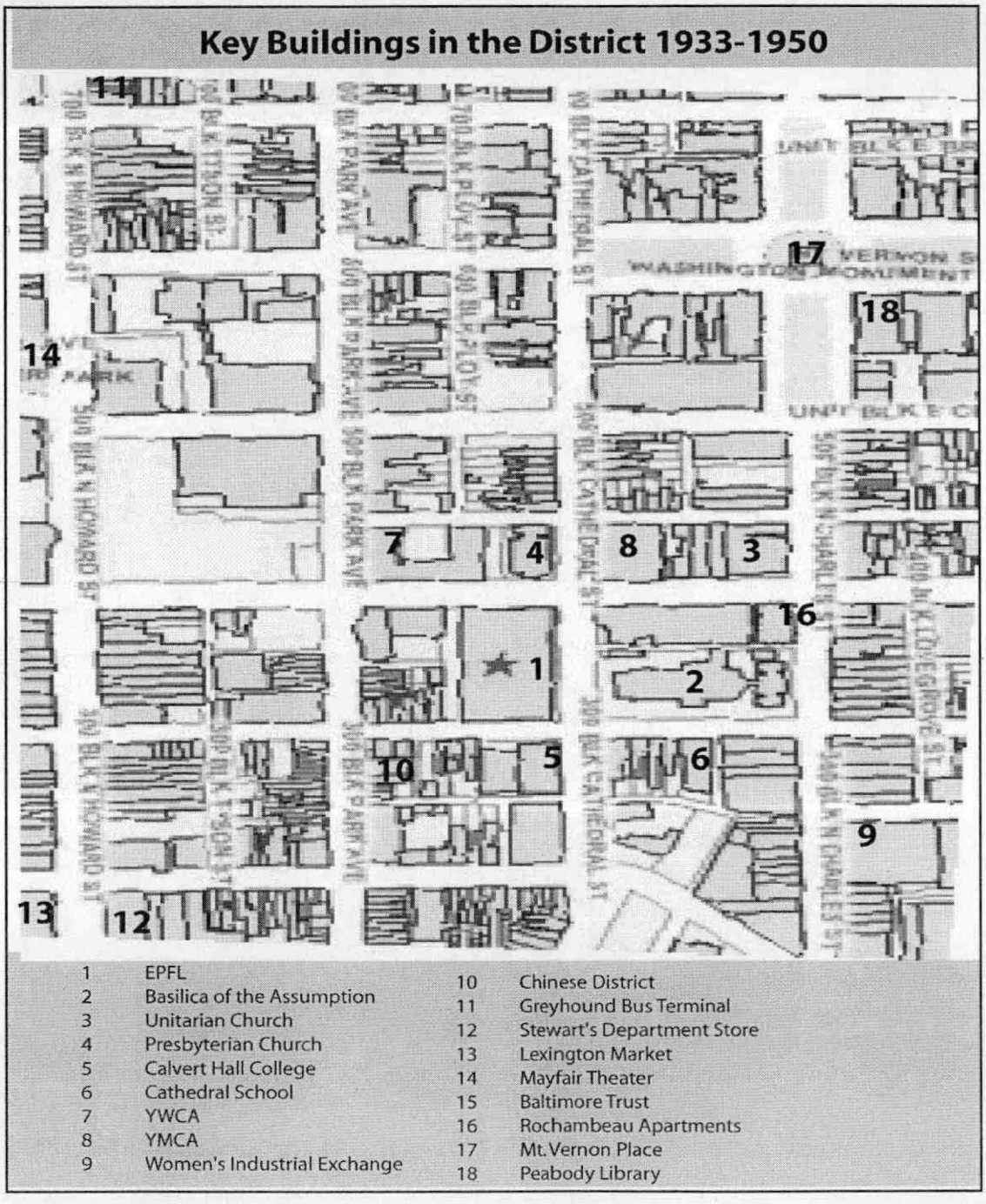

Illustration 5-3 Key Buildings in the District 1933-1950

Illustration 5-4 411 Park Avenue as Photographed in 1936, courtesy HABS

Illustration 5-5 The Baltimore Trust, the City's First Skyscraper, Smith and May (1929), Flathman, 2007

Illustration 5 6 Calvert Hall College, c. 1936, courtesy EPFL

Illustration 5-7 Apartment Buildings to the North of the EPFL, as photographed in 1936, courtesy HABS

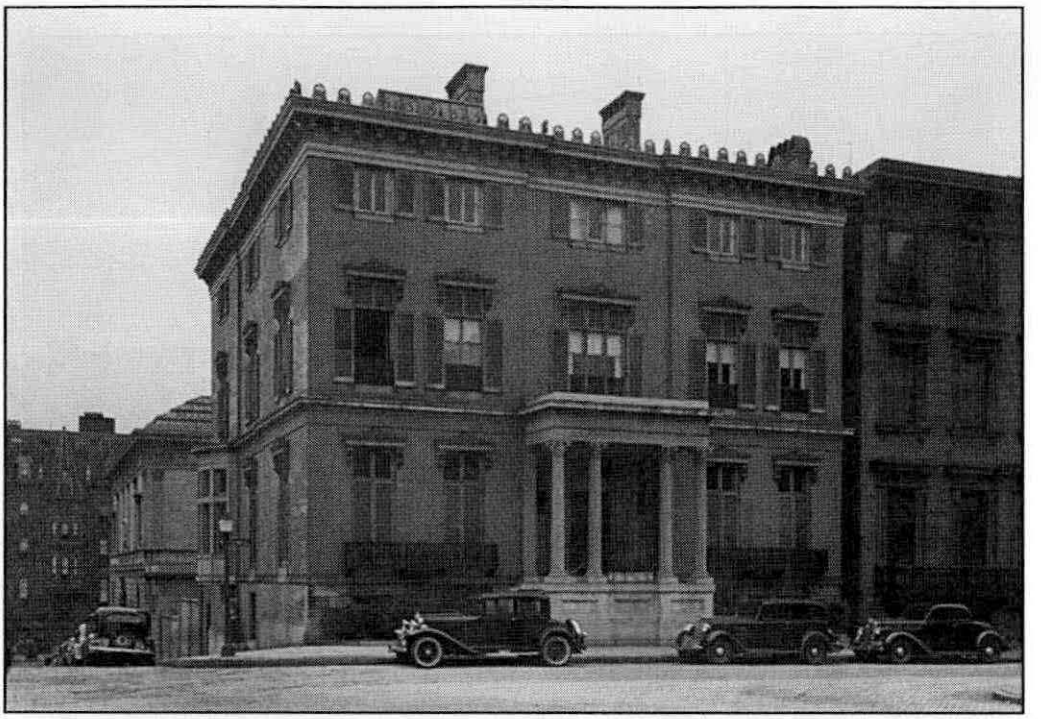

Illustration 5-8 Mt. Vernon Place Townhouse c. 1936, courtesy HABS

Illustration 5-9 Rowhouse Block to the west of the EPFL, Occupied Predominately by African Americans, as photographed in 1936, courtesy HABS

Illustration 5-10 Greyhound Bus Terminal, Arrasmith (1942), Flathman, 2007

Illustration 5-11 EPFL c. 1946, courtesy EPFL

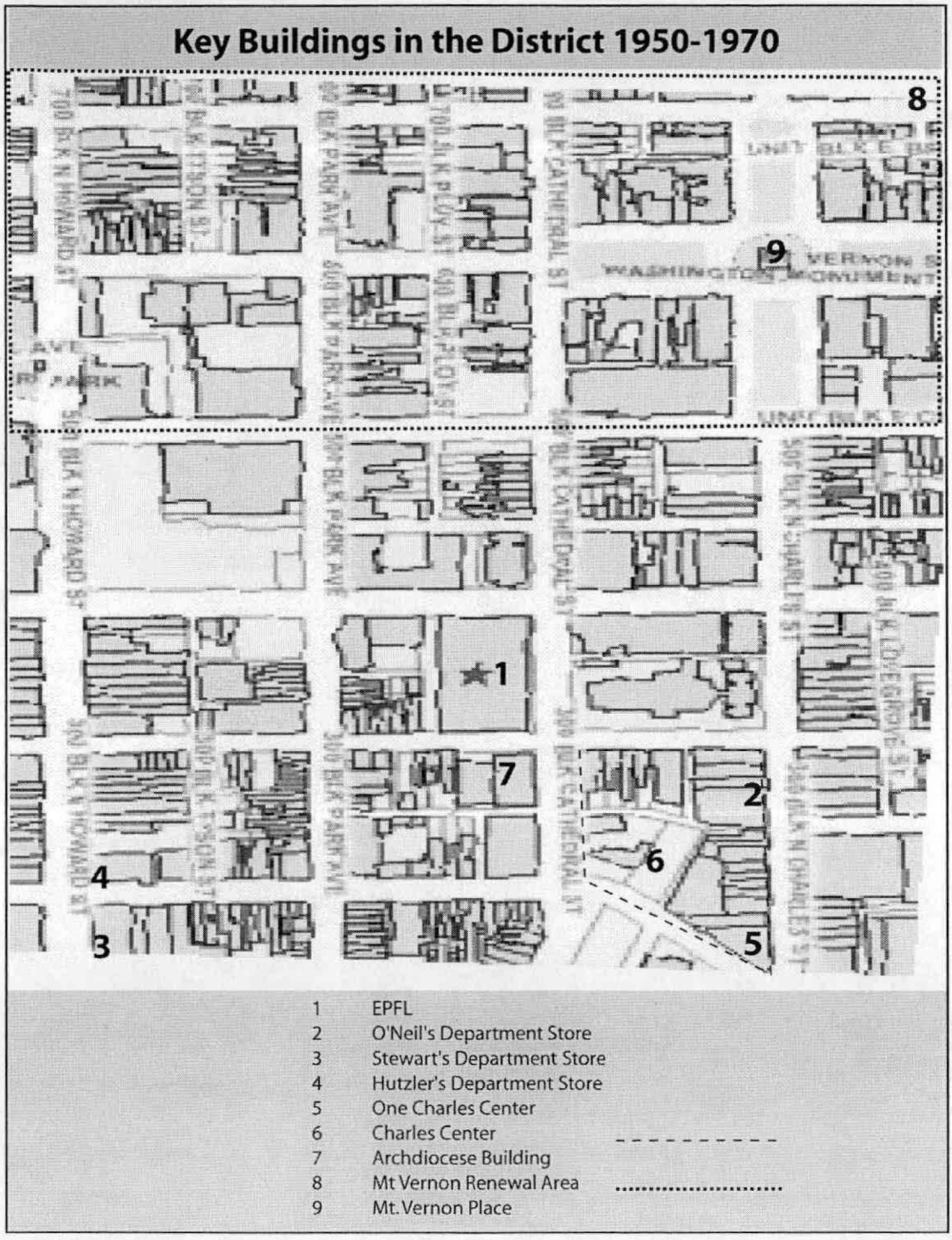

Illustration 5-12 Key Buildings in the District 1950-1970

Illustration 5-13 Baltimore in 1956 with the EPFL on the left, courtesy EPFL

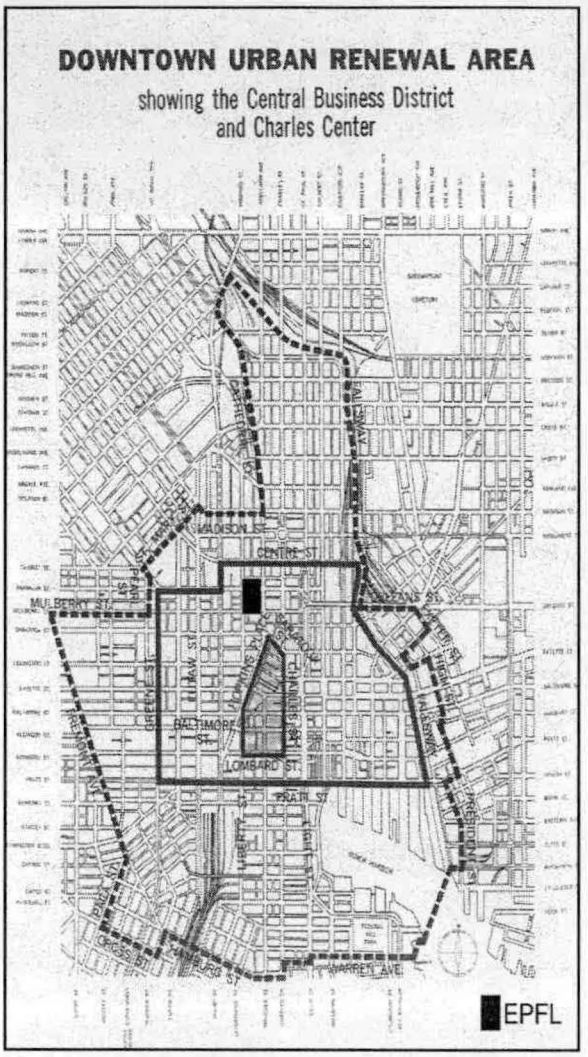

Illustration 5-14 The EPFL Lay at the Heart of Baltimore's Urban Renewal Area, courtesy EPFL

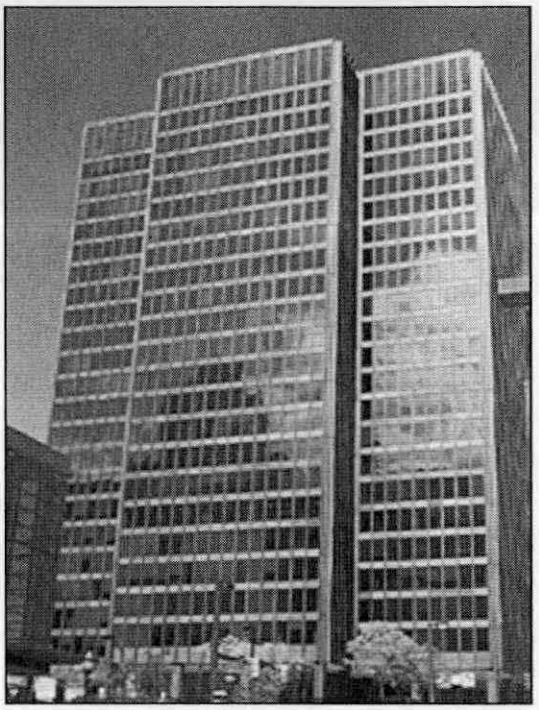

Illustration 5-15 One Charles Center, Flathman, 2007

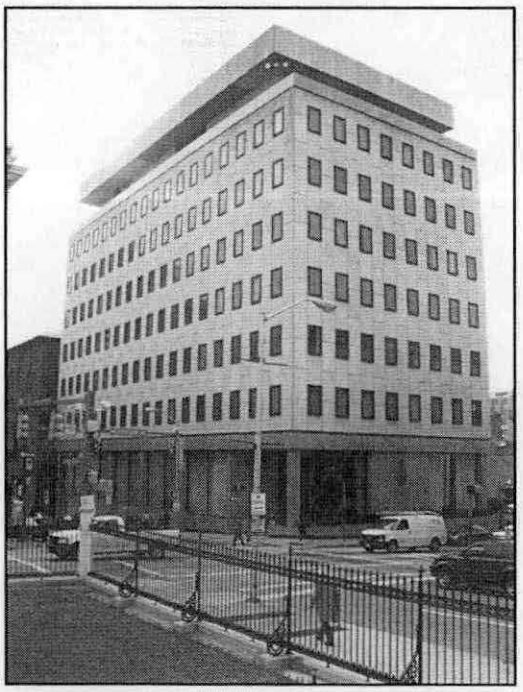

Illustration 5-16 Archdiocese Building (1962), Flathman, 2007

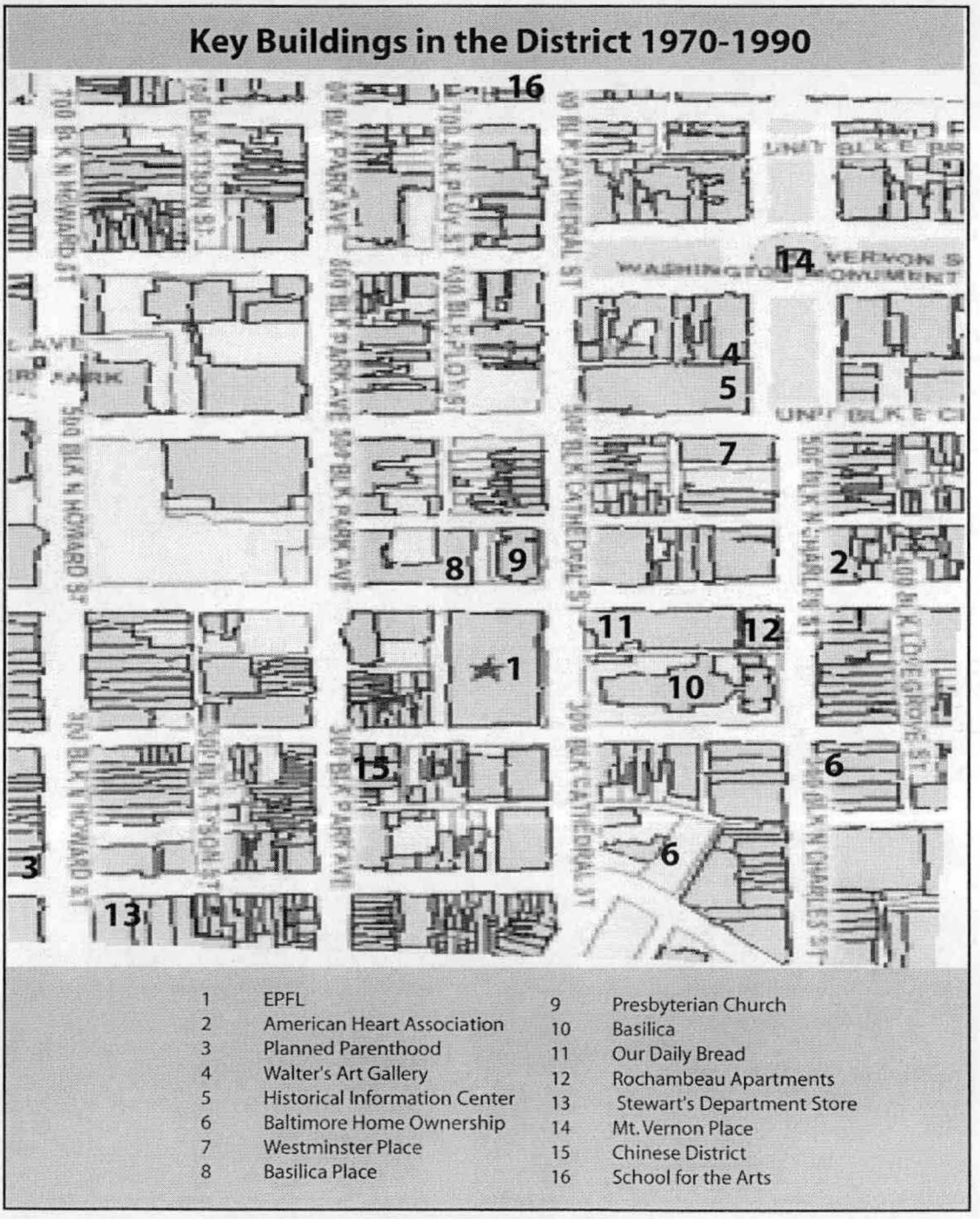

Illustration 5-17 Key Buildings in the District 1970-1990, Flathman, 2007

Illustration 5-18 American Can Factory as photographed in 1988, courtesy HABS

Illustration 5-19 Adaptive use is Widely Employed by Public and Social Service Agencies, as at the 1924 Knights of Columbus Building, Flathman, 2007

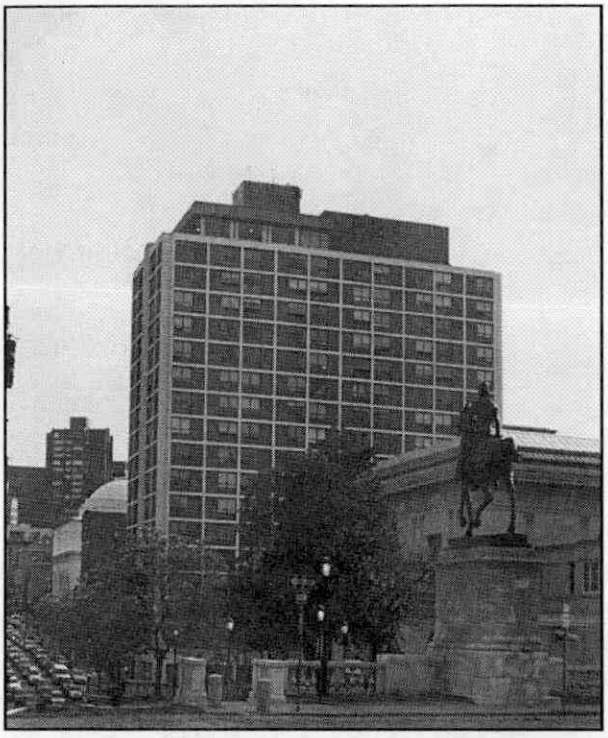

Illustration 5-20 Westminster Place (1968), Flathman, 2007

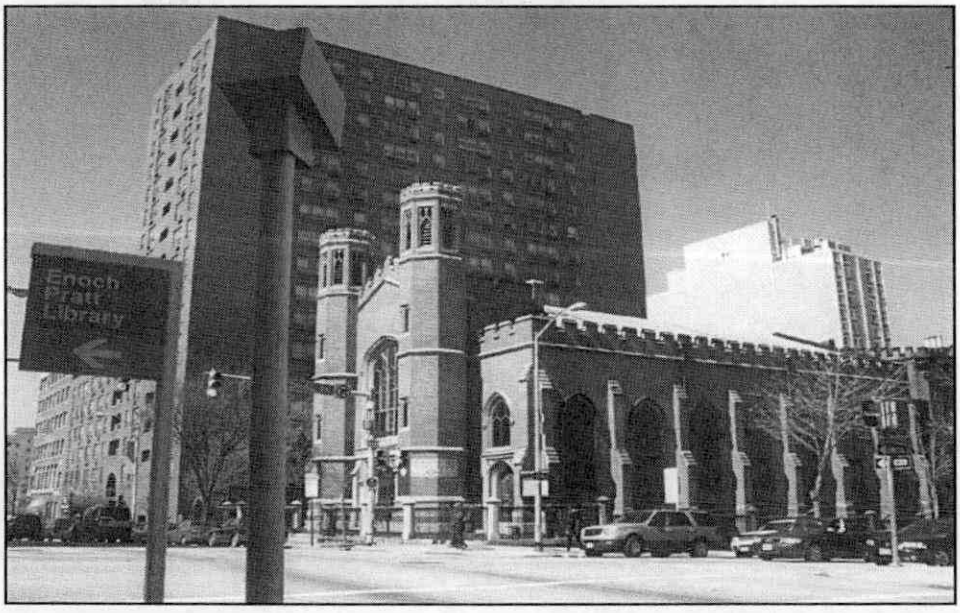

Illustration 5-21 Basilica Place Looms over the Presbyterian Church, Flathman, 2007

Illustration 5-22 Remnants of the Once Vibrant Chinese District, Flathman, 2007

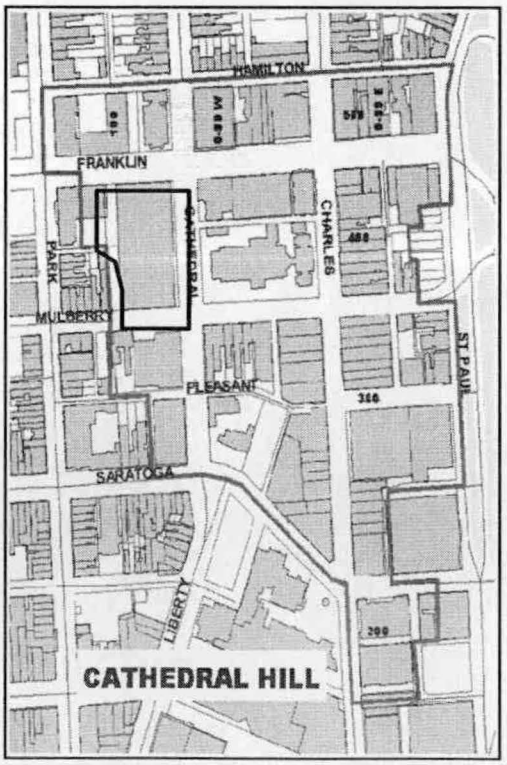

Illustration 5-23 Cathedral Hill Historic District Boundaries, courtesy CHAP

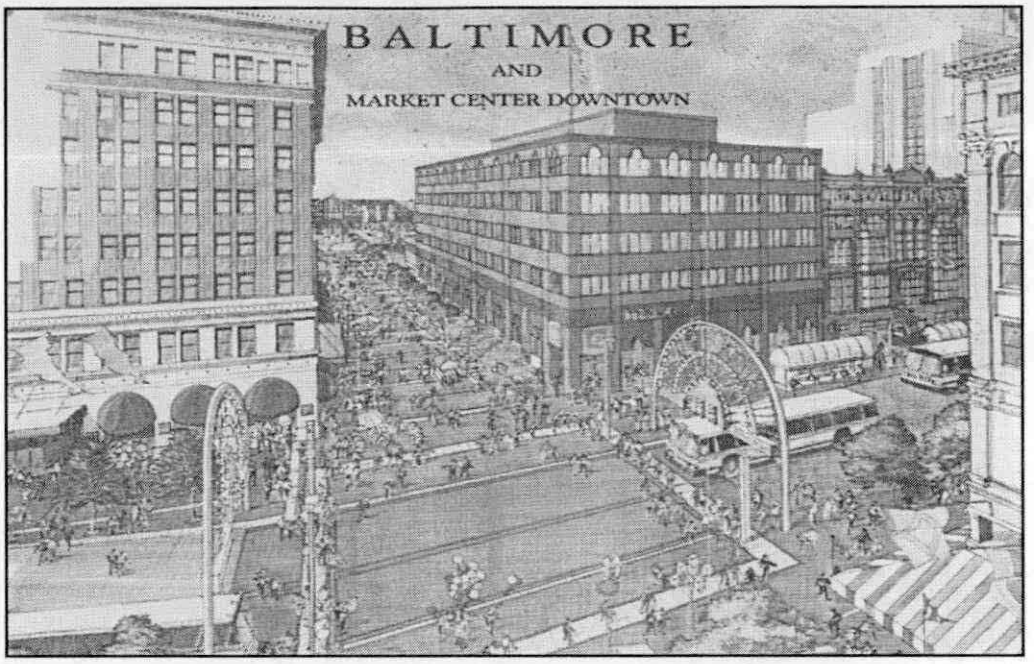

Illustration 5-24 Promotion for Market Center, the Latest Redevelopment Proposal for Central Baltimore, courtesy EPFL

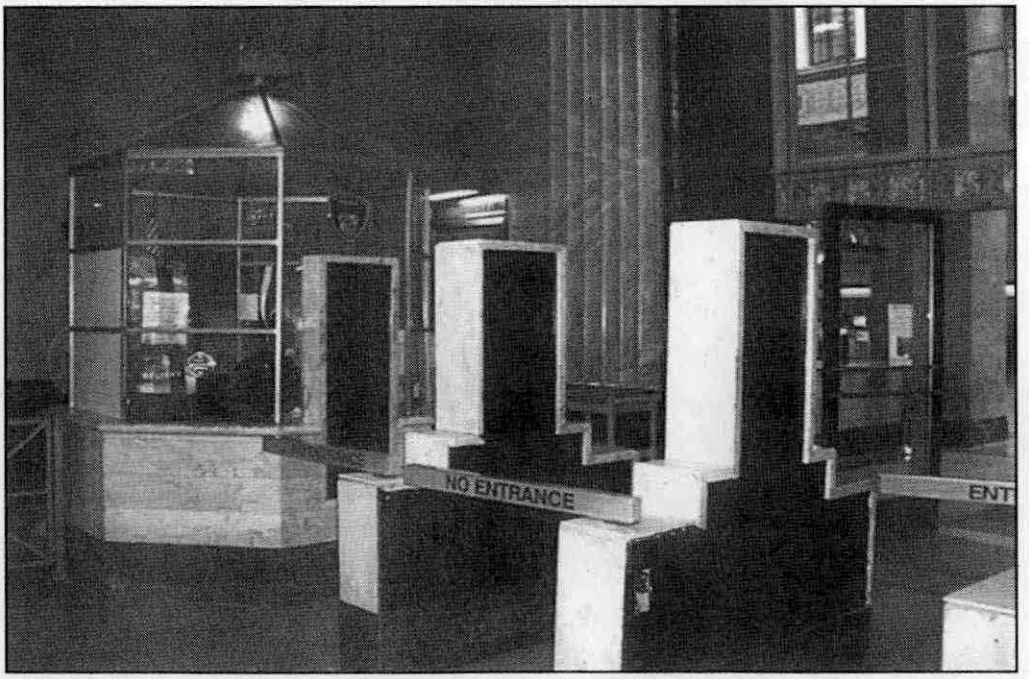

Illustration 5-25 Security Booths in the EPFL Street Level Entry, Flathman, 2007

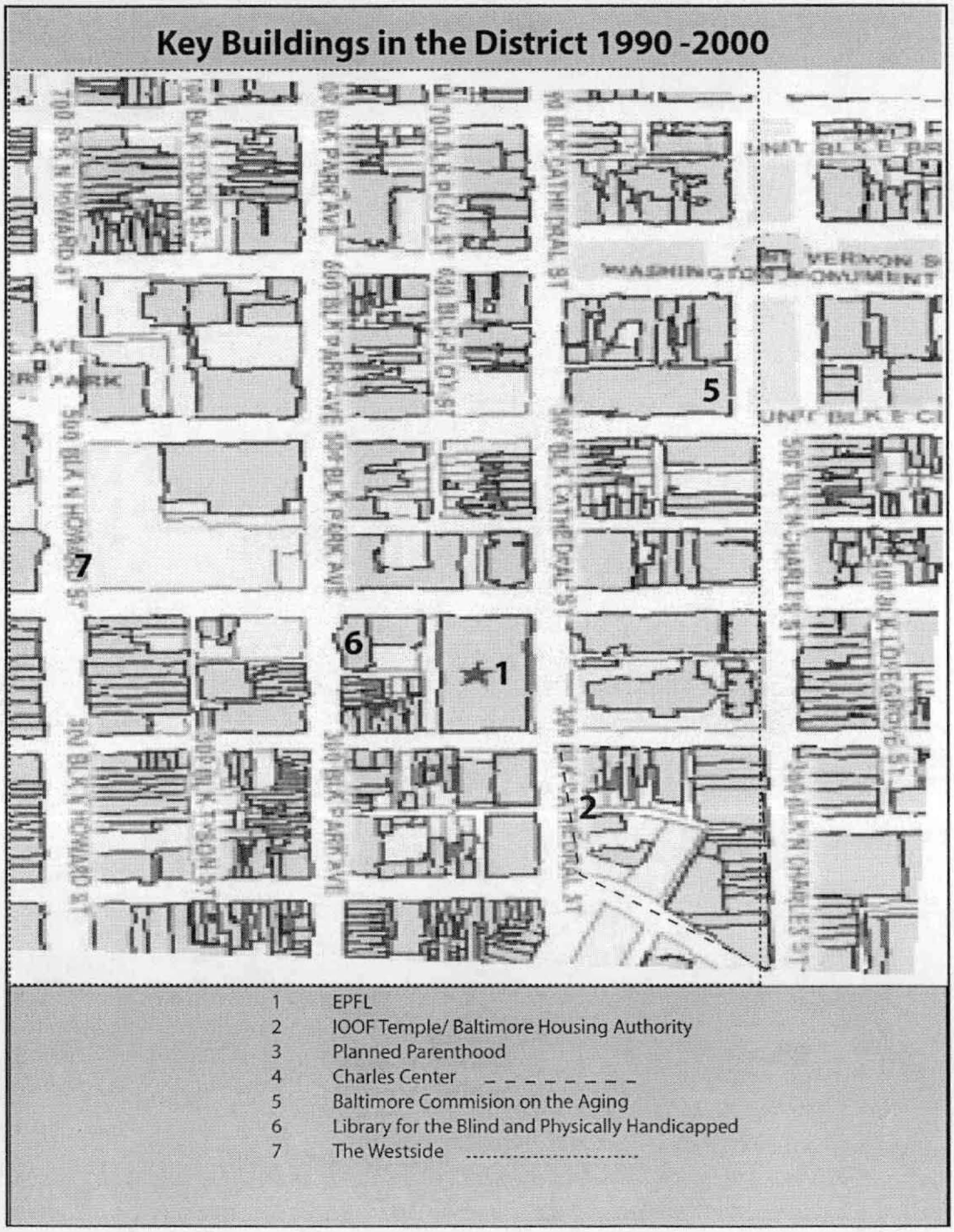

Illustration 5-26 Key Buildings in the District 1990 – 2000, Flathman, 2007

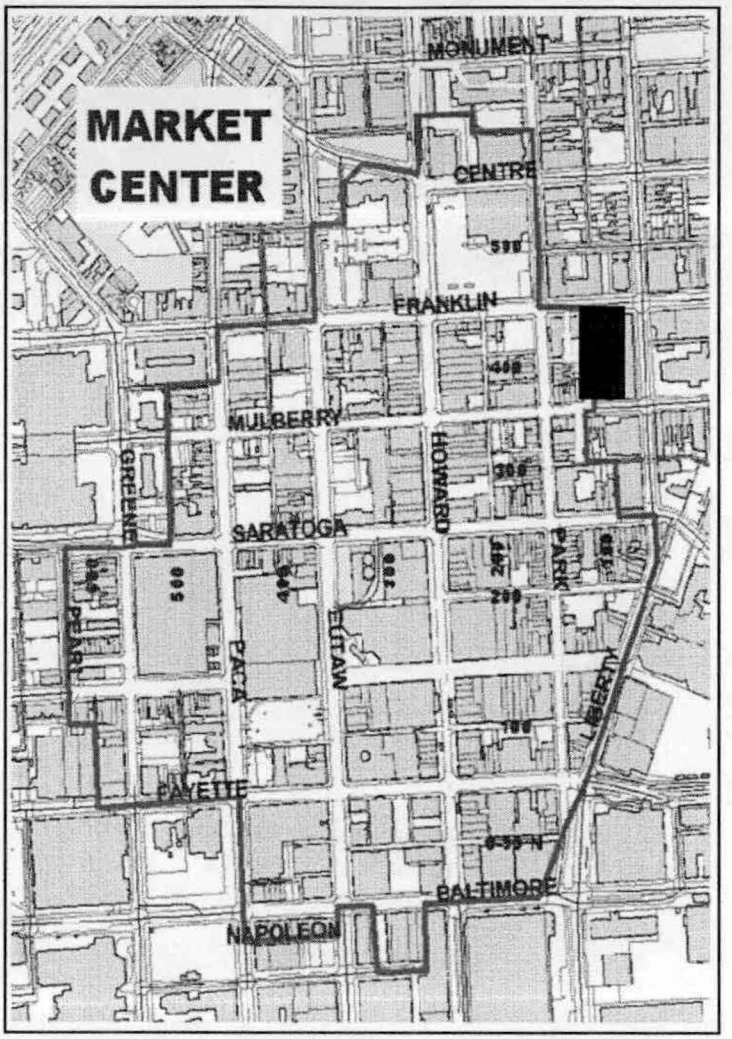

Illustration 5-27 Market Center Historic District Boundary,
Courtesy Baltimore Commission on Historical and Architectural Preservation, CHAP

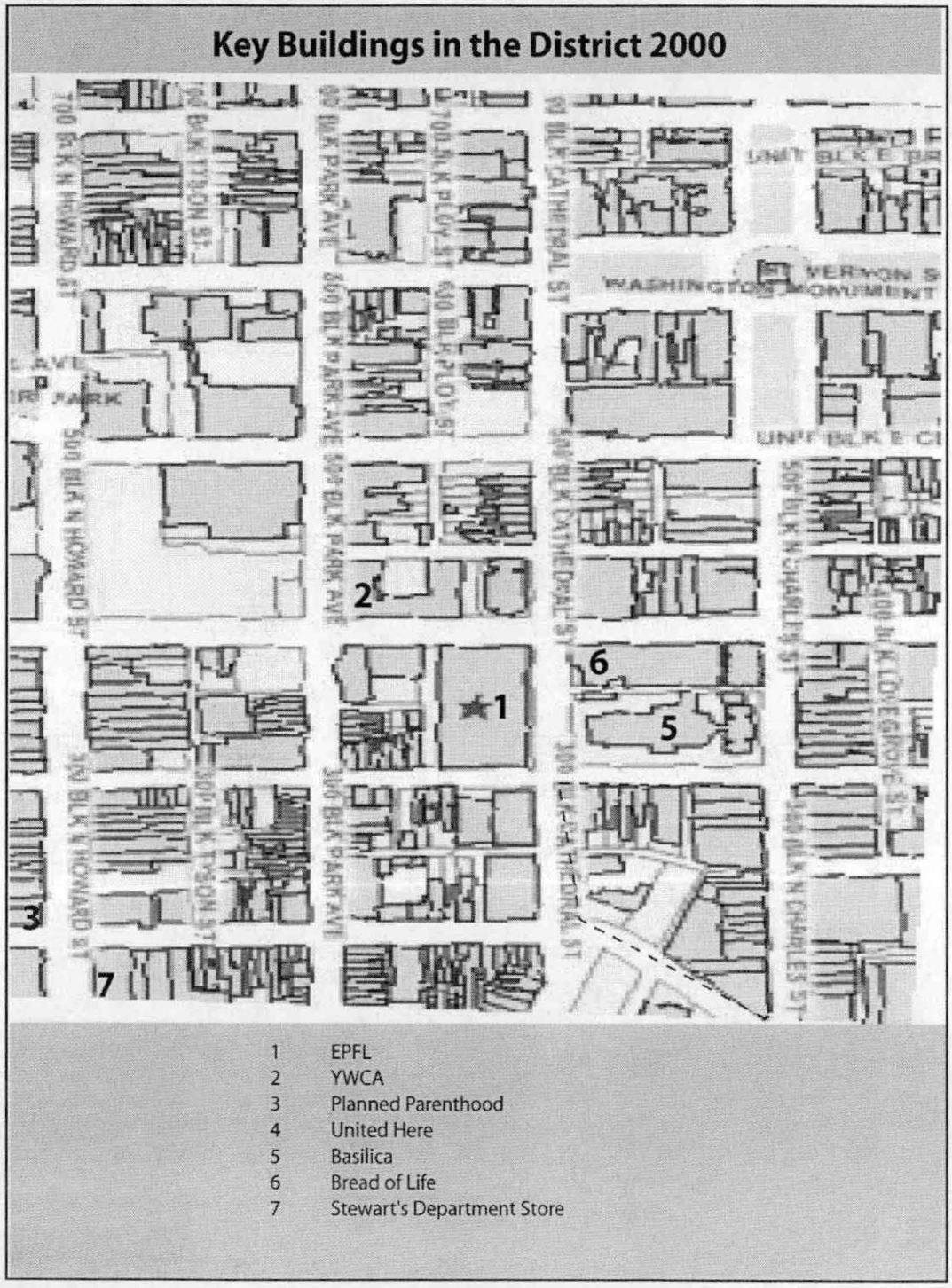

Illustration 5-28 Key Buildings in the District 2000

Illustration 5-29 "Faddish" Public Art and Loft Buildings with Integrity in the Market Center Historic District, Flathman, 2007

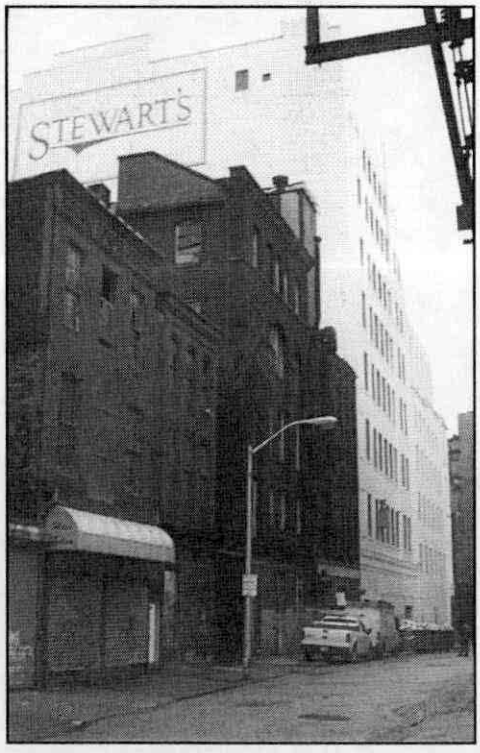

Illustration 5-30 Stewart's Department Store (1901) Proposed for Adaptive Use by the Catholic Relief Services, Flathman, 2007

Illustration 5-32 Gates Discourage Use of the Basilica's Terraces, Flathman 2007

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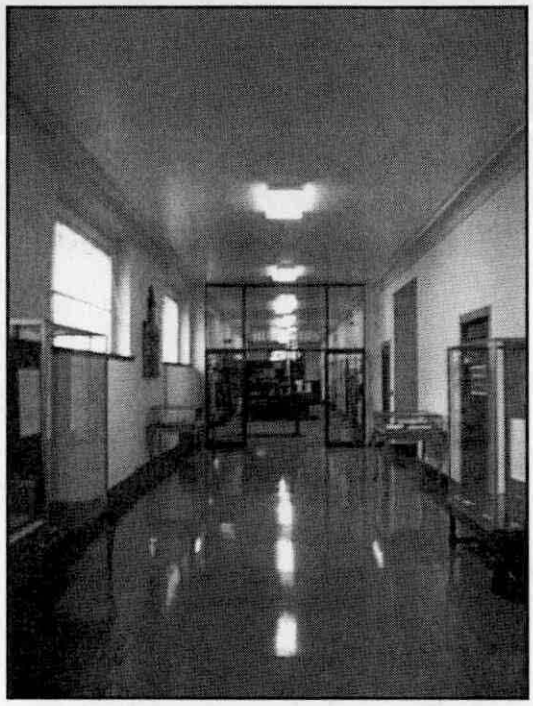

Illustration 6-1 Hallway Outside the Humanities Department, Flathman, 2007

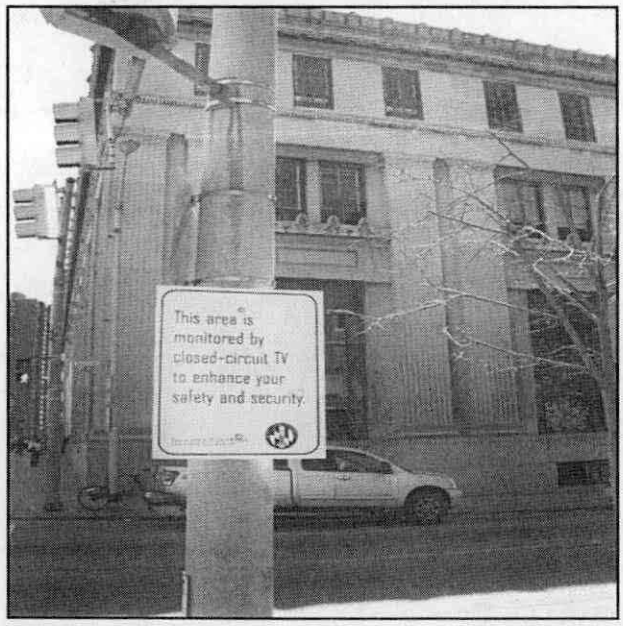

Illustration 6-2 Security Measures Highlight the Fortress-like Atmosphere on Franklin Street, Flathman, 2007

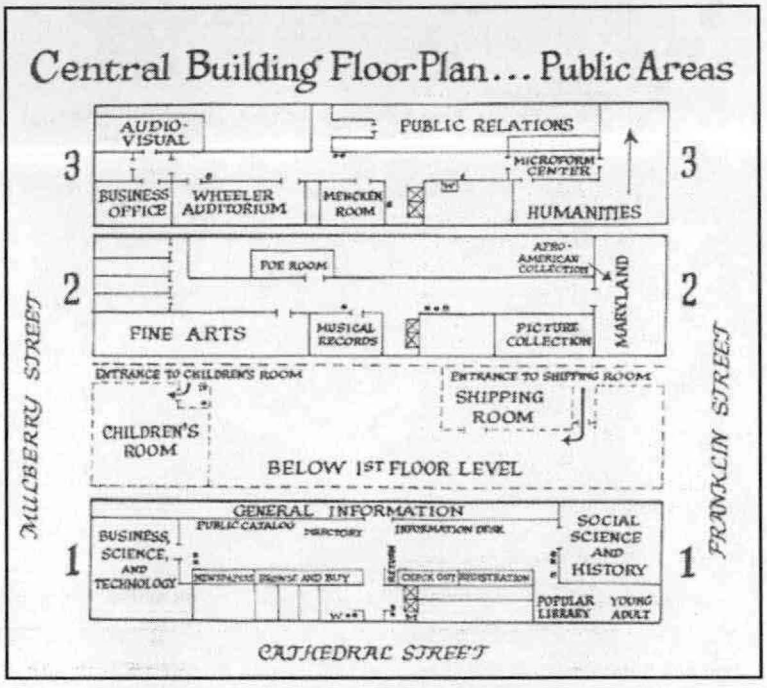

Illustration 6-3 Central Building Services 1973, Courtesy EPFL

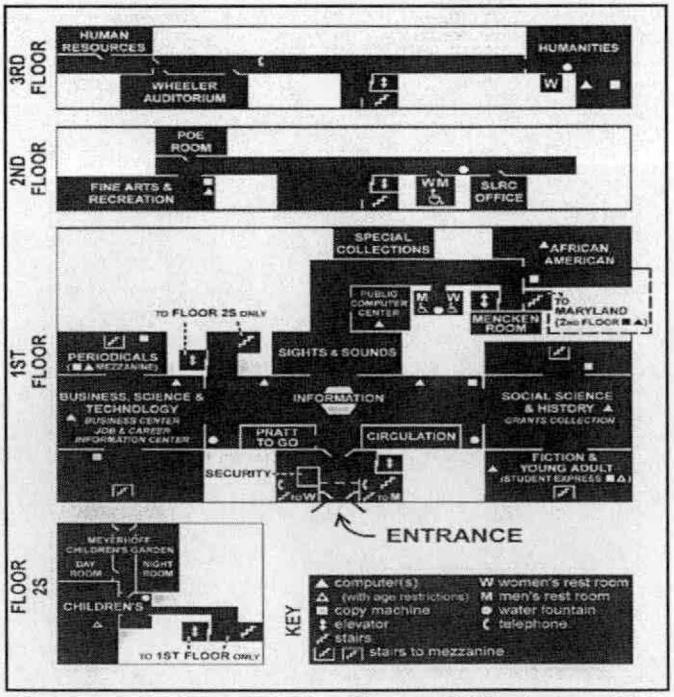

Illustration 6-4 Central Building Services 2007, Courtesy EPFL

1Illustration 6 5 Decorations leading to the Children's Room, Flathman 2007

Illustration 6-6- Decorative Treatments in the Central Hall, Flathman 2007

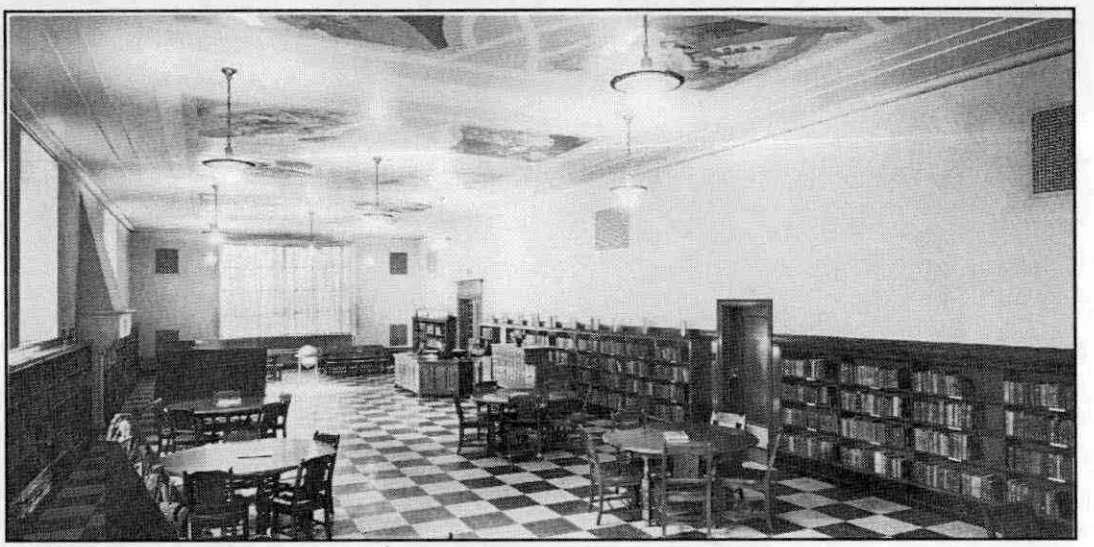

Illustration 6-7 The EPFL Hopes to Restore the Ceiling Murals in the Children's Room to its 1930s Appearance, Courtesy EPFL

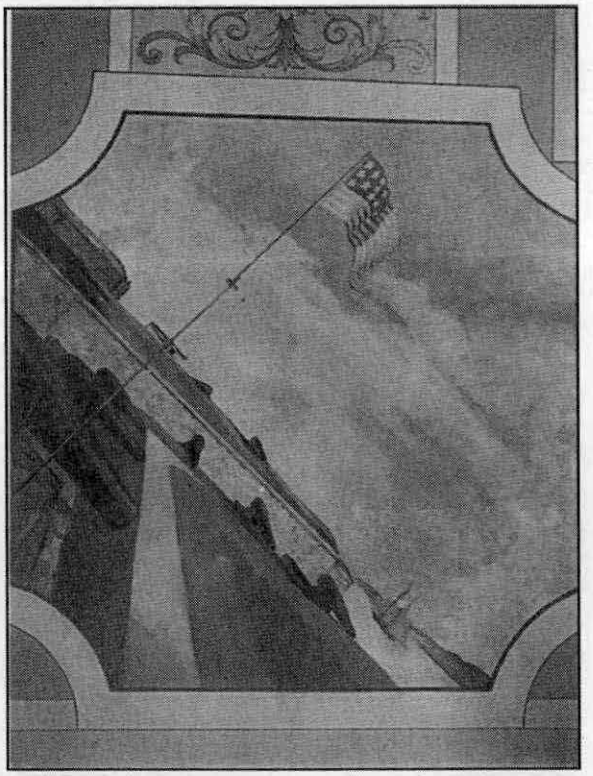

Illustration 6-8 Mural Depicting Fort McHenry during the War of 1812, Courtesy EPFL

Illustration 6-9 Etchings by Local Artists in the Subject Room Portals, Flathman 2007

Illustration 6-10 Faerie Queene Murals, by WPA Artist Lee Woodward Zeigler (1945), Courtesy EPFL

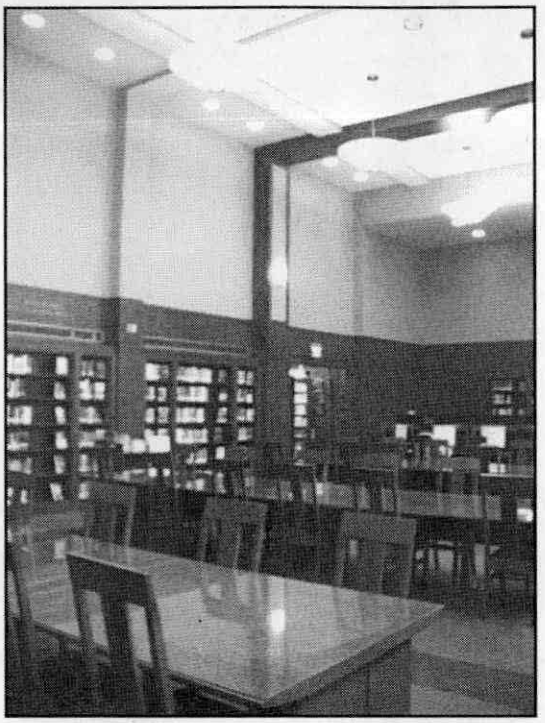

Illustration 6-11 Proposed Location for Art in the African American Collection, Flathman, 2007

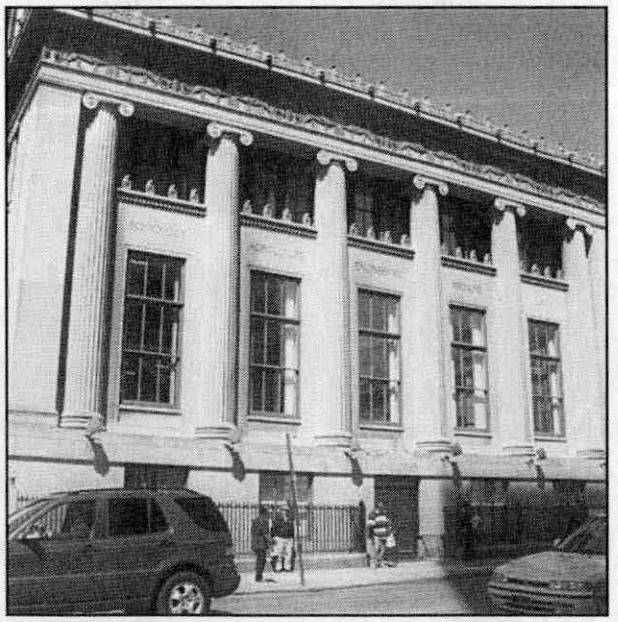

Illustration 6-12 Wilmington's Children's Room is now a Community Resource Center, Flathman, 2007

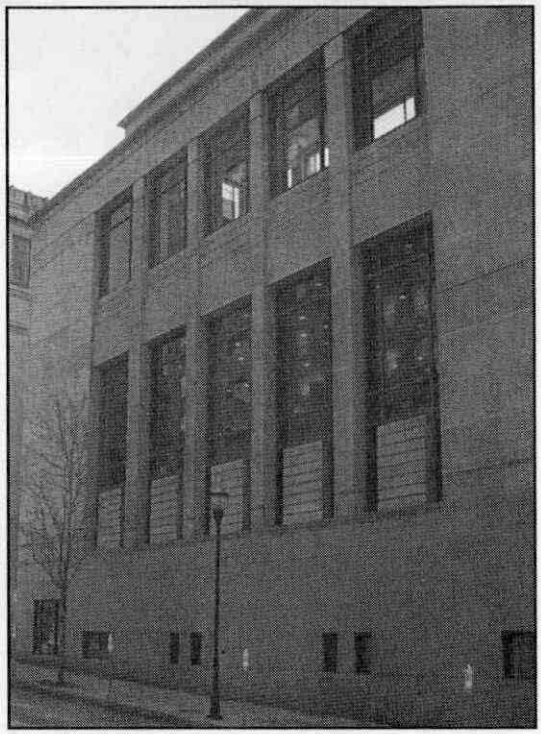

Illustration 6-13 Franklin Street Elevation, Flathman, 2007

Illustration 6-14 Village Learning Place Garden, Flathman, 2007

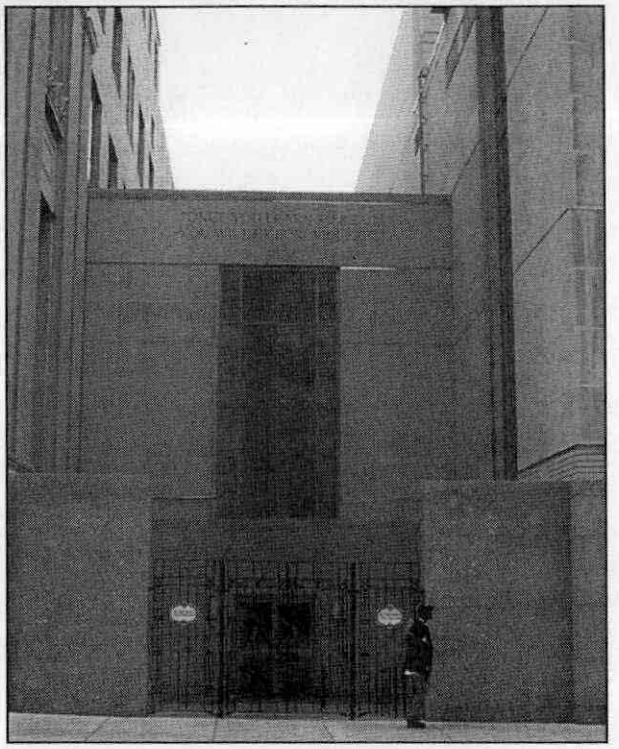

Illustration 6-15 Potential Area for a Small Garden, Flathman, 2007

Illustration 6-16 Gates Discourage Use of the Basilica's Open Space, Flathman, 2007

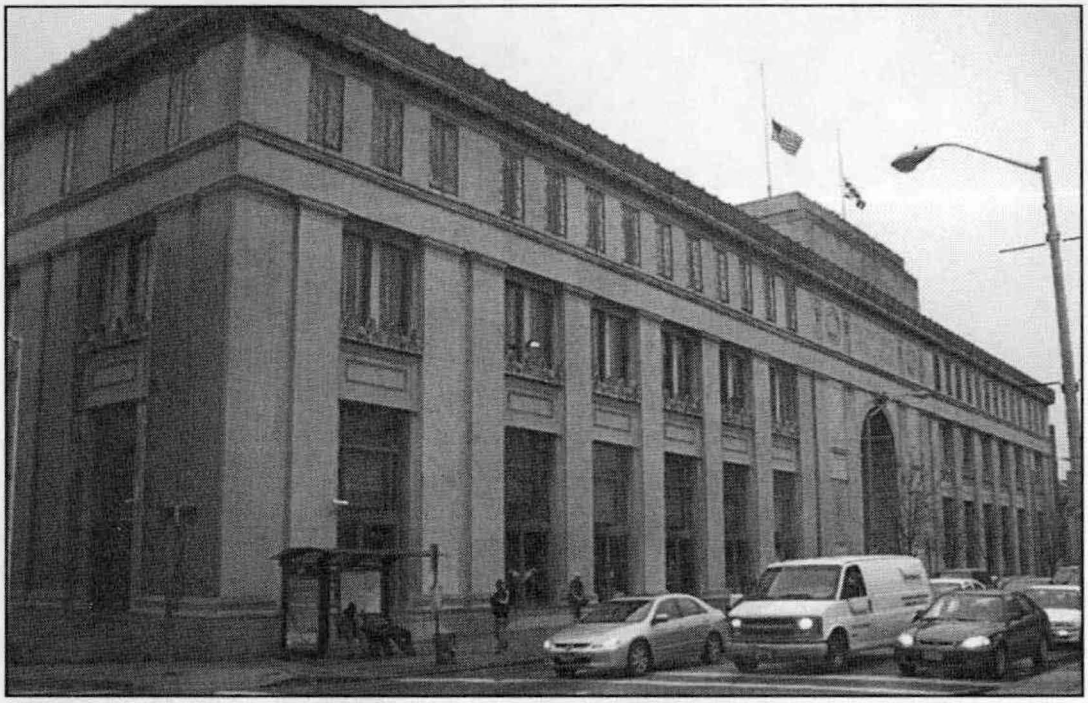

Illustration 6-17 Bus Stop in front of the EPFL, Flathman, 2007

Illustration 6-18 Expansion Diagram – Dashed Lines Indicate Buildings for Potential Adaptive-Use, Flathman, 2007

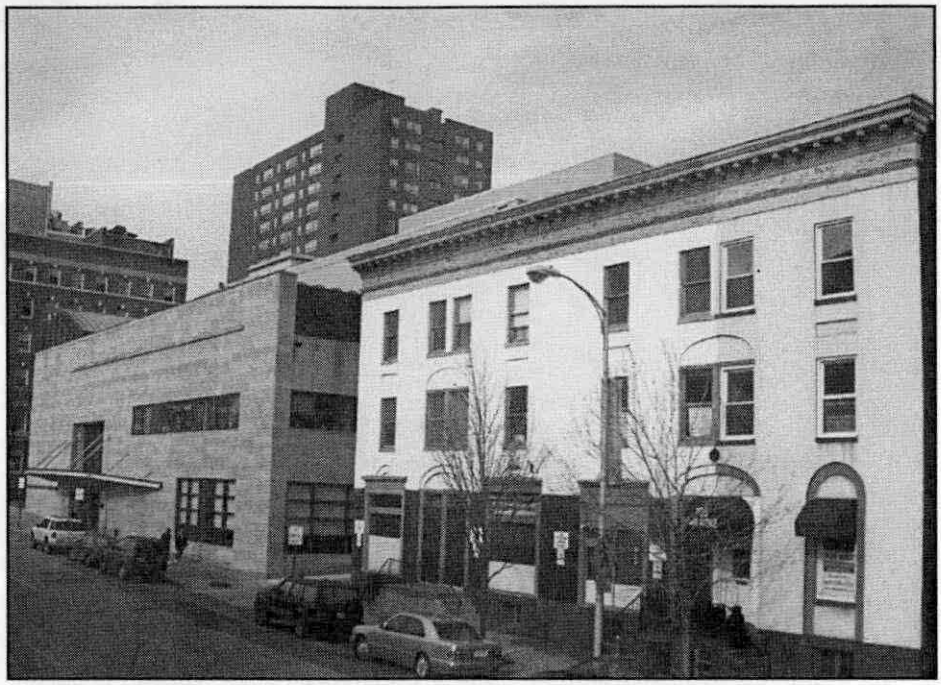

Illustration 6-19 Bridging the Historic and the Contemporary: Proposed Entry to the Courtyard, Flathman, 2007

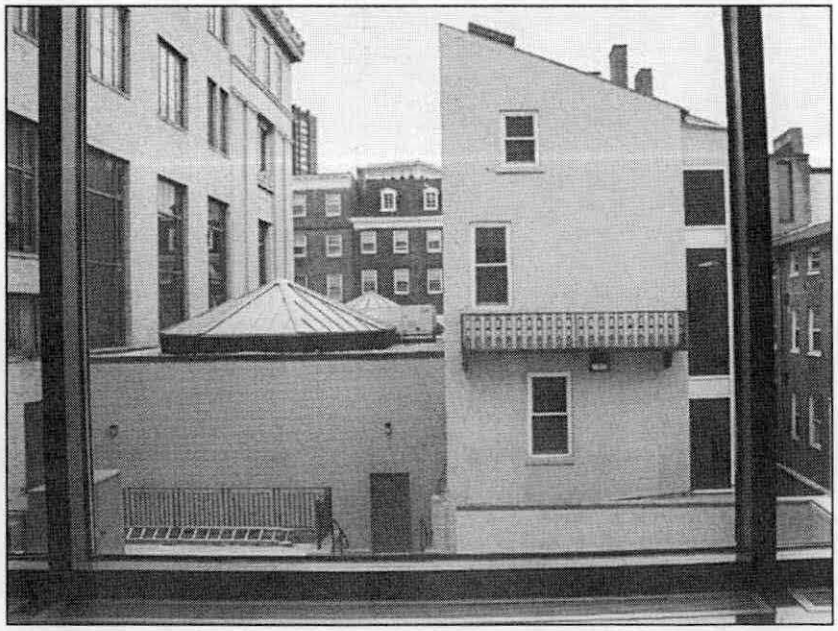

Figure 6-20 Service Court at the EPFL with Views of Rowhouses, the Children's Garden, and the 1932 Building, Flathman, 2007h

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