



*Brandon Scott  
Mayor*

**COMMISSION FOR  
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL  
PRESERVATION**

*Harry Spikes, Chairman*

**STAFF REPORT**



*Chris Ryer  
Director*

**October 11, 2022**

**REQUEST:** City Council Bill 22-0277 Landmark List: Reed Calloway House

**ADDRESS:** 1316 N. Carey Street

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**STAFF:** Lauren Schiszik

**PETITIONER(S):** Councilmember James Torrence

**OWNER:** Trendline Properties, LLC

**SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT**

General Area: This property is located on the west side of the 1300 block of North Carey Street, which is located in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood of Baltimore. This block is bound by Laurens Street to the south, Presstman Street to the north, and the alley street of N. Woodyear Street to the west and N. Stockton Street to the east. The block is comprised mainly of three-story and some two-story Italianate brick rowhouses. There has been some demolition on the block, resulting in a few empty lots, a surface parking lot, and a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century church. A recent fire has damaged the rowhomes immediately north of the subject property. The surrounding blocks to the south, east, and west are largely comprised of late 20<sup>th</sup> century two-story rowhouses, many with a front yard set back.

Site Conditions/Architectural Description: The structure is a three story, three-bay wide brick Italianate rowhouse with an ornate wood cornice on the façade. The fascia brick on the façade has been replaced, but the window and door openings and locations match those of the rest of the houses on the block. The only tells that the fascia brick has been replaced is presence of rowlock lintels above the windows and doors instead of jack arch lintels, and the texture of the brick. The rear of the house has a two-story rear ell with a small frame deck. The rear is clad with stucco. All of the windows appear to be replacements, however, the overall form, massing, fenestration, and appearance is consistent with how this property has looked since its construction.

## **BACKGROUND**

- This designation stemmed from the approved demolition of 2216 Druid Hill Avenue, which is being demolished as part of a full-block demolition on the west side of the 2000 block of Druid Hill Ave. This demolition is being funded by state Project C.O.R.E. and was several years in the making with extensive community engagement and input into the proposal. This demolition is being completed in order to create a large community park which will serve the Druid Heights neighborhood.
- In 2019, local historians and descendants of entertainer Cab Calloway discovered that 2216 Druid Hill Avenue was a childhood home of Cab Calloway and his family in the 1910s and requested a landmark designation. CHAP staff completed research on 2216 Druid Hill Ave. and also tracked down the full history of Cab's numerous residences in Baltimore. 2216 Druid Hill Ave. is one of three extant homes that Cab and his family lived in during his youth in Baltimore from ages 5 to 20, between the years of 1912 and 1927. Two other childhood homes have already been demolished. The Commission urged staff to find other ways to honor his legacy.
- The designation of the home at 1316 N. Carey Street is one way to honor not just Cab and Blanche Calloway's legacy, but also honor and celebrate the talents and legacy of the family that helped raise the Calloway children, giving them their musical education, and serving the greater Baltimore community.
- In June 2020, Councilman Pinkett introduced legislation to designate the Reed Calloway House as a Baltimore City Landmark. The bill did not get through the City Council legislative process prior to the end of the legislative session.
- Councilmember Torrence introduced legislation in February 2021 for the same action, but the bill was withdrawn in June 2022 due to inactivity.
- Councilmember Torrence has reintroduced this bill as City Council Bill 22-0277.

## **PROPOSAL & APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES**

The proposal is to designate this property on the Baltimore City Landmark List.

CHAP staff applied its guidelines for designation of properties as Baltimore City Landmarks, and found that the Reed Calloway House meets two of the four criteria:

1. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history; or
2. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in Baltimore's past

These designation criteria mirror those of the National Register of Historic Places. In general, historic preservation significance criteria privileges people who have stable homes. Many people, historically and today, do not have stable homes and move around a lot. This can make it difficult to both identify and honor places that are associated with significant people, especially if there are multiple sites that are associated with that person.

While sites associated with a person's childhood is typically ineligible, birthplaces and childhood homes of other significant musicians have recently been honored and designated, including that of Nina Simone. From the standpoint of this designation, the house at 1316 N. Carey Street is significant not just for its associations with Blanche and Cab Calloway, but also for its associations with the larger extended family. Staff finds that 1316 N. Carey is eligible under Criterion 1, for broad patterns of events because it is the home associated with the Reed family, who made many contributions to the City's civic, educational, and religious life. The family's purchase and residence at 1316 N. Carey Street also demonstrates the broad pattern of history of West Baltimore in the early 20th century in terms of economic and social development.

Under Criterion 2, considering the three surviving properties associated with Cab and Blanche Calloway in Baltimore City, 1316 N. Carey Street is arguably the most significant. Although they only lived here for two years, the influence and support of the family that lived in this house really made this a familial home base. Cab and Blanche's Calloway's maternal family was the foundation they used to build their careers, and 1316 N. Carey Street, their home for a brief period, was the home for many members of the extended family. This household was active in civic and religious life. Cab, Blanche, and their siblings Bernice and Milton all had natural musical talent and were all performers, but that talent was fostered by their Reed and Credit extended family, particularly their grandmother Annie Reed. Their grandparents, aunts, uncle, and mother were all musicians as well, serving as choirmasters, organists, music teachers, and entertainers in hotels. Annie's obituary noted that she was known for her exceptional musical ability, and that she taught all of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren instrumental and vocal musical education. The obituary goes on to refer to Blanche, Bernice, and Cab Calloway, and their aunt Lillian Reed Thompson as "living monuments to her exceptional musical accomplishments." A 1934 article in the *Afro-American*, after Cab's rise to stardom, credits Annie for Cab's musical talents. Her influence deserves recognition.

Other facets of Cab and Blanche's lives were supported by family. When Cab was sent to reform school, he went to the one that was run by his great-uncle. When the family moved to the suburb of Wilson Park, they moved into a home owned by extended family member Harry O. Wilson. When Cab and Blanche had moved to Chicago in the 1920s, and their mother joined them, their younger brother Elmer moved back into 1316 N. Carey Street with Annie Reed and his uncle Milton, in order to finish his last two years of high school at Douglass. This extended family was centered at 1316 N. Carey Street. While Cab and Blanche only lived here for two years of their lives, the impact of their family that lived in this home for over forty years was profound. This designation honors not just Blanche and Cab Calloway, but their extended family that served the City in so many ways.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS**

The property is not located within a CHAP district; therefore, comments from an Architectural Review Committee are not applicable. CHAP has not received any comments at this time.

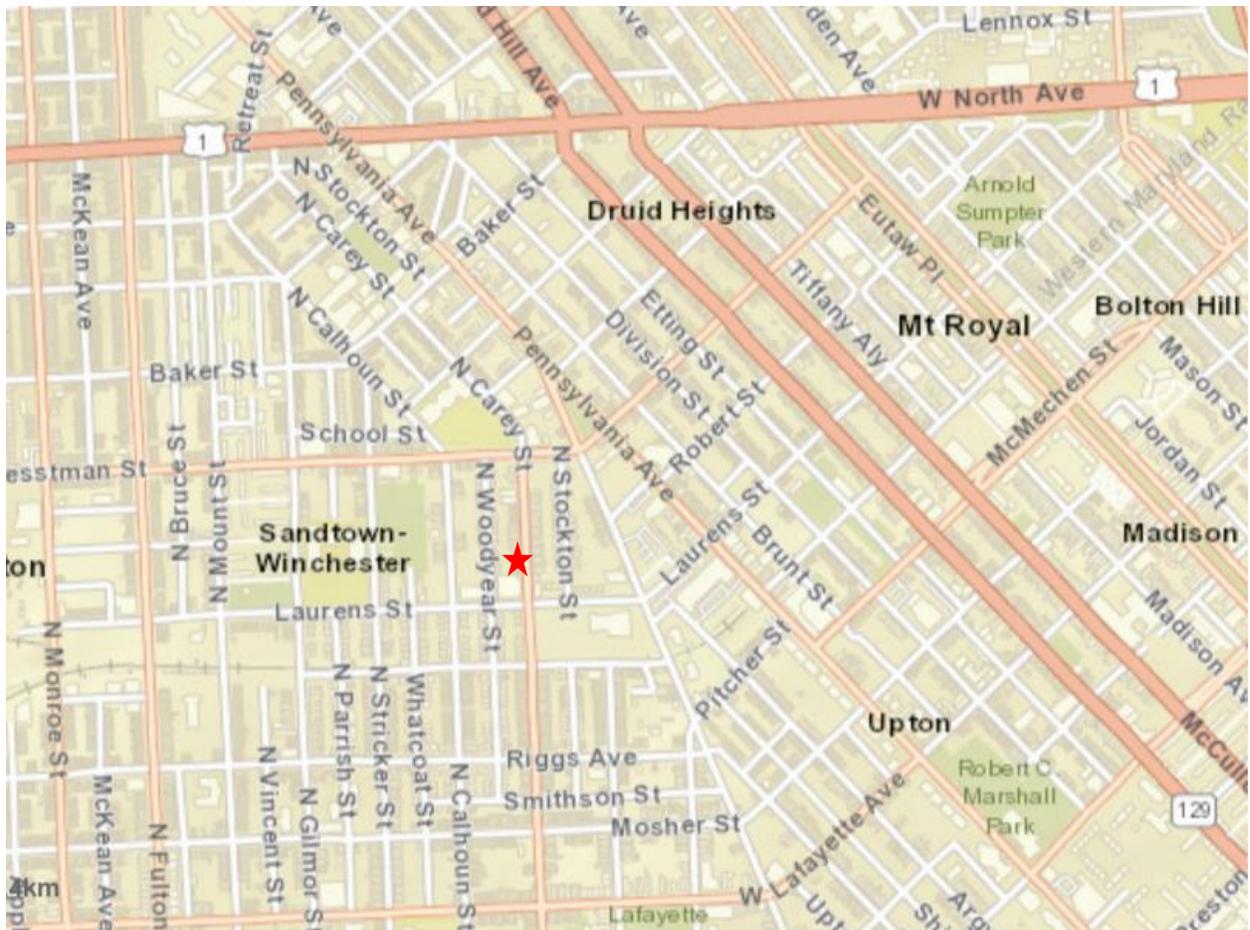
## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends a finding of approval for designation of this property on the Baltimore City Landmark List because it meets criteria 1 and 2 of CHAP's criteria for designation.

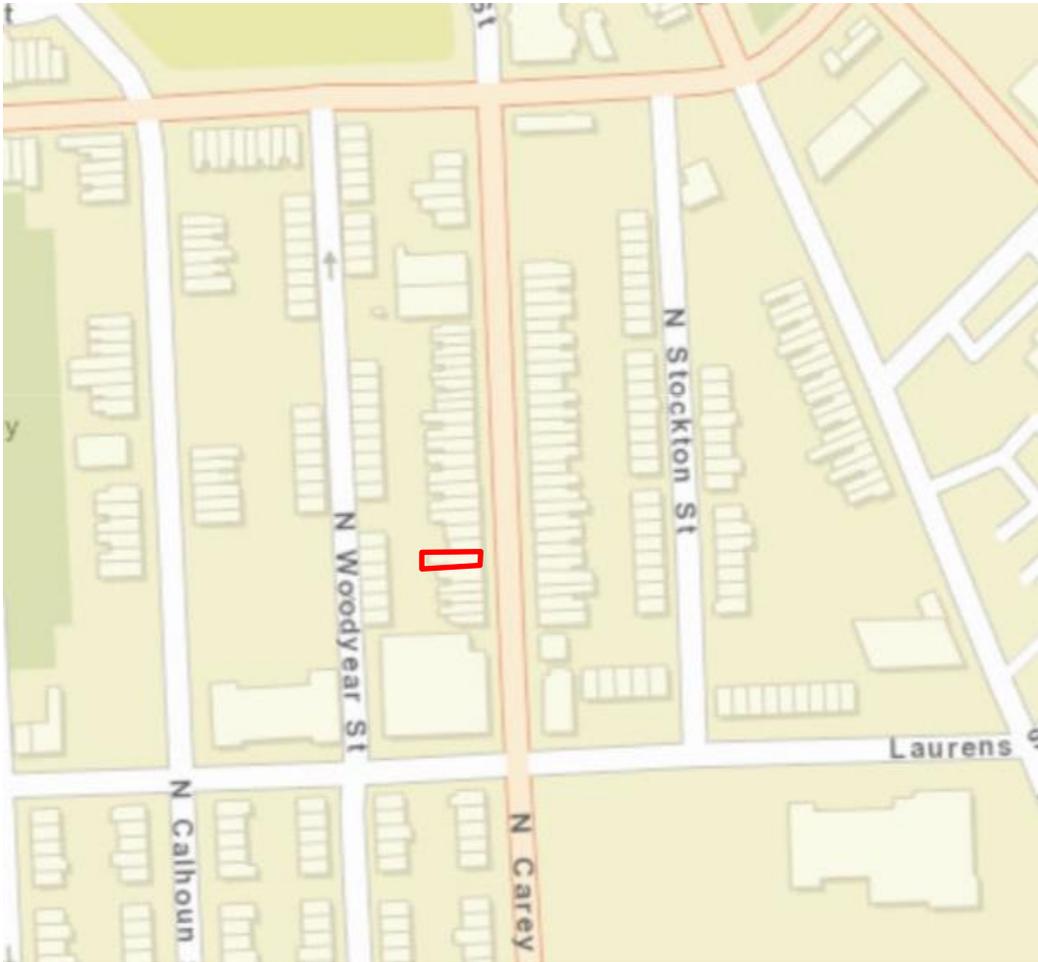


**Eric L. Holcomb**  
Executive Director

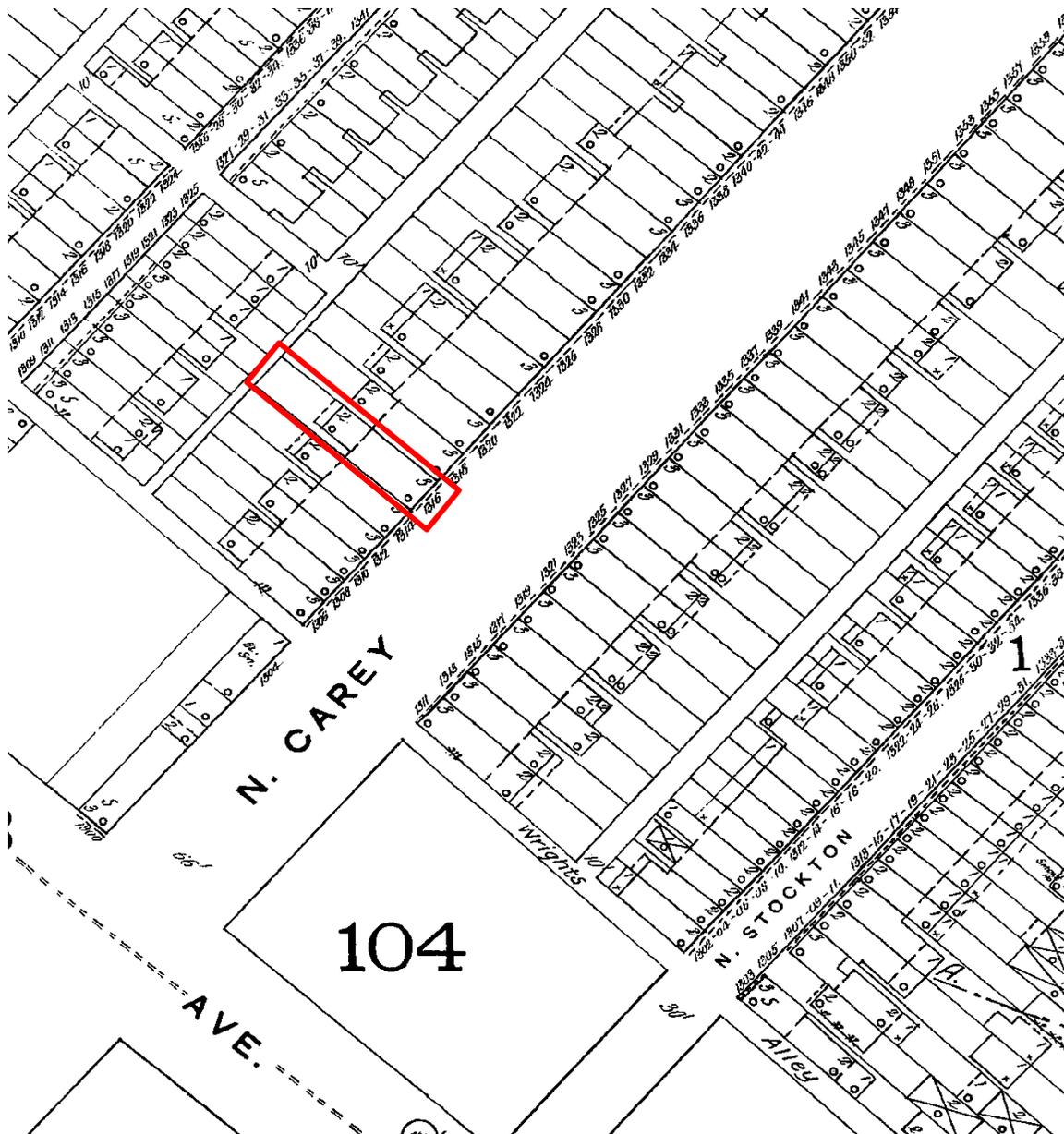
## Maps and Photos



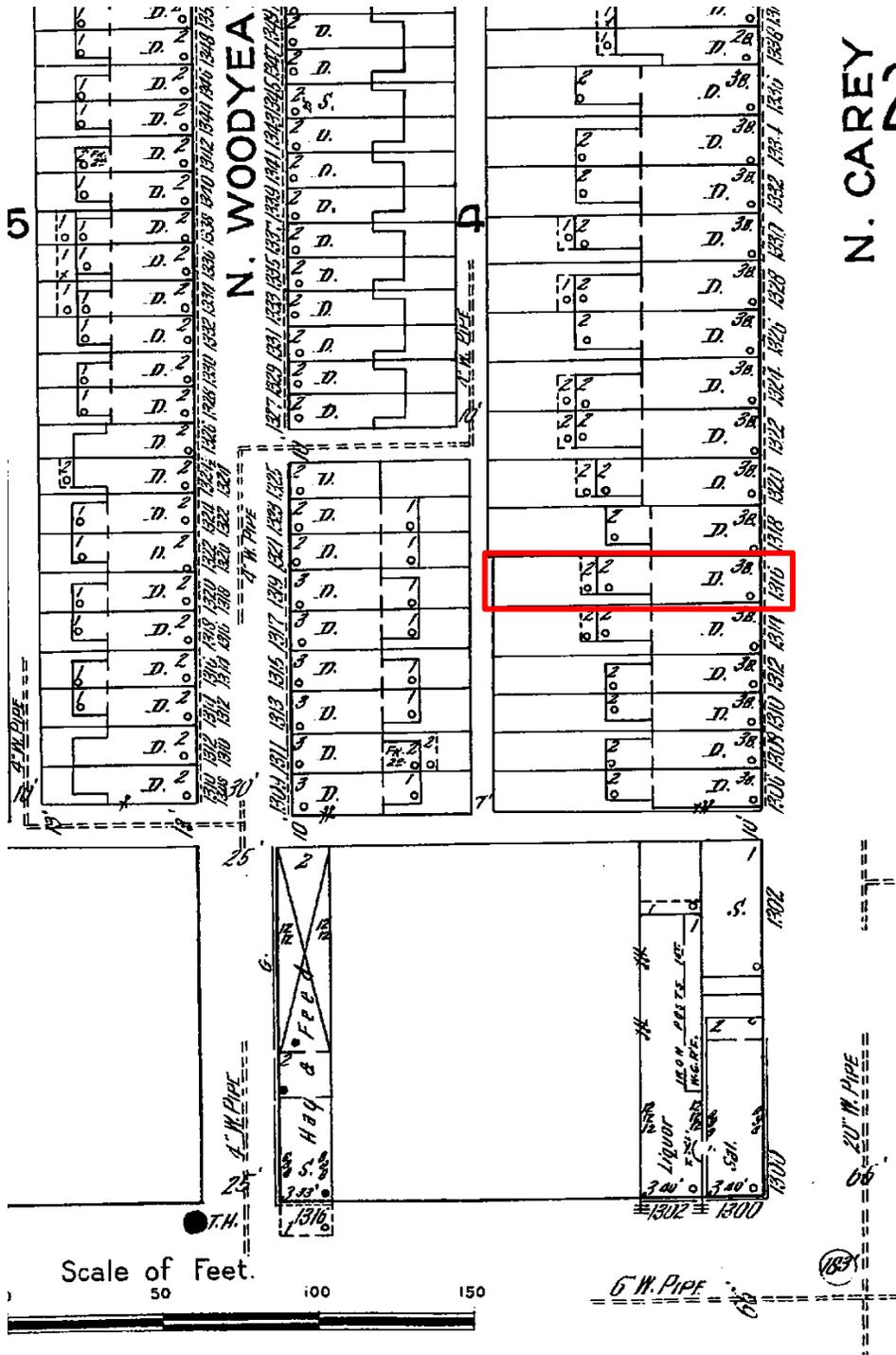
*Map 1:* Locator Map, 1316 N. Carey Street marked with a red star.



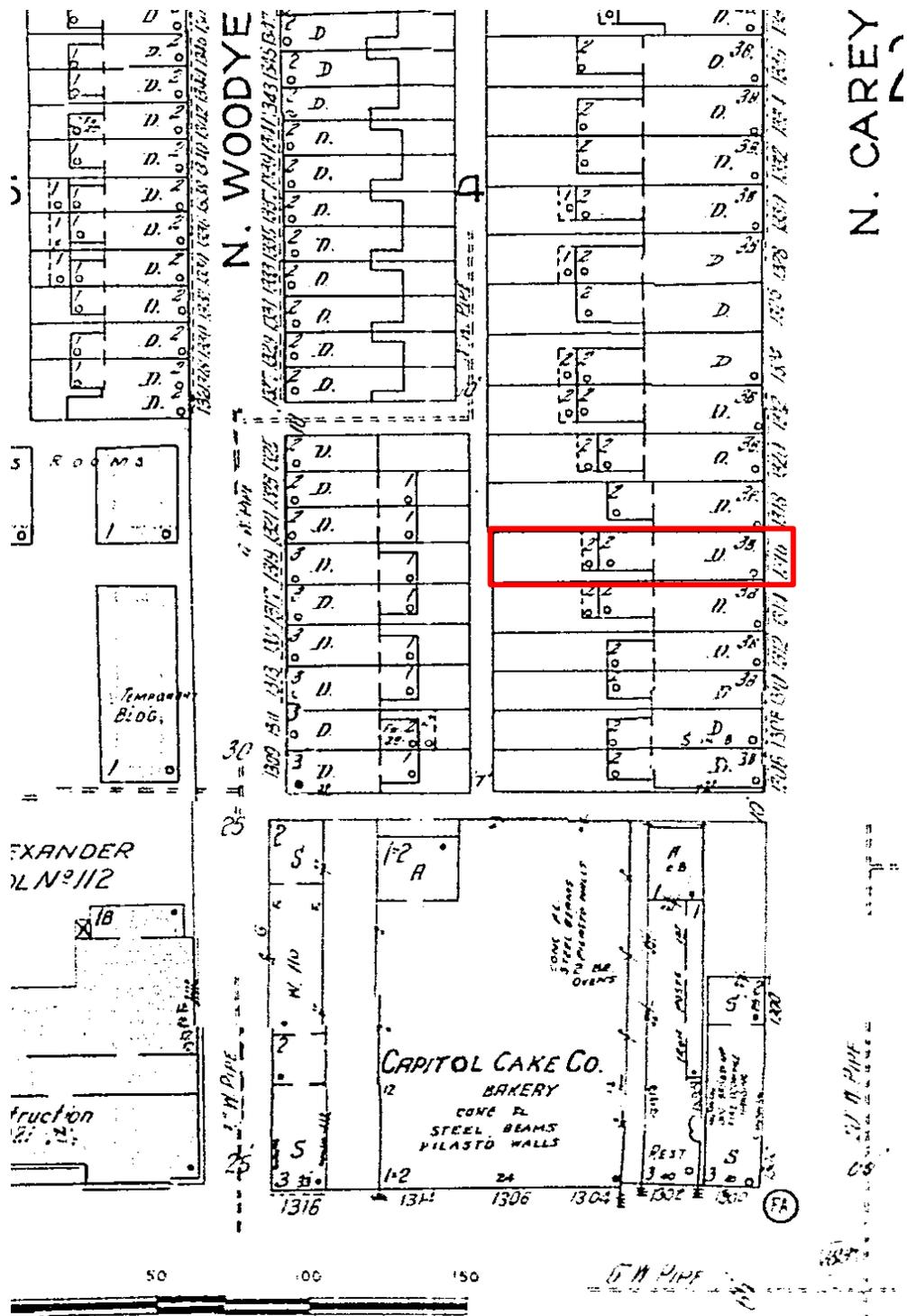
Map 2: Detailed map of 1316 N. Carey Street, marked in red.



Map 3: 1890 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 3, Sheet 109a.



Map 4: 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Volume 2, Sheet 202



Map 5: 1953 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Volume 2, Sheet 202

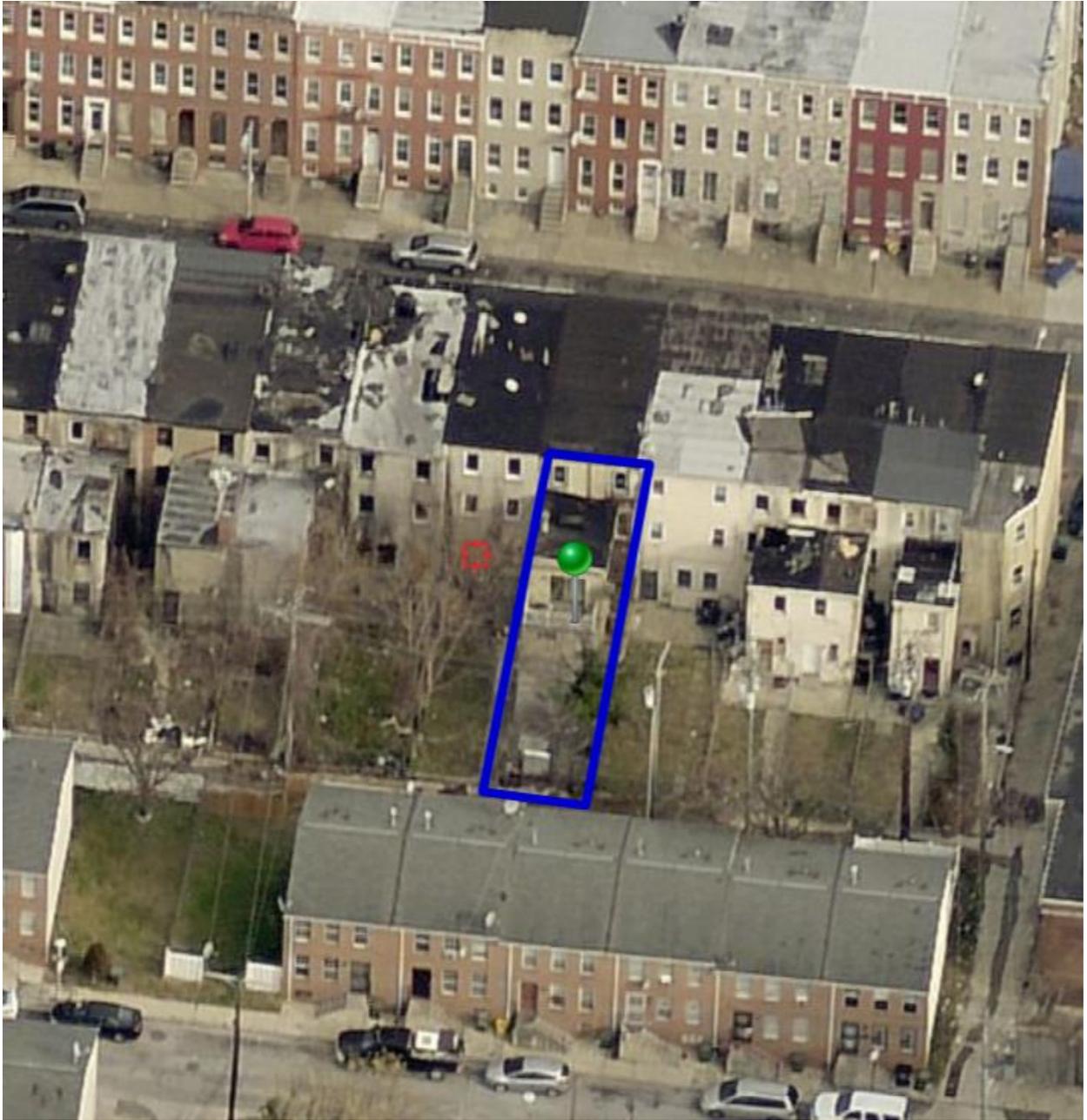
## Photos



*Image 1: 1316 N. Carey Street, September 29, 2022.*



*Image 2: 2019 Aerial Photo of property, view from East. (Eagleview)*



*Image 3: 2019 Aerial Photo of property, view from West. (Eagleview)*