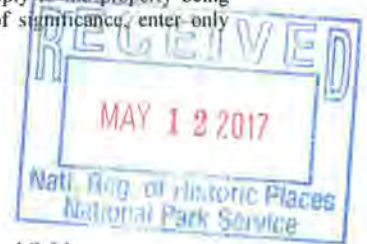


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MP1234

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

Tenleytown in Washington, DC: Architectural and Historic Resources, 1791-1941

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 4112-4118 Chesapeake Street NW

City or town: Washington State: DC County: _____

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

	DAVID MALONEY / DC SHPO	4/26/2017
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:)

Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

6/26/2017
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
Public – Local
Public – State
Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
District
Site
Structure
Object

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th And 20th Century Revivals/ Classical Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Stone, brownstone, brick, and wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street houses at 4112-4114 and 4116-4118 Chesapeake Street NW in Tenleytown are two attached duplexes built in 1909 by master stoneworkers and owners of the land, Frank and Louis Perna. The pair of duplexes are constructed of brick and stone, are faced with a distinctive rough-cut "brownstone," and are covered with gable roofs with wide central dormer windows on each. Each pair features projecting bays on the ends, covered with three-sided conical roofs, and a single-story porch that spans the façade.

The dwellings are located on the south side of the street, on an incline, and stand out among their mostly detached, frame contemporaries in Tenleytown. A north-south alley runs along the east side of the eastern pair of duplexes providing a service lane between Chesapeake and Brandywine streets, while another alley perpendicular to the north-south alley provides access to it and 42nd Street. The alleyway forms the northern border of the lots upon which the houses sit.

Narrative Description

Site

The Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street houses consist of two attached duplexes set on an incline on the south side of Chesapeake Street in Tenleytown and having the addresses 4112-4114 and 4116-4118 Chesapeake Street. A low stone retaining wall separates the front yards of the houses from the sidewalk and further extends from the sidewalk along the east alleyway abutting the foundation of 4112 Chesapeake Street, thereby enclosing a front yard area on the north front and east side wall. On the west side, 4118 Chesapeake is separated from the neighboring houses by a small side yard enclosed by a wooden fence.

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

Exterior Description

The two duplexes are two-story brick and stone structures set upon raised basements and covered with gable roofs. The 1909 building permit for the pair of duplexes lists "brownstone" as the type of stone used for the buildings' facades. However, the stone is more variegated and ranges from reddish brown to almost purplish brown in color and appears to be sandstone from the Seneca Quarry in Montgomery County, Maryland. The stone is a rough-cut ashlar with thin mortar joints and mortar color that blends with the color of the stones. The stones are laid in a quilt-like pattern with random coursings where stones of different sizes may span the height of a single stone, or be paired with other smaller stones to approximate the height of an individual course.

The duplexes are covered with gable roofs whose center gable runs parallel with the street. The roofs, originally slate are now covered with grey asphalt shingles and have recently installed skylights. Large, half-hipped dormers with two window openings with replacement sashes occupy the center fronts of the roof slopes. The projecting end bays are covered with three-sided low-pitched conical roofs that rise above the cornice line of the main gable roof.

The primary façade of the duplexes face north and are divided into three parts with a central bay of two single windows flanked by double-story polygonal projecting bays. Single-story, four-bay porches span the facades. The center two bays hold the entry doors and are reached by a flight of stairs. Stone columns, square-in-plan and set upon broader stone piers, support the half-hipped roofs of the porches. On 4112-4114, the original stone columns have been replaced by tapered columns constructed of a smooth-finished aggregate set upon rough-cut brownstone piers. Wooden railings run between the porch columns to either side of the center entry bays and at the sides of the house and between the duplexes. The porch is reached by a center flight of concrete steps reached from the sidewalk by a leadwalk. The steps, divided on-center by a railing set upon a low foundation, have railings to either side. The porch railings on 4112-4114 are wooden, while those on 4116-4118 are metal.

The porches on both duplexes provide access to two single doors leading to the individual duplexes. The doors are recessed slightly into the stone walls with plain wood trim around the door and single-light transoms above. All four of the doors are wood and glass with the lower wood section featuring two raised panels, and the upper glazed section featuring a single plate glass window. The windows on the first story of the projecting bays, and in all bays of the second stories, are all mostly original 1/1 wood windows punched into the stone walls with rough-cut brownstone lintels and cast stone or limestone sills.

Above the second story windows, a broad wood or metal frieze board with projecting cornice extends across the facades.

The east side elevation of the 4112 Chesapeake extends along the alleyway that runs between Chesapeake and Brandywine streets and is faced with a more heavily rusticated stone. Because Wisconsin Avenue crosses Chesapeake Street at an angle, this wall is quite clearly visible from the heavily-traveled avenue. Rising to a gable end center peak, the wall is composed of rectangular blocks of rusticated sandstone which similarly range in tone. At its attic level, two

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

double-hung, six-over-six light sash windows are symmetrically placed to either side of its midline.

The east wall has three, single, 1/1 windows on the first and second stories and two 6/6 replacement windows in the gable end at the attic level. The windows have rusticated sandstone lintels and smooth-cut limestone or cast stone sills.

The south, rear elevations of the pair of duplexes face the alley with a yard or parking area between the back of the house and alleyway. The walls of south elevation are faced with rough-cut stone of varying sizes and laid much less formally than the facades. The stone also differs in color tone and does not appear to be from the same quarry as the stone on the facades.

The rear elevation is flat and divided into seven bays, with a wide bay on-center with three bays of single 1/1 windows to either side. The wide central bay has a two-bay half-hipped-roof porch across it, with each bay providing access to the separate kitchen areas of the duplexes. Unlike the open front porch, the rear porch is divided by a stone center knee wall, with each section accessed by an individual flight of concrete steps. On the flight's outer side is a short flight of steps to the basement level. The porch at 4118 has been fully enclosed and is now accessed by wooden stairs on its west side. The other porches have wooden sidewalls that wrap partially around their rear sides to screen their rear doorways, beside which are single windows.

The rear slopes of the gable roofs are clad with asphalt shingles and feature central gable dormers with chimneys set behind them. The dormers with two, side-by-side non-historic windows appear to be faced with original slate shingles. Each dormer has a pair of single, non-historic windows in the front wall of the dormer.

The most remarkable difference between the houses' front and rear facades lies in the character of the stone. The rear façade is fashioned of stone which is more heavily rusticated and is much lighter in tone than the facades, with shades ranging from a suffusion of reddish brown to a deep blue-gray. It is laid in broken courses of rectangular blocks and lacks the more ornamental patterns of the front façade with its quilted patterning.

Interior Description

The interiors of the Perna Brothers duplexes offer similar side-passage, room-behind-room layouts, with straight-flight stairs, late Victorian mantels, and wood trim throughout. The entry doors to both pairs of duplexes are in the center bays of the building, so that the stair halls share the center wall between them. The exterior entries open into small vestibules with wood and glass interior doors similar to the exterior ones with wood panels in the lower half and large plate glass glazing in the upper half. The interior doors open into the stair hall with the stair located in front of the door against the interior wall. The stairs are straight-flight, closed stringer stairs with recessed wood panels forming the stringer. Wood newel posts are set upon square bases, feature shafts with recessed panels, and, in the case of 4112 Chesapeake Street, square wood caps topped by decorative Adamesque urns. The stair railings have turned balusters and broad handrails.

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

The stair hall opens through a wide door across from the stair into a front parlor which in all four houses occupies the polygonal bay window. Fireplaces are located on the parlor walls opposite the stair halls. The fireplaces in 4112 and 4114 Chesapeake Street both have Victorian over-mantels; no interior site visit of 4116 and 4118 was undertaken. The fire place at 4112 Chesapeake features a wooden over-mantel with $\frac{3}{4}$ -engaged wooden columns on either side of the firebox and part of a full wooden frame enclosing the firebox and mirror above it. The columns rise to either side of a bowed wooden mantel shelf which separates the firebox opening from the mirror above it. The wooden frame is decorated with applied wooden carvings in floral patterns, while the firebox is closed off by a bronze panel with embossed floral detailing. At 4114, the over-mantel is similar—it is a wooden frame with a bowed wooden shelf separating the firebox from the mirror above it and featuring $\frac{3}{4}$ -engaged columns on the sides. However, there is no applique carving and the column proportions and details differ. Also, the bronze panel is different and features what appears to be a Colonial-era scene of musicians around a table.

The front parlor leads into the rear parlor through a double-wide door opening with pocket doors. The stairs lead to the second-floor bedrooms and attic level. The interiors on all floors retain all of their historic detailing such as narrow laid wood flooring, bulls' eye corner blocks in the molded wood trim around the doors and windows, and molded baseboard.

INTEGRITY

Certain elements of the two duplexes at 4112-4116 and 414-4118 Chesapeake Street have been altered including the substitution of asphalt roof shingles for the original slate roofing; the enclosure of a rear porch; the replacement of historic dormer windows; and the replacement of porch columns at 4112 Chesapeake Street. However, the buildings' overall massing, and character-defining features and materials such as the distinctive stonework, remain intact. The Chesapeake Street houses as built by the Perna Brothers retain their historic identity and associations, along with integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, material, feeling and association.

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Social History

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

Period of Significance

1909

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

William L. Conley (sometimes listed as William L. Couley or William M. Cauley) (architect)
Perna Brothers (builders)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street houses meet National Register Criteria A and C under the Multiple Property Document, *Tenleytown in Washington D.C., Architectural and Cultural Resources, 1791-1941*. The property meets Criterion A in the areas of Community Development and Social History for its associations with the broad pattern of development of Tenleytown from a rural to a semi-urban community, not only in terms of its growing density, but also ethnic and socioeconomic diversity. Constructed in 1909, the houses were built by owners Frank (Francesco) and Louis (Luigi) Perna, local stonemasons who had immigrated to Washington, D.C. from Italy around 1890. Italian stonemasons were much in demand in this city where public buildings, major commercial buildings, churches, bridges and retaining walls were commonly constructed of stone.

The Pernas became highly successful and well-known stone masons in the city. They performed extensive work for the federal government, including buildings at Fort Myer, Fort Washington, and the National Zoo. They may have even repaired the Washington Monument. They erected many of the city's churches, and were especially known for their residential work, both grand mansions and the foundations for more modest homes. Their handiwork can be seen throughout the District today. The Pernas built the Chesapeake Street houses on land owned by them where

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

they operated a stone yard at the center of the block. The houses were intended as a speculative venture to accommodate renters.

The Perna Brothers' duplexes also meet National Register Criterion C with Architecture as the Area of Significance, because they embody the distinctive characteristics of a period and method of construction—cut-stone double houses or duplexes unusual for Washington and especially for Tenleytown—that are representative of the work of master stonemasons. The Chesapeake Street houses are important in that they illustrate the taste as well as the craftsmanship of the Perna Brothers, well-known and locally important stonemasons.

The properties are eligible under the *Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: Architectural and Cultural Resources, 1791-1941* Multiple Property Document under the Associated Property subtype, "Building Clusters" where the Perna Houses were specifically singled out. According to the Multiple Property Document, much of the residential character of Tenleytown is due to the cohesive clustering of buildings that generally evolved from the wholesale development of certain streets and blocks by a single developer/builder/designer team, such as the Pernas. Many speculative builders—both major players and small entrepreneurs—were building in Tenleytown during the first half of the 20th century.

The Period of Significance for the Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street houses is 1909, the year the houses were constructed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The duplex houses at 4112-4114 and 4116-4118 Chesapeake Street NW were built by Frank (Francesco) and Louis (Luigi) Perna, master stoneworkers, local businessmen, and longtime residents of Tenleytown. The houses are built from what appears to be Seneca sandstone, a material quarried in nearby Maryland. The Perna houses reflect Tenleytown's transition from a village-like settlement to a streetcar "suburb within the city," and they represent the introduction of more urban forms of housing to the neighborhood.

The Perna Family of Tenleytown

The first member of the Perna family to settle in the United States was Frank (Francesco) Perna (March 20, 1858 - July 31, 1939). Francesco Perna was born in Belmonti Calabro, a town in Calabria noted for its stone palazzo, churches, and coastal fortifications.ⁱ On October 15, 1889, he arrived in New York on the British steamer Elysia after a thirty-day voyage from Naples by way of Gibraltar.ⁱⁱ Thirty-one-year-old Francesco was an accomplished stone cutter and mason, as well as a widower with a daughter who had remained in Italy.

Family stories recount that Francesco immigrated with his brother Luigi (June 17, 1867 – March 24, 1947). Upon landing in New York, the brothers asked where there was work for stone masons. When told that there were many construction projects underway in Washington, DC. Francesco headed south. Luigi continued to South America.ⁱⁱⁱ

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

Francesco Perna settled in a city with a long tradition of building with stone. In the 18th century before the establishment of the federal city, the crystalline rock known as "Potomac bluestone" or "Sykesville Gneiss," was quarried from bluffs along the Potomac River and Rock Creek. A riverside outcropping just north of the present Lincoln Memorial is thought to have provided the foundation stone for the Capitol and White House, as well as the walls of the Washington City and C&O Canals. Another important source of building stone was the Little Falls Quarry, just beyond the District of Columbia on the Maryland shore of the Potomac. Much of the foundations and backing for the marble facing of the Washington Monument came from this quarry, as did the walls of Georgetown's Old Stone House and many of the original buildings of the National Zoological Park.^{iv}

Potomac bluestone was often faced with blocks of Aquia Creek sandstone from Virginia for a more finished appearance. However, soft and loosely-bonded Aquia stone deteriorated quickly when exposed to the elements. By the late 1840s, it had largely been supplanted by Seneca sandstone, which became popular after James Renwick personally selected it for the Smithsonian Castle's walls. This stone was named for Maryland's Seneca Creek, which flows into the Potomac near the town of Point of Rocks. A mile of riverbank near these rivers' confluence supported several quarries, whose stone traveled roughly twenty miles to Washington on C&O Canal barges. Seneca Creek sandstone is harder and more densely-grained than Aquia stone. Although Seneca stone was sometimes referred to as "brownstone," it was prized for its color tones, which range from red to browns and purples and can emerge more vividly as the stone weathers.^v

Local sandstone remained the material of choice for major public buildings for about twenty years. However, by the Civil War, it had been supplanted by marble from quarries in Cockeysville and the town of Texas, Maryland, which had begun shipping cut slabs by rail in the 1840s.^{vi} However, after 1880, Washington's public buildings used less local stone of all types. Although this shift may be attributed to changing tastes or depletion of quarry beds, improvements in rail transportation had made the finest stone widely available.^{vii} Washington architects like Paul Pelz could select Concord, New Hampshire granite for the Library of Congress' Jefferson Building^{viii} or Ernest Flagg could build the Corcoran Gallery from coarse-grained Cherokee marble from Georgia and pink foundation granite from Milford, Massachusetts (both buildings 1897).^{ix} Bedford limestone from Indiana quickly became the stone of choice for public buildings after it was introduced to Washington in the early twentieth century.

Faced with declining demand and depletion of their best stone, the Seneca quarries were hard hit when an 1889 hurricane washed out the towpath and put the canal out of service for several years. The Seneca Sandstone Company, the largest of the creekside quarries, shipped its last stone in 1901.^x However, Maryland sandstone and bluestone continued to be used for medium and small scale projects, especially when cost was a consideration. The demise of large producers in the Potomac and Rock Creek Valleys helped create a market niche for smaller quarries, some of which were operated by masonry contractors themselves.

Regardless of whether they built with local stone, the 1890s and early 1900s were a prosperous time for Washington builders. Construction boomed in both downtown and such emerging

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

“suburbs within the city” as Bloomingdale, Eckington, Petworth, and Washington Heights. Although the “Panic of 1893” had a chilling effect on construction, building had begun to revive when Coxey’s Army of the Unemployed marched into Washington from the Midwest in April 1894. During the early twentieth century, large-scale stone construction boomed, with such projects as the National Cathedral, Union Station, the original Senate and House Office Buildings, and the District Building all of which were under construction in 1908.

Working first as a stonecutter and then as a contractor, Francesco Perna appears to have prospered quickly despite economic fluctuations. He is thought to have worked on Glen Echo Park, whose “rough native stone” tower and other early buildings were built in 1891-92.^{xi} In December 1893, after anglicizing his name to Frank, he married Mary Alice Dean (1859-1940) in Rockville.^{xii} At this time he may have resided in Maryland, where his daughter Ann was born in 1896. However, it is likely that he lived in Tenleytown by the early-to-mid 1890s, as an 1898 newspaper article refers to him as a “well-known resident” of that neighborhood.^{xiii}

Luigi Perna came to Tenleytown after his brother. Family stories suggest that he may have returned to Italy from South America and then immigrated to the United States. According to passenger records, he arrived in New York on June 24, 1891 aboard the steamer Washington.^{xiv} Luigi, who listed himself as a “bricklayer” on the ship’s manifest, was also a trained stone mason. He settled in Baltimore, where he became a United States citizen on September 24, 1894.^{xv} Although directories list him as a stonecutter residing on Eastern Avenue through 1899, he purchased a lot in Tenleytown’s Square 1732 in May 1896.^{xvi}

Although city directories do not list him as a Tenleytown resident until 1898, Frank Perna also purchased a lot in Square 1732 and received a permit to build a house on it in early 1896.^{xvii} This substantial two-story stone house, which Frank designed and built himself, stood at 4101 Brandywine Street until the 1950s. This site was just steps west of Wisconsin Avenue, a location that provided ready access to the street car as well as a road network that connected to the quarries that lay out River Road in Montgomery County and in the Rock Creek Valley. After building his house, Frank visited Italy in the company of his brother in late 1897 and fell gravely ill with typhoid after his return.^{xviii} Shortly afterwards, he learned that a law barred aliens from owning property in territories of the United States and the District of Columbia. Although Frank was naturalized on February 19, 1898, his status at the time of the lot’s purchase created uncertainty about its title. Resolving these issues required a special act of Congress which exempted him from the law in 1900.^{xix}

In June 1900, a census enumerator found the Perna brothers living a few houses apart in Tenleytown. Luigi, who by then was known as Louis, was listed as a stonemason. He resided with his wife Mary (1878-1945), daughter Katherine (1897-1953), and son Joseph (1899-1973). Frank, a stonecutter, lived with his wife Mary, and their daughters Anne (1896-1979) and Josephine (1898-1918). The household was completed by his daughter Katharine (1884-1909), who had probably returned from Italy with him in 1897.^{xx} Although exact Tenleytown addresses are seldom listed before the early 1910s, it is likely that Frank was residing in the stone house at 4101 Brandywine Street and Louis Perna in a frame house around the corner at 4127 River Road which may have been moved there from a site on Western Avenue.^{xxi}

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

According to family accounts, the brothers worked collaboratively. Frank Perna, who preferred the technical aspects of stone cutting and construction, concentrated on mining and finishing building stone.^{xxii} Louis founded a masonry construction firm. The 1910 Census listed Frank as a stonecutter and Louis as a masonry contractor. Louis' large extended family lived with two families that included stone masons.^{xxiii} Over time, the brothers purchased several large lots in Square 1732 which became their stone yard. By the early 1910s, they had erected nearly one dozen sheds on their properties. Although these lots were subdivided and sold off over the decades, the heart of the stone yard lay at the northeast corner of 42nd and Chesapeake Streets.^{xxiv}

Building the Chesapeake Street Houses

In addition to their commercial contracting, Frank and Louis Perna, both individually or as partners, erected a small number of houses in Tenleytown. These houses appear to have been built as rental properties or speculative ventures, though some housed members of the family at times. The brothers' first project was the houses at 4112-4114 and 4116-4118 Chesapeake, whose construction in 1909 reflected important trends in the development of Tenleytown.

From Village to Suburb

Tenleytown had begun as a crossroads settlement that surrounded a tavern at the junction of River Road and the Tennallytown Road, which is today's Wisconsin Avenue. By 1825, the road to Georgetown had been macadamized and, by 1840, it extended to Rockville. During the mid-nineteenth century, Tenleytown became the nexus of a network of other roads that extended east and west across the District and Maryland. These connections attracted workers in the building trades who traveled to scattered job sites. *Tenleytown in Washington, DC* notes that the 1850 Census showed that Tenleytown's "high number of laborers (84) likely indicates that many residents were ... engaged in the various trades required to build the city and its public buildings."^{xxv}

The Civil War came to Tenleytown with the building of Fort Reno and a nearby settlement of African-American support workers. After the war, "Tennallytown resumed its rural village existence" for the most part.^{xxvi} However, Fort Reno's site became Reno City, a racially-diverse working class community with small frame houses that became the area's first subdivision. Some open lands around Tenleytown were incorporated into large estates. However, nineteenth century Tenleytown's new residents more commonly built farm houses and modest two-story frame dwellings in clusters along the east side of present-day Wisconsin Avenue, Belt Road, and the north and south sides of Grant Road.

Tenleytown became more closely linked to the developed portions of the city in 1890. In that year, the Georgetown and Tennallytown Railway Company began running down Tennallytown Road (called Wisconsin Avenue after 1891) to Georgetown, and the Rock Creek Railway began operating along Connecticut Avenue from Calvert Street to the newly-platted suburb of Chevy Chase. Massachusetts Avenue was also extended from Boundary Street (Florida Avenue) northwest to Wisconsin Avenue.^{xxvii} The greater Tenleytown area's first suburban style developments, including Armsleigh Park (1891), Mount Airy (1892), American University Park (1896-97) and Asbury Park (1898), were platted soon afterwards. However, they grew slowly, in part because municipal services were nearly non-existent and confusion reigned about road

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

maintenance and the routes that city streets would take through the large tracts of undeveloped land. Although the passage of the 1898 Highway Act resolved some of these concerns,^{xxviii} Tenleytown still lacked water mains, sewer service, telephones, and electricity when Frank Perna built his home on Brandywine Street.^{xxix}

Tenleytown in Washington, DC notes that Tenleytown lost its identity as a working-class village distinct from the city as middle-class residents flocked to its platted subdivisions at the end of World War I. However, preliminary signs of urbanization began to appear earlier. Although a local history states that, in the latter days of the 19th century, “few Tennallytown residents were employed by the government or worked in Washington or Georgetown,” in 1905 the neighborhood included numerous building trade workers, who presumably used the streetcar to commute to job sites.^{xxx} Tenleytown gained such essentials of urban life as a firehouse, police substation, schools, sewer lines, and water mains between 1903 and 1908.^{xxxi} Although the wider area’s original and new subdivisions of Colorado Heights (1904), Wisconsin Avenue Park (1908), and National Highlands (1910) were slow to fill in, some clusters of new houses arose during the prewar years. Among these were numerous houses built in the southern blocks of Wisconsin Avenue Park circa 1908-1910.^{xxxii} By 1916, fifty houses had been built in this subdivision, which straddles the informally-delineated modern day neighborhoods of Tenleytown and Friendship Heights.^{xxxiii}

Building the Chesapeake Street Houses

Construction of the Chesapeake houses began in December 1908 with the Pernas’ request to subdivide several larger lots on unpaved Chesapeake Street and to erect structures whose steps would protrude approximately six feet beyond the building line. A building permit issued on January 2, 1909 specified that identical buildings would cover lots 40-43 of Square 1732. They would be two stories tall and built of stone, brick, and wood, with a “brownstone” and brick front façade, a brick, stone, and concrete foundation, and a slate roof with a wooden dormer.^{xxxiv}

Although these houses are variously credited to an architect named Cauley or Cooley, they were probably designed by William L. Conley (1862-1933). A longtime federal government draftsman and architect, Conley designed a few private residences in the 1890s and early 1900s.^{xxxv}

Construction proceeded rapidly. By January 21st, workers were installing stone footings. By February 3rd, masons were building the stone basement walls. By March 1st, first floor joists were being installed and on the 11th, brick partition walls were rising in the basements. Masons were working on the second story at the rear of the house on April 15th. On November 12, 1909, the building inspector certified that all construction was complete.^{xxxvi} In early January 1910, all four units were advertised for rent in the *Washington Herald* and *Washington Post*. By the end of the month, only 4114 Chesapeake appears to have remained vacant.^{xxxvii}

Early Residents

The early inhabitants of the Perna houses reflected the changing character of Tenleytown. They represented the community’s traditional blue collar character but showed the increasing tendency of its residents to work outside the neighborhood. In 1915, 4112 Chesapeake included two units. One unit housed the family of Webster E. Osmond, a skilled helper at the Bureau of Engraving

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

and Printing, seamstress Thea Menefer, streetcar conductor A. F. Moffet, and George Diehl, who was employed by the National Biscuit Company in Eckington. Casper Bein, a German immigrant meat cutter, lived with his wife in the other unit. 4116 Chesapeake was the home of Charles E. Rowe, a lieutenant in the Fire Department, while 4118 was occupied by the family of John Wirtmiller, a plasterer, and lodger John McLucas, a police officer.^{xxxviii}

In 1920, Census Director William Rossiter noted that World War I had accelerated the concentration of people in cities and the employment of women outside the home.^{xxxix} These trends were particularly manifested in Washington after government mobilization agencies imported many employees to aid the war effort. These thousands of new arrivals, many of whom were women, collided head-on with a housing shortage. Newspapers were filled with charges of “price gouging” and “war-profiteering” against real estate firms, who were sometimes accused of evicting long-term tenant families to sub-divide their apartments into exorbitantly-priced war rentals.^{xl}

There was no shortage of imaginative proposals for remedies. Newspapers suggested that the government renovate hundreds of substandard houses, loan money to “women of satisfactory character” to open boarding houses, and convert large residences into rooming houses. In the end, very little was done to mitigate the housing crisis, and newcomers simply grew used to overcrowding. The war’s effects were long-lasting, and, as Rossiter wrote:

So great had been the effort to organize and dispatch abroad huge armies and to concentrate man power arbitrarily at certain points upon the production of supplies and means of transportation that, by January 1, 1920, a year after the armistice, the readjustments necessary to restore the Nation to normal conditions were far from completed.^{xli}

The 1920 Census’ portrait of the Perna duplexes confirmed Rossiter’s assessment. 4112 Chesapeake was subdivided between two families and housed fourteen residents. The Caldwell family included a city watchman, his wife, and their six unmarried children, including daughters who clerked for federal agencies, served as a naval yeoman, and worked as a hospital nurse. The Tracey household included a jeweler, his wife, who worked as a government clerk, their three small children, and a female lodger employed in the office of a senator. Caspar Bein had died in 1917, and 4114 Chesapeake was now home to his widow, her nephew, who was a Washington Post printer, and lodgers who worked as a government electrician and a police officer.

4116 and 4118 Chesapeake were jointly kept as a boarding house by the widowed Mary Wirtmiller. Other residents included her sister, who was a telegraph clerk, and her son, who was a street car motorman, as well as her daughter and son-in-law, who respectively worked as a government clerk and an auto mechanic, and their three small children. Ms. Wirtmiller also had seven lodgers, most of whom were government employees. They included three engineers, a policeman, a chemist, and a lime company foreman. Two African-American women who worked as servants completed the household. In total, 4112-4118 Chesapeake were home to 35 persons.^{xlii}

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

By 1930, the city's housing supply had synchronized with demand. The Chesapeake Street houses had just 17 residents. 4112 Chesapeake remained divided into two apartments, while 4114, 4116 and 4118 Chesapeake were again separate units. The family of Joseph Perna, son of Louis Perna and a partner in the family firm occupied 4116 Chesapeake, where they would reside for decades.

After constructing the Chesapeake Street houses, the Perna family erected other buildings in Tenleytown. In 1922, Frank Perna & Son were credited with the design of a stone and tile house at 4345 Wisconsin Avenue NW. In 1923, Frank Perna, Sr. designed and constructed detached stone houses at 4619 and 4621 42nd Street NW.^{xliii} In 1934, he designed the now-demolished brick and frame houses at 4000 and 4008 Brandywine Street and moved a frame house from the path of a road-widening project to a stone foundation at 4018 Brandywine.^{xliiv} In 1937, Frank Perna, Jr. designed 4026 Brandywine, a small brick and stone building with flats above storefronts. The stone retaining wall between 4018 and 4024 Brandywine was probably built by Frank Perna Sr. or his son.

The Perna family also built a two-story stone building in the alley that connects Chesapeake and Brandywine Streets in Square 1732. Although no permit can be located, it was apparently constructed sometime after 1925 as a garage and office for the stone yard. It has since been converted to a residence.^{xlv}

Master Craftsmen

In the years after they built the Chesapeake Street houses, the Perna brothers' collaboration turned into one of Washington's premier stone construction firms. Because the firm generally worked as subcontractors, its contributions cannot be fully inventoried through sources like building permits. However, its documented accomplishments are still noteworthy. When Louis Perna opened an office at 827 Fourteenth Street NW in 1915,^{xlvi} newspaper advertising promoted the firm's work on foundations:

Nearly every home of recent construction has a stone foundation, and Mr. Perna is responsible for the greater number. He... has constructed a number of buildings entirely of stone and stone foundations for scores of residences, business buildings, and not a few public buildings and churches in every section of the city. Architects are coming more and more to specify stone foundations for any class of building, and for that reason Mr. Perna's business is increasing rapidly.^{xlvii}

However, the Perna brothers' portfolio included many other projects large and small. One linked Embassy Row to rustic Vermont. In 1910, Edward Everett, an Ohio glass magnate known as "The Bottle King," commissioned architect George Oakley Totten to design a new mansion on Sheridan Circle and a palatial summer home near Bennington, Vermont. According to a Perna family story, Everett was so impressed with the Pernas' work on his Washington mansion that he hired them to work on his Vermont manse. In the spring of 1911, Frank Perna is said to have set off from Washington with a mule and cart, hiring worthy craftsman enroute to Vermont. In Bennington, the Perna masons built cabin-like shelters, mined stone, and worked from sun-up to dark six days per week to finish their tasks before winter.^{xlviii}

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

The Perna firm worked extensively for government agencies. Although they do not specify the projects, Congressional serial records indicate that Louis Perna received significant federal payments for both stone and buildings.^{xlix} One family photograph is said to include at least one of the brothers on a scaffold atop the Washington Monument. The family also has what is said to be a chip of the stone from which the monument's capstone was formed. Louis Perna built numerous stone buildings for the federal government, including noncommissioned officers' quarters, bakeries, and other service buildings at both Fort Meyer and Fort Washington.¹ He also built the National Zoological Park's original Small Animal House and Animal Hospital with stone described as "seam-faced granite" from the Pernas' own quarry at Connecticut Avenue and Pierce Mill Road.^{li} In 1916, he built gateways at the Maryland Agricultural College in College Park, Maryland with granite from the foundation of the Administration building that had burned in 1912.^{lii} He also built stone steps and walls at Washington's Western High School.^{liii}

Among the most prominent residences on which the firm worked were the Maryland houses of paint, glass, and oil dealer Hugh Reilly, motion picture projector inventor Thomas Armat, and lawyer Prescott Gatley.^{liv} In 1915, the Perna firm worked on two especially famous houses. In 1914, baker William S. Corby had hired architect Arthur B. Heaton to transform the Chevy Chase former home of Senator Francis Newlands into an Elizabethan Revival manse he named "Ishpiming." Louis Perna built its granite-walled additions and a formal garden with elaborate retaining walls.^{lv} Perna was also the masonry contractor for the Henry Parker Fairbanks House (better known as the home of Woodrow Wilson); designed by Waddy Wood at 2340 S Street NW.^{lvi} Additional projects included the Bradley Hills Country Club and the Chevy Chase Clubhouses.^{lvii} The firm is said to have built the wall around Evelyn Walsh's estate "Friendship" which now encloses McLean Gardens.^{lviii}

Churches were a specialty of the firm. Among the houses of worship whose stonework that the firm constructed or extensively remodeled by 1915 were the Zion German Lutheran Church at 6th and P Streets NW, the United Brethren Church at North Capitol and R Streets, St. John's Church of Bethesda, and St. Albans Church at Wisconsin and Massachusetts Avenues NW, as well as Georgetown Lutheran Church, All Soul's Episcopal Church, and the Chapel of the Transfiguration.^{lix} The stonework of these churches is of a high order of craftsmanship, color composition, and texture, and its style is well-matched to the character of the building and its surroundings.

Designed by Murphy and Olmstead, Georgetown Lutheran Church (1914) stands at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Volta Place NW.^{lx} Most of the Potomac bluestones of the church's Gothic façade are semi-smoothed, but this pattern is occasionally punctuated by rougher-textured accent stones. The stone, which is laid in broken courses, varies dramatically in shades of blue and gray but each stone is dressed in rectangular shapes whose right angles are emphasized by an outline in contrasting white mortar.

Designed by Fred A. Kendall and Delos Smith, All Souls Episcopal Church (1913) overlooks Rock Creek Park from the 2300 block of Cathedral Avenue NW.^{lxi} This English Arts and Crafts style church has walls of colorful rusticated stone set in a random pattern of shapes, size, and

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

colors. The west wall of the nave is built of boulder-like stones that appear extruded from the surrounding mortar.

When the Episcopal Chapel of the Transfiguration was constructed in 1915, its neighborhood near Fourteenth and Gallatin Streets NW was largely open land crossed by unpaved streets. Designed by Arthur L. Burtt, the chapel has a steep gabled roof and a tall bell tower of rectangular bluestone slabs interspersed with larger, rough-textured chunks of granite.^{lxii} A company advertisement noted that it was “built of rubble stone and broken range stone from Port Deposit and bluestone from the Perna quarry.”^{lxiii}

In 1919, Frank Perna retired and turned his share of the business over to his brother.^{lxiv} In 1925, Louis Perna reorganized the firm to include the family's next generation. Louis Perna & Sons included Frank Perna, Jr. (1902-1942) and cousin William Amoroso (1887-1970), as well as Louis's sons Joseph, Frank R. (1901-1951), Albert (1904-1946), and Louis Jr. (1910-1991), all of whom lived in the Tenleytown area.^{lxv} Louis Perna, Sr. remained active in the firm and resided in Tenleytown until his death in 1947.^{lxvi}

Louis Perna & Sons performed general stonework for nearly fifty years. Beginning in the 1920s, the Pernas owned the historic Brookeville Woolen Mill property in Montgomery County, on whose grounds they operated two quarries.^{lxvii} In 1942, the firm entered into an agreement to mine stone at the Stonyhurst Quarry in Montgomery County, which it used extensively in projects during the 1950s and 1960s.^{lxviii} By the end of World War II, its stone yard appears to have expanded to occupy parts of lots 9 and 10 in Square 1732.

During the 1930s, Louis Perna & Sons branched into bridge and highway abutment construction.^{lxix} One of its notable projects is the curving, double-arched bridge that carries Rock Creek Parkway across the creek between P and Q streets. Its aesthetic qualities are documented by the National Park Service's *Historic Resource Study for Rock Creek Parkway* (1990), which reproduces the 1936 *Final Construction Report's* copious photographs of the bridge's stonework with a caption directing the reader's attention to its color contrasts.^{lxx} The *Final Construction Report* notes that:

All stone masonry for the project was placed by Louis Perna and Sons, Incorporated of Washington, DC to whom this part of the contract was sublet by the general contractor. Stone for stone facing and parapets was obtained from the Stonyhurst Quarry near Cabin John, Md. and granite dimensioned masonry was obtained from the H.E. Fletcher Co., West Chelmsford, Mass., where it was cut to the required dimensions before shipment... All operations in connection with the placing of stone masonry, and the cutting of the stones for stone facing and parapets, was done by hand and hand operated hoists. All stone masonry was cut and placed by expert masons, the stones being carefully selected as to size, color, and durability.^{lxxi}

Supervision of the aesthetic elements of this project, as well as the stone work on the nearby Massachusetts Avenue Bridge (1939), is said to have been exercised by the firm's vice-president, Frank R. Perna.^{lxxii}

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

In addition to its highway projects, Louis Perna & Sons continued to perform a full range of stonework through the depression, World War II, and the postwar years.^{lxxiii} In 1934, it contributed masonry work for Christ Lutheran Church, designed by Smith and Edwards at 5101 Sixteenth Street NW^{lxxiv} and stonework to Wilson High School.^{lxxv} In 1937, it reproduced the badly-deteriorated flagstone floor of the District of Columbia World War I Memorial.^{lxxvi}

In 1949, the firm performed a unique and demanding task for the National Bureau of Standards. To determine the properties of different varieties of stone, the Bureau commissioned the building of a test wall which incorporated samples of more than two thousand types of stone from sixteen countries. Constructed under the supervision of William Amoroso, the wall took approximately six times as long to construct as an ordinary wall of the same thirteen by forty-foot dimensions.^{lxxvii}

Frank R. Perna supervised the stone work on buildings at Georgetown University and on priests' and professors' quarters at Catholic University before his early death in 1951.^{lxxviii} At the time he died, the firm had begun setting stone for suburban shopping centers, office complexes, and high-end residences.^{lxxix} In 1963, Louis Perna & Sons' Vincent Benedetto won a Washington Building Conference Award for his flagstone paving installation in the courtyard of the National Wildlife Federation headquarters.^{lxxx} In 1964, the firm installed the stonework for the Little River Inlet Bridge, which carries the northbound George Washington Memorial Parkway between the Arlington Memorial and Theodore Roosevelt bridges.^{lxxxii}

Louis Perna & Sons remained active until the death of Joseph Perna in 1973.

The Chesapeake Street Houses and Their Significance

4112-4114 and 4116-4118 Chesapeake Street are significantly associated with Tenleytown's patterns of settlement as well as the development of its building stock. The houses were built as part of a residential and artisanal complex constructed by Tenleytown residents Frank and Louis Perna over a period of more than twenty years. Although the houses appear to have originally housed rental tenants, Perna family members involved in the family stonework business lived in at least one of the units over several decades. The duplexes were owned by family members for many years. 4112-4114 Chesapeake Street NW remained in the family until ownership passed to an LLC within the last several years. The houses are built of what appears to be Seneca sandstone or a very similar type of stone that was quarried in nearby Montgomery County, Maryland. The houses thus have a uniquely organic relationship with Tenleytown and its development.

At the same time they are associated with continuity, the Chesapeake houses represent a transitional stage in the development of Tenleytown. They were built during an early swell in the wave of growth that would transform neighborhood after World War I. The Pernas' original complex suggests an earlier economic pattern in which master craftsmen and workers dwelled at their workplace. The Chesapeake Street duplexes reflect the more modern developmental form in which working class housing with ready access to rapid transportation allowed workers to commute to a remote place of business. While the duplexes' residents included family members,

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

they were advertised in citywide newspapers and appear to have attracted residents who worked outside the community. As such, they are an early example of housing associated with the transformation of Tenleytown from village to streetcar suburb.

The Chesapeake Street houses were influential in the development of Tenleytown's building stock, with regard to both materials and forms. Tenleytown's early dwellings were frame, while the Chesapeake Street houses were among the earliest masonry houses in the squares included in the Tenleytown Historical Society's 2003 building survey. Frank Perna's 1896 stone house was next door to what the DC Building Permits Database records as Tenleytown's earliest brick houses, constructed by J.A. Kidwell at 4117 and 4119 Brandywine Street in 1893.^{lxxxii} The database presents the Chesapeake Street houses of 1909 as the next masonry dwellings in Tenleytown. Within a few months several other builders erected masonry dwellings, some of which combined stone with brick.^{lxxxiii} Although the majority of Tenleytown's houses were frame into the 1920s, brick predominated thereafter. Tenleytown and surrounding neighborhoods also developed a notable portfolio of stone houses. The Pernas' Chesapeake Street houses are important because they are among the community's early examples of the trend to masonry construction and appear to be the Tenleytown survey area's oldest surviving stone houses.

Attached-unit masonry dwellings like the Chesapeake Street houses represent a more urban building form that the detached frame houses that had characterized early Tenleytown. Nineteenth century Tenleytown included some attached frame houses, including a row constructed in Square 1764W in 1893 which survives in much altered form that includes the relatively recent addition of brick facades.^{lxxxiv} However, such wood construction is not a form associated with more modern urban development, as it would not have been permitted by the fire codes in effect in the more developed sections of the city. The Pernas' duplexes appear to be the earliest urban style masonry attached houses in Tenleytown.^{lxxxv} They were soon followed by others, as exemplified by developers Richard Ough and Son's row of nine brick duplexes at 3901 to 3919 Windom Place NW, erected in 1910. Thus, the Chesapeake Street houses are pioneering examples of building forms significant to Tenleytown's pattern of settlement.

The Chesapeake Street houses are also significant because they represent distinctive examples of the stone house building form that are the work of master craftsmen. The portfolio of work performed by Frank and Louis Perna, whether singly, as collaborators, or through the firm of Louis Perna & Sons includes distinguished structures of many types. Their work is of distinctive quality, which was acknowledged by the selection of their firm to execute many noteworthy commissions of great aesthetic appeal.

The Perna brothers' artistry has revealed the beauty resident in the Chesapeake Street houses' stone. The houses do not provide as large a canvass as a bridge or church, and the multiple varieties and shapes of stone the Pernas used in larger-scale projects would be overpowering here. Rather, the Perna brothers utilized the same aesthetic sense and artistic principles to create a careful composition in sandstone of varying color tones and textures that both unifies the houses as an ensemble and elevates them far above utilitarian buildings.

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

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(Washington, DC; U.S. Government Printing Office, 1906)

Curry, Mary. *Tenleytown: Community Identity and Continuity Through the Quarry and Stone Building Business.* (Research Paper for Urban History Class, American University, 1974).
Includes interview with Anna Perna Tucker.

D.P. Sefton. Interview with Fred Perna, Washington, DC, June 1, 2016.

Jane Waldmann Interview with Frank and Fred Perna, Washington, DC, February 9, 2008

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 acre (9,600 square feet)

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38° 57' 3.03" N | Longitude: 77° 4' 52.9" W |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The pair of duplexes at 4112-4114 and 4116-4118 Chesapeake Street NW occupy the following lots in Square 1732:

- 4112 occupies Lot 43.
- 4114 occupies Lot 42.
- 4116 occupies Lot 41.
- 4118 occupies Lot 40.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries reflect the lot lines of the 1908 subdivision application submitted by the Perna brothers for the construction of the houses.

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: D.P. Sefton
organization: for Tenleytown Historical Society
street & number: 5332 42nd Street NW
city or town: Washington, D.C. state: _____ zip code: 20015
e-mail tenleytownhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com
telephone: _____
date: March 2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
City or Vicinity: Washington, D.C.
Photographer: D.P. Sefton, photos 1-8; Kim Williams, photos 9-14
Date Photographed: June 2016 and March 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

View looking southwest showing north elevation of 4112-4114 Chesapeake Street and east side wall of 4112 Chesapeake Street
1 of 14

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

View looking south showing north elevation of 4116-4118 Chesapeake Street

2 of 14

View looking southwest showing north elevations of 4112-4114 and 4116-4118 and part of east elevation of 4112 Chesapeake Street NW

3 of 14

View looking southwest showing east elevation of 4112 Chesapeake Street NW

4 of 14

View looking skyward showing roofline of eastern projecting bay of 4114 Chesapeake Street NW

5 of 14

View looking southwesterly showing north elevation of 4112-4114 Chesapeake Street NW

6 of 14

View looking north showing south (rear) elevation of 4116-4118 Chesapeake Street NW

7 of 14

View looking north showing south (rear) elevation of 4112-4114 Chesapeake Street NW

8 of 14

View looking north showing entry door at 4112 Chesapeake Street NW

9 of 14

View of interior showing front parlor of 4112 Chesapeake Street NW looking towards stair hall

10 of 14

View of second floor hallway of 4112 Chesapeake Street NW

11 of 14

View of stair hallway at 4112 Chesapeake Street NW

12 of 14

View of stair at 4114 Chesapeake Street NW

13 of 14

View of mantel in front parlor at 4114 Chesapeake Street NW

14 of 14

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

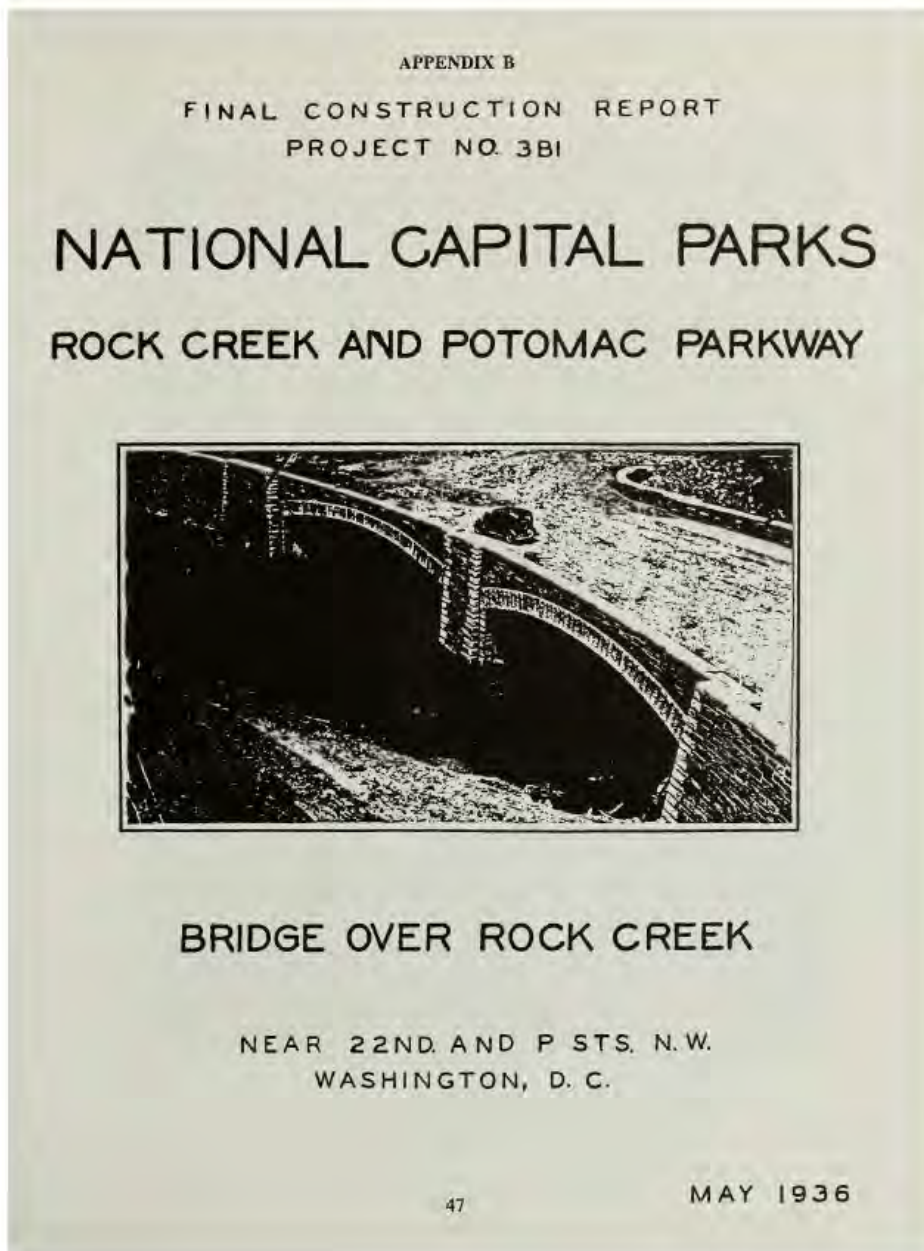
Washington, DC
County and State



Frank Perna House, 4101 Brandywine Street NW, erected 1896, razed circa 1950
(*Courtesy Fred Perna*)

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State



Final Construction Report (1936) cover of Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway showing Perna-built bridge over Rock Creek

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State



Georgetown Lutheran Church (1914), 1500 block Wisconsin Avenue
Stonework by the Louis Perna Company



All Souls Episcopal Church (1913), 2300 Cathedral Avenue NW
Stonework by the Louis Perna Company

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

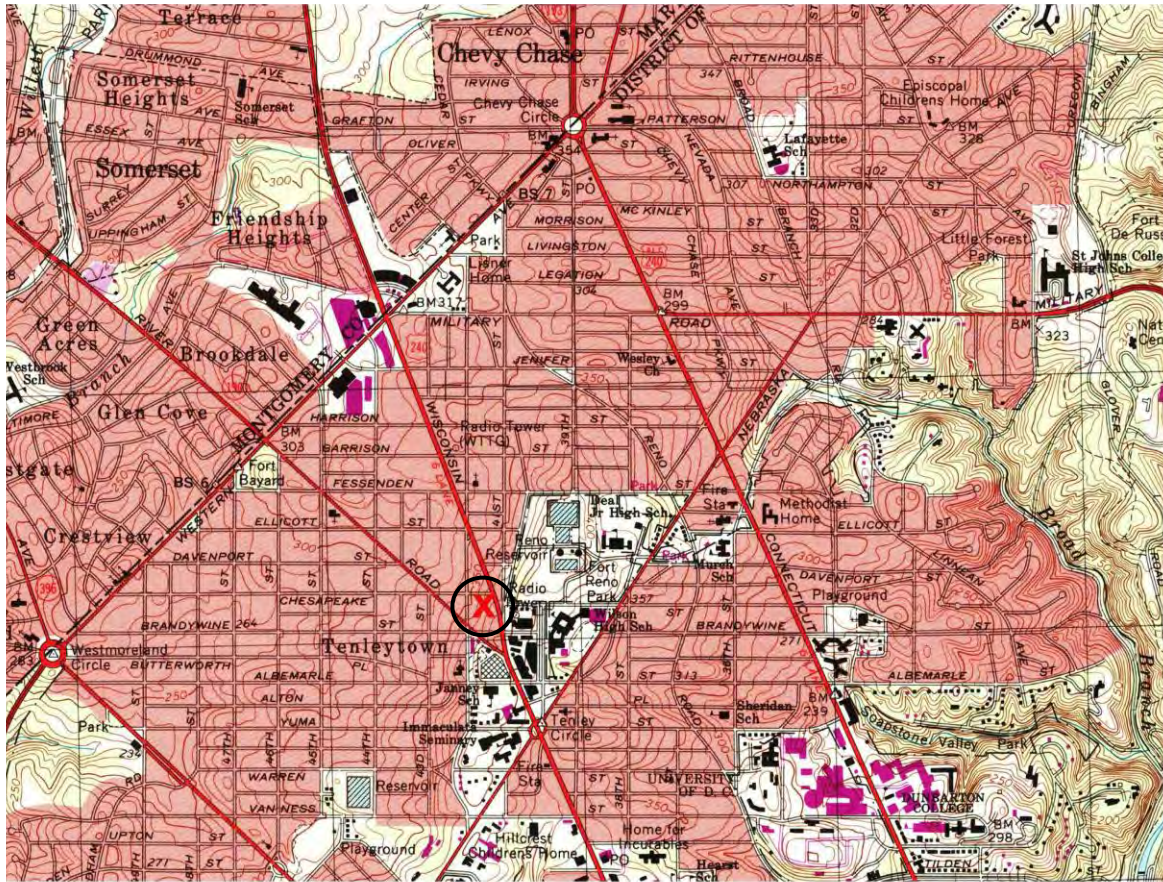
Washington, DC
County and State



Episcopal Chapel of the Transfiguration (1915), 1400 block of Gallatin Street NW
Stonework by the Louis Perna Company

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

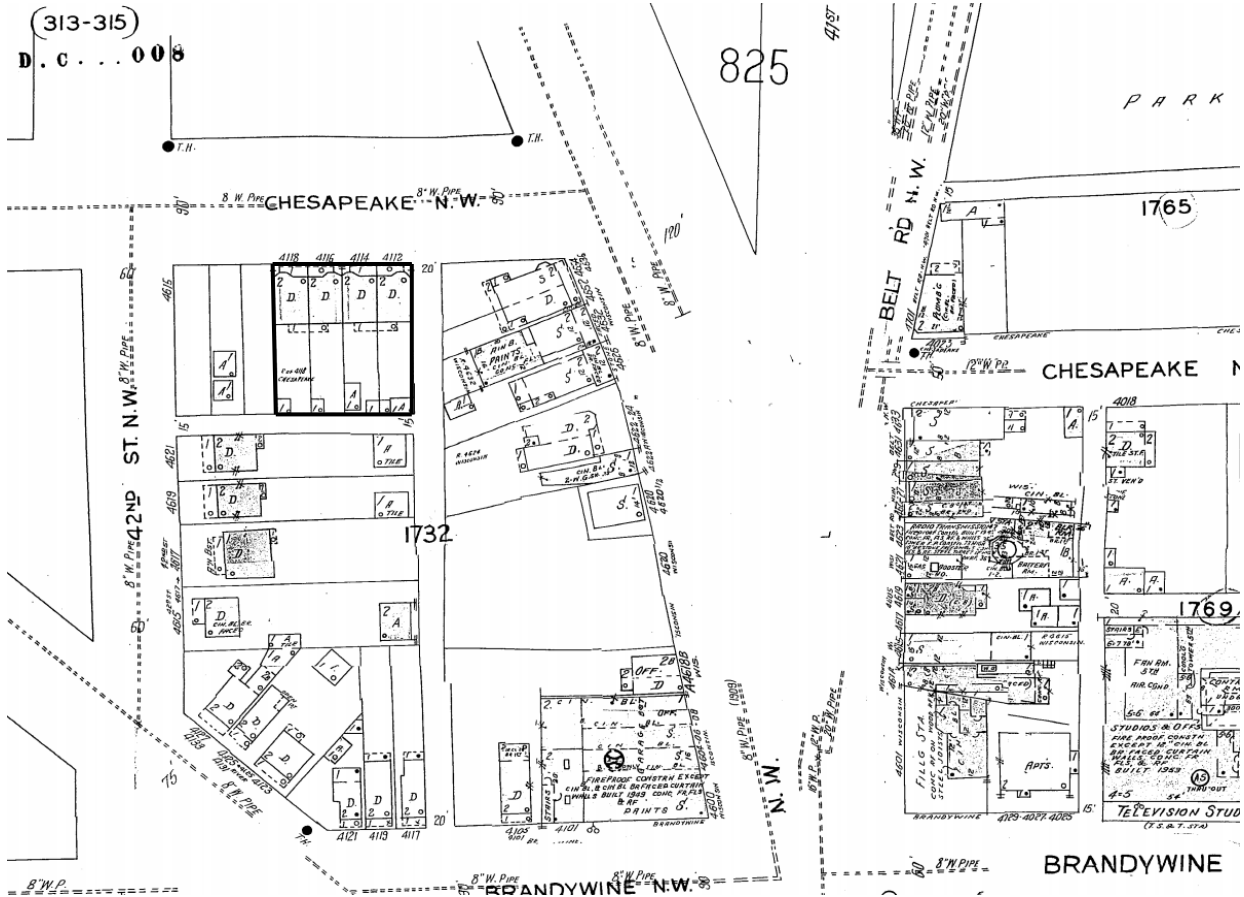
Washington, DC
County and State



Site Map showing location of 4112-4114 and 4116-4118 Chesapeake Street NW
USGS Washington West Quad map

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

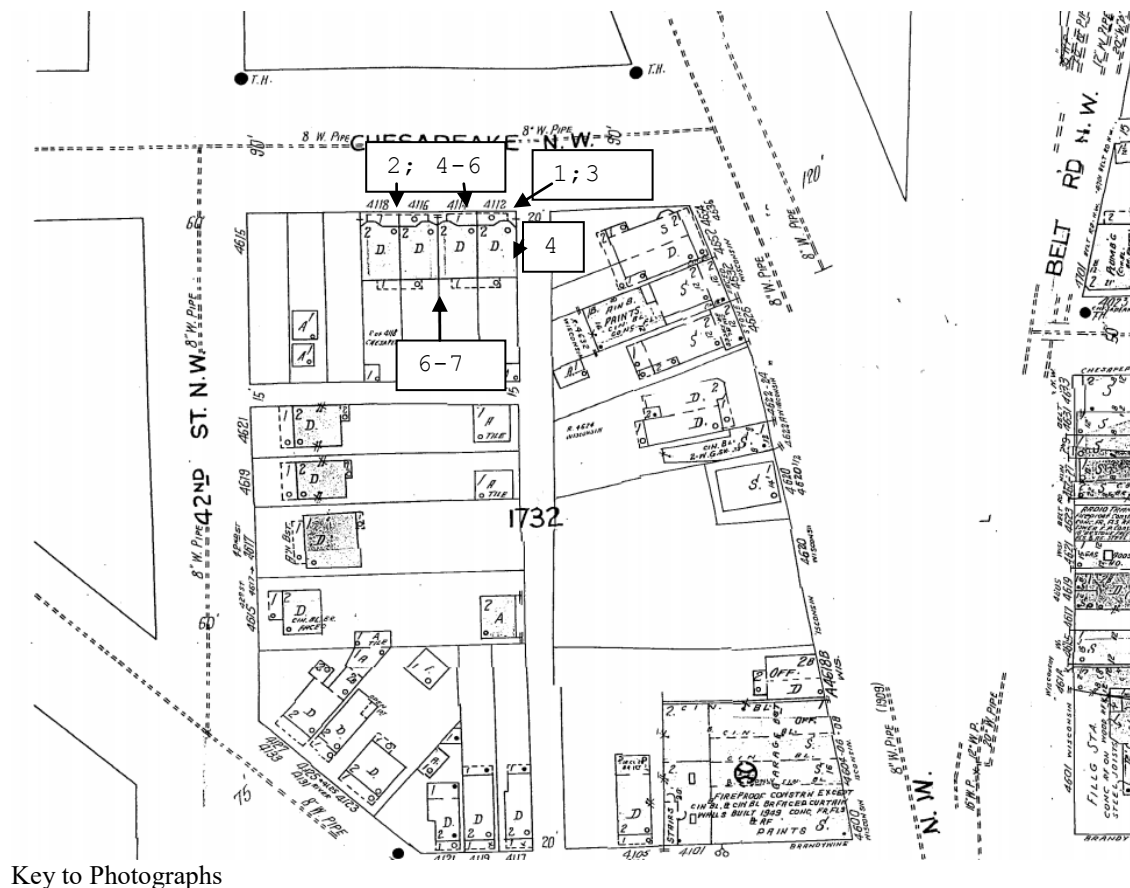
Washington, DC
County and State



Site Plan showing National Register boundaries of Perna Chesapeake Street Houses
(Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Washington, D.C., 1959, Plate 821)

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State



Key to Photographs

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

ⁱ "Belmonti Calabro," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belmonte_Calabro, accessed June 15, 2016.

ⁱⁱ "Francesco Perna: Passport Application Form for Naturalized Citizen #1246 (March 5, 1898)," and "Marine Intelligence: Arrived. Sailed," *New York Times*; Oct 17, 1889; 3.

ⁱⁱⁱ D.P. Sefton. Interview with Fred Perna, Washington, DC, June 1, 2016.

^{iv} "Washington's Building Stone," in United States Geological Survey. *Building Stones of Our Nation's Capital*. (Online version), <http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/stones/stones1.html>, accessed June 9, 2016.

^v <http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/stones/stones4.html>, and *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Seneca Quarry* (M17-52) (1973), 76-77.

^{vi} United States Geological Survey. *Building Stones*, <http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/stones/stones4.html>

^{vii} Janes O'Connor, "Building Stones and Geomorphology of Washington, DC: The Jim O'Connor Memorial Field Trip," 46, online at <http://www.gswweb.org/oconnor-fieldtrip.pdf>, accessed June 2, 2016.

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Washington, DC

Name of Property

County and State

^{viii} O'Connor, 26.

^{ix} O'Connor, 19.

^x O'Connor, 45. Also "Seneca Stonecutting Mill," <http://www.senecatrail.info/stonecutmill.html>, accessed June 9, 2016.

^{xi} *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Glen Echo Amusement Park*, (M35-41) (1981), 8-1.

^{xii} "Rockville," *Washington Post*; Dec 23, 1893; 6.

^{xiii} "Affairs in Georgetown," *Washington Evening Star*, July 23, 1898, 7.

^{xiv} "Luigi Perna: Passport Application Form for a Naturalized Citizen #49448" (December 3, 1901). Also, "Passenger List of the Washington," http://interactive.ancestry.com/7488/NYM237_570-0689?pid=9272879&backurl=http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?_phsrc=3DGuA169%26_phstart=3DsuccessSource%26usePUBJs%3Dtrue%26gss%3Dangs-g%26new%3D1%26rank%3D1%26msT%3D1%26gsfn%3Dluigi%26gsfn_x%3D0%26gsln%3Dperna%26gsln_x%3D0%26msypn_ftp%3Ddistrict%2520of%2520columbia%26MSAV%3D1%26msbdy%3D1867%26cp%3D0%26catbucket%3Drstp%26uidh%3Dabg%26pcat%3DROOT_CATEGORY%26h%3D9272879%26recoff%3D8%25209%26db%3Dnypl%26indiv%3D1%26ml_rpos%3D2&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=GuA169&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true, accessed May 30, 2016.

^{xv} "Luigi Perna: Passport Application Form."

^{xvi} "Real Estate Transfers," *Washington Post*; May 20, 1896; 9.

^{xvii} "Transfers of Real Estate," *Washington Evening Star*, January 23, 1896, 12, and DC Building Permit #1133 (February 18, 1896)

^{xviii} "Affairs in Georgetown," *Washington Evening Star*, December 6, 1897, 11 and "Affairs in Georgetown," *Washington Evening Star*, July 23, 1898, 7.

^{xix} "District Bills in the Senate," *Washington Evening Star*, January 23, 1899, 1.

^{xx} Twelfth Decennial Census (1900), District of Columbia Enumeration District 1, Sheet A14. Spellings of family members' names sometimes differ from other sources.

^{xxi} Mary Curry. *Tenleytown: Community Identity and Continuity through the Quarry and Stone Building Business*, (unpublished paper prepared for American University Urban History Class, May 5, 1974). Ms. Curry interviewed Anna Perna Tucker, daughter of Frank Perna, Sr.

^{xxii} Sefton Interview with Fred Perna

^{xxiii} In 1910, Frank and Louis' sister Antonia (1876-1962) was married to stonemason Anthony Pellegrino. Ben Porto, age 21, may have also married into the Perna family. This and other information on Perna family history and genealogy is drawn extensively from a set of notes prepared by Diane Tamayo of the Tenleytown Historical Society, as well as from the Waldmann Interview with Frank and Fred Perna, the Sefton Interview with Fred Perna, and the Curry Interview with Anna Perna Tucker.

^{xxiv} Sefton Interview with Fred Perna. The construction of sheds in the 1910-1915 period is documented by numerous building permits. The stone yard location is mentioned by Anna Perna Tucker in Curry, 13.

^{xxv} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E5.

^{xxv} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E13.

^{xxv} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E17.

^{xxv} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E17-18.

^{xxvi} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E23.

^{xxvii} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E9.

^{xxviii} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E16.

^{xxix} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E13.

^{xxx} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E17.

^{xxxi} *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E13-14.

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

xxxii *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E17-18.

xxxiii *Ibid.*

xxxiv DC Permit #2434, Jan. 2, 1909.

xxxv "Rites Tomorrow for W.L. Conley: Retired Architect, 70, Had Lived in Washington 40 Years," *Washington Post*; Jan 10, 1933; 4.

xxxvi Construction details are from building inspector's notes and other documents which accompany Permit #2434.

xxxvii Classified Ad, *Washington Post*; Jan 7, 1910;10, Advertisement, *Washington Herald*, January 24, 1910,8 and Classified Ad, *Washington Post*; Jan 30, 1910; R2.

xxxviii *Boyd's City Directory of the District of Columbia for 1915*. (Washington, DC: R.L. Polk Company, 1815), 1427. The directory presents somewhat garbled listings. Moffett and Diehl are listed individually with the address 4112 Chesapeake Street but are omitted from the "cross-cross" directory of names by street address. Diehl is listed as a "General Manager" in the directory, but he appears to have been the George H. Diehl whose 1917 draft card lists him as a bakery salesman living at 4716 Wisconsin Avenue, not the George C. Diehl who chaired the Good Roads Board of the American Automobile Association and soon became the association's president.

xxxix William S. Rossiter. *Increase of Population in the United States, 1910-1920* (Census Monograph 1). (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.1921), 19-20.

xl John Hancock. "\$10,000,000 To Erect Homes for Clerks to Be Asked of Congress," *Washington Post*, January 20, 1918, 4.

xli Rossiter, 15.

lii 1920 Census, District of Columbia Enumeration District 171, Sheets 6A and 6B.

liiii DC Permits #169905, March 23, 1934 and 170661, April 23, 1934.

liiv "DC Construction Shows Decrease," *Washington Evening Star*, April 28, 1934, B2. This house was moved from 3918 Chesapeake Street according to the article.

liv DC Permit #199294, February 5, 1937.

lxvi *Boyd's City Directory of the District of Columbia for 1915*, (Washington, DC: R.L. Polk, 1915), 1008.

lxvii "Solidity in Foundation" (advertisement) in *Washington Herald: "Washington in 1915" Edition*, August 28, 1915, N.P. <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045433/1915-08-28/ed-2/seq-24/>, accessed June 15, 2016.

lxviii Sefton Interview with Fred Perna and Jane Waldmann Interview with Frank and Fred Perna, Washington, DC, February 9, 2008. Although it does not reference Frank Perna or provide detailed information about any other sub-contractor, the construction and stonework of The Orchards is described in *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: The Orchards (Everett Estate)* (2000). A description of Everett's Sheridan Circle House is contained in the National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

lxix *Reports, Documents, and Journals of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives*. Washington, DC; U.S. Government Printing Office, 1906) 42, 44.

¹ "Solidity in Foundation."

^{li} "Solidity in Foundation," "Zoo to Have Hospital," *Washington Herald*, July 27, 1915, 2, and "The Town Crier," *Washington Herald*, July 25, 1915, 12.

^{lii} "New Gateway at College Park," *Washington Post*; Apr 25, 1915; R7.

^{liii} *Report of the District of Columbia Engineer Department (1911)*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1911). 287.

^{liv} "Solidity in Foundation,"

^{lv} Mark Walston. "Call It Ishpiming," *Bethesda Magazine* (May-June 2010), N.P., accessed at <http://www.bethesdamagazine.com/Bethesda-Magazine/May-June-2010/Call-it-Ishpiming/?cparticle=2&siarticle=1>, accessed June 12, 2016.

Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

- lvi *Woodrow Wilson House (Henry Parker Fairbanks House)*, HABS No. DC-133, 11.
- lvii "Solidity in Foundation."
- lviii Sefton Interview with Fred Perna.
- lix "Solidity in Foundation."
- lx DC Building Permit 638, August 8, 1914.
- lxi DC Building Permit 2327, November 21, 1913.
- lxii "Apartment to Cost \$400, 000," *Washington Post*; Mar 7, 1915; 41.
- lxiii "Solidity in Foundation."
- lxiv Sefton Interview with Frank Perna.
- lxv Tamayo, Perna family Notes, Waldmann, Sefton, and Curry interviews with Perna family members.
- lxvi "L.A. Perna, 79, Dies; DC Stone Mason," *Washington Evening Star*, March 24, 1947, A12.
- lxvii *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Brookeville Woolen Mill* (M23-69) (1977), 8-3
- lxviii "Agreement: Stoneyhurst Quarry and Louis Perna & Sons," <http://collections.digitalmaryland.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/mhqu/id/516/rec/1>, accessed June 25, 2016.
- lxix Sefton Interview with Fred Perna.
- lxx *Historic Resource Study*, 47-55.
- lxxi Jere L. Krakow. *Historic Resource Study: Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Suitland Parkway, Baltimore-Washington Parkway*. (Washington, DC: National Parks Service, 1990), 39.
- lxxii "Frank R. Perna, 50, Stone Contractor, Dies," *Washington Evening Star*, September 19, 1951, B1.
- lxxiii In 1932, the firm built the masonry base of the fence around the Parmalee estate at 3029 Klinge Road NW "Home Plans Filed," *Washington Evening Star*, April 2, 1932, B3.
- lxxiv "Two Workmen Hurt," *Washington Evening Star*, June 5, 1931, B1.
- lxxv "Masons' Dispute Aired at Hearing," *Washington Evening Star*, August 31, 1934, B1.
- lxxvi *DC War Memorial: National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory* (2009), 91.
- lxxvii "Scientists Up Against Stone Wall," *Washington Post*; Jan 8, 1950; M15.
- lxxviii "Frank R. Perna, 50, Stone Contractor, Dies,"
- lxxix Among its projects were stonework for the Hecht Company store at Arlington's Parkington Center (1951) and the Chevy Chase Shopping Center (1954), as well as a patio with "beautiful stone walls and terraces of Tennessee Crab orchard stone" for an estate at 3216 East-West Highway in Chevy Chase, Maryland. See Advertisement (1952), *Washington Evening Star*, October 30, 1951, B24. Advertisement, *Washington Evening Star*, September 15, 1952, R5. Advertisement, *Washington Evening Star*, September 19, 1954, A36.
- lxxx "Building Congress Hails Superior 17 Craftsmen," *Washington Post*, Jun 18, 1960; B1.
- lxxxi *Little River Inlet Bridge*, HAER No. DC-39, 2.
- lxxxii *Baist's Real Estate Atlas* of 1919 records these houses as frame. Today they are covered in siding and their construction material cannot be ascertained by examination. See Map Illustration 1.
- lxxxiii One example is the detached house at 4215 River Road, designed by E.D. Ryerson and permitted about 6 months after the Chesapeake Street houses. This large dwelling is essentially a brick house, as only its first story is clad in stone
- lxxxiv *Tenleytown in Washington, DC*, E11.
- lxxxv The next masonry duplex in Tenleytown to receive a permit appears to be Albert Beers' brick double-house at 4120-4122 Fessenden Street which was permitted about six months later.





4116

4118















412











UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses

Multiple Name: Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: 1770-1941, MPS

State & County: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

Date Received:
5/12/2017

Date of Pending List:

Date of 16th Day:

Date of 45th Day:
6/26/2017

Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: MP100001234

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

X Accept

Return

Reject

6/26/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria Accept, national Register Criteria A and C.

Reviewer Patrick Andrus

Patrick Andrus

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218

Date

6/26/2017

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MEMO

DATE: April 28, 2017
TO: Patrick Andrus
FROM: Kim Williams *fw*
RE: Transmittal Letter for Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street houses

Please find enclosed two disks for the Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street Houses National Register nomination.

The enclosed disk, Disk 1 (of 2) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street houses and the enclosed Disk 2 (of 2) contains photographs as per the NR photo requirements of the Perna Brothers' Chesapeake Street houses.