



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

### STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur  
Director

March 10, 2016

**REQUEST:** Landmark Designation: Apostolic Faith Church of God Building, 1939  
Walbrook Ave.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**STAFF:** Lauren E. Schizik

**PETITIONER:** Apostolic Faith Church of God

**OWNER:** Apostolic Faith Church of God

#### **SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT**

##### Site Conditions/Architectural Description:

The property consists of a three-bay wide, five-bay deep one story tall front-gabled frame Gothic Revival church clad in formstone, with a stone foundation and a projected central entrance bay with a tower, located on a 0.17 acre lot. The building is adjacent to an alley to the west, and sits on a wide lot with a parking pad and lawn located to the east of the church. There is a rear one-story addition that has a separate entrance on Walbrook Ave, set far back from the street.

General Area: The property is located a block north of North Ave on the south side of Walbrook Ave., east of the intersection with Payson St. It is located in the Mondawmin neighborhood. The surrounding block is comprised of modest two-story two bay wide brick rowhouses constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-to-early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, that feature marble steps, decorative brickwork around the windows, and ornate cornices. Many of the rowhouses have been covered in formstone. While the neighborhood is not designated as a historic district locally or nationally, it shares architectural characteristics with other designated neighborhoods.

#### **HISTORY**

There are no previous Planning Commission actions regarding this site.

#### **CONFORMITY TO PLANS**

The proposal is consistent with the City of Baltimore's Comprehensive Master Plan, specifically: PLAY Goal 1: Strengthen Stewardship of Historical and Cultural Resources; LIVE Objective 4: Protect and Enhance the Preservation of Baltimore's Historic Buildings and Neighborhoods.

## **ANALYSIS**

This is the second public hearing for this structure as part of the Baltimore City Landmark designation process. The first hearing occurred when the CHAP Commission reviewed and recommended approval of Landmark designation on February 9, 2016. CHAP's landmark report is attached to this staff report.

This Landmark Designation has been reviewed by the CHAP Commission and is consistent with planning initiatives.

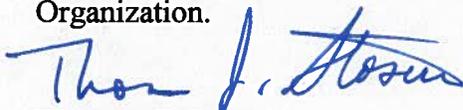
The CHAP Commission found the following: The building today known as the Apostolic Faith Church of God Building was constructed in 1894 by John Sheiblein & Son for Concordia German Lutheran Church in the Walbrook suburb of what was then Baltimore County. The church was founded a year prior, and this frame chapel was constructed to serve as a temporary structure until the congregation raised the funds to complete a more substantial building on the same lot; a practice that was common among congregations in Baltimore. Except in this case, the new building was constructed at another location, and this frame church has remained as a rare surviving example. Following a merger with St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1921, the congregation moved to another location but retained this building as the clubhouse of the church-sponsored Emorywood Athletic Club through the 1930s. The building became the church for the African American Pentecostal congregation of the Apostolic Faith Church of God No. 1 by 1951. This building served as the mother church for this international denomination for decades, and today houses the Bishop's office and is used for special events.

Based upon the historical context and architectural design of the Apostolic Faith Church of God Building, the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation found that it meets CHAP Landmark designation criteria for the following standards:

- B. A Baltimore City Landmark may be a site, structure, landscape, building (or portion thereof), place, work of art, or other object which:
1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history;
  3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS**

Notification of this hearing has been provided to the church and posted on the property. The following entities were notified about the consideration of this item at the February CHAP hearing: AIA Baltimore, Baltimore Heritage Inc., Baltimore National Heritage Area, Councilman Mosby, Fulton Heights Community Association, Inc., Greater Mondawmin Coordinating Council, Preservation Maryland, and Robert W. Coleman Community Organization.



**Thomas J. Stosur**  
**Director**