

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD**  
**APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION**

New Designation     X      
Amendment of a previous designation       
Please summarize any amendment(s)     

Property name Brookland Bowling Alley  
*If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.*

Address 3726 10<sup>th</sup> Street, NE

Square and lot number(s) Square 3822, Lot 805

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5A06

Date of construction 1938 Date of major alteration(s) 1939; 1952

Architect(s) William E. St. Cyr Barrington Architectural style(s) Art Deco

Original use Bowling Alley Present use Commercial use

Property owner Atlantic Electric Supply Company

Legal address of property owner 3726 10<sup>th</sup> Street, NE, Washington, DC 20017

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) DC Preservation League

*If the applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.*

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) 401 F Street, NW, Room 324, WDC 20001, 202.783.5144

Name and title of authorized representative Rebecca Miller, Executive Director

Signature of representative      Date     

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) Brookland Community Development Corporation

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) 3418 9th Street, NE, Washington, DC 20017

Name and title of authorized representative Hayden Wetzel, Representative

Signature of representative      Date     

Name and telephone of author of application Hayden Wetzel – 202.526.5986

Date received       
H.P.O. staff

**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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Brookland Bowling Alleys

other names Brookland Recreation Center; Atlantic Supply, Inc.

**2. Location**

street & number 3726 10<sup>th</sup> Street NE  not for publication

city or town Washington  vicinity

state DC code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ zip code 20017

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper  
Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No.

Magi No.

DOE \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

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Register.

See continuation sheet.

Determined not eligible for the National

Register.

removed from the National Register.

other

(explain): \_\_\_\_\_

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Name of Property

County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
		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**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION-CULTURE/Sports facility

COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty store

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

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## Description Summary:

3726 10<sup>th</sup> Street NE is a two-story building of blond brick, distinguished primarily by an ornate art-deco front façade of bays, parapets and geometric sawtooth ribbons (both vertical and horizontal). A deep angular bay extends the first story forward from the building line, framing a prominent parapet for the main entrance. The second story, flat, has a similar parapet at the middle. Both parapets are decorated with vertical ribbons of sawtooth-laid brick and decorative headers. Wide windows characterize the first story and smaller, square windows the second. Horizontal bands of darker brick and a band of convex-arc stonework along the top of both stories bind the design together.

The roof is flat, and the exposed side and back facades of plain red brick. A chimney arises from the southern flank of the building.

## General Description:

3726 10<sup>th</sup> Street NE is a two-story flat roofed brick building with a one-story projecting bay which extends across the majority of the facade. On the two-story block, a centralized tower-like structure extends above the adjacent roof parapet, providing relief to an otherwise generally flat facade. In the one-story section, a similar higher parapet marks the entry to the building. The entry doors are at grade. The building is attached to the neighboring building to the north and is freestanding to the south.

The tower on the two-story piece consists of two projecting piers, and a flat expanse of brick between with a single square or nearly square masonry opening containing a pair of 8-lite steel casement windows with transom. The piers are accented with a brick panel laid in a "sawtooth" (bricks set diagonally) pattern with a precast bas-relief rosette at the base. A precast band caps the piers and the extended parapet. Set back from the face of the brick, the band consists of a continuous repetition of shallow convex arcs oriented vertically, giving the appearance of a "scalloped" edge to the top of the tower. The same precast profile is used consistently at all of the 9<sup>th</sup> street elevation rooflines.

Flanking the outward sides of the piers are two large windows at the second floor, identical to the casement configuration in the central bay. Smaller, shorter square openings mark the end bays at the north and south extremities of the facade at both the second and the first floor. The windows in these openings at the second floor are a pair of 6-lite steel sash and at the first floor modern replacement full-pane windows. The primary architectural element at the first floor is a deep projecting bay form with widely chamfered, or angled, corners. Short brick return walls allow the bay to meet the main wall of the building at right angles. Four large storefront windows are set in the brick walls, one each on the angled sides and a pair flanking the main entry.

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The entry consists of projecting brick piers detailed with a sawtooth brick pattern. A pair of full glass entry doors is set in the brick wall between the piers. The opening itself is framed by an unusual triple soldier course brick "casing" in a stack bond with a soldier course header. A metal awning, surely a later addition, covers the entry and obscures the fine brickwork. A precast cap, also in the convex scallop pattern, finishes the entry piece.

The predominant exterior building material is a buff-colored ironspot brick laid in a running bond with header brick courses every seventh course. Seven horizontal bands of a single course of dark brick, projecting slightly beyond the face of the wall, contrast with the predominant buff brick. The banding brick has a red body and a dark, almost black, surface. At the second floor bands mark sill and head lines of the masonry openings — a common sill and the head of the short and the tall windows. A fourth band marks a line mid way between the head of the large window and the parapet. All of the second floor banding stops at the projecting piers; it does not carry across the center section of the facade. The banding on the first floor marks the head and sill of the storefront window system. The small punched end bay opening windows share a common head with the storefront; a dark brick band marks the sill of the small windows. The entry piece is unbanded. Although there are some alignments of window heads (first floor) or sills (second floor), the overall pattern on the elevation is not equal, lending the facade an uneven almost "vernacular deco" quality.

The highly visible south corner of the building is obscured by large mechanical equipment which is clearly a later addition. The buff brick turns the corner to the south with a stylized quoin motif before transitioning to a common red brick. There are several utilitarian openings on the south elevation and the south face of a tall brick chimney is coterminous with the south wall.

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**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 pattern of our history.
- B** Property 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)

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

**Area of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1938-1952

**Significant Dates**

1938 (original building); 1939 (addition); 1952 (renovation)

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Architect: William E. St. Cyr Barrington  
Builder: Home Construction Comp.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

**Previous documentation on files (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency

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- 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  
# \_\_\_\_\_

- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

City Library



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## Summary Statement of Significance:

The Brookland Bowling Alleys<sup>1</sup> building was constructed in 1938 and expanded in 1939, a period that saw a number of new amenities brought to the still-suburban Brookland neighborhood of northeast Washington. Designed in the art deco style seen in other Brookland buildings of that period,<sup>2</sup> the Center served as an entertainment venue for (white) residents – primarily a bowling alley – until a disastrous fire ravaged the building in 1950. Two years later the building, renovated to its original design by the same architect, re-opened as Atlantic Electric Supply Corp., which still occupies the building today.

The Brookland Bowling Alleys deserves to be declared a local landmark building because of its distinct art deco style, still in its original appearance; its place in the history of the Brookland community; and as a rare surviving bowling alley in the city.

## Resource History and Historic Context:

**History of Brookland Before 1938:** The Brookland neighborhood of northeast Washington was constructed from 1887, when the children of local magnate Jehiel Brooks sold the considerable property of their recently-deceased father to various developers. The area quickly became a trolley-car suburb, tied to the city by a new trolley line that passed the newly-founded Catholic University and ran up the local commercial strip, 12<sup>th</sup> Street NE. Brookland was typical of such new suburbs in all respects except that it was racially integrated, a characteristic which it has retained. The area also quickly took on a strong Catholic flavor, with the establishment of Catholic University (1885), the Franciscan Monastery (1899), Trinity College (1900), and St. Anthony’s Parish (1892). Soon after a vibrant community life developed, dominated not only by churches, schools and shops but also centers of fellowship and entertainment (the Masonic Temple, 1911; Brookland Billiard Parlor, 1934<sup>3</sup>; Newton Theatre, 1937), and restaurants and tea houses of the local sort.

To the mid-1930s the area north of Michigan Avenue had served as a rail yard attached to the B&O Railroad tracks which separate the neighborhood from the University. Extensive stockyards existed there also.<sup>4</sup> In 1934 B&O removed this yard and sold the western portion of the land (along the tracks) to developers who constructed the present Turkey Thicket community, while a large portion to the east was purchased by the city as the Turkey Thicket Recreation Center. A smaller area south of this new development but still north of Michigan Avenue and adjacent to the railroad tracks had already seen some minor commercial construction but was soon to be rebuilt for community retail use.

**Construction of the Brookland Recreation Center:** All of square 3822 (bounded by the B&O Railroad tracks on the west, Michigan Avenue on the south, 10<sup>th</sup> Street on the east and Perry Place on the north) was called “Talbert Farm”<sup>5</sup> at least to 1936 and was owned by Charles H. and Lida Tompkins (prominent local builders) in 1938. This land they sold to

<sup>1</sup> Originally named the Brookland Recreation Center, not to be confused with the Turkey Thicket Recreation Center, a city-owned center almost directly across the street and of a later date.

<sup>2</sup> For example the landmarked Newton Theater at 3601 12<sup>th</sup> St, the now-refaced Brookland Shopping Center immediately adjacent to Atlantic Electric Supply at 3730 10<sup>th</sup> St, St. Anthony’s Church 1026 Monroe St, and buildings at 3600, 3617, 3623, 3739, and 3739 12<sup>th</sup> St, and at 1029 Perry St; all of these were built in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

<sup>3</sup> At 3522 12<sup>th</sup> St NE 1934-35.

<sup>4</sup> These appear in the relevant plat books.

<sup>5</sup> Plat map for that year; the name Wm. A. Wimsatt appears on the same square.

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the Home Construction Company<sup>6</sup>, which in turn sold the lots to individual buyers. Lot 805<sup>7</sup> was still owned by Home Construction when a permit was applied for on 17 August 1938 (No. 215693) for construction of a one-story brick bowling alley, costing \$52,000. The “designer” was William E. St. Cyr Barrington. In the following year the Brooklyn [sic]<sup>8</sup> Recreation Center, Inc. received a permit (17 July 1939, No. 224648) for Barrington<sup>9</sup> to expand the building by one story. (Home Construction was the builder.)

The architect Barrington (he appears under various guises in the records: Edward, William E., William C., and using only initials) was a prominent practitioner and of long career, having studied under Jules Henri De Sibour<sup>10</sup>. Building permits attributed to him in the recently-established city database of only-new construction show his name on 108 documents between 1923 and 1947 in all parts of the city, almost all of these being brick houses, and apartment and commercial buildings. In 1938-39 he worked almost exclusively for Home Construction. His earlier career, though, had been in interior work, mostly of fashionable clubs both in Washington and other East Coast cities, often described as having rather fanciful designs.<sup>11</sup> He also had responsibility for moving the homes adjoining Conduit Road NW when it was widened and renamed MacArthur Boulevard.

The Brookland Recreation Center was largely a bowling alley, although it also offered such other amenities as a barber shop and “luncheonette”.<sup>12</sup> The 28 alleys were built for duckpins (on both floors<sup>13</sup>) and described as very popular with local bowlers in press accounts.

**The Brookland Bowling Alleys:** A more local hand than Tompkins was involved in the development of the Brookland Recreation Center – Paul F. Moore, Sr., a native Washingtonian and founder in 1924 of the local institution Brookland Hardware Store. He also built bowling alleys in Takoma and Fort Davis.<sup>14</sup> Press accounts also mention the alleys’ managers, though it is difficult to access their exact relationship to each other: Samuel M. Tompkins, brother of the builder;<sup>15</sup> Howard Campbell, a prominent local bowler and alleys manager after whom the premier local event was named and apparently the first manager of the Brookland Recreation Center;<sup>16</sup> and Karl L. Gochenour, “among the top 10 bowlers in the country”, described as part owner and manager after the Recreation Center changed its name to the Brookland Bowling Alleys.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Shown as headquartered at 1906 M St NW in the 1940 City Directory; the company was owned by Tompkins (Wash Post 30 June 1941 p. 19).

<sup>7</sup> It often shows as lot 134/81-83 (or, in one instance lot 81-82) in its earliest building permits; and entry in the Recorder of Deeds records explains: “lot 805 taxed as 134”.

<sup>8</sup> Simply a mistake. The accompanying blueprint is titled “Brookland Recreation Center”.

<sup>9</sup> In the earlier permit Barrington’s address was the Chamber Building downtown, but in 1939 he gave his address as 3732 10<sup>th</sup> St NE – the neighboring shopping center.

<sup>10</sup> For information on Barrington see the Wash Post 31 Oct 1934 p. 11, 27 June 1976 p. 26.

<sup>11</sup> Besides the 1934 article cited above, see the Wash Post 28 Aug 1932 p. R2.

<sup>12</sup> See the Wash Post 20 Apr 1950 p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Wash Post 20 Mar 1949 p. C2, 20 Apr 1950 p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Wash Post 6 Apr 1958 p. A18.

<sup>15</sup> Wash Post 31 Mar 1965 p. B9, where he is erroneously shows as manager from 1937 to 1950.

<sup>16</sup> Wash Post 24 Jan 1939 p. 18.

<sup>17</sup> Wash Post 10 Jan 1949 p. 10, 20 July 1980 p. C6.

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Just when and how the Brookland Recreation Center became the Brookland Bowling Alleys is not clear. The former name appears in press accounts only to 1941, replaced afterward by the latter,<sup>18</sup> but "Recreation Center" stays in the City Directories until 1948. On the other hand, "Brookland Bowling Alleys" is used by news accounts as early as 1940 and continues to the end of the alleys' life in 1950.<sup>19</sup> That the two names refer to the same establishment is clearly shown by a review of deeds and trusts on the property, where the square and lot listed as Brookland Recreation Center in the original building permit (cited above) is later listed as "Brookland Bowling Alley [sic]"<sup>20</sup> The Tompkins Company continued to own the building and leased it to Brookland Bowling Alleys, Inc.<sup>21</sup>

The Brookland Bowling Alleys was one of a collection of popular dedicated bowling alleys in the city (there were also private lanes in clubhouses, universities and other social venues), hosting the regular games of such groups as the Taxicab League, the Intersorority Pinettes, and the Brookland Merchants League. It also served in varying years as the venue for important tournaments, including the Howard Campbell Sweepstakes, the Brookland Sweepstakes, and the Washington City Duckpin Association's City-Wide Tournament.<sup>22</sup> This was a period of regular increase in the number of bowling alleys in the city: a review of listings in the City Directory shows that alleys grew from 12 in 1940 to 22 in 1943 (the peak year, including four in northeast Washington), and then began a decline to 17 in 1948 and 13 in 1956 (of which none were in northeast). The Brookland alleys' closest competition was just pleasant walk away, where both King Pin and National Amusement Club were housed at the strip shopping center at 1309 Rhode Island Avenue NE.

**Burning of the Bowling Alleys and Coming of Atlantic Electric Supply:** On the morning of 19 April 1950 a "man-punishing" fire destroyed the Brookland Bowling Alleys.<sup>23</sup> A cigarette or short-circuit was blamed for the near-total loss of the building's interior, estimated at a \$125,000 loss.<sup>24</sup> The Fire Chief called in 34 engines, four trucks, two rescue squads, and two ambulances to fight the blaze; nine firefighters were hospitalized, most as a result of the noxious fumes given off by wax burning from the alleys' floors. The first floor sank into the building's foundations and the ceiling came near to collapse, but the "fireproof" structure's walls were saved.

The old Brookland Bowling Alleys underwent a series of repairs in 1951-52<sup>25</sup>, under the direction of the original architect, Barrington, and was reopened in 1952 as the new offices of the Atlantic Electric Supply Corp. and Atlantic Hardware Division. Atlantic leased the building from owner James E. Reid, who sold it to Tenth Street Corp (of Maryland) in 1954, and they in turn to Atlantic in 1974.<sup>26</sup> Photographs before and after the fire show no important change in the outward appearance of the building.

<sup>18</sup> The last mention of the old name in the Washington Post is 1 May 1941 p. 24.

<sup>19</sup> For example, Wash Post 31 Mar 1940 p. X8, continuing to references to 1949, e.g. Wash Post 4 Jan 1949 p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> For example, 28 Mar 1945 (Liber 8086/folio 171). The property underwent a long series of trusts and leases in the 1940-50s

<sup>21</sup> Wash Post 20 Apr 1950 p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Wash Post, various dates. Interestingly, the Alleys never seem to have advertised in the community newspaper Brookland-Woodridge Guide.

<sup>23</sup> Wash Post 20 Apr 1950 p. 1, Times-Herald 20 Apr 1950 p. 5, where the building is erroneously described as having been built in 1935.

<sup>24</sup> Wash Post 18 Aug 1950 p. B1.

<sup>25</sup> Records show six principal permits for those years but the original documents are not readily available for review. See Wash Post and Times-Herald, both 6 Apr 1952. Repairs were reported at \$100,000.

<sup>26</sup> Records of the Washington Board of Realtors.

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## Major Bibliographical References:

The George Washington University (Graduate Program in Historic Preservation), McDaniel, George W., ed, Images of Brookland – The History and Architecture of a Washington Suburb (Historical and Cultural Resources Studies, No. 1). (The George Washington University?), Washington DC, 1979.

Records, Recorder of Deeds

Materials in the Washingtoniana Division of the ML King Library:

Plat maps

Washington Post, Washington Times-Herald

Brookland-Woodridge Guide

Building Permits

City Directories, telephone directories

Washington Board of Realtors records

Name of Property \_\_\_\_\_

County and State \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** \_\_\_\_\_

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Hayden M. Wetzel  
Organization Brookland resident date 28 September 2008  
street & number 1026 Irving St NE telephone (202) 526-5986  
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20017

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## Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**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.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional Items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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## Property Owner

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

name Atlantic Electric Supply Corp.  
street & number 3726 10<sup>th</sup> St NE telephone (202) 526-1300

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city or town Washington state DC zip code 20017

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**Paperwork Reduction 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. 470 *et. seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

Sq 3822/lot 805 (3726 10<sup>th</sup> St NE); property facing 10<sup>th</sup> St NE just north of Michigan Ave NE.

**Boundary Justification:**

The lot contains the subject building.