

PH0021903

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
COUNTY:
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE
FEB 5 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
East Capitol Street Car Barn

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Metropolitan Car Barn

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1400 East Capitol Street, N.E.

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Congressman
Walter E. Fauntroy, D.C.

STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11 COUNTY: District of Columbia CODE: 001

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) vacant

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
O. Roy Chalk, President, D.C. Transit System, Inc.

STREET AND NUMBER:
1422 New York Avenue, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:
6th and D Streets, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

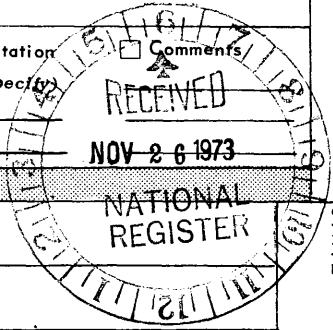
TITLE OF SURVEY: Proposed District of Columbia Additions to the National Register of Historic Places recommended by the Joint Committee on Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: Revised 1973 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
National Capital Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
1325 G Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The East Capitol Street Car Barn is a picturesquely massed, red brick structure which occupies almost the entire block in northeast Washington bounded on the south by East Capitol Street, on the west by 14th Street, on the north by A Street, and on the east by 15th Street. This utilitarian building with Romanesque Revival detailing was constructed in 1896. It has two main sections: 1) the narrow office block at the south which is approximately 433' long and 46' wide; and 2) the car house consisting of three sheds attached to the north side of the office section. Each shed is approximately 80' wide, and two of them extend the entire 433' length of the building. The north shed is approximately 250' long and begins at the west wall of the building. Due to this shed's shorter length, the building has an L-shaped plan and the northeast corner is occupied by an open yard, 80' by 184'.

Structurally the building is not innovative. Its brick bearing walls have a brick and concrete foundation. The office block has a basement, wood floors, and wood framing supporting roofs covered with slate on wood sheathing. Brick walls and cast iron columns carry the heavy wood trusses and steel beams of the monitor roofs of the sheds. The sheds' roofs are covered with corrugated iron sheathing. The sheds are separated by 4" hollow tile walls which ended before the transfer table which was located at the west end of the entire car house. Most of the floors of the sheds were covered with granite block paving.

The office section has a Beaux-Arts plan consisting of a central pavilion connected to end pavilions by long hyphens. The two story end pavilions have high hip roofs and two story, projecting, square corner towers with pyramidal roofs. On the south (main) facade of each end pavilion a semi-elliptical arch joins the corner towers at the second floor level and supports a balcony. The balcony is under the pavilion's overhanging eaves. The one story, gable roofed hyphens each have seven recessed panels separated by pilasters. Each panel has two windows with semi-elliptical arches. Next to the central pavilion each hyphen has one window which is not in a recessed panel. Near the west pavilion a dormer is located on the south slope of the roof of the west hyphen. It is probable that this dormer is a later addition as it is the only major assymmetrical feature of the south facade. The main pavilion is a two-story, rectangular block covered with a gabled mansard roof which is broken by several chimneys. At its south corners are two-story, square towers with pyramidal roofs. Semi-elliptical arches and balconies similar to those of the end pavilions join the corner towers of the central pavilion with its large, three-story central tower with high hip roof. The first story of this central tower has a large round-arched entrance flanked by rectangular windows with transoms. On the second and third stories of the central tower are two groupings of three windows. The second story windows are rectangular and the third story windows have round arches.

(Continued on Form-10-300a)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1896

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated the East Capitol Street Car Barn, at 1400 East Capitol Street, N.E., a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. This large, well preserved, picturesque building designed by Waddy B. Wood is intrinsically linked to the history of Washington's rapid transit system. The building, erected as a car barn, repair shop, and administrative offices for the Metropolitan Railroad Company in 1896 is an architecturally imposing structure representing three important stages in the history of the rapid transit system: (1) the electrification of Washington streetcars and the final replacement of horse-drawn cars in the 1890's; (2) the consolidation of streetcar lines into a functional network in the early 20th century; and (3) the gradual replacement of the streetcar by the bus in the first half of the 20th century.

History

Washington in the late 19th century had a proliferation of street railway lines. Its first streetcar company, the Washington and Georgetown Railroad Company, was chartered in May 1862. The second company, the Metropolitan Railroad Company, was chartered in July 1864, and over thirty years later this company built the East Capitol Street Car Barn. The Metropolitan was founded by A.R. Shepherd and Richard Wallack to operate on F Street and 9th Street. At first it was not an economic success and used one horse "bob-tail" cars to cut expenses. By the 1870's the company was showing a profit and began to expand. Following a common trend among Washington streetcar companies in the late 19th century, the Metropolitan absorbed other companies and so acquired new lines. In 1872 it absorbed the Union Railroad Company and the Boundary and Silver Springs Railway Company. In 1874 it acquired the Connecticut Avenue and Park Railway Company.

In 1889 and 1890 the United States Congress required streetcar companies in downtown Washington to convert from animal traction to some form of mechanical traction. The use of overhead wires was also outlawed. In order to comply with these requirements the streetcar companies experimented with various mechanization schemes. The Metropolitan unsuccessfully tested a storage battery system from 1889 to 1894. In 1894 the company was required by congress to construct an underground conduit system. Such a system allowed electric cars to be operated without wires due to the conduit

(Continued on Form 10-300a)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Assessments, Atlas, Directories, Newspaper Clippings, and Photographs. Washingtoniana Collection. D.C. Public Library.

Boettjer, John W. "Street Railways in the District of Columbia." (M.A. Thesis, George Washington University, January 1963)

D.C. Building Permits. National Archives Record Center. Record Group #351, Accession #65A490. Permit 1240, March 18, 1896.

(Continued on Form 10-300a, Page 2)

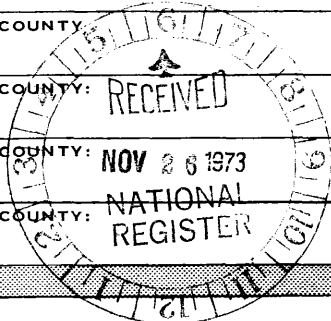
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES							
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	38 ^o	53'	25"	76 ^o	59'	06"
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"						
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"						
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 123,930 square feet; 2.83 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
T. Robins Brown, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: National Capital Planning Commission DATE: May 1973

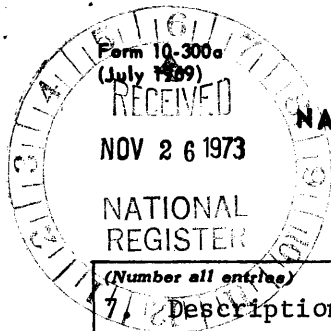
STREET AND NUMBER:
1325 G Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name: <u><i>James G. Smith</i></u></p> <p>Title: <u>Assistant to the Mayor for Housing Programs</u></p> <p>Date: <u>NOV 20 1973</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u><i>A. B. Moxter</i></u> Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date: <u>2/5/74</u></p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u><i>Wm. H. ...</i></u> Keeper of the National Register</p> <p>Date: <u>1-30-74</u></p>
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7. Description - East Capitol Street Car Barn

Hand-select red brick and moulded brick are used in the office block. The office section of the car barn has handsome decorative brickwork. Corbeling on the towers support panels of diaperwork. The first story of the towers has channeling to simulate stonework. The second story of the corner towers of the central pavilion has squares with geometric designs in brick. The cornices of the hyphens are brick. The cornices of the towers are probably sheet metal. Other features include tooled granite sills, lintels, belt course, steps, water table, keystones and chimney caps.

The sheds are common brick and have little applied ornamentation. Windows have semi-elliptical arches and granite sills. There is a granite water table and brick cornice. The monitor roofs of the sheds are expressed in the basilica end form of their side elevations. The taller, central section of each shed contains the rectangular entrance. Above the entrance are three windows under an oculus. Flanking the entrance are two windows. Pilasters separate the facade into clear geometric divisions. Since the basilica end is repeated three times on the west facade, a distinct rhythm is established.

Street car tracks still run through the car sheds. Originally the two far tracks on either side of the car house formed a loop. Other tracks were over pits for maintaining the machinery under the cars. At the west was a transfer table used to move the cars from one track to another. At the east of the shorter north shed was the stable where the repair wagon and its horses were kept.

The exterior of the car barn is remarkably unchanged except that the windows are presently boarded up. The office section has undergone some interior change. The large open spaces of the sheds have been preserved.

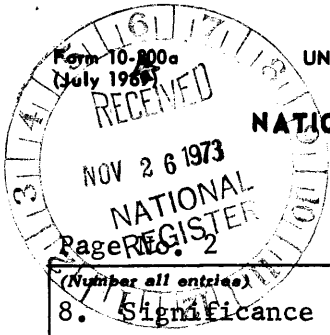
8. Significance

which ran between the rails in the center of the track. Congress also extended the company's line on East Capitol Street around the sides of Lincoln Park to 15th Street, or to the site of their future car barn.

Metropolitan hired A. N. Connett as chief engineer and installed an electric conduit line on 9th Street. This line opened on July 29, 1895, and was a success. Metropolitan quickly converted its other lines to the conduit system, and other street car companies followed suit. By 1899 all downtown lines were operated by electric conduit.

The East Capitol Street Car Barn was built when Metropolitan was converting all of its lines to the conduit system. Its building permit is dated March 18, 1896. Built in an undeveloped section of the city, the car barn occupied all of square 1057 except the northeast corner. The building was designed by Waddy B. Wood, a prominent Washington architect, and A. N. Connett was its

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8. Significance (continued)

engineer. The building, containing administrative offices of the Metropolitan Railroad Company as well as a storage room and repair facilities for cars, was occupied in 1897.

In 1899 an attempt was made to organize Washington's numerous streetcar companies when Washington Traction and Electric Company, a consolidation of ten car lines and two electric power companies, was formed. Metropolitan was one of the two profitable streetcar companies taking part in the consolidation. In June 1901, the Washington Traction and Electric Company was declared bankrupt.

In February 1902, the property of the Washington Traction and Electric Company was taken over by the Washington Railway and Electric Company. This company stabilized the streetcar situation and for the first time Washington had an efficient network of electric railways instead of many competing lines. The offices of the company were in the East Capitol Street Car Barn until 1918 when they moved to 14th and G Streets, N.W. The car barn continued to function as a storage and repair shop for electric cars after the offices moved.

In 1933 the Washington Railway and Electric Company combined with Capital Traction Company. The merged company, Capital Transit Company, operated both streetcars and buses. Gradually the streetcars were replaced by the more flexible buses. In 1956 D.C. Transit received Capital Transit Company's franchise. On January 28, 1962, the last streetcar was operated in Washington. The East Capitol Street Car Barn was used to store buses.

In 1973 D.C. Transit Company was acquired by METRO, Washington's new rapid transit authority. East Capitol Street Car Barn, however, was not acquired by METRO, and it is presently vacant. There is considerable interest in adapting it for use as a recreational facility.

9. Bibliography

D.C. Public Utilities Commission. "Report on Cost of Reproduction: General Office Building and Carhouse of Washington Railway and Electric Company." July 1, 1914.

Greathead, R.N. "Inspection Report: Capital Transit Company East Capitol [sic] Car Barn." Schedule Item No. 3. July 1934, for Marsh and McLennan Insurance, N.Y.

King, LeRoy, Jr. "100 Years of Capital Traction: The Story of Streetcars in the Nation's Capital." Unpublished manuscript in Columbia Historical Society Library.

National Capital Planning Commission. Landmarks File.

(Continued on Form 10-300a, Page No. 3)

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9. Bibliography (continued)

Street Railway Journal. Vol. 11 (January 1895), p. 45; Vol. 11 (August 1895) pp. 530-32.

"The Street Railways of Washington, D.C." Street Railway Review. IX (June 15, 1899), pp. 365-370.

Tindall, Dr. William. "Beginning of Street Railways in the National Capital." Records of the Columbia Historical Society of Washington, D.C. Vol. 21. 1918; pp. 24-86.

White, John H., Jr. "Public Transport in Washington Before the Great Consolidation of 1902." Records of the Columbia Historical Society of Washington, D.C. Vol. 66-68. 1966-68, pp. 216-230.

Withey, H.F. and E.R. Withey. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, 1970, p. 670.

