ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: ARCHITECTURAL ACTIVISM: REBUILDING LIVES/REBUILDING COMMUNITIES

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Thesis Directed by: Steven W. Hurtt, Professor, School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation

Rebuilding Lives/Rebuilding Communities entails the adaptive reuse and transformation of mostly abandoned buildings formerly used as an orphanage and hospital in West Baltimore into an expanded drug treatment facility and building trades school. Students will experience the therapeutic power and sense of accomplishment derived from working with their hands while developing the skills necessary to rebuild the crumbling urban fabric seen throughout Baltimore’s most disadvantaged neighborhoods. The area adjacent to the site is in desperate need of rehabilitation and could serve as a workshop for the building trades program.

As owner of the site since November 2003, Coppin State University could manage the facility and coordinate the building trades program with their Department of Applied Psychology and Rehabilitation Counseling. This department offers graduate degrees in several related fields including Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counseling, Rehabilitation Counseling, and Correctional Education.

The Hebrew Orphan Asylum could serve as the anchor of the new campus. Built in 1876 to benefit the Jewish children of Baltimore, it could now become a refuge for today’s orphans of society, those whose lives are shattered by drug and alcohol addiction. Creatively reusing virtually all of the buildings on the site would also demonstrate any building, especially historic properties in challenging neighborhoods can be successfully recycled and become the catalyst for positive change in a community. It would also illustrate the leadership role architects can and should play in determining how best to address the visual, social, and economic impact that vacant and abandoned buildings have on cities across the nation.
ARCHITECTURAL ACTIVISM:
REBUILDING LIVES/REBUILDING COMMUNITIES

By

Arthur J. Silber

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture 2005

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I first learned of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum in Baltimore while reading an article in the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper announcing the sale of the building to Coppin State University. The article included a photograph and brief history of the building, as well as the possible adaptive reuse as a public school academy similar to the SEED School in Washington DC.

Over the next year I considered possible alternative uses for the property given its architectural, historical, and cultural value, relatively isolated location in one of the city’s most disadvantaged residential neighborhoods, and the buildings’ disconnection from other institutions in the city. How could buildings conceived and built to help the most vulnerable members of society, and now ironically in desperate need of salvation themselves, once again become valuable resources for the greater Baltimore community?

Despite its proud history, Baltimore today struggles with difficult social problems exasperated by a chronic drug epidemic that plagues the city’s most impoverished neighborhoods. The statistics are overwhelming. According to the February 2005 Profile of Indicators report issued by the National Drug Control Policy, Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse, calls involving narcotics to Baltimore 911 decreased 15.7% to 98,195 in 2003, down from a staggering 116,607 the year before. Combined juvenile and adult drug sales and manufacturing arrests totaled more than 11,200 with some reports claiming drug-related crimes account for as much as 80% of the offenses committed in Baltimore each year.

Although the majority of these crimes are considered non-violent offenses, individuals convicted of these crimes are going to jail and prison in record numbers. An article that appeared in the *Baltimore Sun* on June 1, 2003 stated Maryland now incarcerates more than 35,000 people, over 10% more than the entire country of Canada. According to the Justice Policy Institute, approximately nine out of 10 people sent to prison in Maryland since 1990 are African American and the United States now has over two million people behind bars.
Slightly over 85% of the women in jail or prisons in the United States were convicted of a non-violent offense.

The homicide rate in Baltimore city, often one of the highest per capita in the nation, has surpassed more than 300 deaths in 10 of the past 15 years. The Baltimore Police Department estimates that 40% - 60% of these homicides are drug related.\(^1\) Despite declines in the past five years, the murder rate is again on the upswing, and it is not just local residents who have noticed. According to an article by James Dao that appeared in *The New York Times* on February 9, 2005

“After trending downward from a record 353 in 1993, homicides in Baltimore have ticked back up since 2002. They hit 278 last year, putting Baltimore in line for the title of deadliest big city in the nation, with a homicide rate three times greater than Los Angeles and five times greater than New York. Last month, the city posted its bloodiest January since 1973, with 32 killings.”

As the population has shifted from the city to the surrounding suburbs, Baltimore has experienced a significant drop of almost 30% in the number of residents resulting in an onerous number of vacant and abandoned buildings. It therefore seemed natural to respond to these phenomena and develop a thesis that would address the role architects should play in responding to the needs of the individual, the community, and the built environment as well as honor those whose legacy can still be seen in the monuments they erected to improve the lives of those less fortunate.

\(^1\) National Drug Intelligence Center, *Maryland Drug Threat Assessment*, August 2002
History

Founded in 1729, nearly 100 years after the land grant that established the colony of Maryland, Baltimore Town began as a tobacco and wheat port located on a northwest branch of the Patapsco River, a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay. Two adjacent settlements followed a few years later. Jones Town (1732) formed just across the Jones Falls, the stream that defined the eastern edge of Baltimore Town and Fells Point (1733) an area farther east along the water’s edge. By 1773 both had merged with Baltimore Town to create the heart of the city that continues to thrive today.

Figure 1. A New and Accurate Map of Baltimore Town, by G. Gould Presbury, 1780 illustrating the original settlement and Jones Town east of the Jones Falls as well as the Gay Street area and lots on the western edge of the harbor. Baltimore was named after the founding proprietor of the Maryland Colony, Cæcilius Calvert, second Baron Baltimore. Maryland Historical Society.

In the years after the American Revolution, Baltimore Town grew and prospered and by the end of the 18th century it was an incorporated city with over 31,500 residents, an increase of 100% in only 10 years. The city played a significant role in the defeat of the British during the War of 1812 with the successful defense of Fort McHenry, the event that inspired Maryland lawyer Francis Scott Key to draft what would later become the Star

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2 Jones, Carlton, Baltimore: A Picture History.
Figure 2. Map of Baltimore, 1822. Although the street grid appears to extend from downtown to the city limits, this was not the case. Development is concentrated around the inner harbor and just east of the Jones Falls. It will take almost 100 years for neighborhoods to be built in the area adjacent to the western city boundary.

Spangled Banner. The B&O Railroad linked Baltimore to St. Louis and the Mississippi River in 1857, enabling cargo to travel quickly to and from the Midwest, down the Chesapeake Bay to the southern states, the West Indies and South America. By the start of the Civil War in 1861, Baltimore had become the third largest city in the U.S. boasting a population of well over 200,000 largely fueled by an influx of primarily German and Irish immigrants.

One of these German immigrants was William Solomon Rayner, a Jewish orphan from Bavaria who came to the U.S. in 1840 at the age of 18. He settled in Baltimore, married and became a successful merchant, banker, and religious community leader. Rayner became the first president of the Hebrew Benevolent Society in 1856, a charitable organization began by 16 German-speaking Jews to provide financial assistance to the Jewish community.
Figure 3. William S. Rayner was an orphan from Bavaria who became a successful businessman and religious leader in Baltimore. The street on which the Hebrew Orphan Asylum is located bears his name. His son, Isidor Rayner, served as Maryland Attorney General and was elected to both the Maryland House and Senate as well both houses of the United States Congress.
In 1872, William Rayner joined with Dr. Benjamin Szold and Alfred Ulman, to establish and finance the Hebrew Orphan Asylum (HOA). He donated property known as Calverton, a country estate designed by French architect Joseph Jacques Ramée and built in 1816 for banker Dennis Smith. Smith went bankrupt and the house eventually became the Baltimore County Almshouse before it was acquired by Rayner. Located in Calverton Heights, a small village beyond the western city limits in Baltimore County, the building was destroyed by fire in 1874. The property was part of a significantly larger area annexed by the city of Baltimore in 1903.
Figure 5. F. Klemm’s 1873 Map of Baltimore and Suburbs. The Hebrew Orphan Asylum is clearly labeled west of Ward 19 and just outside the city limits in Baltimore County.
Figure 6. Baltimore, 1876. This map illustrates juxtaposition of the planned grid and the existing development in Calverton Heights. Located in Baltimore County, the area will not be annexed by the city for another 27 years. Landowners are clearly indicated. William S. Rayner, one of the major benefactors of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum, owns several parcels in the area. A.S. Abell, founder of the Baltimore Sun newspaper, owns a large tract of land directly south of the asylum.

Figure 7. Baltimore, 1876. Residential development to the west of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum may be due to the numerous mills located on a tributary of the Gwynns Falls just north of Lanvale Street and west of the Franklin Turnpike. The houses along Lanvale Street, northwest of the asylum, are still standing. The dwellings along Calverton (now Rayner Avenue) have all been demolished and the land remains unimproved.
Figure 8. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map, Baltimore, 1901-02. Development in Calverton Heights has continued. The kitchen laundry wing extending north from the main asylum building was demolished; The single family house on West Lanvale Street is labeled “dilapidated”. The duplex directly across from the Hebrew Orphan Asylum stands today. A church still occupies the building just to the west of the duplex along Rayner Avenue. Although all of the duplexes along Rayner Avenue southwest of the Orphan Asylum have been demolished, the rowhouses remain today.
Figure 9. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map, Baltimore, 1914-15. Development in Calverton Heights has intensified. The Cahn Gymnasium completed in 1904 can be seen directly north of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum (HOA) along North Dukeland Street. The single family house on West Lanvale Street labeled “dilapidated” on the 1901-02 map has been demolished and the site is undeveloped. A group of infill rowhouses have been built in between two duplexes along Rayner Avenue. A significant number of rowhouses have also been erected in the area south and west of the HOA.
Figure 10. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map, Baltimore, 1914-15. Development in Calverton Heights has spread south of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum but very little activity can be seen to the east. The area where a stream runs north from Edmondson Avenue virtually parallel with Albert Avenue (now known as Braddish Avenue) remains open space today, providing a view corridor to eastern portion of the thesis site along Rayner Avenue. Arunah Avenue, just south of Harlem Avenue was named for Arunah S. Abell, a former owner of the property.
Figure 11. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map, Baltimore, 1928-36. Development directly north, west and south of the HOA is quite dense. A series of garage buildings occupy the site directly west of the former Cahn Gymnasium building along North Dukeland Street. These no longer exist and the area has become a public dumping ground.
Figure 12. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map, Baltimore, 1928-36. Very little has changed since the 1914-15 map. Jordan Street now runs from Edmondson Avenue north crossing Lanvale Street. Much of this street will eventually be eliminated.
The present building, located at the corner of Rayner Avenue and North Dukeland Street in West Baltimore, was designed by Lupus and Roby and dedicated on October 22, 1876, less than two years since the fire that destroyed the original building. In his *History of Baltimore City and County*, Thomas Scharf describes the building as

"designed in the Romanesque style of architecture, and consists of a main building one hundred and fifty-six feet in length and sixty-nine feet in width, and a detached kitchen building forty feet square, connected with the main structure by a corridor thirty feet long. The central portion of the building is three stories in height, and the wings two stories. The centre is ornamented with two octagon towers, while the wings are adorned with four turrets. The front and sides are built of pressed brick, with Ohio sandstone trimmings. The entrance is protected by a handsome portico, with richly carved columns and massive granite steps. The cornices throughout are of galvanized iron, painted to correspond with the stone-work. The main building is surmounted by an octagonal tower, situated over and lighting the principal staircase, and also assisting in the ventilation of the building."
The Hebrew Orphan Asylum has become West Baltimore General Hospital. A two-story sunroom shown at the left of the photo originally was included on both sides of the building. A 1944 addition to the east side of the building required the removal of one of the sunrooms. The other no longer stands and the doorways to the space have been converted to windows.

Boys and girls were housed on separate sides of the building. The kitchen/laundry and connecting corridor have been demolished as well as the two-story sunrooms on each side of the building. The wrought iron fence remains along Rayner Avenue and North Dukeland Street. Most recently, the building housed several Baltimore City social service agencies. It has been abandoned for well over a decade.
In 1904, Bernard Cahn dedicated the Hannah U. Cahn Memorial Hall in recognition of his wife’s work on behalf of the Jewish community. Built as a gymnasium for the children of the asylum, it also included classroom space on the ground floor and a bridge connecting it with the main building. The Cahn Memorial Hall is located to the north of the main orphan asylum building facing North Dukeland Street between Rayner Avenue and West Lanvale Street. Bertha Rayner Frank, daughter of William Rayner later donated $10,000 to establish a Manual Training School in memory of her husband.\(^3\)

In 1923 the Hebrew Orphan Asylum moved to a new location in the Mt. Washington section of northwest Baltimore and the former orphanage site was sold to the Baltimore Medical Association. It became West Baltimore General Hospital in June 1924. By 1927, the hospital added a nurse’s residence at the corner of North Dukeland and West Lanvale

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\(^3\) Bertha Frank’s donation was reported in an article in the Baltimore Sun dated September 4, 1910. Despite repeated efforts to determine the site of the Frank Manual Training School, I have been unable to find any evidence of its location. It was likely an area inside the main Orphan Asylum Building.
streets. A power plant just to the east of the nurse’s quarters along West Lanvale Street, and directly behind the main building was likely added a few years later.

Figure 16. “… it is hoped they [the children of the asylum] will be improved mentally and morally as well as physically,” remarked Bernard Cahn at the dedication of the gym. Photo courtesy The Jewish Museum of Maryland.

Figure 17. The nurse’s residence as it appeared in the Baltimore News American, April 1927. The Cahn Gymnasium appears in the right side of the photograph.
To accommodate continued growth of the West Baltimore community, the hospital added two additional buildings in 1944. Virtually identical in size and design, the three-story brick buildings face one another across Ashburton Street on the northwest and northeast corners of Rayner Avenue. The building on the west side of Ashburton Street is connected to the eastern façade of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum. The building was later sold by Lutheran Hospital and currently is home to Tuerk House, a 28-day residential drug rehabilitation clinic.

Figure 18. Completed in 1944, this building and one virtually identical across Ashburton Street substantially increased the size of the hospital. This building, now known as Tuerk House, was named in honor of Isadore Tuerk, a Maryland State Health Commissioner and advocate for those in need of treatment for substance abuse. Tuerk House has inpatient, outpatient and continuing care programs for both men and women. Photo courtesy the Maryland Historical Society.

Figure 19. Interior of the building, September 27, 1944. Photo courtesy the Maryland Historical Society.
The Lutheran Home and Hospital Association acquired West Baltimore General Hospital in 1949. Growth continued with the addition of a large surgical and diagnostic building complete with facilities for 76 surgical patients in 1963 on a parcel of land bounded by West Lafayette Street to the north, Rayner Avenue to the south, Braddish Avenue to the east and Ashburton Street to the west. Portions of West Lanvale Street and Jordan Street were demapped to allow for construction of the new building. A pedestrian bridge crossing over Ashburton Street connected the new facility with the hospital buildings on the west side of the street. Renovations to the building included the addition of a morgue in the basement in 1974.

![Figure 20. Architectural model of the 1963 Building, proposing three times the number of beds that were actually built.](image)

![Figure 21. New hospital under construction, September 1962. The plans have been scaled back to include a maximum of four floors as opposed to seven as shown in the model. Only three were ever completed.](image)

In 1977, the hospital added the Rosemont Primary Care Center on the eastern side of the hospital property along Braddish Avenue. A final expansion of the hospital in 1981 at a cost of $1.6 million added a third level to the patient facilities portion of the hospital and consolidated medical and surgical services in one area of the facility.\(^4\) Lutheran Hospital vacated the property in the 1989.

\(^4\) *Baltimore Sun*, March 29, 1981
Site Description

The thesis site is in the Mosher neighborhood of West Baltimore in the state of Maryland. Maryland is just south of the Mason-Dixon line bounded by Pennsylvania to the north, Virginia to the south, Delaware and the Atlantic Ocean to the east, and West Virginia on the western border. Baltimore, Maryland's largest city, is situated along the Chesapeake Bay at the mouth of the Patapsco River in the central part of the state. The city is home to the oldest Roman Catholic diocese in the United States and Benjamin Latrobe’s masterpiece, The Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is America’s first cathedral.

![Figure 22. Map of Maryland and surrounding area. Baltimore is ideally located along the eastern seaboard of the United States. It is approximately 36 miles to Washington DC, 90 miles to Philadelphia, 129 miles to Richmond, VA, 169 miles to New York and 196 miles to Pittsburgh PA.](image-url)
Figure 23. Baltimore, MD. The thesis site is in the heart of West Baltimore approximately 3.5 miles from the Inner Harbor.

Figure 24. Baltimore Map Detail. Coppin State University is located on North Avenue, about nine blocks north of the thesis site.
Bounded by West Lafayette Avenue and West Lanvale Street to the north, Rayner Avenue to the south, Braddish Avenue to the east and the west side of North Dukeland Street to the west, the site slopes up from the northeast corner at West Lafayette and Braddish Avenues to the southwest corner at Rayner Avenue and North Dukeland Streets. The open parcel across North Dukeland Street from the Hebrew Orphan Asylum occupies the highest part of the site. The eastern portion of the site was excavated for the 1963 Lutheran Hospital addition and today is relatively flat.

Figure 25. Thesis Site Map

1. Open parcel
2. Open parcel
3. Hebrew Orphan Asylum, 1876
4. Cahn Gymnasium, 1904
5. Nurses’ Residence, circa 1927
6. Power Plant, circa 1930
7. Tuerk House, 1944
8. Bridge, 1963
9. Nurses’ Residence, 1944
10. Lutheran Hospital, 1963
11. Rosemont Primary Care Center, 1977
The thesis site includes the following parcels located in the Mosher neighborhood of West Baltimore. All of the buildings, with the exception of the site improved by the 1944 building known as Tuerk House, were acquired by Coppin State University in November 2003. Tuerk House is the only building currently in use. The others are abandoned.

1. Ward 16 Section 24, Block 2380
   Lots 1/3: 2800-2804 Rayner Avenue, vacant
   7,768 square feet, approximately 0.18 acres
   Lot 72: South Alley and North Dukeland Street between Rayner Avenue and West Lanvale Street, vacant
   7,402 square feet, approximately 0.17 acres

2. Ward 16, Section 24, Block 2381
   Lot 1: 730 Ashburton Street (Tuerk House)
   31,335 square feet, approximately 0.72 acres
   Lot 2: 2700 Rayner Avenue including the Hebrew Orphan Asylum, Cahn Gymnasium, 1925 Nurses' Residence and Power Plant
   49,842 square feet, approximately 1.14 acres

3. Ward 16, Section 24, Block 2375
   Lots 1/28: 1944 Nurses’ Residence, Lutheran Hospital, Rosemont Primary Care Center 252,148 square feet, approximately 5.79 acres
Figure 27. Baltimore’s Neighborhood Statistical Areas Map. This map of Baltimore indicates the neighborhoods that both comprise the city and provide the boundaries for statistical purposes. The site is located in the Mosher neighborhood (indicated in black) in the heart of West Baltimore.

Figure 28. Mosher Neighborhood Map. Mosher is Baltimore bounded by Riggs Avenue to the north, Edmondson Avenue to the south, Braddish Avenue to the east, and Poplar Grove Avenue to the west.

Figure 29. Green Space. A green space just to the south of the eastern portion of site has never been developed. Today, it provides a view corridor north from Edmondson Avenue to Rayner Avenue.
Site Analysis

With the exception of the thesis site, Mosher is virtually 100% residential with very few commercial properties part of the statistical area. According to the 2000 census, the Mosher neighborhood had 2,009 residents, a decline of 24.2% since 1990. During the same 10-year period, the number of total housing units decreased by 5% to 825 with the number of vacant units (those not for sale or rent) numbering 117 or 14% of all units, a staggering 317.9% increase. Including vacant units for sale or rent increased the vacancy rate in Mosher to 19% or an additional 40 homes. In the year 2000, Baltimore had 27,153 vacant units or 9% of the 300,477 units in the city. Including vacant units for sale or rent increased the vacancy rate to 14.1%, an additional 15,328 units. Baltimore’s population decreased to 651,154 in 2000, down from 736,013 in 1990.

Abandoned Buildings Figure Ground. The area immediately to the west of the thesis site is plagued by vacant and abandoned properties, many of which date to the mid and late-nineteenth century.

5 http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/planning/census/index.html
6 U.S Census Bureau 2003 American Community Survey, Baltimore, Maryland reports the population of Baltimore to be 602,733.
This street figure/ground illustrates the separation of the site from the Coppin State University campus due to the path of the railroad that slices through the area between the two sites. Although the train is elevated in places, it creates a significant barrier that makes traveling between the two areas difficult.

The street hierarchy also highlights both the limitations imposed by the railroad and the residential quality of the area. Primary east/west thoroughfares are separated by irregular-sized residential and institutional blocks and a zone whose development was clearly influenced by the railroad. The primary north/south streets are easily identified since they overcome the barrier imposed by the train tracks.
There are quite a number of educational institutions within walking distance of the site including four elementary schools, one middle school, one special education school, and one vocational/technical high school. Although, Coppin State University is only about one mile from the site, it is completely disconnected due to the path of the railroad and change in topography. Coppin State is also the only major educational or cultural institution in the city close to the thesis site.
Current Conditions

Figure 35. Hebrew Orphan Asylum stands at the northeast corner of Rayner Avenue and North Dukleland Street. December 2004.

Figure 36. Hebrew Orphan Asylum. December 2004.
Figure 37. Hebrew Orphan Asylum main entrance. December 2004.

Figure 38. Hebrew Orphan Asylum with the connection to Tuerk House. December 2004.
Figure 39. Hebrew Orphan Asylum with the Cahn Memorial Hall along North Dukeland Street. December 2004.

Figure 40. Cahn Memorial Hall, December 2004. The building is seriously deteriorated; front steps are crumbling, windows knocked out and/or boarded up completely; interior likely seriously compromised by the elements given the west-facing orientation of the building. December 2004.

Figure 41. Cahn Memorial Hall Cornerstone. December 2004.
Figure 42. Nurse’s Residence. The building appears to have virtually no roof remaining and is clearly exposed to the elements. A portion of one of the light fixtures can be seen at left. December 2004.
Figure 43. Nurse’s Residence with Cahn Memorial Hall and the Hebrew Orphan Asylum along the east side of North Dukeland Street.

Figure 44. Nurse’s Residence with Power Plant, Bridge, and 1963 Building along West Lanvale Street. All are vacant and exposed to the elements. December 2004.
Figure 45. Bridge over Ashburton Street at the corner of West Lanvale Street. Tuerk House can be seen behind the bridge to the left. Power Plant and Nurse’s Residence on the right. December 2004.

Figure 46. North façade of 1963 Building from the corner of West Lafayette and Braddish Avenues. The former hospital parking lot in foreground. December 2004.

Figure 47. South and east façades of 1963 Building from the corner of Rayner and Braddish Avenues. One of the 1944 Buildings can be seen on the right side of Rayner Avenue and to the left of the 1963 Building. Rosemont Primary Care Center on the far right side of the building along Braddish Avenue. All abandoned and exposed to the elements. December 2004.
Figure 48. 1963 Addition to Lutheran Hospital. View from Rayner Avenue looking north. November 2005

Figure 49. 1963 Building loading dock. November 2005.

Figure 50. 1963 Building loading dock November 2005.
Figure 51. One of two buildings completed in 1944. This one is now known as Tuerk House. It is the only building on the site that remains in use today. It was not part of the parcel acquired by Coppin State University in November 2003. December 2004.

Figure 52. Looking North Along Ashburton Avenue. One of the two 1994 Buildings, likely used as a nurses’ residence on the left. The 1963 hospital building can be seen to the right behind the nurses’ residence. The bridge crosses over Ashburton Street, connecting the 1963 hospital building with the 1944 Building (Tuerk House) on the west side of the street. December 2004.
Figure 53. Looking Northwest along Rayner Avenue. One of the two 1994 Buildings, likely used as a nurses’ residence on the left. The 1963 hospital building can be seen to the right. November 2005.

Figure 54. Looking west from Braddish Avenue, at the Rosement Primary Care Center. The 1963 hospital building can be seen to the left as well as the Ashburton Street Nurse’s Residence, Bridge, Tuerk House, and buildings along West Lanvale Street. November 2005.
Figure 55. The north side of the 2800 West Lanvale Street. Only one or two houses are occupied. The houses set back from the street on the left side of the photograph date to the early 1870s. December 2004.

Figure 56. The rear of the south side of the 2800 West Lanvale Street. Approximately 85% of the houses on this street are boarded up and appear to be abandoned. The area in the foreground of this photo is part of the thesis site. December 2004.
Figure 57. The property at the northwest corner of Rayner Avenue and North Dukeland Street is now vacant. At one time a house and two outbuildings occupied the site. December 2004.
An important precedent for this thesis is campus planning, specifically the creation of meaningful open space often referred to as a campus “mall” or “quad”. The four examples shown above all include this type of space in various configurations. All but the University of Rochester are true urban campuses that share a common street edge with the surrounding community.
Figure 59. Carnegie Mellon University Figure/Ground. Designed by renowned Beaux-Arts architect Henry Hornbostel, the "competition-winning architect of the original university master plan and of all its buildings through the early 1930s," the Carnegie Mellon campus is comprised of mostly yellow brick buildings, many with terra cotta ornamentation.

Carnegie Mellon has a primary mall named the "Cut" that runs from Forbes Avenue south to the opposite end of the campus, terminating at the main entrance to Hunt Library. Diagrammatically, a secondary space known as the "mall" overlaps the Cut in front of the library and College of Fine Arts building. Experientially, the mall extends from the western edge of the cut down to Hamerschlag Hall directly on axis with the College of Fine Arts. Due to the sloping topography and relatively diminutive size of Hamerschlag Hall when compared with the College of Fine Arts, the relationship of these buildings is not as direct as one might expect from the portrayal of the space as depicted in the figure/ground.

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At Johns Hopkins University, the smaller lower quad is connected to a larger upper quad that lies perpendicular to it by an outdoor staircase. Ames and Krieger Halls define the edges of both spaces. Gilman Hall, "the first major academic building" constructed on the Homewood campus faces the Eisenhower Library, named for Milton Eisenhower, a former president of the university and brother President Dwight D. Eisenhower. A north/south axis bisects the upper quad connecting the lower quad with the residential portion of the campus along University Parkway.

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8 http://www.jhu.edu/masterplan/why/
Figure 61. The University of Rochester Figure/Ground. Ground was broken in 1927 for the 85-acre University of Rochester main campus located about two miles south of downtown Rochester at a bend in the Genesee River.9

The University of Rochester Eastman Quadrangle visually links the Rush Rhees Library with the Interfaith Chapel and Genesee River just across Wilson Boulevard, a minor campus thoroughfare. Strong Auditorium on the east and Schlegel Hall on the west define the southeastern edge of the quad and frame the chapel which sits directly on axis with the library. Wilson Commons, a student center designed by I.M. Pei and completed in 1976 helps define an important secondary outdoor space known as Dandelion Square, just to the west of the Eastman Quadrangle. The campus also includes both residential and fraternity quads.

9 http://www.rochester.edu/aboutus/history.html
Figure 62. The University of Pennsylvania Figure/Ground. Located in University City on the western side of Philadelphia, The University of Pennsylvania is a 269-acre urban campus just across the Schuylkill River from Center City. Established in 1751, Penn’s campus includes a number of impressive buildings by notable architects such as Frank Furness, Louis Kahn, Eero Saarinen, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown.

Encompassing a total of “38 interlocking buildings surrounding five interior courtyards”, the Quad at the University of Pennsylvania was designed by Cope and Stewardson in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The Quadrangle is a residential complex in the heart of an urban neighborhood, making the open space framed by the buildings a crucial component in the quality of life enjoyed by the students. Blanche P. Levy Park an important outdoor space at the core of the campus is framed by College Hall, designed by Thomas Webb Richards and the first building on the West Philadelphia campus and three libraries including the spectacular Fisher Fine Arts Library by Philadelphia native Frank Furness. College Hall and
the Fisher Fine Arts Library are both on the National Registry of Historic Places as well as part of the University of Pennsylvania Historic District.

**Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades**

Founded in 1888 by Isaiah V. Williamson, a Philadelphia merchant and philanthropist, The Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades offers programs of study in carpentry, masonry, horticulture, the machine trades, paint/structural coating and power plant technology. Williamson’s Quaker ideals formed the core of the school’s philosophy. His statement, “In this country every able-bodied, healthy young man who has learned a good mechanical trade, and is truthful, honest, frugal, temperate, and industrious, is certain to succeed in life, and to become a useful and respected member of society” still informs the core values embodied by the school today. The 220-acre campus designed by Frank Furness is located 14 miles southwest of Philadelphia in Media, Pennsylvania.

The Williamson Free School serves as a thesis precedent for architectural, programmatic and theoretical reasons. Originally housed in one building that burned in the mid 1950s, four of the trades--carpentry, masonry, the machine trades and paint/structural coating--are now taught in a series of virtually identical buildings. A computer lab was recently added to the machine shop building to better integrate technology into that program. Separate buildings house horticulture and power plant technology.

The four structures built to replace the Furness building that burned down all incorporate a large double-height space with an abundance of natural light, a classroom space, an office for one faculty member, a storage room, a locker room, a separate room for specialized equipment and an accommodation for HVAC. Although quite utilitarian, the space is flexible, facilitates supervision of students with minimal faculty present, allows for natural ventilation, and gives students ample space to execute large projects. The use of brick and concrete is both functional and aesthetically consistent with the program of the buildings.
Philosophically, Williamson provides a valuable conceptual model. The core values of faith, integrity, diligence, excellence, and service remain the foundation of a Williamson education today. At a time when we struggle for solutions to many of the same problems society has grappled with for decades, a return to these core values in the context of learning a valuable trade could provide the path to a successful future for many former addicts and former convicts. For many, the alternative is not too unlike the vacant and abandoned buildings that stand waiting to once again become valuable resources for the community.
Program size depends on the number of disciplines. Each discipline would have a similar amount of students and require approximately the same amount of square footage. Areas of study may include carpentry, plumbing/hvac, electrical, painting/drywall, masonry and historic plaster restoration services. Due to the nature of the site, materials must be stored mostly in an indoor, secure environment requiring significantly more storage for the masonry trade.

This is a preliminary program analysis. It applies to new construction only. Existing buildings will be dedicated to expanded drug treatment, administrative of the building trades school, security and facility maintenance. Additional facilities including classrooms, a computer lab, more faculty offices, a vending area, and outdoor storage area may also be included as part of the design development process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Space</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Square Footage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main work area</td>
<td>Large open, unobstructed space, high ceiling, well-ventilated, durable materials</td>
<td>5,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage area</td>
<td>Easily accessible, secure, high ceiling</td>
<td>1,200 sf*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special equipment needs</td>
<td>Sound proof, secure, easily monitored well-ventilated</td>
<td>425 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Easily monitored, wired</td>
<td>800 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference room</td>
<td>Wired, secure</td>
<td>275 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tool storage</td>
<td>Easily accessible, secure</td>
<td>200 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>Central location, wired</td>
<td>225 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathroom/locker room</td>
<td>Lavatories, wc, urinals, showers lockers, changing area</td>
<td>1,200 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td>Ventilation system</td>
<td>300 sf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subtotal square footage 9,650 sf

Addition of 30% 2,895 sf

Total 12,445 sf
Design Objectives

1. Coordinate the existing buildings with new construction to create a comprehensive campus setting.

2. Explore the adaptive reuse potential of all the existing buildings on the site.

3. Reinforce the edges of the site to improve the relationship of the existing buildings with the surrounding neighborhood.

4. Unify the eastern and western sides of the site into a cohesive campus.

5. Develop meaningful open space that enhances the relationship between individual buildings, creates a campus-type atmosphere and relates to the greater community.

6. Provide a safe, secure, and inspiring environment in which to live and learn.

7. Establish a link/access route between the site and the existing Coppin State University campus.
Strategy 1

The first scheme utilizes all of the existing buildings with the exception of the bridge, adjoining staircase and the Rosemont Primary Care Center. A long campus mall is created by framing the space between the existing hospital and the new construction. A building facing Braddish Avenue terminates the space. An addition on the southeast corner of the site addresses the view corridor that extends down to Edmondson Avenue and creates a secondary outdoor space along Rayner Avenue.

Figure 64: Strategy 1 Figure/Ground
Figure 65: Strategy 1 Axon
**Strategy 2**

The second scheme also utilizes at least portions of the existing buildings with the exception of the bridge, adjoining staircase and the Rosemont Primary Care Center. Two quads are created by placing a building directly north of the elevator core/lobby of the existing hospital. New construction provides north and east edges to these outdoor spaces. Although a large portion of the hospital is reused, the space below the western edge of the patient room section is removed allowing the outdoor space to flow freely beneath it and into one of the quads.

*Figure 66: Strategy 2 Figure/Ground*
Figure 67: Strategy 2 Axon
**Strategy 3**

The third scheme also utilizes at least portions of the existing buildings exception the Rosemont Primary Care Center. New construction forms the eastern edge of a large campus mall. A large segment of the first floor of the 1963 hospital is removed allowing a significant portion of the patient rooms and the elevator/lobby core to sit above the landscape on concrete supports, connecting the mall with the southern edge of the campus along Rayner Avenue. A portion of the first floor of the hospital is reused and terminates the open space that extends from Rayner Avenue south to Edmondson Avenue.

![Figure 68: Strategy 3 Figure/Ground](image-url)
Figure 69: Strategy 3 Axon
Design Issues

There are a number of significant issues to be resolved during the development of this thesis.

1. How to successfully relate a new building(s) to the small-scale residential development surrounding 75% of the site.

2. How to address the odd configuration of the western part of the site along North Dukeland Street, this part of the site’s relationship to the buildings across the street, and its role in terminating the western edge of the campus.

3. How to overcome the distance between the Coppin State University campus and the new site including the issues posed by the location of the existing railroad tracks, existing urban fabric, topography, access to the site, safety, right of way, etc.

4. How to honestly evaluate the existing buildings and their adaptive reuse potential given the difficulty in obtaining specific plan, section and interior condition information.

5. How to create open space that enlivens the neighborhood without creating an even more dangerous environment.

6. How to best utilize the Hebrew Orphan Asylum given its location at the south west corner of the site and its relationship to the existing buildings and open space for new construction.
Conclusion

Over the course of the semester, a central theme emerged: How could the buildings already present on the site be integrated with new construction? This question had to be addressed on several critical levels including the master plan of the campus, design of the new buildings, adaptive reuse of the existing structures, and distribution of space to accommodate all of the functions necessary for the site to operate as distinct campus.

Regarding the master plan, I determined only the Rosemont Primary Care Center, the built connection between Tuerk House and the Hebrew Orphan Asylum, the bridge over Ashburton Street, and a later addition to the 1963 hospital should be slated for complete demolition. Four new buildings were added to the site: two for the instruction of the building trades, a library, and an auditorium which could be used by both the school, expanded drug treatment center, and the surrounding community. These buildings along with the adaptive reuse of the 1963 hospital would comprise the vast majority of the new campus.

Figure 70: Demolition Plan. Areas marked with diagonal lines are recommended for demolition. From left to right, these areas include the hyphen linking Tuerk House with the Orphan Asylum the bridge crossing over Ashburton Street, all areas of the 1963 Lutheran Hospital except the concrete piers, patient rooms and elevator core, and the Rosemont Primary Care Center at the eastern edge of the site.
The master plan is characterized by a series of outdoor spaces that serve to link the various buildings and create a campus environment. A large campus “mall” running east to west intersects an expansive outdoor terrace that serves to connect this space with Rayner Avenue to the south. The auditorium at the eastern edge of the campus terminates the long axis formed by joining West Lanvale Street with the new mall. A smaller lawn is framed by the 1944 Nurse’s Residence and a colonnade running along the western edge of the new library. The reconfiguration of the 1963 hospital building allows new functions to be strategically placed at street level including the campus bookstore, a bank, a café, and a convenience shop. A grand outdoor staircase connects the street level with the terrace above creating a smooth transition from the public side to the more private side of the campus. This movement from public to private is emphasized by the ability to walk along the terrace and pass under the residential bar of the hospital to the campus mall. This transition is seen again in the entrance to the school buildings and auditorium. Students pass through openings in the facade to a recessed entry, making the transition from outdoor to indoor. This is also the case with the auditorium where students pass through a colonnade to enter the building. These transitions not only represent outdoor to indoor and public to private but also symbolize the journey from drug abuse to recovery, from non-skilled to skilled, from desperation to leading a healthier, more productive life.

Another major component in the campus plan is the closing of Ashburton Street to vehicular traffic. This would help link the historic core of the upper campus with the lower portion that now includes the majority of the new buildings. Compression points help to formalize the outdoor space and serve as visual clues that pedestrians are moving from one area of the campus to another. One of these points can be seen along the wider walkway created between the 1944 buildings. A new pair of entry pavilions will facilitate entry to these buildings at ground level while also forming a reference point for movement through the center of the campus.
A small non-denominational chapel, named for the longtime administrator of the HOA, and a small row of transitional housing define the western boundary, framing the historic core of the upper campus with new construction on both of the farthest east/west edges of the site.

Given the "object" nature of both the 1876 Hebrew Orphan Asylum and 1963 Hospital, I chose to utilize the two trades school buildings to create a more cohesive campus environment. My goal was to visually link the disparate parts of the site through the design, massing, and materials of these new buildings allowing them to serve as a background for the more flamboyant, historic asylum and massive, modern hospital.

The new trades school buildings are characterized by long, rhythmic façades with four-foot overhangs that give emphasis to the roof and guard the interior space against the harsh summer sun. Designed to evoke the rowhouse typology seen throughout the city of Baltimore, the modulation of the facades helps weave these buildings into the residential fabric of the neighborhood.

Steel brackets inspired by the exposed concrete piers that inform the design of the 1963 hospital across the campus mall support the overhang. Visually, the roof of the trades school floats above the building in the same way that the residential bar of the hospital hovers atop its base below. This emphasis on the roof also reinforces that this trade school will help train people to provide shelter, one of our most basic human needs. A partial hexagon shaped staircase placed prominently at the entrance to the school buildings makes reference to the Orphan Asylum vocabulary. Brick with precast concrete details solidify the visual relationship of the new construction with all of the buildings on the site.

In a more deliberate way than the trades school buildings, the auditorium takes many of its design cues directly from the Orphan Asylum. The stair towers that dominate the orphanage’s façade are translated into brick columns that form a colonnade on the building’s west-facing facade. Steel brackets used to support the overhang are now rotated 90 degrees to form a modified arch on the front façade. Variations of the fenestration employed on the trades school buildings give the auditorium a civic quality it demands as the focal point of the campus mall.
The adaptive reuse of the hospital would entail the removal of all material below the mechanical mezzanine and residential portion with the exception of the structural concrete piers. Planned as a comprehensive student center complete with student lounge areas, dining services, a lecture hall, recreation space, a bookstore, a computer lab, a café, a student activities room, and an art gallery, the building’s new façade would be characterized by a glass curtain wall system set-off approximately 18” from the existing piers but still attached with a structural connection. This same detailing would be utilized on the glass entry additions to the two 1944 buildings, at the hyphen between Tuerk House and the Hebrew Orphan Asylum, and on the eastern façade of the auditorium.

The historic structures on the site pose a difficult dilemma. All of the buildings, with the exception of Tuerk House, are abandoned and have been exposed to the elements for a significant period of time. My interview with Dr. John Hickey, the director of Tuerk House, revealed that most of the original fabric from the interior of the orphanage has been destroyed. These buildings have undoubtedly suffered considerable damage to the interior. The Orphan Asylum seems to be in better physical condition than either the Cahn Memorial Hall or the 1927 Nurse’s Residence. A complete evaluation of these structures is required. However, despite these dismal conditions, every effort should be made to save these structures and adaptively reuse them to support the new building trades school and expanded drug treatment facility.

The Hebrew Orphan Asylum would be the administrative focal point of the new building trades school and could include the Office of the President, academic affairs, comptroller’s office, admissions, alumni, procurement, the career center, registrar, financial aid, development, security, facilities management, etc. Cahn Memorial Hall could once again serve as a recreation center. Space in the lower level could supplement more physical activities. The 1927 nurse’s residence could become the new home of Coppin State University’s Department of Applied Psychology and Rehabilitation Counseling with offices for faculty and graduate students. Buildings on campus could be named in honor of those instrumental in the history of the site, William Rayner, his daughter Bertha Rayner Frank,
Benjamin Szold, Alfred Ulman, the Reverend Samuel Freudenthal, and Harry and Leon Ashman, physicians at West Baltimore General and later Lutheran Hospital.

Addressing the detailed physical preservation of the historic buildings on the site has not been the focus of this thesis. Rather, my goal was to develop a master plan that championed the adaptive reuse of the existing buildings while at the same time developing a program and attitude about the new construction that would compliment the historic structures and help to preserve the community, the spiritual history of the site, and the philosophy embodied in the words of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum’s benefactors. At the dedication of the new orphan asylum in 1876 after a fire two years earlier destroyed the original building, William Rayner declared his hope for the young institution,

“[I] hope the day is not far distant when the endowments and donations will be ample to make it also a first-class institution of learning, where the intelligent youth can not only be instructed in the rudiments but also in those higher branches of education necessary for professional life, and when it will be considered an honor and a high testimonial to have been a graduate of the school of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of Baltimore.”

Bernard Cahn, in his dedication of the hall erected in memory of his wife, expressed a sentiment still relevant today,

“Few events in my life have afforded me greater pleasure than the completion of this memorial building, erected to my wife’s memory. I trust it will be an everlasting monument to one whose aim in life was to help and give pleasure to others. It is my sincere hope and expectation that the children of the asylum will be greatly benefited by the physical culture which they will receive, and as it is said ‘A sound mind dwells in a sound body,’ it is to be hoped they will be improved mentally and morally as well.”

It is the preservation of these ideals, along with the bricks and mortar that represent them that is the focus of this thesis. The abandoned orphanage, hospital and related buildings on this site embody how we as a society often turn our backs on those most in need of empathy, practical advice, and financial assistance. The adaptive reuse of this historic fabric would demonstrate that buildings, like people, are not disposable. They require attention, care, and compassion and should not be cast aside or left to waste away simply because they have fallen on hard times. They are an important part of our history and can play a vital role in our future. Architecture and historic preservation have the power to help heal this community and enhance the lives of the people who call Baltimore home.
**Figure 71:** Rowhouse/Building Trades School Figure Comparison. Baltimore has a well established and diverse rowhouse tradition seen throughout the entire city. Frank Hall, the larger of the two buildings designed to house the Building Trades School, is compatible both in length and scale with rowhouses in the area immediately adjacent to the new campus.

**Figure 72:** Axis/Cross Axis. Both the axis and cross axes weave the new campus into the neighborhood to form a cohesive community.

**Figure 73:** Edge. Additions to buildings and new construction continue the street edge established by the existing development thru the new campus.
Figure 74: Campus Gateways. A series of "gateways" characterized by points of compression alert pedestrians that they are moving through the campus from "town to gown" and back again.
CAMPUS PLAN

1. Hebrew Orphan Asylum (Administration)
2. Henson Residences (Transitional Housing)
3. Frendland Center (Non-denominational Chapel)
4. Cahn Memorial Hall (Gymnasium/Recreation)
5. Sack Hall (College Skills University's Department of Applied Psychology and Rehabilitation Counseling)
6. Power Plant
7. Tuerk House (Medicaid Treatment)
8. Ulman House (90-Day Drug Treatment)
9. Frank Hall (Masonry/Carpentry)
10. Ashman Hall (Historic Preservation/Painting/Plumbing/Electric)
11. Rayner Auditorium
12. Student Center
13. Student Residence Hall (Building Trades School)
14. Library

Figure 75: Campus Master Plan

Figure 76: Rayner Auditorium, West Facade
Figure 77: Frank Hall (Building Trades School, Carpentry/Masonry Trades), North Façade

Figure 78: Frank Hall (Building Trades School, Carpentry/Masonry Trades), South Façade

Figure 79: Frank Hall (Building Trades School, Carpentry/Masonry Trades), East Façade
**Figure 80**: Frank Hall (Building Trades School, Carpentry/Masonry Trades), West Façade

**Figure 81**: Frank Hall (Building Trades School, Carpentry/Masonry Trades), Wall Section
Figure 82: Rayner Auditorium, First Floor Plan

Figure 83: Frank Hall, First Floor Plan

Figure 84: Ashman Hall, First Floor Plan
Figure 85: Library, First Floor Plan
Figure 86: Student Center, First Floor Plan
Figure 87: Campus Mall. Perspective looking east towards the Rayner Auditorium Building. Frank Hall (the masonry/carpentry portion of the Building Trades School on the left, the former Lutheran Hospital, now a Student Center on the right.
Figure 88: Baltimore by the Numbers. A statistical overview detailing the impact drugs has on the city of Baltimore and the state of Maryland.


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