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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Washington Railway and Electric Company (WRECO) Garage
other names/site number Capital Transit Company Central Bus Garage

2. Location

street & number 2112 Georgia Avenue NW

 not for publication
city or town Washington, D.C. vicinity

state District of Columbia code DC county _____ code 001 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this 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 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 local

DAVID MALONEY, DC SHPO 12/11/2013
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

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

for Edison H. Beall 2.5.14
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

WRECO Bus Garage
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION / Road-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION / Road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete and brick

walls: Brick, steel, limestone

roof: Metal, slag, gravel

other: _____

WRECO Bus Garage
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Physical Description

Summary Paragraph

The WRECO Bus Garage is a large, low-lying brick building located on the west side of the 2100 block of Georgia Avenue in northwest Washington, D.C. Located across from Howard University Hospital, the primary façade faces east to Georgia Avenue and extends approximately 240 feet in length. The building reaches the full depth of the block with its south elevation stretching along V Street NW from Georgia Avenue to Eighth Street. Its west rear elevation runs approximately 240 feet north along 8th Street NW, terminating at the south wall of the Bond Bread Factory, which occupies the northern section of the square. Along with the Bond Bread Factory, the WRECO Bus Garage has long been a visual landmark on Georgia Avenue.

The WRECO Bus Garage was designed by architect Arthur B. Heaton and constructed in 1930 to house a fleet of buses for the Washington Railway and Electric Car Company. Although it is essentially a large utilitarian storage structure, it displays a high quality of design and craftsmanship that make it a notable example of its building type. The building fills the entire block with its depth, but is divided into two front and rear parts: 1) the front section of the building faces Georgia Avenue and offers a three-part façade with a two-story central pavilion and flanking wings covered with a flat roof; and 2) the rear section is the garage "shed" and is covered with a gable roof.

Today the WRECO Garage faces Howard University Hospital across Georgia Avenue NW; however, at the time the garage was constructed, the hospital site was occupied by Griffith Stadium, the home of the Washington Senators and Washington Redskins until 1960.

Exterior Description:

The east front of the WRECO Garage presents a three-part façade with a two-story central section and one-story side wings at the northern and southern ends. The central pavilion is in turn divided into three parts, with a four-bay-wide center section and two, single-bay wide hyphens connecting the center pavilion to the one-story wings. The four bays of the center section are separated by double-story brick pilasters with limestone caps. The pilasters stop short of the flat roofline at the base of an attic-level or parapet wall which is enlivened by decorative brickwork and limestone panels. The center pilaster is wider than the flanking ones and thus appears to be more of a buttress than a pilaster. Its cap is also wider and merges at the attic level with a limestone tablet situated between the limestone panels.

Each of the four bays of this central section historically contained two garage door openings on the first story and four, single windows on the second story. Presently there are single window openings (with metal replacement sash) on the second story still, but altered openings on the first story. A two-bay-wide bus entrance is located in the southern two bays, while infilled openings occupy the northern bays of this central pavilion.

The brickwork surrounding the second-story windows is laid in an elaborate polychromatic basket-weave pattern which contrasts with the horizontal patterns of the pilasters and renders a craftsman-like effect to the building.

The interior one of the two single-bay-wide hyphens to either side of the center section project about four inches from the wall planes on both the central pavilion and end wing. These hyphens are capped by a ridged

WRECO Bus Garage

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

limestone cornice and limestone attic level. The end hyphens are wider than the inside hyphens and also have wider window openings on the second story. On the first story, there is a large window opening on the southern end, and a door on the northern end, framed with a limestone surround.

To either side of the hyphens are the north and south end wings. Each of these wings consists of two wide bays, divided by wide brick buttress-like piers with limestone caps above a ridged cornice. The upper section of each pier has an incised vertical slit, lending the suggestion of a castle turret. Similarly, at each of the corners of the building, a parapet wall rises above the lower flat wall creating a corner tower effect, while the limestone caps rising above the cornice line are like a crenelated castle wall. All of the bays in the wings are filled with large, metal replacement sash.

The south elevation of the building faces V Street and is divided into ten bays by projecting buttress-like brick piers. The three eastern most bays of this elevation are part of the front tri-partite block of the building, while the other seven are part of the "bus barn" section of the building. The eastern-most wings forming part of the building's front section thus offer the same configuration, detailing, and fenestration to those on the end wings of the front façade. The rear two bays act as an end wall to the gable roofed "bus barn."

The five center bays of the V Street façade are covered with a gable roof, while the end two bays are covered with a flat roof. The downward slope of V Street as it approaches Eighth Street allows each of the bus barn's bays to have a pair of rectangular windows at the lower level. On the first story, each bay has a very large rectangular window opening, now covered with painted plywood. Gaps in the plywood covers, however, indicate that the original industrial steel sash frames remain in place. The bus barn is topped by a gable roof, which is in turn topped by a recessed gable-roofed clerestory now sheathed in steel panels obscuring original window openings. The second story of the bus barn's gable end wall is enlivened by the rough-textured and randomly-mixed hues of brick, some with shiny highlights suggesting the presence of mica. The upper part of the gable end is brick laid in a soldier course. Below this soldier course is a band of bricks laid in a checkerboard pattern forming a kind of stringcourse across the gable end. At the midpoint of this stringcourse, just below the peak of the gable, is a brick roundel filled with brick laid in a checker-board pattern, and framed by a circumference of brick laid in a row-lock pattern. The contrasting and variety of colors in the brick, laid in American bond courses in the lower wall section accents the brick patterning above.

The two bays between the bus barn and the southwest corner of the garage are similar to the three at its southeast corner, with the addition of lower level rectangular windows. A tall square brick chimney rises near the interior gable wall of the bus barn.

The east, rear, elevation of the WRECO Bus Garage faces 8th Street is the least architecturally articulated of the three exposed walls. It is located along a lightly traveled section of street. Before the 1960s, this block of 8th Street across from the garage was lined with modest 19th-century brick row houses, only one of which still stands. The downhill slope from Georgia Avenue provides a full-height lower story along much of the 8th Street elevation of the building. As the grade rises along 8th Street going north, there is a corresponding diminution in the size of the doors and windows at this level. The 8th Street elevation has a narrow central bay, flanked by wings which lack the piers and pilasters which subdivide the more publically-exposed and formal Georgia Avenue façade. This central bay is demarcated from the wings by pilasters topped with limestone caps and spanned by a brick pediment topped with its own limestone cornice. The pediment brick is laid in a soldier course in contrast to the American bond masonry beneath the limestone cornice and brick dentil band which span the entire façade. The center bay's upper story has a large window, now covered by plywood. Its lower story is a single-width entrance for a bus-sized vehicle.

The 8th Street is less symmetrical than the Georgia Avenue façade. Beside the limestone-capped pilaster at the V Street end of the southern bay, there are three entrance openings which probably accommodated cars and trucks rather than buses. The entrance furthest from the corner is filled in with brick which perfectly matches that of the façade, suggesting that it was created for future use. Above these entrances are three

WRECO Bus Garage
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

large and nearly square windows, now covered in plywood. The section of the south bay that borders the central bay is occupied by a row of three narrow windows on each story, with the lower story window sills perhaps a foot above the sidewalk. Gaps in the plywood covering of a number of the window apertures on this façade reveal the presence of original steel sash industrial windows.

The northern bay, on the gradually ascending slope of Eighth Street, has a fenestration pattern which differs somewhat from that of the south bay. The center bay pier is flanked by a door centered beneath a small rectangular window, followed by a row of four rectangular windows. The remaining section of the façade before it meets the Bond Bread Factory is occupied by four square windows, whose diminished height allows room for a door and window beneath, as well as a small upper window in the brick corner pilaster. There is a small upper story brick structure above this northern most section of the façade with a pair of rectangle window apertures.

Although its brickwork is less complex, the 8th Street façade's brick is of comparable quality, texture, and variegated color patterns to that of the garage's more public facades.

WRECO Bus Garage
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1930-1958

Significant Dates

1930; 1933; 1949; 1958

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Arthur B. Heaton (architect)

Skinker & Garrett Company (builders)

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- 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.

WRECO Bus Garage

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

Period of Significance (justification)

The Washington Railway and Electric Car Company (WRECO) bus garage was constructed in 1930 to house and maintain the bus fleet of the Washington Railway and Electric Company. It continued in this usage through the company's consolidation as the Capital Transit Company in 1933 and, again, through that company's reorganization into the DC Transit Company in 1949. In 1958, the garage became the service facility and gasoline depot for a United States Post Office truck fleet that had been displaced from the Main City Post Office at North Capitol Street and Massachusetts Avenue NE. The Period of Significance extends from the 1930 construction date to 1958 when the garage ceased to house buses that formed part of the city's bus transportation network.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The WRECO Bus Garage at 2112 Georgia Avenue NW is Washington, DC's first purpose-built garage for servicing and storing transit buses. It meets National Register Criterion A and C under the Multiple Property Document *Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962*, because it is associated with events that have contributed to the broad patterns of our history namely the development of mass transit systems in Washington, DC and the transportation-oriented commercial development of the area around the intersections of 7th Street, U Street, Georgia Avenue, and Florida Avenue NW.

The WRECO Bus Garage is significant under National Register Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a building type. The WRECO Bus Garage was designed by Arthur B. Heaton, whose wide-ranging works include influential transportation-related structures of the early automotive era, as well as numerous distinguished residences and apartment houses. The Multiple Property Document *Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962* states that, like the street car power house, "the bus garage is a significant property type for its role in the continuing evolution of public transportation in Washington, D.C." In order to be eligible under the Multiple Property Listing, bus garages must retain integrity of setting, location, design, workmanship, and association. The resource should display original massing and elements that denote the building's use, such as large door openings to accommodate buses.¹ The WRECO Bus Garage displays the massing and elements associated with its original use, including the three-part front block and the rear, gable-roofed shed lit by a monitor roof. Although the original steel sash windows have been replaced along the Georgia Avenue facade, the original windows along 8th Street remain intact behind plywood boards. The WRECO Bus Garage features high quality craftsmanship, especially in the decorative brickwork patterning. The WRECO bus garage possesses integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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

The WRECO Bus Garage is significant in the Area of Transportation for its association with the city's streetcar and bus industry, and more particularly of the city's transition from streetcar to bus service for public transportation. What came to be known as the Capital Transit Company's Central Bus Garage was constructed in 1930 to house and maintain the buses of the Washington Railway and Electric Company, formerly known as the Washington Traction and Electric Company. As its name suggests, it originated as a

¹ *Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962*, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2005, p. F86.

WRECO Bus Garage
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

streetcar company, but as a result of Congress's 1900 Reorganization Act, many of the streetcar lines and all the city's electric lighting company were combined under a single holding company, WRECO. The popularity of streetcars began to decline in favor of the more flexible bus system. Of course, bus fleets required parking, preferably out of the weather, and service facilities. The two combined streetcar/bus companies, WRECO and Washington Rapid Transit soon sought large garages. Although other companies had presumably repurposed existing warehouses and garages, WRECO's Georgia Avenue bus garage is the first known purpose-built garage for its transit fleet.

The WRECO Bus Garage is thus also significant in the Area of Architecture as an example of a bus garage, and in particular as the first known purpose-built garage for WRECO's fleet of buses. The building embodies the distinguishing characteristics of its type, as detailed in the Multiple Property Document, *Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962*.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The WRECO Garage and Mass Transit in Washington

The development of mass transit in Washington, DC is related in detail in the Multiple Property Document, *Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962*. It begins with the Civil War-era horse cars whose routes connected Georgetown with the Navy Yard through downtown, succeeded in the 1890s by electric street cars. Boom times saw car lines extend into outlying districts, frequently financed by speculators seeking to promote their real estate developments. These small companies often became financially over-extended and merged with larger car lines. Early street car companies usually generated their own electric power, which they also sold to residents of the new developments as well as other customers along their routes.

During the early 1900s, the pace of mergers in the streetcar industry increased, and the consolidated companies invested in larger car barns and other facilities. The Washington Railroad and Electric Company (WRECO) grew out of the Washington Traction and Electric Company (WTEC), a holding company formed in 1896 by Oscar Crosby, who over the next several years merged almost two dozen small lines in an attempt to control both the city's street car and electrical generation services. In 1902, the WTEC collapsed from accumulated debt, and its stock was purchased by the Washington and Great Falls Railway Company, forming a consolidated firm called the Washington Railway and Electric Company (WRECO)ⁱⁱ The car lines' electrical generation facilities were merged with other holdings to become a subsidiary called the Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO).

For the next twenty years, WRECO expanded its routes and continued to acquire smaller lines, rivaled only by the Capital Traction Company as the city's dominant transit provider. Its major shops, originally constructed by the Metropolitan Street Railroad, stood at 24th and P Streets, NW. Another legacy of the Metropolitan Street Railroad was WRECO's wooden car barn and stable at the intersection of Seventh and Pomeroy (now W) Streets NW, adjacent to the Howard University campus.ⁱⁱⁱ

Washington adopted buses for mass transit more slowly than it embraced other forms of automotive transportation, such as taxicab and jitney services. Although buses appeared on city streets in the early 20th-century, they were chiefly used for sightseeing or excursions. By 1912, motor trucks had largely replaced horses for commercial purposes. Jitneys, a hybrid of bus and taxi services in which an automobile drove pre-established routes through downtown, picking up pedestrians who hailed it, were commonplace before World War I. Like taxicabs before them, the public acceptance of transit buses was not automatic. For instance, an

ⁱⁱ *Ibid*, E64

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid*, E19.

WRECO Bus Garage

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

electric bus line down 16th Street, the Semmes Autobus line between the Treasury Building and the community of Brandywine, Maryland in 1912, and the Metropolitan Bus Company's pioneering bus-only line in 1913 all quickly failed.

However, on March 1, 1921, the Washington Rapid Transit Company (WRTC) began service on two routes running from 14th and Buchanan Streets NW through the downtown shopping and government office districts that was soon extended to Haines Point. Within its first six months, the WRTC had carried 750,000 passengers and added several new routes.^{iv} The street car companies immediately realized that the motor bus represented formidable competition. By 1921, the president of WRECO was testifying against the chartering of more bus lines before the Public Utilities Commissioner.^v Although the commissioners limited the licensing of jitneys, they continued to approve new bus routes. WRECO responded by filing formal complaints to the PUC about "unfair competition." By April 1922, the *Washington Post* editorialized against the "unseemly squabble" between the companies which it blamed on "the apparent belief of the railroad companies that they own the streets and have the right to control basic transportation thereon."^{vi}

The bus lines had powerful allies beyond the *Post*. One was the Federation of Civic Associations, which heavily represented outlying neighborhoods whose residents frequently complained about high fares and infrequent service from the carlines that essentially held a monopoly on public transportation to downtown. Another was a large segment of the public which saw streetcars as "road hogs" whose track beds caused congestion on downtown streets and considered them slow, uncomfortable, and inefficient when compared with buses that maneuvered through traffic on rubber tired wheels. Streetcars were considered less safe because their tracks typically ran down the center lanes of a street, and passengers were forced to step into traffic lanes when boarding or disembarking.

By December 1922, WRECO itself was running a bus line that connected Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenue car lines via Woodley Road, and in January, 1923, it replaced streetcars with buses on at least one segment of its lines.^{vii} Street car ridership continued to drop,^{viii} and, by 1925, WRECO was operating numerous bus lines, covering such routes as Dupont Circle to 45th and Fessenden Streets NW.^{ix} During this period, bus fleets grew as well. They were apparently serviced and garaged at street car barns and other traction facilities. In 1926, the buses-only WRTC made application to adapt the sub-basement of the CTC's 14th and Decatur Streets NW car barn for use as a garage.^x

The building of the WRECO Garage in 1930 is an outgrowth of the transition to bus transportation. In 1925, the company operated 44 buses accommodating an estimated 999 passengers at full capacity.^{xi} By 1929, the company ran 97 buses, capable of carrying 2,418 persons.^{xii} However, other economic trends also influenced the construction of the garage. Despite increasing fleets and expanding routes, overall transit ridership was declining during the late 1920s. For 1928, WRECO blamed a two percent loss in passenger revenue from passengers to competition from automobiles, whose registration increased 18% that year.^{xiii} The Great Depression had an even more dramatic effect on ridership. For 1930, WRECO reported a passenger decline

^{iv} "Buses In Capital Will Be Increased," *Washington Post*; Sep 25, 1921; 49

^v "Oppose More Busses," *Washington Post*, Nov 17, 1921;13

^{vi} "Protests New Bus Lines.: W. R. & E. Co. Declares Competition Is Unfair." *Washington Post*; Mar 18, 1922; 1

^{vii} "Through Car Service To Potomac Park Ends," *Washington Post*; Jan 31, 1923, 12

^{viii} "New Bus Line In Operation," *Washington Post*; Dec 15, 1922; 16 and "W.R. & E. To Request Additional One-Man Cars, Ham Admits," *Washington Post*; Oct 16, 1924, 2.

^{ix} "W.R. & E. To Get Permit For Dupont Bus Line," *Washington Post*; May 2, 1925m 9.

^x "Bus Company Seeks Garage at Gar Barn," *Washington Post*; Oct 13, 1926; 20.

^{xi} *Annual Report of the Public Utilities Commissioners for 1925*, (Washington, DC Government, 1926), 116.

^{xii} *Annual Report of the Public Utilities Commissioners for 1929*, (Washington, DC Government, 1930), 149.

^{xiii} "Potomac Electric To Spend \$5,176,250 For Improvements," *Washington Post*, Jan 20, 1929;M22

WRECO Bus Garage

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

of about 8%. The company blamed increased competition from taxis, noting that the city's cab and limousine fleet had grown 41% during the previous year, which likely reflected the newly unemployed turning to hacking.^{xiv} An unmentioned cause was that the unemployed no longer commuted to work and those fortunate enough to have jobs watched even their trolley tokens closely.

After litigating for a fare increase from eight to ten cents in 1930, WRECO remained profitable, principally from its PEPCO subsidiary. While the company reported a slight loss on bus operations in 1930, it increased its fleet by over 20% to 119 buses with a capacity of 2,973 passengers.^{xv} In 1931, the year that the garage opened, it had 122 buses accommodating 3,172 passengers.^{xvi} The portrait that emerges of these years is that the company struggled to expand just to stay in place. As ridership declined, it formulated "liberal plans... for extension... of bus service" and sought to maximize efficiency by increasing its annual investment in its buildings by about 7% in 1930. This prompted implicit praise from the *Washington Post*, which noted that "the company has fallen into line with President Hoover's plan to stimulate business recovery."^{xvii}

The building of the WRECO Bus Garage is significant to the development of the area around the intersections of 7th, 9th, and U Streets as well as Georgia and Florida Avenues NW during this period. This area, whose north-south axis is Georgia Avenue, offers quick access to the city's government and retail districts via Seventh Street NW, downtown's earliest "Main Street." Florida Avenue provides arterial connections to the northwest and northeast quadrants, as well as to the New York and Rhode Island Avenue corridors. While Howard University has long been the chief development force in this area, the building of Griffith Stadium both evidenced the accessibility of this area to population centers along these major corridors and spurred further transit development. During the 19th century, numerous coal yards, lumberyards, bakeries, and other businesses needing direct access to important transportation corridors located along the northern end of the 7th Street corridor. The building of the Bond Bread Factory in 1929 and the WRECO Bus Garage next door in 1930 represent the continuance of this function into the automotive era.

By 1933, financial strains compelled Congress to permit the long-proposed merger of the city's transit lines.^{xviii} The new Capital Transit Company included WRECO, Capital Traction, and eventually the independent bus lines of the Washington Rapid Transit Company. The merger brought about the construction of two larger bus garages designed by Arthur Heaton in 1934: the Western Bus Garage on Wisconsin Avenue in Friendship Heights (currently pending Historic Landmark designation) and the Southeast Garage (Half and M Streets SE, demolished in 2006). The WRECO Garage, which included the offices of the Central Division,^{xix} continued in use as the Central Bus Garage through the transformation of Capital Transit into DC Transit in 1956. By 1958, the garage was leased as a depot for the trucks serving the Post Office at North Capitol and Massachusetts Avenue.^{xx} Although Capital Transit was purchased by what would become Metro in 1972, the garage and other real estate remained the property of Capital Transit proprietor O. Roy Chalk. Eventually, it was acquired by Howard University for use as a maintenance facility.

^{xiv} "Unregulated Taxi Competition Hit By Traction Line," *Washington Post*, Jan 18, 1931;M22

^{xv} *Annual Report of the Public Utilities Commissioners for 1930*, (Washington, DC Government, 1931), 103.

^{xvi} *Annual Report of the Public Utilities Commissioners for 1931*, (Washington, DC Government, 1932), 86

^{xvii} "Unregulated Taxi Competition," *Washington Post*, Jan 18, 1931;M22

^{xviii} While this merger undoubtedly allowed consolidation of functions, it also illuminates the labyrinthine nature of the city's regulated public utilities in the twenties and thirties. Since 1922, WRECO's largest shareholder was a New York-based holding company called the North American Company. By 1925, NAU was also the majority shareholder in WRECO's erstwhile competitor, the Washington Rapid Transit Company.

^{xix} Display Ad, *Washington Post*; May 11, 1947;M2

^{xx} "City Post Office Gasoline Moved," *Washington Post*; Nov 10, 1958; A22

WRECO Bus Garage

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

Arthur B. Heaton and Auto-Age Architecture

Born in 1875, Arthur B. Heaton was a native Washingtonian and graduate of Central High School. He began architectural training in 1894 as an apprentice to Frederick B. Pyle, and worked for Paul Pelz from 1895 to 1896, for William J. Marsh from 1896 to 1899, and for Marsh & Peter from 1899 to 1900. His earliest credits included row houses in Foggy Bottom and small multi-unit "sanitary houses" on Bates Street NW.^{xxi} In 1900, Heaton opened his own office and in 1902 joined the American Institute of Architects, with endorsements from Robert Head, William J. Peter, and Glenn Brown. In this year he won a breakthrough commission, the five-story Washington Heights Apartments at 1910 Connecticut Avenue NW. Numerous commissions for upscale dwellings and apartment houses followed. During his enormously prolific career, Heaton also came to design stores, churches, schools, offices, banks, a swimming pool, and a cancer hospital, as well as such industrial facilities as laundries, printing plants, and equipment garages.

Heaton's first work for WRECO came in 1920, when he began to design or modify its PEPCO subsidiary's substations, including one designed by his mentor, Frederick B. Pyle. As the 1920s progressed, he was commissioned to design service and administrative buildings, and he is generally credited with the design of the major PEPCO electrical generation plant on Benning Road NE.

Heaton's first major automobile-oriented building was the ten-story Capital Garage of 1926 at 1314 New York Avenue NW (demolished 1974). Designed to accommodate 1,200 cars, the Capital Garage was Washington's first large public parking structure. Designed in a "modified Gothic Style" incorporating auto-themed medallions, lion-gargoyles, and long vertical stripes of window, the garage included a gasoline station, a waiting room for chauffeurs, a ladies room, and two stores at ground level.

The Capital Garage was followed three years later by the WRECO Bus Garage. One week after the D.C. Permit to Build was issued for the WRECO Garage, Heaton obtained a permit for one of his most noteworthy automobile-oriented projects, The Park n' Shop development at 3501 Connecticut Avenue NW. This project, to which Heaton added an auto laundry and gasoline station (both now demolished) has been described as a nationally significant work in the evolution of the shopping center which was widely publicized and praised during the 1930s. The building is considered a prototype for a number of other complexes in the metropolitan area and elsewhere in the U.S. during the 1930's and 1940's, and is among the most architecturally significant commercial properties in the nation's capital.^{xxii}

In November 1934, Heaton was commissioned by the newly formed Capital Transit Company to design a slightly-larger bus garage at 44th Street NW, now known as the Western Bus Garage. In 1936, he designed the single-story Eastern Garage for Capital Transit at 17 M Street SE. Capital Transit subsequently erected several other bus garages and shops in the city and suburbs for which Heaton provided designs, although no architect was credited on building permits. These garages, located in less-visible industrial areas, were utilitarian in character and lacked the visual flair of his early designs.

In addition, Heaton's commissions included designs for several Lord Baltimore service stations and several restaurants for Blue Bell chain, one of which became the famous Waffle Shop at 1404 Park Road NW. His final credited project in the District of Columbia was an Alley Dwelling Authority housing project at 7th and I Streets NW in 1940. During World War II, Heaton designed garden apartment complexes and the Hillside Defense Worker Housing Development in Virginia. He died in 1951 at age 76.

^{xxi} Biographical information for Heaton is derived from Stephen Calcott, National Register Form, *Babcock-Macomb House*, (1994), Section 8, 6-7, American Institute of Architects Registration Form: Arthur B. Heaton (1901), and "A.B. Heaton Dies: Noted Architect." *Washington Post*, December 7, 1951, B2. Information about his building portfolio comes from the DC Historic Preservation Office Building Permits Database.

^{xxii} National Register Form, *Cleveland Park Historic District*, E5.

WRECO Bus Garage
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

The WRECO Bus Garage as a Work of Architecture

The WRECO Bus Garage commission presented Arthur Heaton with a set of contradictory challenges. Perhaps the least of these was that his design options were limited by the building site, a roughly square plot bounded on three sides by city streets and on the fourth by the newly-constructed Bond Bread Factory. The building was to be erected for a client whose business was declining with the nation's economy. Plainly, the financial need was acute for the project to be moving forward in such a bleak economic climate, and Heaton plainly needed to achieve maximum economy and efficiency for this first structure of its type in Washington. The times dictated that its design be austere for an additional reason. WRECO's fares and capital expenditures were regulated by the District's Public Utilities Commission, and a structure with any trace of ostentation would have fanned public resentment and opposition to future fare increases. Although these circumstances ordinarily might have dictated a merely utilitarian building, WRECO's garage would occupy a highly-visible location, projecting an image of a company vigorous in the face of adversity and symbolizing corporate permanence. Heaton was forced to juggle these competing priorities to create a structure that was functional, economical, and appealing. Although he was among the city's most prominent architects, Heaton undoubtedly realized that, in the current state of the building industry, his client could have its pick of practitioners if he proved unequal to the task.

Although Heaton employed many styles, he specialized in applying elements of the art moderne style to his larger buildings at this point in his career. This accent on massing, geometric patterns, abstracted classical forms, and contrasting material textures without the necessity of applied ornament or elaborate detailing, allowed Heaton to compose a massive structure which was both economical and visually attractive. Heaton split his long horizontal facades into bays with pilasters, and created smaller visual planes with protrusions and setbacks of the bays within their elevations, avoiding flat, broad expanses of brick that might suggest fortress or penitentiary walls. Many of Heaton's effects depend on opposing contrasting elements. The garage is linked into a horizontal composition by its continuous smooth-finished limestone cornice, above a dentiled molding of protruding dark bricks against a red brick background. He avoided dead expanses of wall by mixing rough-textured brick with varied color accents and degrees of sheen in random combinations. Within a facade, he mingled basket-weave or checkerboard patterns with American bond brickwork, counterpointing brick courses in vertical and horizontal alignment. The blank south gable-end wall of the bus barn is perhaps the best example of Heaton's artistic use of brick. Here, the uppermost five feet of the wall, which includes the "point" beneath the gable's roofline, is laid in courses of vertically-aligned bricks, with a band of bricks laid in a checkerboard pattern below it. At the midpoint of this band, beneath the wall's pinnacle, a circle about five feet in diameter composed of bricks laid end-outward and filled with checker-board brick, suggests the oriel window above the altar in the end gable of a church. The contrasting American bond courses in the wall's lower section further accents these patterns. These elements lend a vibrant quality of motion to these large planes of brick.

Heaton's use of art moderne massing and accents lent the Bus Garage a note of grace and modernity not usually associated with industrial buildings. Many of the larger street car companies built imposing castle-like powerhouses and car barns in the late nineteenth century. Heaton lampoons this Victorian ponderousness with the rectangular voids in the garage's corner piers, which resemble the slit windows in castle turrets.

Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington notes that the selection of a prominent architect like Arthur B. Heaton evidences the importance they placed on these early bus garages, and states that his employment of such devices as "pilasters and brick stringcourses to break the large massing of the building and ornamental brickwork to relieve the monotony of the long facades elevating these bus stations from industrial structure to

WRECO Bus Garage
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

public building.^{xxiii} These stylistic characteristics are present in the WRECO Bus Garage, along with other defining elements such as a three-part elevation, which includes a central pavilion with large bus doors and the end wings, and steel sash windows. This earliest of Heaton's bus garages stands with his finest buildings of any type.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Annual Report of the Public Utilities Commissioners for 1928, (Washington, DC Government, 1929)
Annual Report of the Public Utilities Commissioners for 1930, (Washington, DC Government, 1931)
Annual Report of the Public Utilities Commissioners for 1931, (Washington, DC Government, 1932)
Calcott, Stephen. National Register Form, *Babcock-Macomb House*, (1994)
Waldman, J.C. National Register Form: *Western Bus Garage*, (2005)
Trieschmann, Laura V., Weidlich, Robin J., Bunting, Jennifer J., Didden, Amanda, and Williams, Kim, National Register Form: *Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962* (1998, 2005)
Wood, Kathleen Sinclair. National Register Form: *Cleveland Park Historic District*, (1987)
King, LeRoy O., Jr. *100 Years of Capital Traction: The Story of Streetcars in the Nation's Capital*. Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1972.

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

Acreage of Property 58,607 square feet/
1.3 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

^{xxiii} *Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington*, E87.

WRECO Bus Garage
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

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

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.918201 | Longitude: -77.022438 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

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

The WRECO Bus Garage at 2112 Georgia Avenue, NW occupies Lot 0933 on Square 2877 in northwest Washington, D.C.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The WRECO Bus Garage has occupied the site since its construction in 1930.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter Sefton
organization D.C. Preservation League date December 2014
street & number 401 F Street, NW, Room 324 telephone (202) 783-5144
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20001
e-mail info@dcpreservation.org

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs:

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

WRECO Bus Garage
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Name of Property: The Washington Railway and Electric Company (WRECO) Bus Garage

City or Vicinity: 2112 Georgia Avenue, NW

County: State: District of Columbia

Photographer: Kim Williams

Date Photographed: November 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

View looking NW showing east elevation
1 of 6.

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

View looking NW showing south elevation
2 of 6.

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

View looking NW showing east elevation
3 of 6.

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

View looking north showing south elevation
4 of 6.

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Detail, south elevation gable end
5 of 6.

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Howard University
street & number 2041 Georgia Avenue NW telephone _____
city or town Washington state DC zip code _____

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 18 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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Washington Railway and Electric Company Bus Garage
Name of Property Washington, D.C.
County and State Streetcar and Bus Resources of WDC, 1862- 1962
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps and Images

Page 1



The Washington Railway and Electric Company Bus Garage
2112 Georgia Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C.
Site Plan from Bing Maps

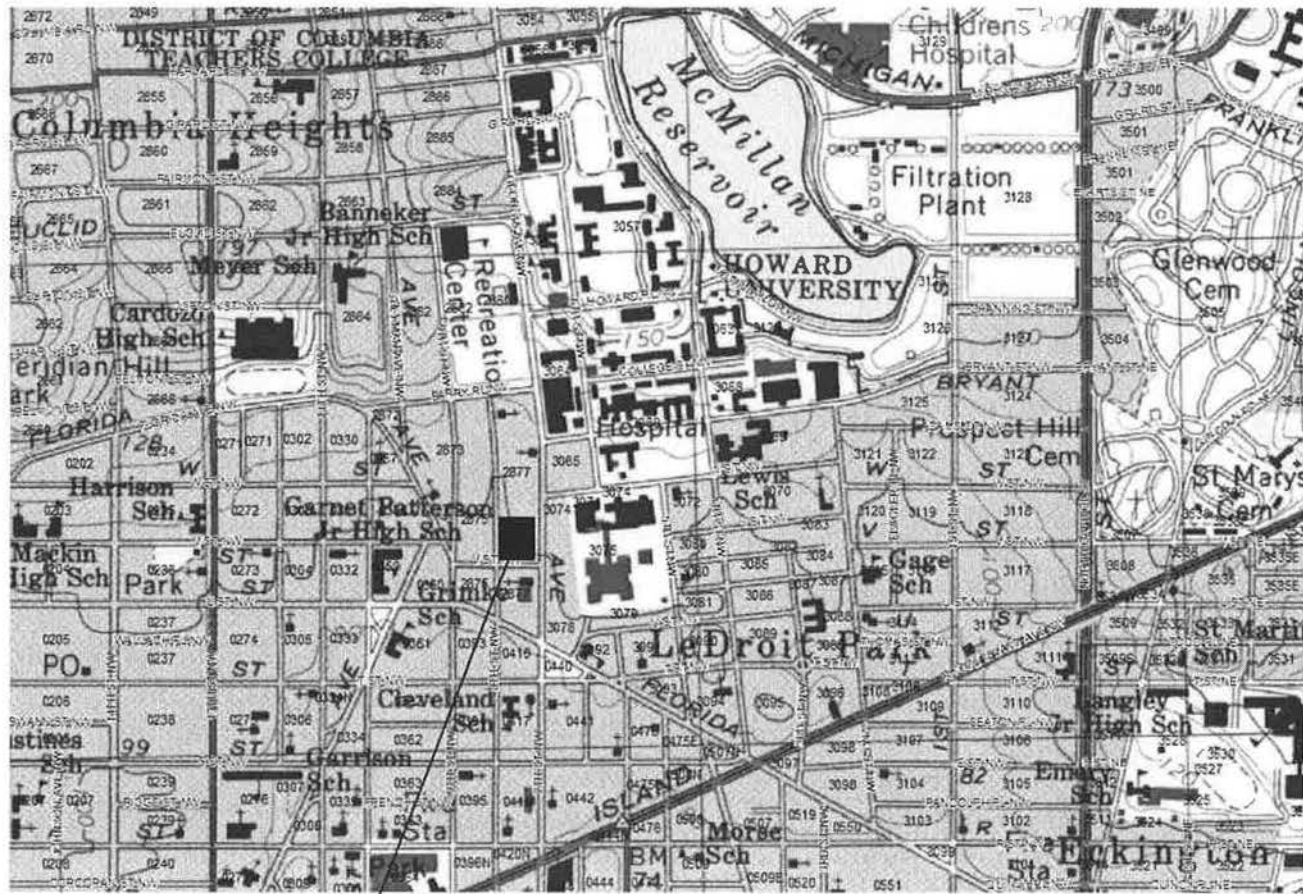
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Washington Railway and Electric Company Bus Garage
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County and State Streetcar and Bus Resources of WDC, 1862- 1962
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Section number Maps and Images

Page 2



Washington Railway and Electric Company Bus Garage
2112 Georgia Avenue, NW
USGS Quad Map Site Plan

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Washington Railway and Electric Company Bus Garage
Name of Property Washington, D.C.
County and State Streetcar and Bus Resources of WDC, 1862- 1962
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps and Images

Page 3



Washington Railway and Electric Company Bus Garage
Site Plan showing National Register Boundaries

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Washington Railway and Electric Company
Bus Garage

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

Streetcar and Bus Resources of WDC, 1862-1962

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps and Images

Page 4



Aerial photo showing Griffith Stadium with WRECO Bus Garage in upper right hand corner of image, 1941

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Washington Railway and Electric Company
Bus Garage

Name of Property
Washington, D.C.

County and State

Streetcar and Bus Resources of WDC, 1862-1962

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps and Images

Page 5



Aerial Image of Griffith Stadium showing WRECO Garage at center left in photo across from stadium

Washington Railway & Electric Company Bus garage



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

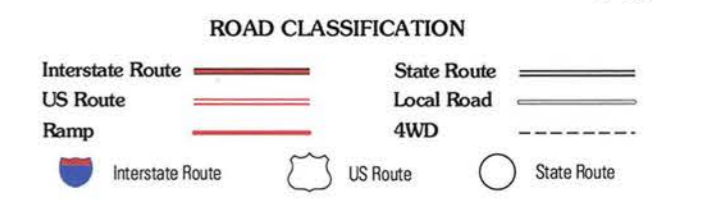
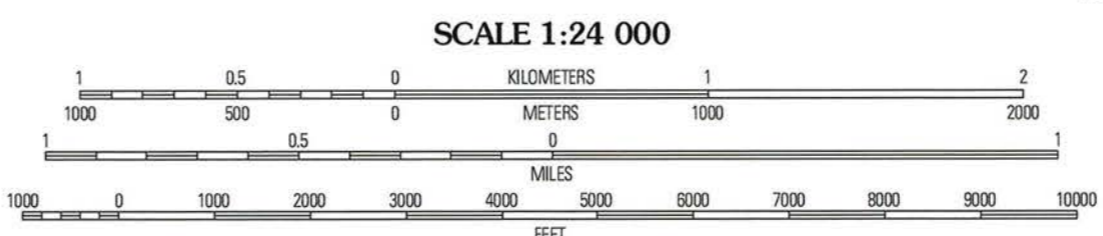
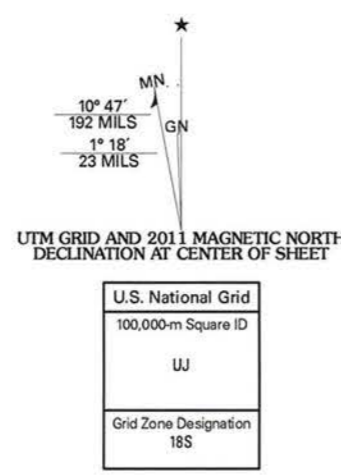


WASHINGTON WEST QUADRANGLE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA-MARYLAND-VIRGINIA
7.5-MINUTE SERIES



Long Lat
38.918201
-77.022438

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)
World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84) Projection and
1 000-meter grid; Universal Transverse Mercator, Zone 18S
10 000-foot ticks; Maryland Coordinate System of 1983,
Virginia Coordinate System of 1983 (north zone)



Imagery.....NAIP, June 2009
Roads.....©2006-2010 Tele Atlas
Names.....©GNIS, 2010
Hydrography.....National Hydrography Dataset, 2009
Contours.....National Elevation Dataset, 2008
Boundaries.....Census, IBWC, IBC, USGS, 1972 - 2010

Table with 2 columns: U.S. National Grid, Grid Zone Designation. Row 1: 18S

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NORTH AMERICAN VERTICAL DATUM OF 1988
This map was produced to conform with version 0.5.10
of the USGS US Topo Product Standard.
A metadata file associated with this product is draft version 0.5.15

Table with 3 columns: Rockville, Kennington, Beltsville. Row 1: Falls Church, Washington West, Washington East. Row 2: Annandale, Alexandria, Anacostia

WASHINGTON WEST, DC-MD-VA
2011

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2112

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Washington Railway and Electric Company Garage
NAME:

MULTIPLE Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, DC MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 12/20/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/21/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/05/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/05/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13001133

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 2.5.14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.