

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M: 35-155

1. Name of Property

Sycamore Store

2. Location

street and number 7025 MacArthur Boulevard Lot 32, Block 2, Glen Echo Heights
 city, town Bethesda, Maryland 20816
 county Montgomery

3. Owner of Property (see continuation sheet)

name Dean K. Brenneman, A.I.A.
 street and number 4101 Cathedral Avenue, NW, Apt. 601 telephone 202-237-1692
 city, town Washington state DC zip code 20016

4. Location of Legal Description

Montgomery County Land Records liber: 27528 folio: 800
 city, town Rockville, MD tax map: GM-53 tax parcel/tax ID number: 07-029-00507922

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- n/a Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
				<u>0</u>	

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3. Owner of Property

name	Peter W. Pagenstecher, CR		
street and number	6309 Winston Drive	telephone	301-320-6314
city, town	Bethesda	state	MD
		zip code	20817

3. Owner of Property

name	Mark A. Anderson, CR		
street and number	15121 Old Columbia Pike	telephone	301-421-4212
city, town	Burtonsville	state	MD
		zip code	20866

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Summary:

The Sycamore Store is a 2-story frame structure, which evolved from a 1-½ story Bungalow dating from 1916-1921 and having received additions and renovations in at least two distinct phases; in 1925 and sometime in the late 1930's. The building is two bays wide and is divided internally between a grocery store space, on the left side of a first floor, front-to-back, demising partition; and a residence in the remainder of the first floor and the entire second floor. This division apparently dates back to at least the renovations of 1925, and most probably to the purchase of the property by Hugh "Boots" Johnston in 1921, or to his reputed beginning of store operations in 1919. The majority of the foundation is brick, with cement-parged block present at a rear addition. Painted siding is 1" thick wood clapboard with a 7" exposure and mitered corners. Windows are mostly 6 over 1-light double-hung with a 4" back-banded ext. casing. The remaining windows are an assortment of wood and steel casements. The roof is primarily asphalt shingle with composition roll roofing on the low-sloped roof of the aforementioned rear addition. Modern ogee gutters and rectangular downspouts of white aluminum have failed and were recently removed to effect repairs to the fascias and soffits. The original building was constructed on a crawlspace, which was subsequently excavated to create a dirt-floored cellar under the body of the main building. All additions to the original structure still rest upon crawlspaces.

The Sycamore Store sign is a contributing resource and is widely considered a local landmark. It is a patinated copper, decoratively molded sign box with white glass formed letters. The letters are illuminated from behind with incandescent light bulbs. A few of the letters are broken or missing and the lighting does not function, however the sign is clearly visible in photographs from the mid 1930's and is one of the most character defining elements of the store. As such, it should be designated as a historic resource in the "Object" category.

A nondescript garage, of uncertain origin, is also present on the northeast corner of the property. The wood frame structure is in deteriorated condition and is 20' square with side hinged, track mounted, sliding vehicle doors and board and batten siding. This structure is a non-contributing resource and is currently slated for demolition.

Comprehensive Description:**Exterior:**

1. The west-facing, MacArthur Boulevard "front" of the building displays two gable-ended bays, which represent, from left to right, the fronts of the store space and the living room, respectively. The store gable is punctuated by a large bow window for retail display purposes; with the previously mentioned sycamore store sign mounted directly above it in the gable. The slightly smaller living room gable is bisected by a red-brick chimney with two decorative soldier courses in the main body and two rowlock courses near the cap. Two small 2 over 3-light, casement windows flank the chimney. This composition effectively reinforces the distinction between the public nature of the store and the private character of the adjacent living quarters. A shingled dormer on the front roof is a reminder of Bungalow origins. The two dormer windows are 3 over 2-light casements. To the right of the living room is a porch which has been screened-in and extended towards the front by means of a plywood roof-hood with a scalloped edge and of insubstantial construction.
2. The north-facing Walhonding Road side of the building is plain and utilitarian in appearance; with ornamentation limited to a slightly more than ½-round gable vent at the main roof. A pediment-covered entry stoop is concrete and is approached from both sides by concrete steps. Two 4x4 posts connected by a short section of standard porch railing support the roof pediment. The posts, rail and the door to the store are painted black, which accords with the dark painted windows apparent in early black and white photos of the building. The store entry is located in a projection from the main block of the building, which brings it within inches of the property corner at the street intersection; effectively directing retail traffic to the store entrance. On either side of the entry stoop is a double hung window illuminating the store while another double-hung window towards the rear of the building illuminates the work area at the rear of the store. A pair of double-hung windows and another lone double-hung window open into a bedroom on the second floor; their seemingly random location actually reflecting the centerline of the original bungalow roof and the later bump out of the room towards the rear.
3. The east-facing rear of the building displays a number of unique elements. The service door to the store sits adjacent to a "storm-cellar" entranceway. To counterbalance the weight of the cellar door, a rope with an old

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double-hung window-sash weight is supported by a pulley, allowing one to easily open the heavy door and leave it suspended in an open position. A back door to the residence is located on the side of a rear kitchen and breakfast room addition. All three of these doors are protected from the elements by a second floor "sleeping porch" supported by brackets and accessed by doors from two of the second floor bedrooms. A high window in the middle of the sleeping porch opens into the one bathroom of the building. The bathroom is located at the center rear of the building, between the bedroom mentioned in the previous paragraph and another located above the kitchen/breakfast room addition. The bathroom windows, as well as the windows in the kitchen & breakfast room, are all steel casements, suggesting that at least the bathroom window dates from the time of the rear addition, although the bathroom itself may well date from earlier.

4. The south-facing side of the building is arguably the most residential façade of the building. On this side, there are two bays; one in the first floor breakfast room at the rear corner, and another in the middle of the master bedroom (located at the center of the original bungalow gable). There is also a screened porch, mentioned previously in paragraph #1. This porch is entered from the east (rear) side and served as another entrance to the living quarters, via the living room. Between the breakfast room at the rear and the living room and screened porch at the front, lies a dining room with another set of steel casement windows. All other windows on this side are double-hung. Early photos of the side porch indicate that it was originally an open porch and was subsequently screened-in.

Interior: The store space is located on the left (north) side of the front-to-back demising partition. The store space is one large, open room. It is internally divided into a general retail area (with display cases and shelves for products and produce), a service deli area (with a deli case, a walk-in cooler and a sink), and the counter area (where the original wooden sales counter is still in place). Finishes are basic and utilitarian; with unfinished pine floors & rough plaster walls. The walk-in cooler was built-in place of 2x4 walls covered with cedar tongue and groove vertical paneling.

The remainder of the first floor is given over to the residence; organized from front to back with the living room, the dining room and the kitchen and breakfast rooms at the rear. The painted wood kitchen cabinets appear to date from the 1930s. The front of the living room features a brick fireplace with modest mantel, flanked by two small casement windows. The dining room features a small built-in china cabinet next to the chimney, which serves the furnace in the basement below.

The second floor contains a center hall flanked by two original bedrooms. The bedroom to the left has been expanded to the rear and opens to the rear porch. The bedroom to the right remains the original size but now opens to the rear to a third bedroom, above the kitchen/breakfast room. Behind the center hallway lays the only bathroom. All interior doors and hardware are consistent with late teens and early twenties construction, as are bathroom fixtures.

Conclusion: The Sycamore Store began life as a 1-1/2 story frame Bungalow, with a center dormer and a main roof pitch of 5/12, extending out over a full-width front porch. The original 32'-6" wide x 28'-4" deep structure sat on a shallow brick crawlspace, with no cellar or basement. Photos dating from the late 1920's or early 1930's show the original roofline of the main house still intact; plus the addition of the two front gables and chimney, the side porch, and a shed dormer over the right rear of the original first floor. In the attic, some of the original roof framing is still evident confirming the pitch and configuration of the original roof. The same pictures show the clear absence of the two bays on the South façade and the addition for the current kitchen, breakfast room and rear bedroom. Presumably these were added at the time of the raising of the roof to its current 8/12 pitch. Mr. George Rogers, who worked at the store since 1935 and owned it from 1953 to 2004, recalls that the last additions were made in the late 1930's. This is consistent with the period indicated by the metal casement windows and the kitchen cabinet hardware. The double-hung windows in the areas of the last additions/renovations were most likely relocated from effected locations in the original structure.

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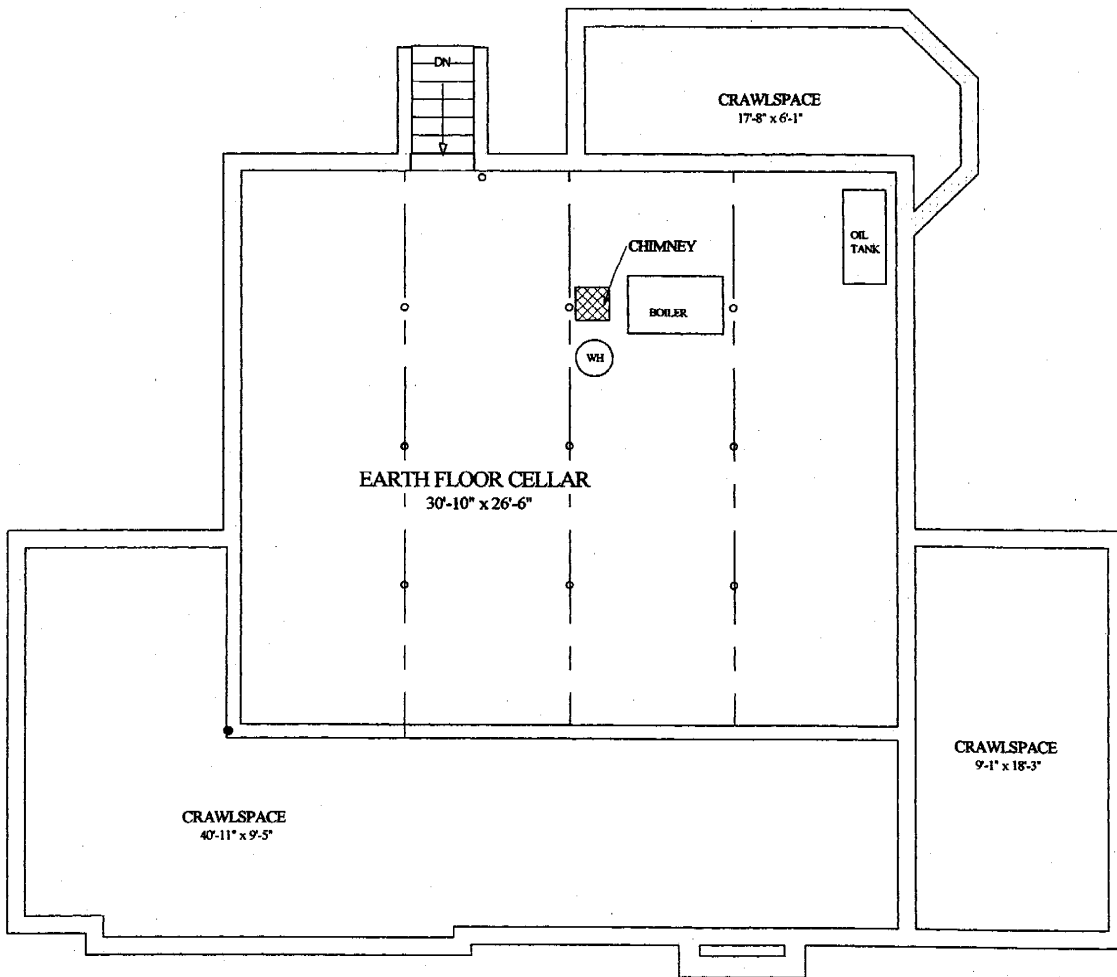


Figure 1. Current cellar/foundation plan. The original crawlspace has been excavated to create a dirt-floored cellar. The shaded crawlspaces are all additions. Drawing by Dean Brenneman & Jason Gagen, copyright 2004 by Brenneman & Pagenstecher, Inc.

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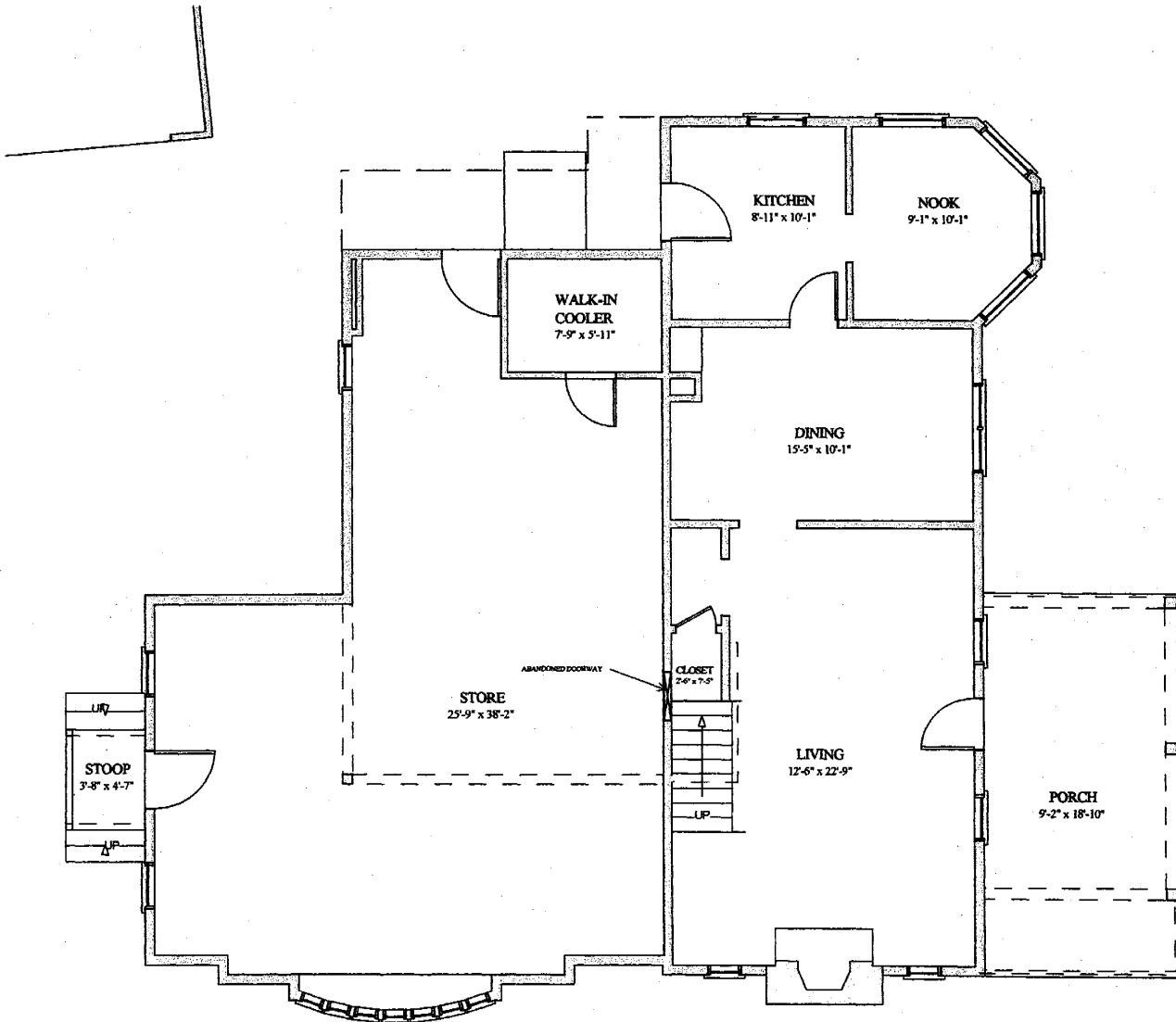


Figure 2. First floor plan. Shaded areas represent additions to the original bungalow. Drawing by Dean Brenneman & Jason Gagen, copyright 2004 by Brenneman & Pagenstecher, Inc.

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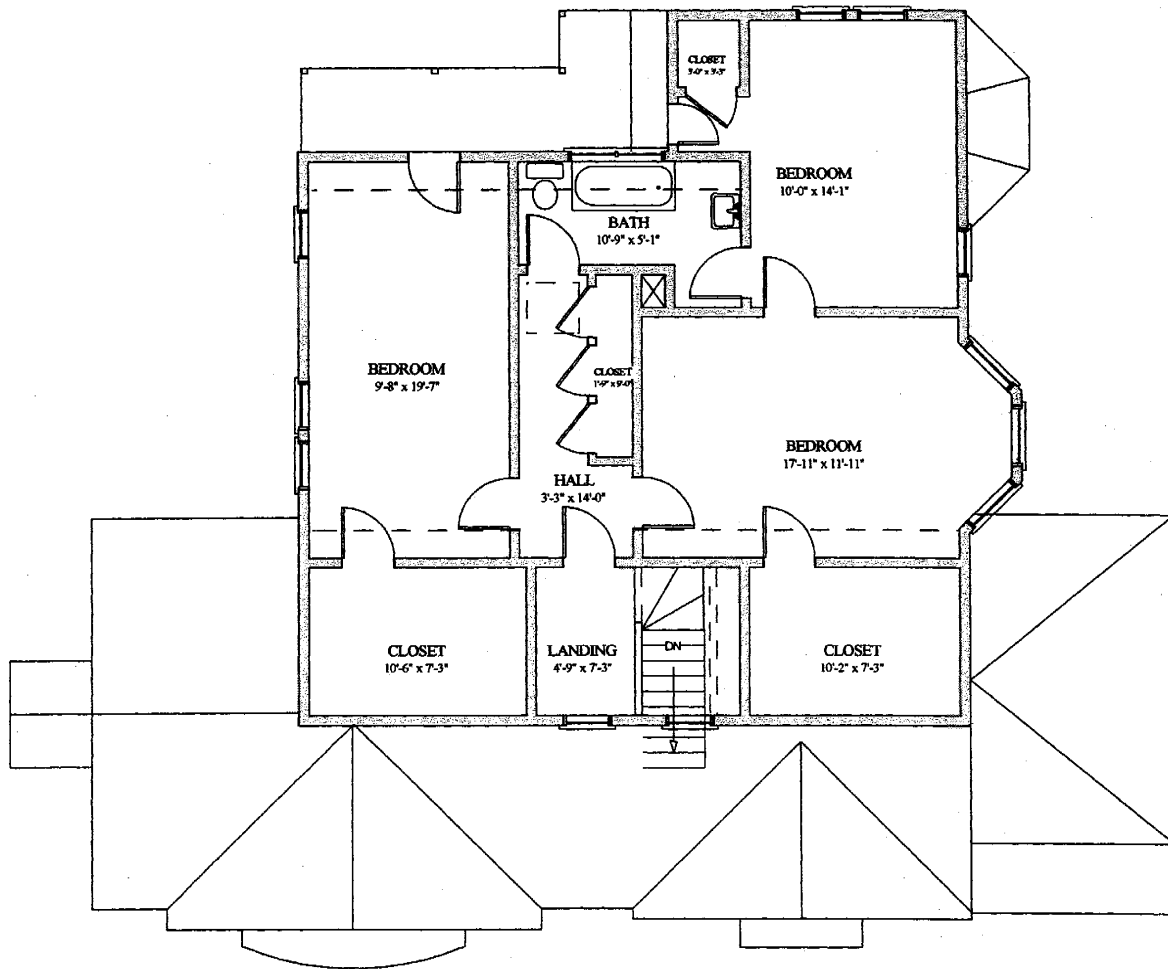


Figure 3. Second floor plan. Shaded areas represent additions to the original bungalow. Drawing by Dean Brenneman & Jason Gagen, copyright 2004 by Brenneman & Pagenstecher, Inc.