

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

4072

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: Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13

Other names/site number: Harvard Substation

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1001 Harvard Street, NW

City or town: Washington State: D.C. County: N/A

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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

| | |
|---|------------------|
| <u>DAVID MALONEY/DC SHPO</u> | <u>4/30/2019</u> |
| Signature of certifying official/Title: | Date |
| <u>DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE</u> | |
| 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 |

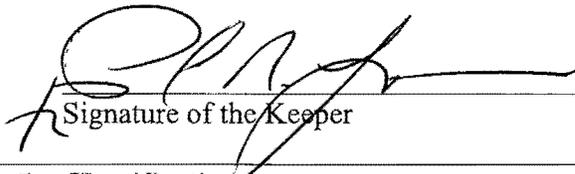
Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
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:) _____


Signature of the Keeper

6/3/2019
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

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property _____

Washington, D.C.
County and State _____

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>1</u> | _____ | buildings |
| _____ | _____ | sites |
| _____ | _____ | structures |
| _____ | _____ | objects |
| <u>1</u> | _____ | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/Energy Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/Energy Facility

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Craftsman

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Concrete, Slate (roof)

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 Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13 is part of a one-half-acre energy distribution site located on the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue and Harvard Street, NW in the Columbia Heights neighborhood in northwest Washington, D.C. The site contains the original, one-story, Craftsman-inspired brick substation building constructed in 1907 and facing Harvard Street, along with later additions to the side and rear. The original building is a red brick structure covered with a hipped roof with exposed rafters. The utility building is characterized architecturally by its low-lying roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters, concrete corner quoins, and window lintels with keystones.

The site also contains one- and two-story additions to the original substation, constructed in 1920, 1921, 1929, 1937, and 1944. Although within the boundaries of the property, the additions fall outside of the period of significance.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Narrative Description

General Description:

Site

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13 is located at the northwest corner of Harvard Street and Sherman Avenue, NW in the Columbia Heights neighborhood in northwest D.C. The rectangular-shaped building is sited with its short end elevation facing Sherman Avenue and its long side extending along Harvard Street. The freestanding building, including the original 1907 structure and its additions, fits seamlessly along a commercial block of Sherman Avenue in the otherwise, residential rowhouse neighborhood. It is separated from a three-story apartment building on the west by a narrow passage, and by an open lot on the north. This open lot was occupied until recently by an apartment building.

Rectangular in plan, Substation No. 13 is a one-story building with brick walls laid in American bond set above a concrete foundation. The building is covered with a low-lying hipped roof sheathed with slate shingles. The roof features wide and overhanging eaves with decorative exposed rafter ends. The east and west slopes of the roof each have a single hipped dormer window located on-center of the slope. Large multi-paned metal sash windows are located on the exposed east and south elevations. Later additions abut the north and west walls of the original building obscuring the historic conditions.

Exterior Description

The east elevation of the original 1907 building is two bays wide with each bay defined by a triple set of 15-light metal sash windows, covered with metal grilles, set upon a continuous concrete sill that extends around the building. A brick wall fills the space between the concrete foundation and this continuous window sill, while concrete lintels with keystones cap the windows above. The corners of the building are buttressed by concrete quoining. The exposed rafter ends of the hipped roof extend well beyond the face of the building and below the cornice line giving the building its Craftsman appearance. These exposed rafters ends are decoratively carved. Single, hipped dormers with a 10-light fixed window is located on-center of the east and west façades, although the west end one is obscured by a later addition.

The south elevation of the 1907 building extends six bays long along the north side of Harvard Street NW. Each bay consists of a triple set of 15-light metal sash covered with metal grilles. The bay to the west of center was originally an entrance that has since been converted into a window and the lower level infilled with brick to match the other windows. As on the east elevation, a continuous concrete beltcourse serves as a sill for the window openings. Each individual window is capped by a concrete lintel with a central keystone and end blocks. The corners of the building feature concrete quoining.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Several additions extend the 1907 building to the west: a one-story, two-bay addition constructed in 1929 abuts the west end of the 1907 substation, and a taller, two-story addition, built in 1929 abuts the 1920 addition. Abutting this 1929 addition is a small brick addition from 1944. The 1920 and 1929 additions feature brick walls with large 24-light metal sash windows with metal grilles. The two-story 1929 section features a stepped parapet roof and tile spandrel panels between the first and second stories. A single metal door is located in the 1920 addition.

A two-story, red brick addition, built in phases, abuts the north end of the building. The first story was built in 1921 and the second story was added in 1937. A large opening with a metal grille fills the first story while two large openings are located above it in the second. Another addition, set well back from Sherman Avenue, and constructed in 1944 abuts the 1921/1937 addition towards the rear of the lot. This addition is capped by four large ventilating towers is unadorned and contains no openings though large metal panels fill the first and last bays of the brick elevation.

The west elevation consists of the west elevation of the 1929 addition. This elevation is unadorned and contains no bays.

Interior Description

The interior floor plans generally consist of a large, open space in which electrical equipment is placed for the transforming and distribution of electricity to the surrounding community. The building holds equipment only and is not accessible.

INTEGRITY

Pepco Substation 13 has been in continuous use as a sub-station since its construction in 1907 and has been enlarged over time. Despite later additions from the 1920s through the 1940s, the original 1907 building is still clearly legible and is distinguished by its historic massing, materials, design and craftsmanship. The building is located on the same site and still occupies the same setting—that is a substation in a residential neighborhood. The building retains its integrity of location, setting, feeling and association.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

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

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE
ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1907

Significant Dates

1907

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Frederick B. Pyle (architect)

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

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 Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13, constructed in 1907, is the first purpose-built electrical substation built outside the boundaries of the original city of Washington. While its construction was opposed by residents in the neighborhood, the substation was necessary to provide electricity to the growing population in the northwest sector of the District. The 1907 building was designed by Washington architect Frederick B. Pyle and was deliberately intended to fit aesthetically into the residential streetscape.

The Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13 meets National Register of Historic Places Criteria A and C at the local level of significance with Architecture and Engineering as the Areas of Significance. The property meets Criterion A as it is associated with the urban growth patterns of the District as it expanded beyond its original city limits at today's Florida Avenue. Along with this residential growth came a need to provide reliable electric service to the residents, in this case to those moving into the Columbia Heights, Mount Pleasant, Park View, and other near northwest neighborhoods. In 1902 Pepco became the sole electric utility company providing electrical service to D.C. and nearby suburbs in Maryland and Virginia. Beginning with the centralization of the generation of electric power at the Benning Road power plant in late 1906, Pepco substations became the critical link in distributing electricity for the various classes of services for which it was needed throughout the city. Substation No. 13, constructed in 1907, was the first purpose-built substation constructed outside the original city of Washington with the sole purpose of supplying electricity to residential customers. This is markedly different than earlier suburban substations which were collocated with street car carbarns with the primary goal of servicing streetlights.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13 also meets Criterion C as an outstanding example of an electric substation as designed by architect Frederick B. Pyle. The domestic scale and design of Pepco Substation No. 13 is particularly notable. It is the first instance of an effort by Pepco to design its substations in a manner that it considered to be architecturally compatible with the buildings in the surrounding community. This philosophy of design resulted from initial community opposition to the project. Pyle's work for Pepco included designs for four substations dating to 1906 and 1907 as part of Pepco's centralization of power generation and distribution made possible with the construction of the Benning Power Plant. Of these design's, Substation No. 13 is a unique example of Pyle's work, being his only substation to be treated architecturally – include architectural ornamentation – rather than as an unadorned building to house electrical equipment.

The period of significance is 1907, the year the building was constructed.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

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

Potomac Electric Power Company's Substation No. 13, located at 1001 Harvard Street, NW, on the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue and Harvard Street, NW, was built in 1907 as part of Pepco's construction campaign which replaced and centralized electrical power generation in Washington, D.C., at a new power plant on Benning Road. The centralization of power generation required a network of power substations to distribute electricity throughout Washington, including the substation at Harvard Street. Community opposition to building the Harvard Street substation resulted in the construction of a building more architecturally compatible with the surrounding residential area and helped established Pepco's long-standing commitment to design substations that were architecturally compatible with the neighborhoods in which they were constructed.

Background History of the Potomac Electric Power Company

The Potomac Electric Company organized in 1891 with capital stock of \$25,000 and a generating station located on the Virginia side of Chain Bridge. This company went into receivership on July 17, 1893. A reorganization brought about the Potomac Light and Power Company under the same management. Another reorganization brought about the Potomac Light and Power of Virginia. The company put in a bid for street lights in competition with the United States Electric Light Company, which was accepted by the District Commissioners. The United States Electric Light Company took the case to court leading to several years of bitter competition between the two companies.

By 1898, the Potomac Company secured contracts for power to the independent railway lines in the District of Columbia and installed feeders to Brightwood, the Washington Street substation, Eckington and Riverdale, and Montrose Junction on the Tennallytown Rockville Line. This same year, the United States Electric Lighting Company erected a new plan at 14th and B streets, NW.

The following year, in 1899, the United States Electric Light Company and the Potomac Power and Light Company joined forces in a more cooperative arrangement, and when the Washington Railway and Electric Company (WRECo) was formed in 1902, it combined the several independent railways in Washington into one unified system and formally combined the two lighting companies as a subsidiary of WRECo known as the Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco).

One of the earliest initiatives of Pepco was to establish a new central power plant. Of the possible locations near Washington, the site at Benning on the Anacostia River was ideally located for the generation of electrical energy. Work began at Benning in April 1906 with operations beginning by December of the same year. By 1907, it was possible for Pepco to shut down all of the older generating stations with the exception of the Edison equipment at 14h and B streets. The centralization of electric generation in Washington gave rise to the need for a

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

power substation distribution system to supply the various types of energy needed throughout the city.

During the fifteen-year period from 1907 to 1922, there was no notable change to Pepco's method of generating or electric distribution system. Following 1922, demand for electrical power experienced a rapid increase leading Pepco to install generators capable of supplying more power and the addition of new substations.

During the 1930s, Pepco's headquarters, generating facilities, and distributing operations at 14th and B streets were taken over by the federal government as it began to develop the Federal Triangle. This led to the construction in 1930 of a new headquarters building at 999 E Street, NW, a new service station at 10th and Florida Avenue, NW, and a new substation on Champlain Street. The decade also witnessed the construction of the Buzzard Point Generating Station which began in October 1932 and was completed within the year. During World War II, Buzzard Point would become Pepco's base load generating plant.

Today Pepco continues as Washington's sole supplier of electricity, though the company no longer generates electricity. On June 7, 2000, Pepco sold generating plants with a total capacity of 5,154 megawatts to the Mirant Corporation, including four generating stations located in Maryland and Virginia. From this time, Pepco has operated primarily as an energy supplier distributing electricity through its system of substations.

Substations of the Potomac Electric Power Company

The addition of the 6600 volt, 25 cycle, three phase turbo-generators in Pepco's Station B (14th and B streets, NW) prior to 1905 is considered the beginning of electric substations as they are known today – this being that high tension energy was delivered to the substation by means of high tension feeders from the generating station. Upon delivery, the energy is transformed, converted, and redelivered for the various classes of services for which it is needed.

With the completion of the Benning power generating plant in December 1906, Pepco shut down its older generating stations as it could rely almost exclusively on substations to form the connecting link between the generating station and the consumer. It was impractical to generate all classes of energy at one location to reach all consumers.¹

Four new substations were immediately added to the system with the opening of Bennings – nos. 2, 10, 11, and 12. The new substation no. 2 adjoined the old substation no. 2 at 450 Washington Street, NW. Substation no. 10 was a purpose-built brick structure designed by architect Frederick B. Pyle and located in the alley between H, I, 14th, and 15th streets, NW. Substation no. 11 was located in a remodeled office building abutting the streetcar carbarn at 13th and D streets, NE, and substation no. 12 was located in the old steam power station at 33rd and K streets, NW, in Georgetown.

¹ Santamaria, Cesar, *History and Evolution of the PHI Electric System*, p. 6.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

In 1907, Pepco planned construction of its first substation—substation no. 13—outside of the city’s central core to accommodate a growing population in the area. The proposal was met with opposition from the surrounding Columbia Heights community which attempted to prevent its construction through court action. After a two-month delay, construction of Substation no. 13 proceeded, taking into consideration the concerns of the community.

After 1907, Pepco not only designed and built substations to conform with the zoning laws in the section of the city they occupied, but also adopted a philosophy of designing the buildings to harmonize, as much as possible, with the types of buildings prevailing in the surrounding neighborhood. A review of known Pepco substation design from 1899 to present reveals that Pepco’s philosophy of creating substations that architecturally harmonize with their surroundings has evolved over time.

Pepco’s substation design in Washington D.C. falls into four major categories that correspond to the era in which they were constructed. These are:

- Early substations (built prior to 1928): The substations are largely utilitarian or industrial in character. Several were built as extensions of streetcar carbarn facilities, as alley structures, or in preexisting buildings converted for substation use. Two notable substations from this era are substation no. 13, located at Harvard Street and Sherman Avenue (1907), and substation no. 8 (1927), located at 2415 Martin Luther King Jr., Avenue. Substations nos. 13 and 8 exemplify Pepco’s best efforts to harmonize substation design with their surrounding communities during this era.
- Substations constructed from 1929 to 1939: The design of substations during this period was dominated by architect Arthur B. Heaton, who not only elevated the architecture of Pepco substations but created an Art Deco aesthetic that unified both the service buildings of Pepco and its parent company, the Washington Railway and Electric Company. Heaton was concerned with promulgating high standards of design beyond the monumental core of Washington and his work was recognized on several occasions by the Washington Board of Trade for elevating architectural design in private development.
- Substations constructed from 1939 to 1960: During this era, Pepco architects designed substations that were camouflaged with their surroundings. Beginning in September 1939, small substations constructed in Washington neighborhoods were designed to resemble Colonial revival residential properties or, when on a commercial corridor, as a storefront. While this policy led to some of Pepco’s most architecturally harmonious designs in residential sections of Washington, they also had the dual purpose of decreasing public awareness of substation locations which, in turn, helped address concerns related to keeping Washington’s electrical system safe and secure in the years leading up to and during World War II and afterward during the Cold War era.
- The Modern Era: Contemporary substation design follows no singular design aesthetic, although Pepco continues to consider location, the character of the neighboring buildings, and the technical requirements of delivering reliable electrical service as they design new substation buildings. Today, substations tend to be larger than substations of earlier eras, and a number of unique design solutions have been used to continue the practice of

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

employing creativity to both achieve buildings that harmonize with their surroundings and a low level of public awareness.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13 was designed by Frederick B. Pyle and constructed in 1907 as part of Pepco's construction campaign which replaced and centralized electrical power generation in Washington, D.C., at a new power plant on Benning Road. The centralization of power generation required a network of power substations to distribute electricity throughout Washington, including the substation at Harvard Street. Pepco Substation No. 13 is closely associated with the growing need to provide reliable electric service to the residents in the District of Columbia, particularly those who resided in the neighborhoods of Columbia Heights, Mount Pleasant, Park View, and other growing population centers in Washington's near northwest during the first half of the 20th century. The rise of residential demand for electricity, beginning with electric lights and increasing with electrical appliances and other goods resulted in a series of additions to Substation No. 13 to increase the substations capacity and meet residential demand. These additions include a one-story addition to the west of the original building in 1920, a one-story addition to the north of the original substation in 1921, a two-story addition to the west of the substation in 1929, a second story addition on the north of the substation in 1937, and a one and one-half story addition to the north and west in 1944.

The earliest known public announcement of Pepco's intent to construct a new substation at Sherman Avenue and Harvard Street occurred in the *Washington Times* on July 28, 1907.² Concerned residents immediately filed a protest with the District Commissioners objecting to the construction of the substation. According to the protest, the residents and property owners considered the substation a nuisance and expressed concern that it would ruin property values in the immediate vicinity which, until that time was primarily residential in nature. Despite the community protest, the District Commissioners decided to approve the permit for the Potomac Electric Power Company's substation on July 30, 1907. Supporting this position, Pepco stated that it had received the necessary two-thirds consent of the property owners holding property within ninety feet of the proposed substation site.³

Residents in opposition to the substation, led by attorney A.T. Stewart, appeared before the District Commissioners on August 5, 1907, and argued that the Commissioners did not have the authority to grant the permit due to a section in the regulations that prohibited the erection of such a building on a square occupied exclusively for residential purposes.⁴ Mr. Stewart also argued that the necessary consent of two-thirds of the property owners within 90 feet of the proposed building had been secured by subdividing the substation site and deeding a portion of it to Pepco Secretary Whitehead, who naturally gave his consent to erect the substation.⁵ In response, Pepco vice president George H. Harries argued that the regulation was not intended to

² "New Electric Substation at Sherman Street, N.W." *The Washington Times*, July 28, 1907, p. 7.

³ "Residents' Protest in Vain." *The Washington Post*, August 1, 1907, p. 14.

⁴ "Oppose Substation." *The Evening Star*, August 5, 1907, p. 8.

⁵ "Hearing on Power Plant." *The Washington Post*, August 6, 1907, p. 14.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

apply in cases where there were only two dwellings on the square.⁶ At the time the permit was issued, the entire square was unimproved with the exception of two rowhouses located on Sherman Avenue to the north of the proposed substation.

A permit for the substation was filed on August 23, 1907, and issued the following day, for a substation designed by architect Frederick B. Pyle at an estimated cost of \$6,500. The design was more sympathetic to the surrounding community and more architecturally significant than earlier substations designed by Pyle, presumably in partial response to community opposition.

Resulting from the August protest, the District Supreme Court determined on September 6, 1907, that Pepco could proceed with their plans, but directed that the parties opposed to the substation had 30 days to complete the taking of proof to the charges contained in their bill of complaint. Pepco continued to deny the allegations and declared that the neighborhood was rapidly changing, with new stores and business uses occurring in the community even beyond the location of the substation. Furthermore, Pepco stated that there was no merit to the concern that the substation would be a noise nuisance and collected affidavits from residents living near their substations at Washington Street and 13th & D streets supporting that view.⁷ In the end, the permit was upheld and the substation was constructed.

While community opposition eventually ceased, residents remained distrustful of the substation in its earliest years. On the morning of June 18, 1908, the *Washington Times* reported that the operator at Substation No. 13 had been electrocuted. A passerby, noticing a lack of activity, looked in the window of the substation to find operator J.H. Davidson with his head buried in his arms. Without attempting to enter the building, the man called Pepco's main office and reported that the operator had been electrocuted. Power was quickly cut off to the substation, disabling the Brightwood line. Pepco Superintendent Folsom, in charge of substations, hurried to the substation to investigate only to find Mr. Davidson at the door ready to greet them. Davidson had apparently been resting and, when the power was cut off, thought there was trouble at some other point in the system.⁸

Substation No. 13 is a superior example of a Pepco substation designed during the period before 1928. It is significant both as a building type and due to its impact on Pepco's decision to design substations that were architecturally compatible, as much as possible, with the structures in surrounding them. Stylistically, Substation No. 13 is unique in the work of Frederick B. Pyle. While he designed four substations for Pepco in 1906 and 1907, his other designs were architecturally unadorned and utilitarian in nature. In Substation No. 13, Pyle incorporates concrete and employs an architectural vocabulary that adds beauty to the building – making this the first electrical substation in Washington to consider aesthetics as an important component to the structure.

⁶ "Oppose Power Sub-Station," *The Washington Herald*, August 6, 1907, p. 10.

⁷ "Court Discharges Rule." *The Evening Star*, September 6, 1907, p. 3.

⁸ "Man Sits Rigid at Switchboard, Tragedy Saddens Whole Force." *The Washington Times*, June 18 1908, p. 8; "Davidson Not Electrocuted." *The Evening Star*, June 18, 1908, p. 3.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Architect of Substation No. 13: Frederick Bennet Pyle (1867-1934)

The son of Robert L. and Elizabeth (Walton) Pyle, Frederick B. Pyle was born in London Grove, Pennsylvania on September 7, 1867. Following his graduation from Swarthmore College with a Bachelor of Science degree, Pyle moved to Washington around 1891 and established an individual practice. Early in his career, may have worked under Glenn Brown and Arthur Heaton. Apt at designing in a wide range of styles, Pyle made a name for himself designing single-family dwellings, including numerous residences in Cleveland Park, Mount Pleasant, and Kalorama around the turn of the century. He worked as an architect for the Cleveland Park Company in 1896, during which time he designed three houses, all of which share similar curvilinear shapes and Federal-style details. He returned to work in Cleveland Park in 1905, designing a house for himself as well as a number of other houses in the Tudor and Shingle styles. In 1905, he also provided plans for Samuel Woodward, the founder of the Woodward & Lothrop Department Store, for a series of rowhouses on Bancroft Place in the Shaw neighborhood.

In the twentieth century, Pyle expanded into downtown commercial buildings, which were typically of steel frame construction. Pyle's storefronts were some of the most highly decorated in downtown Washington and featured ornamental lions' heads, eagles, plant forms, and classical motifs. His most notable works include the Equitable Savings and Loan Building (1911-12), which he designed in conjunction with Arthur B. Heaton, the F Street portion of the Woodward and Lothrop department store (1912), the Philsborn & Company Building (1919), the City Club (1921), and the Evans Building (1924).

Among Pyle's earliest non-residential designs are four substations designed for the Potomac Electric Power Company in 1906-1907. These included an addition to Substation No. 2 (1906, since razed) at 422 Washington, Street, NW; a design for Substation No. 10 (1906), an unadorned two story alley structure located between 14th, 15th, L, and I streets NW; a power house on Shariff Road, NE (1907, since razed); and a design for Substation No. 13 (1907) at 1001 Harvard Street, NW. Of these designs, the one for Substation No. 13 is the most architecturally interesting and significant.

Pyle resided in the large gambrel-roofed house he designed in Cleveland Park from 1906 to 1918, after which he lived in the Wardman Inn. In 1926, he moved to Wesley Heights where, according to his obituary, he "won the admiration of the entire community." Pyle died in 1934 following a prolonged illness.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Books & Manuscripts

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"Electricity in Washington." In *The Book of Washington*. Washington, DC: Washington Board of Trade, 1930.

Santamaria, Cesar. *History and Evolution of the PHI Electric System*. Unpublished manuscript, 2009.

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"Ask Light Plant Enjoined." *The Washington Post*, August 31, 1907, p. 10.

"Building Permit Issued." *The Evening Star*, August 24, 1907, p. 2.

"Building Permits Show Increase." *The Evening Star*, May 29, 1920, pt. 2, p. 4.

"Court Discharges Rule." *The Evening Star*, September 6, 1907, p. 3.

"Davidson Not Electrocuted." *The Evening Star*, June 18, 1908, p. 3.

"Electric Firm Plans \$5,900,000 Expansion." *The Washington Post*, December 5, 1929, p. 1.

"File a Protest." *The Evening Star*, July 30, 1907, p. 16.

"For Electric Substation." *The Evening Star*, August 1, 1907, p. 17.

"Hearing on Power Plant." *The Washington Post*, August 6, 1907, p. 14.

"Light Plant Defended." *The Washington Post*, September 7, 1907, p. 2.

"Man Sits Rigid at Switchboard; Tragedy Saddens Whole Force." *Washington Times*, June 18, 1908, p. 8.

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation

Washington, D.C.

No. 13

Name of Property

County and State

“New Electric Substation at Sherman Street N.W.” *Washington Times*, July 28, 1907, p. 7.

“North American Co. To Enlarge Plant.” *The Evening Star*, November 21, 1929, p. 15.

“Oppose Power Sub-station.” *Washington Herald*, August 6, 1907, p. 10.

“Oppose Substation.” *The Evening Star*, August 5, 1907, p. 8.

“Permit Refused.” *The Evening Star*, August 8, 1907, p. 13.

“Residents’ Protest in Vain.” *The Washington Post*, August 1, 1907, p. 14.

“Story to Be Added.” *The Washington Post*, February 7, 1937, p. R1.

“Substation Barred.” *Washington Herald*, August 8, 1907, p. 10.

“War on Electric Station.” *The Washington Post*, August 30, 1907, p. 11.

“Week’s Building Operations in District Total \$1,363,850.” *The Evening Star*, March 16, 1929, p. 16.

“Would Bar Substation.” *The Washington Post*, July 31, 1907, p. 14.

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: _____

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.10 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.926942 | Longitude: -77.026320 |
| 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: |

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

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

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13 occupies Lot 0033 in Square 2852 in the Columbia Heights neighborhood of the District of Columbia.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13 is on its original site and has been associated with the site since construction of the substation in 1907.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kent C. Boese
organization: DC Preservation League
street & number: 1221 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 5A
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20036
e-mail: info@dcpreservation.org
telephone: 202.783.5144
date: April 14, 2016

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.)

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

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. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Pepco Substation No. 13

City or Vicinity: Washington

County: N/A

State: D.C.

Photos 1- 7 Photographer: Kent Boese, 2016

Photos 8-14 Kim Williams, April 2019

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

- 1) General View looking west northwest from the intersection of Sherman Avenue and Harvard Street, NW
1 of 14
- 2) General View of 1907 building looking west from Sherman Avenue, NW
2 of 14
- 3) General View looking west from Sherman Avenue, NW
3 of 14
- 4) General View looking north of Harvard Street, NW, elevation
4 of 14
- 5) Detail view of Harvard Street, NW, elevations showing 1920 and 1929 additions
5 of 14
- 6) General view of north elevation looking southwest from Sherman Avenue, NW
6 of 14
- 7) General view north northeast from Harvard Street, NW, of west elevation
7 of 14

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

- 8) Detail of dormer on front slope of roof of east elevation, view looking west
8 of 14
- 9) Detail of roof vent, view looking north
9 of 14
- 10) Detail of dormer on west elevation, obscured by later addition, view looking north
10 of 14
- 11) Detail of rafter ends on south elevation, view looking skyward in easterly direction
11 of 14
- 12) Detail of rafter ends at west end of 1907 building looking westerly
12 of 14
- 13) Detail of window lintel, south elevation, view looking north
13 of 14
- 14) View looking east showing open space at north end of site
14 of 14

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State



General View looking west northwest from the intersection of Sherman Avenue and Harvard Street, NW

1/14



General View of 1907 building looking west from Sherman Avenue, NW

2/14

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State



General View looking west from Sherman Avenue, NW, showing original 1907 substation and 1921, 1937, and 1944 additions.

3/13



General View looking north of Harvard Street, NW, elevation

4/14

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State



Detail view of Harvard Street, NW, elevations showing 1920 and 1929 additions.

5/14



General view of north elevation looking southwest from Sherman Avenue, NW.

6/14

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State



**General view north northeast from Harvard Street, NW, of west elevation.
7/14**



**Detail of dormer on front slope of roof of east elevation, view looking west
8 of 14**

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State



Detail of roof vent, view looking north
9 of 14

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State



**Detail of dormer on west elevation, obscured by later addition, view looking north
10 of 14**

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State



**Detail of rafter ends on south elevation, view looking skyward in easterly direction
11 of 14**

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State



**Detail of rafter ends at west end of 1907 building looking westerly
12 of 14**

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State



Detail of window lintel, south elevation, view looking north
13 of 14

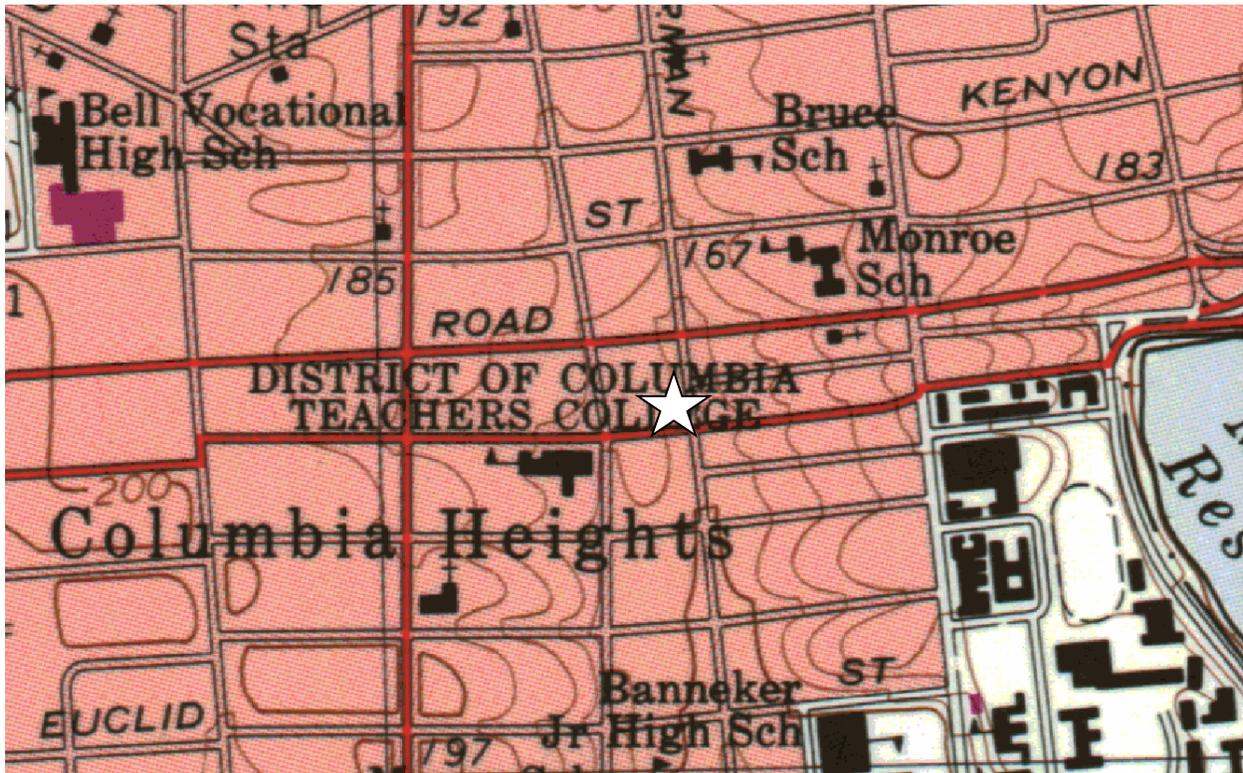


View looking east showing open space at north end of site
14 of 14

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

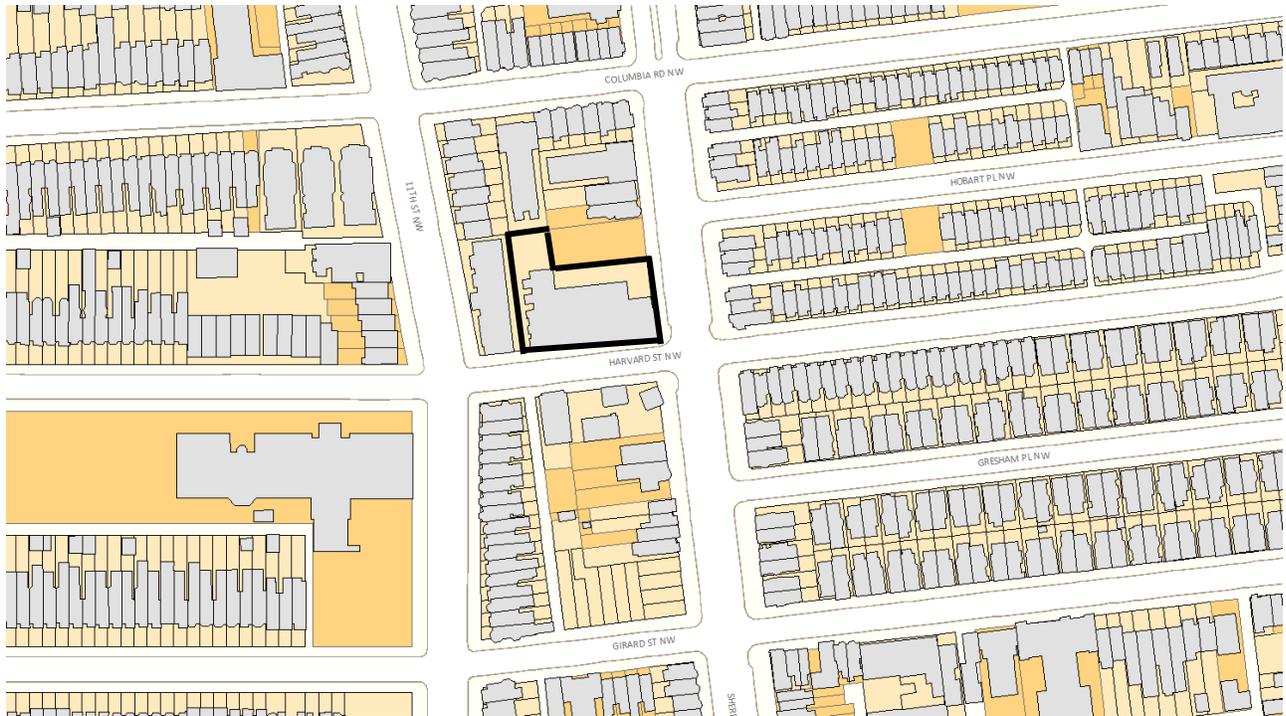
Maps



USGS Quad Washington West Map showing site of Pepco Substation No. 13 at 1001 Harvard Street NW

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State



Site Plan from ArcGIS (2019) showing National Register Boundaries of Pepco Substation (Square 2852 Lot 33)

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State



Key to Photographs

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 13

Name of Property

Historic Images:

Washington, D.C.

County and State



Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13, view toward the northwest from the intersection of Sherman Avenue and Harvard Street, NW, ca. 1950s. (Photo from Pepco)

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.



Harvard St
1900

Sherman St
2900

ONE WAY



Sherman
AVE NW
2900
1000



ZONE 1
RESIDENT
PERMIT
PARKING
ONLY
7AM-8:30PM
DAILY

NO
PARKING
TUESDAY
8:00AM-11:00AM
STREET
SWEEPING





Sherman St





Small white sign on the door.

Small white sign on the right side of the building.

9
VISE
SOLO



NOTICE
NO TRESPASSING

NO PARKING
EXCEPT AS SHOWN
HEREIN



DANGER
HIGH VOLTAGE
KEEP AWAY

NOTICE
NO TRESPASSING
popco TEL: 872-2000



Do Not Block
Delivery

No Loitering

Do Not Block
Delivery

NOTICE
POSITIVELY
NO TRESPASSING

DANGER

TOW AWAY
NO PARKING
OR STANDING
ANYTIME
←

TWO HOUR
PARKING
LIMIT IN CURB
DURING BUSINESS
HOURS
→

NO PARKING
EXCEPT
FOR THE TRUCKS
AND TRAILERS
DURING
STREET
SWEEPING















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13

Multiple Name:

State & County: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

Date Received: 5/3/2019 Date of Pending List: 5/16/2019 Date of 16th Day: 5/31/2019 Date of 45th Day: 6/17/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100004072

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 6/3/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 13 is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. Completed in 1907 from plans by DC architect Frederick B. Pyle, the one-story, brick building was the first purpose-built substation constructed outside the original city core. Serving the rapidly expanded neighborhoods of Columbia Heights, Mt. Pleasant, and Park View, the substation was carefully designed in the Craftsman style to assure its compatibility within the largely residential area. With the centralization of power generation by Pepco starting around 1906, substations such No. 13 became essential components of the city's electrical service grid and greatly supported community expansion and development outside the downtown core. Future research may address the potential significance of later twentieth century additions.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 6/3/2019

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

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MEMO

DATE: May 2, 2019

TO: Paul Lusignan

FROM: Kim Williams 

RE: Transmittal Letter for Pepco Substations No. 13 and No. 25

Please find enclosed two disks for the Pepco Substation No. 13 National Register nomination and two disks for the Pepco Substation No. 25. The enclosed disks, Disk 1 of 2 contain the true and correct copy of the nominations. The enclosed Disks 2 of 2 contain photographs as per the NR photo requirements.