

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 General Baking Company Bakery (Bond Bread Factory)
If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.

Address 2146 Georgia Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001

Square and lot number(s) Square 2877, Lot 0930

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission ANC 1B

Date of construction 1929-1930 Date of major alteration(s) _____

Architect(s) Corry B. Comstock

Architectural style(s) Art Moderne

Original use Bakery Present use Vacant

Property owner Howard University

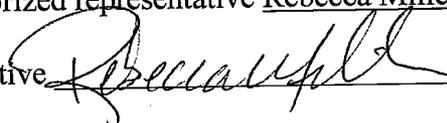
Legal address of property owner 2041 Georgia Avenue, NW, WDC 20060-0001

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 2/7/13

Name and telephone of author of application Peter Sefton/John DeFerrari 202.783.5144

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 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 General Baking Company Bakery
other names/site number Bond Bread Factory

2. Location

street & number 2146 Georgia Avenue NW not for publication
city or town Washington, D.C. vicinity
state District of Columbia code DC county _____ code 001 zip code 20001

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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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
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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commercial/Trade/Bakery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Art Moderne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: _____
walls: Brick, steel, concrete

roof: _____
other: _____

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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 Bond Bread Factory building is a high-style industrial building for Washington, D.C. The building's style, quality craftsmanship, and decorative detailing are rare for the city's industrial building stock. The Bond Bread Factory, although vacant, remains in good condition and retains its integrity.

The Bond Bread Factory occupies a rectangular site in the north section of Square 2877. (Illustration 1) Its northern boundary would be the W Street right-of-way, which runs between Georgia Avenue and Eighth Street NW within a fenced parking lot today. Its west façade stretches south on Eighth Street NW to the Washington Railway and Electric Company Bus Garage, its southern boundary. Its east façade faces the 2100 block of Georgia Avenue NW. The building is constructed entirely of white brick. Each of its three exposed facades presents a radically different configuration.

The Georgia Avenue Facade

The front façade of the Bond Factory faces Georgia Avenue NW. (Illustration 2) It consists of a three story, three bay central pavilion, whose center bay is topped by one story windowless rectangular penthouse. The central pavilion is flanked on either side by a two-bay, two story wing. The building's profile thus assumes the ziggurat configuration often associated with the art deco/art modern style. Although the building now has modern metallic framed windows, they appear similar to the single and paired one-over-one widows shown in the architect's rendering. (Illustration 2a)

The central pavilion's center bay is separated from its flanking bays by piers, which are extruded approximately four inches, rising from the concrete water table at sidewalk level to the top of the third story. From here, their strong vertical lines are carried higher by rectangular terracotta blocks under angled caps which form the corners of the penthouse. Each pier is inscribed with a pair of channels which run to the third story cornice, further enhancing the façade's sense of verticality. Between its terracotta corner blocks, the face of the penthouse is subdivided by three vertical strips of white terracotta block laid at right angles to its brickwork. (Illustration 3)

The central pavilion contains many elements common to the Georgia Avenue façade as a whole (Illustration 4). Framed by extruded outer piers that rise to its block cornice from sidewalk level, it is composed with multiple levels of inset elements. Below a secondary cornice line, the pavilion's center bay has three inset vertical sections, each of which contains a tier of two single windows above a more deeply-inset rectangle of what appear to be protruding terra cotta squares. Each window is deeply inset into its aperture below a course of vertically-aligned bricks and a block sill. (Illustration 5) These inset sections visually suggest that the narrow intervening strips of façade are pilasters. Below a row of blocks, the first story of the center bay contains the building's main entrance. This single doorway presents the building's only overtly ornamental elements. It is topped by a vaguely classically-accented pediment with dental moldings and curved brackets. The doorway is outlined with terra cotta moldings with a picture frame style rounded edge. It is flanked by a pair of identical light fixtures which resemble lanterns, with leaded glass panels and finialed tops and bases. (Illustration 6)

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The outer bays of the central pavilion reflect a similar composition scheme. Beneath a parapet wall and a lower cornice, the second and third story windows are arranged in two tiers above spandrels of terracotta squares, although here the apertures accommodate paired sashes. On the first floor of the south bay, the aperture for the double sashes is above a horizontal pair of spandrels. The first floor of the north bay is largely devoted to a vehicle entrance, flanked by a single door. It is currently covered by a rollup steel security door. (Illustration 7)

The north and south wings are each two stories tall, with two bays separated by a pier with an angled limestone cap. Their composition is similar to that of the central pavilion, with inset apertures for pairs of one-over-one sash windows separated by what are essentially faux pilasters.

The North Façade

The north elevation, which faces a parking lot, was built largely as a one story structure, rather than the two story building depicted in the published pre-construction rendering. (Illustration 8) The two story section of the north wing extends perhaps fifty feet west from the corner of Georgia Avenue, while the central pavilion's three story section extends roughly one and a half times deeper. The exposed facades of these multi-story sections share the basic elements of the Georgia Avenue façade, with bays, some blank and some with window apertures, separated by piers with limestone caps. The one story section, which otherwise extends the full width of the building, lacks most of these features. A single undifferentiated bay beneath a parapet wall with only an upper block cornice, it is penetrated by a half-dozen pairs of one-over-one windows. It was presumably designed with the expectation that all but its upper stories would be shielded from view by adjacent buildings to the north.

The Eighth Street NW Façade

The Bond Factory's rear façade is divided into two sections. (Illustration 9) A four bay section to the north shares a common roofline with the building's north façade, but the slope of the grade from Georgia Avenue allows it an extra half-story of height. To its south is a three bay section bordering the WRECO Bus Garage, which is two-and-a-half stories tall. Like the upper story of the wings of the Georgia Avenue façade, the second story of this section is only about fifty feet deep. Although the south façade is now hidden by the north wall of the WRECO Garage, it appears that the section between the rear of the south wings of the Georgia Avenue and Eighth Street elevations was an extension of the one story structure revealed by the north façade.

The Eighth Street façade shares many elements with the Georgia Avenue façade. Its bays are divided by protruding piers with angled limestone caps. Each story other than the first has an aperture capable of holding a pair of single windows, but no spandrels. In the bays of the one-and-a-half story section, many of the apertures are filled with sets of metal louvers, apparently to ventilate the factory's fleet garage. Each of these bays has a pair of small rectangular windows just above the water table.

The two-and-a-half story section shares these elements, as well as taller parapet wall with an upper and lower cornice similar to those on the Georgia Avenue wings. Eighth Street slopes downhill as it proceeds south toward V Street, which allows this section to have a full height door and larger lower story windows. The first story of the southernmost bay is largely devoted to a vehicle entrance for the garage.

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The Eighth Street elevation provides the clearest view of the factory's orange terracotta tile smokestack, which rises about five stories from the south side of the central portion of the building. The smokestack has a graceful cylindrical shape, with a flared top capped by a spark arrester. It is a distinctive element of the local skyline.

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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 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.)

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Commerce

Industry

Period of Significance

1929-1971

Significant Dates

1929-1930

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Corry B. Comstock

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

The Bond Bread Factory meets National Register Criterion A because it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history and the development of the District of Columbia. The Bond Bread Factory is the city's outstanding representative of the "sanitary bakery" movement in industrial architecture. It embodies its era's application of the principles of sanitation and nutrition to food safety and public health as they understood them. It also is an extraordinarily rare example of a modern manufactory constructed by private industry within the District of Columbia and an outstanding representative of the period in economic history when nationally-advertised products were manufactured in the city. As such it is also an important marker of the importance of bakeries and other light industrial activities to the development of this neighborhood, which stood at what was once one of Washington's major transportation crossroads. Finally, it is a notable touchstone in the collective memory of the city, with its reputation for perfuming the neighborhood around Griffith Stadium and the Howard campus with the aroma of fresh-baked bread.

The Bond Bread Factory meets National Register Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction, as well as representing the work of a master. It also possesses high artistic values as a fusion of the art moderne style with industrial architecture. The Bond Bread Factory is the city's finest example of a factory building executed in the art moderne style, which allowed the building to clearly express the technological modernity of its products and serve as an advertisement for the company that commissioned it. Corry B. Comstock is a nationally-significant industrial architect specializing in bakeries. Besides being his only building in Washington, DC, it is among his major works. Comstock was primarily a designer of functional buildings, but the Bond Bread Factory is a building of special distinction. While factory commissions of the time seldom involved budgets for ornamentation or artistic embellishment, Comstock achieved aesthetic distinction through the manipulation of such architectural elements as the planes within a façade and contrasting brickwork. The Bond Bread Factory has been called "stately," a term which was validated when plans were devised to use it as a "little city hall" in the 1980s.

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

The Bond Bread Factory reflects an important stage in the development of the District of Columbia as the city's outstanding representative of the "sanitary bakery" movement in industrial architecture. It also represents a stage in the city's economic history when modern factories were constructed to manufacture national brands locally. Its construction was a significant event in the development of light industry in a neighborhood that was once one of the city's major transportation hubs.

Of the several historic Shaw bakery buildings that remain standing, the Bond Bread Building is the most architecturally distinctive. At a time when many new factory buildings were nondescript, the General Baking Company clearly sought a distinguished and dignified look for its Georgia Avenue plant, reflected in its commissioning the nationally-prominent bakery architect Corry B. Comstock to design it. The brick-and-concrete building's stepped, three-level façade is in keeping with art deco design practices, which favored ziggurat-like shapes.¹ Its sleek vertical piers with their pointed stone caps at the roofline signal a touch of the soaring optimism of the art deco age, though the building is not actually very tall. The design adheres to the

¹ Hans Wirz and Richard Striner, *Washington Deco: Art Deco Design in the Nation's Capital*, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984), 35.

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“stripped classical” or “traditionalized Moderne” style typical of Washington’s federal offices —the verve of art deco checked by the constraints of neoclassicism.ⁱⁱ The overall message, though restrained, is of pride and permanence.

Bread-making in the early 20th Century

At the beginning of the twentieth century, food sanitation had become a nationwide obsession, culminating in Upton Sinclair's influential *The Jungle*, about the horrors of the meatpacking industry. Bread-making was also a topic of concern.ⁱⁱⁱ An article in the *New York Times* in 1896 excoriated small traditional bakeries in that city (“The walls and floors are covered with vermin, spiders hang from the rafters, and cats, dogs, and chickens are running around in the refuse...”) and asserted that “the cause of this trouble is that small bakeries are owned by ignorant persons. The large bakeries are conducted in an exemplary manner.”^{iv}

Contemporary newspaper articles suggest a campaign to get people to buy their bread from large factories. An 1893 article in the *Evening Star* observed that “Home-made bread is a back number. Machine-made bread takes the cake. The twentieth century bakery is a thing of beauty and the up-to-date baker is a joy forever.”^v At the popular Pure Food Show at the Washington Convention Hall in 1909, D.C. bakeries put on a massive exhibit that filled the K Street end of the hall. Visitors could observe machines doing the work in a modern factory setting; dirty human hands never touched the bread.^{vi} In that same vein, a 1919 advertisement for Dorsch’s White Cross Bakery in *The Washington Times* urged consumers to give up their old-fashioned reliance on the corner store: “Why buy bread at the grocer's, fresh for each meal, when it is possible to get *good, wholesome, and fresh* bread that tastes as good at the *last bite* as it did when you first cut into the warm loaf?”^{vii}

History of the General Baking Company in Washington

The General Baking Company’s predecessor in Washington D.C., was the Boston Baking Company, which operated its plant at 119 First Street SW, a site at the foot of Capitol Hill that is now occupied by the U.S. Botanical Garden building. The company was primarily a commercial producer of bread, competing with several other local bakeries for the market in bread sold at grocery stores for 5 cents a loaf. The Boston Baking Company’s brands included “Butter Krust Bread,” “Grandma’s Bread,” and “Pan Dandy Bread,” which it advertised in 1908 as being “better for you than the ordinary fluffy ‘baker’s’ bread,” having “all the flavor and substance of the finest home-made bread.”^{viii} “There is no finer and sweeter bread baked than the bread bearing the BOSTON LABELS,” a 1911 advertisement proclaimed.^{ix} The Boston Baking Company was one of several companies that worked hard to publicize the idea for Washingtonians that factory-made bread could be every bit as good as homemade bread but more sanitary. It contributed to the “Model and Modern Bakery” at the 1909 D.C. Pure Food Show. Other participants at the time included Corby Brothers, Behrens & Sons, the Havenner Baking Company, and Michael Holzbeirlein.

Early in 1911, rumors started circulating that a giant new “bread trust” was to be formed in New York City. A group of independent bakeries were planning to pool their resources to combat the powerful Ward Baking Company, headed by Robert B. and George S. Ward. Originally to be called the National Bread Company, the

ⁱⁱ Wirz and Striner, 89ff.

ⁱⁱⁱ See, for example, “Clean Bread,” full-page advertisement in *The Washington Times*, Jul. 26, 1908, 10 and “Bond Bread and pure milk—both are safe foods for him,” advertisement in *The Washington Post*, Dec. 15, 1919, 11.

^{iv} “War on Filthy Bakeries” in *The New York Times*, Apr. 8, 1896.

^v “The Staff Of Life: How Bread Is Made in a Big Bakery” in *The Evening Star*, Jul. 15, 1893.

^{vi} “Pure Food For All” in *The Washington Post*, Nov. 14, 1909, ES10.

^{vii} Advertisement in *The Washington Times*, Feb. 27, 1919, p. 15.

^{viii} Advertisement in *The Washington Post*, Nov. 16, 1908, p. 12.

^{ix} Advertisement in *The Washington Post*, Jul. 4, 1911, p.3.

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trust combined 21 baking companies in 12 northeastern and midwestern cities, with assets worth some \$25 million. When the merger was completed in June, the name had been changed to the General Baking Company. Aware of the sensitivities at the time to the formation of commercial monopolies, which were being fought by Theodore Roosevelt's Justice Department, the new company issued a statement about its intentions:

There is no purpose or thought of the establishment of a monopoly in the manufacture and sale of bread; such a monopoly would be impossible, as in most localities, with few exceptions, only one baking company has been acquired, leaving competition open to hundreds of others.

The real purpose of the company is progressive through the advantage of wise buying of materials, the employment of economic, scientific, and up-to-date methods of manufacturing, and by its extensive advertising system it proposes to educate the public to a higher standard of quality in bread.^x

Boston Baking Company's Richard J. Earnshaw had stated in March, perhaps disingenuously, that it wasn't planning to join the new conglomerate. "We never have received an offer for our plant. If enough money is offered us we, of course, will sell out.... The talk of a 'bread trust' however, is ridiculous."^{xi} Nevertheless, three months later the Boston Baking Company was one of the companies that formed the new organization.^{xii} Key to the merger was Harry B. Leary, Sr. (1864-1938), who had made his fortune in the commercial boating business in Baltimore before coming to Washington to represent several western flourmills. Along with Earnshaw, Leary controlled Boston Baking and engineered its merger into the General Baking Company.^{xiii}

At first, the bakery continued to produce the same bread products as the Boston Baking Company had previously sold. Then in 1919, General Baking Company introduced its Bond Bread line, its trademark brand, to Washingtonians. As the company extensively advertised, it held a special competition in November 1919 at the local YWCA, attended by 2,210 Washington housewives, who all brought their best homemade bread to the event. A "committee of impartial judges" selected the best 121 loaves from the lot, and "from these best homemade loaves Bond Bread has been patterned—in order that the children and grown-ups of Washington and vicinity may have better bread—more delicious bread, than they have ever had before."^{xiv}

The new product was called Bond Bread because each loaf had General Baking Company's guarantee printed on its wrapper, warranting that "the loaf of bread contained within this germ and dust proof wrapper is made from the following pure food materials, and no other ingredients of any kind: best spring wheat flour, compressed yeast, pure filtered water, best fine salt, pure lard, cane sugar, and condensed milk."

During the 1920s, William B. Ward formed a holding company called United Bakeries to operate more than 35 plants controlled by his family, which was a dominant force in the New York City market. In 1925, he set up Continental Bakeries, which absorbed other companies, including Taggart Bakeries, the creators of Wonder Bread, and soon controlled over 100 plants. Then, in 1926, Ward acquired General Baking, which controlled 42 plants, and attempted to consolidate all three firms into a colossus called the Ward Food Products Corporation. However, the Justice Department filed an anti-trust suit and in 1927 obtained a consent decree requiring that connections between the three firms be dissolved. Within 18 months, William B. Ward died suddenly at his desk at age 44, complicating the decoupling of the firms, which took years.^{xv}

^x "Bakers In Merger" in *The Washington Post*, Jun. 15, 1911, p. 1.

^{xi} "Bread Trust in Deadlock" in *The Washington Post*, Mar. 15, 1911, p. 12.

^{xii} *Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Washington, District of Columbia*. (Philadelphia: G. Wm. Baist, 1913), Vol. II, Plate 5.

^{xiii} "H.B. Leary Sr. Dies; Business Man, 74" in *The New York Times*, May 13, 1938.

^{xiv} Advertisement in *The Washington Post*, Dec. 15, 1919, p. 11.

^{xv} *Handbook of American Business History: Manufacturing*, edited by David O. Whitten, Bessie Emrick Whitten (Greenwood, 1997), 47, and *Combination in the American Bread-baking Industry*, 127-128.

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By 1928, government plans to relocate the U.S. Botanical Garden to General Baking Company's site at the foot of Capitol Hill forced General Baking to look for a new location. Company officials chose the site of a neighborhood swimming pool, formerly operated by the District of Columbia Sports and Amusement Club, on Georgia Avenue in Shaw.^{xvi}

The site was about a block and a half south of another large bakery complex, the Corby Baking Company, at 2301 Georgia Avenue NW. The Corby Baking Company had been founded by Charles I. Corby (1871-1926) and his brother William (1867-1935). Their bakery, which at one point was Washington's largest, was constructed in 1902 with subsequent additions in 1912 and later that filled the block.

Opposite the new General Baking site on the east side of Georgia Avenue was Griffith Stadium, where a number of Washington baseball and football teams played. For years to come, attendees at ball games would be treated to the sweet smells of the Bond Bread factory wafting over them as they sat in the stadium's bleachers.^{xvii}

Excavation work at the bakery site, by the Charles L. Stockhausen Company of Baltimore, began in 1929. General Baking awarded \$650,000 in contracts for construction of the state-of-the-art building, made of white-glazed brick and reinforced concrete. Corry B. Comstock of New York, an experienced bakery architect, designed the stately new structure. An article in the *Evening Star* noted that the building would be one of the largest and most modernly equipped in Washington. "Particular attention will be paid to sanitary measures, the bread being touched by human hands only twice in the baking and once in the wrapping."^{xviii} It was completed in 1930.^{xix} By that time the General Baking Company owned 50 plants serving cities in 18 states.

The 1930s and 1940s saw a shift in bread marketing. Sanitation fears were no longer as prominent in the mind of the public, which was growing used to "clean" packaged foods. As a result marketing shifted toward stressing the nutritional benefits of eating bread on a daily basis. General Baking was competing head to head with Continental Baking, which had taken over the Corby Company. Bond Bread squared off on grocery store shelves with Continental's Wonder Bread. General Baking upped the ante in 1931 when it licensed patents from the Paediatric Research Foundation for fortifying its Bond Bread with vitamin D. Research in the 1920s at Johns Hopkins University and elsewhere had demonstrated the health benefits of vitamin D, known as the sunshine vitamin because it is absorbed through the skin directly from the sun. In September 1931, the manager of the Georgia Avenue bakery had an army of messenger boys hand-deliver thousands of loaves of Bond Bread to "doctors, dentists, nurses, and matrons of schools and hospitals in Washington and adjacent territory" to publicize its newly enriched bread.^{xx} Continental Baking Company soon responded by adding more nutrients to Wonder Bread, eventually culminating in the famous "Builds Strong Bodies 12 Ways" advertising slogan. Other nutrition-oriented marketing campaigns from both companies focused on the use of unbleached flour as well as larger amounts of milk to increase the vitamins, minerals, and protein content of the bread.

Consumption of plain white bread—the primary product of the General Baking Company's Georgia Avenue plant—peaked in the early 1950s, declining after that largely due to the introduction of competing types of breads and bread products. The company at that point was producing bread under the Bond and Blossom brands. The *Washington Times-Herald* reported in 1953 that baking was the largest processing industry in

^{xvi} "Bakers To Locate on Georgia Avenue" in *The Evening Star*, Jun. 12, 1928.

^{xvii} There are several reminiscences on the Web, such as <http://washingtondcmemories.com/mem12.html> In many cases, the individual who remembers the aroma of bread mistakenly thinks it came from the Wonder Bread factory. The Wonder Bread factory was better known but was not as close as the Bond factory, which was the much more likely source.

^{xviii} "\$650,000 Bakery Work Is Awarded" in *The Evening Star*, Jul. 24, 1929.

^{xix} "New General Baking Co. Plant Nearly Completed" in *The Evening Star*, Mar. 16, 1930.

^{xx} "Doctors Make Test of Vitamin D Bread" in *The Washington Post*, Sep. 27, 1931, p. M12.

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Washington, with 17 major bakeries scattered about the city. The industry employed 3,000 people who worked around the clock to produce breads, cakes, and rolls of every description. Further, according to “industry spokesmen,” residents of the greater Washington metropolitan area spent \$23 million per year on bakery products, eating about 300,000 pounds of bread every day.^{xxi}

In the late 1950s the General Baking Company began a campaign of expansion and diversification, purchasing Van de Kamp's Holland Dutch Bakers, Inc., of Los Angeles, which represented its first break into the west coast market. The following year it acquired Eddy Bakeries, Inc., of Helena, Montana, to gain a foothold in the mountain states. However, by the early 1960s, General Baking Company's profit margins on bread making had slimmed to less than 1 percent. The company was facing stiff competition not only from dominant Continental Baking Company but also from in-store bakeries at local supermarkets, which often were able to offer fresher, cheaper bread. In addition, the interest of corporate managers had shifted to tourism. The company purchased tourist facilities at Yellowstone National Park and Everglades National Park, among others, and in 1967 changed its name to General Host in 1967 to reflect its diversification. In the early 1970s it began selling off its bakeries to concentrate on other forms of retail.^{xxii}

By 1971, the Georgia Avenue plant had shut down, and the D.C. government purchased the building for use as a community services center. The D.C. government had received federal funds to renovate the bakery building and run the community services center in it jointly with the People's Involvement Corporation (PIC), a federally-financed anti-poverty group that was given a 30-year tenancy.^{xxiii} In 2001, when PIC's lease expired, the D.C. government proposed exchanging the property with Howard University for a parcel of land at Florida and Sherman Avenues NW. The university planned to build a new development on the bakery site called Howard Town Center, a mix of housing and retail businesses. A separate project of offices, retail and housing was likewise to be developed on the parcel of land obtained by the city. The D.C. City Council ratified the arrangement in 2006, and the exchange of properties was completed in 2008.

The Architect: Corry B. Comstock

The Bond Bakery was designed by New York architect-engineer Corry B. Comstock (1874-1932), an extremely significant figure in the branch of industrial architecture concerned with baking and a designer of notable structures connected with sports.

Born in Pittston, Pennsylvania on October 15, 1874, Comstock worked as a carpenter as a young man. By 1900, he had migrated to Pittsburgh, where he continued in this trade and apparently completed his education. By 1905, he was advertising his services as an architect and refrigeration engineer with offices in the Union Stockyard on Herra Island. It is likely that Comstock began his lifelong association with the Ward Baking Company during these early years in Pittsburgh.^{xxiv}

The Ward family's first bakeries were small shops in Manhattan. Just before the Civil War, Hugh Ward relocated his business to Pittsburgh, where his sons Robert B. and George S. Ward's bread-baking firm erected

^{xxi} “Bakery Output in Washington Hits High Mark” in *The Washington Times-Herald*, Aug. 9, 1953.

^{xxii} General Host Corporation company history, at <http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/General-Host-Corporation-Company-History.html>

^{xxiii} “2 Little City Halls Set in NW” in *The Washington Post*, Jul. 27, 1971, C1.

^{xxiv} Comstock's birth date is referenced in numerous Ships' Passenger Manifests, see, for example,

http://search.ancestry.com/iexec?htx=View&r=an&dbid=7488&iid=NYT715_1352-0020&fn=Corry+B&ln=Comstock&st=r&ssrc=&pid=4005265975, accessed February 1, 2013. His residence was captured in the 1896 City Directory for Pittston, PA, 208, the 1900 U.S. Census, 21st Ward, ED 257, Sheet 13B, and the 1902 Pittsburgh City Directory, 354, and 1906 Pittsburgh City Directory, 2079. All accessed online at <http://www.ancestry.com>. January 20, 2013. .

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what was billed as the city's first "scientific" and "sanitary" bakery in 1903. During the next several years, the Ward brothers expanded their operations to Chicago, then to Providence, Cleveland, and Boston.^{xxv} In 1908, they decided to re-enter the New York City market, this time on a large scale.^{xxvi} As Robert B. Ward recalled;

Having selected a suitable location for the establishment of a plant in Brooklyn and in the Bronx section I took the architects with me and embarked for Europe. We were gone some thirty days and when we returned the plans were completed. They were made literally in mid-Atlantic. I took this novel course so as to be entirely free from the usual interruptions of business in an office.^{xxvii}

Ward's party, which included Comstock, landed in New York in October 1909, just three months before the *New York Times* reported that the firm would erect a six story plant covering much of a block along Southern Boulevard in the Bronx and a similarly large plant on Pacific Street in Brooklyn. Comstock was the architect for both plants, with bakeries in East Orange, New Jersey and Manhattan soon to follow.^{xxviii}

By 1911, New York's established bakeries had organized their "Bread Trust," the General Baking Company, to combat the Wards, and both sides battled for market share by such tactics as distributing wagonloads of free loaves house-to-house.^{xxix} Comstock's factories became propaganda weapons in this trade war. The Ward Baking Company promoted itself as technologically advanced, endowing nutritional research at universities, and its "Tip-Top Bread" as hygienic and healthful. A 1911 *Architects' and Builders' Magazine* feature on the new plants observed that "No place can be too clean for the production of food, and with an apparent full recognition of the advertising value of this fact" the Wards "have made their buildings within and without as clean and as sanitary, both in fact and in appearance, as it is possible to make them."^{xxx} Comstock's terracotta-clad Bronx plant was called "a beautiful structure of white tile, with graceful Grecian outlines," which produced bread safe from human contact..., literally baked from start to finish untouched by the human hand."^{xxxi} This imagery of "spotless cleanliness" was enhanced by the plants' underground loading docks and garages, which eliminated "horses, harness, and stables" and enabled delivery of "every loaf" in electric trucks, "driven by clean-cut healthy salesman uniformed and gloved in white."^{xxxii}

Comstock's work for the Wards soon moved beyond the baking business. In addition to his keen promotional instincts, Robert B. Ward was a passionate baseball fan. After allegedly being unable to close a deal for the New York Yankees, the Ward brothers became prominent backers of the "outlaw" Federal League, which challenged the American and National League during the early nineteen-teens. Comstock designed the steel and concrete grandstands at Washington Park,^{xxxiii} the home of the Wards' Brooklyn Tip-Tops, who changed their name to the "Federals" after New York's newspaper publishers that they would eschew reporting the games

^{xxv} *Bread Facts*, (New York: Research Products Division, Ward Baking Company, 1920) 106-109, and "Sudden Death of Robert B. Ward," *Bakers' Review*, November, 1915, 76.

^{xxvi} "Bread Trust has a Rival," *New York Times*, March 3, 1910

^{xxvii} F.C. Lane. "Famous Magnates of the Federal League," in *Baseball Magazine*, July 3, 1915, 25-29, online at

www.la84foundation.org/SportsLibrary/BBM/1915/bbm3g.pdf, accessed January 20, 2013. New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957 establish that a party including Ward and Comstock landed in New York on October 10, 1909 after embarking from Cherbourg. See

http://search.ancestry.com/texec?htx=View&r=an&dbid=7488&iid=NYT715_1352-0020&fn=Corry+B&ln=Comstock&st=r&ssrc=&pid=4005265975, accessed February 1, 2013.

^{xxviii} "In the Real Estate Field", *New York Times*, February 2, 1910 and February 19, 1910., accessed at

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F60612F73C5417738DDDAB0894DA405B808DF1D3>, January 22, 2013.

^{xxix} "Bread Trust Begins War in Brownsville," *New York Times*, January 3, 1911,

<http://select.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F50D11F83C5517738DDDA0894D9405B818DF1D3>,

^{xxx} "Ward Bread Company Bakeries in the Boroughs of Brooklyn and the Bronx," *Architects and Builders Magazine* June, 1911) Volume 43, Number 9, 485

^{xxxi} Lane. 106-108.

^{xxxii} *Bread Facts*, 110.

^{xxxiii} "Federal League Park and Postless Stand," *The World of Baseball*, December 11, 1915, 11

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before advertising the Wards' bread for free. In 1914, Comstock designed Harrison Field, the home of the Newark Peppers, and when the Federal League threatened to construct a stadium with innovative post less grandstands near the Giants' Polo Grounds in Manhattan, Comstock was announced as its architect.^{xxxiv}

When Pittsburgh's Federal League team appeared financially shaky, Ward arranged for Comstock to become its co-owner, as well as the rebuilder of its Exhibition Park grandstand, completing his improbable fifteen-year journey from carpenter to major league franchise owner.^{xxxv} The Pittsburgh Rebels, who took their nickname from playing manager Ennis "Rebel" Oakes, prospered under Comstock's co-ownership, going from a losing record in 1914 to finishing a half-game behind the league champions the following season. Comstock was highly active in league affairs, and, after interference by the more established leagues, internal conflicts, and the sudden death of Robert B. Ward caused the demise of the Federal League after the 1915 season, Pittsburgh and Brooklyn were among the four franchises for which compensation was successfully negotiated.^{xxxvi}

By 1916, Comstock had established an office for his engineering and architectural practice on Manhattan's Park Avenue.^{xxxvii} The Raymond Concrete Pile Company used photographs of a Ward plant in its advertising and listed Comstock among the prominent architects who used their products.^{xxxviii} He invented a commercial oven, which the *New York Times* reported was still widely used during the 1930s, and became an executive in a steel products firm and a director of the Ward Baking Company, while continuing to design bakeries and other industrial structures. In 1922, he designed Iceland, a mammoth 200-foot long skating rink behind a glazed terracotta façade on 53rd Street at Broadway. Iceland, for years the only large indoor rink in the city, had financial backing from the famous disappearing Judge John F. Crater, but Comstock apparently held some equity, as he remained president of the company for the final decade of his life.^{xxxix}

Through the tumultuous growth and restructuring of the Ward empire in the mid-1920s, Comstock served as a director of both the Ward and Continental Baking Companies and remained active as an engineer-architect. He designed large bakeries, including simultaneously constructed plants for both the Ward and General Baking companies in Baltimore, where he had designed large packinghouse facilities since the nineteen-teens, as well a large factory for the Gottfried Baking Company on 51st Street in Manhattan.^{xl}

The Bond Factory and the Gottfried Bakery commission in Manhattan were probably codas to Comstock's architectural career. When the Bond Factory produced its first loaves on June 2, 1930, the Great Depression was casting a pall over the construction industry. By 1932, it was estimated that two-thirds of the construction workers in New York City were out of work, and the team fortunate enough to be employed designing Rockefeller Center voted to tithe themselves an hour's pay each week for the relief of destitute architects.^{xli} Corry Comstock still had his corporate directorships, and presidency of the Iceland Company. He spent much of

^{xxxiv} "Break Ground For Park; Newark Federal Ground Will Be Ready April 20 -- To Seat 20,000" *New York Times*, March 2, 1915. Also, David Pietrusza and Lee McPhail. *Major Leagues* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co, 1991), 245 and "Federal League Park and Postless Stand," *The World of Baseball*, December 11, 1915, 11
^{xxxv} David R. Leavitt, *The Battle That Forged Modern Baseball: The Federal League Challenge* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), 99 and "Pittsburgh Feds Reorganize," *New York Times*, March 10, 1914,

^{xxxvi} See Leavitt for a detailed account of Comstock's involvements in the higher councils of the league, including winning approval from the New York City Board of Aldermen to close Manhattan streets for the proposed ballpark (228), as well as the settlement discussions and protracted lawsuit.

^{xxxvii} *Manhattan City Directory, 1916*, online at <http://www.ancestry.com>

^{xxxviii} "Better Foundations," *The American Architect*, May 14, 1913, 17, was illustrated with Comstock's Schorsch Building in the Bronx and contained a testimonial from the architect.

^{xxxix} "Skating Rink for West 53rd," *New York Times*, April 22, 1922 and Christopher Grey, "An Old-Fashioned Dance to the Music of Time," Real Estate Section, *New York Times*, October 13, 1996, at <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/10/13/realestate/an-old-fashioned-dance-to-the-music-of-time.html>, accessed Jan. 22, 2013

^{xl} See New York City Office of Metropolitan History, Building Permits Database 1900-1986, 1930 OB 53, online at <http://www.metrohistory.com/searchfront.htm>, accessed January 19, 2013.. "Real Estate." *The Baltimore Sun*, Jul 20, 1919; C57, "Real Estate Deals And Building News: Bids Asked For Erection Of New Structure" *The Baltimore Sun*; Oct 1, 1926; 21

^{xli} Daniel Okrent. *Great Fortune: The Epic of Rockefeller Center* (New York: Viking, 2003) 188-192.

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1930-31 in a successful proxy battle to replace the chair and most of the board of the Ward Bakery Company, but by the following year his health was failing and Iceland was in foreclosure.^{xlii} On October 24, 1932, after spending two weeks at home with severe heart problems, he left his house in the prosperous suburb of Pelham for his midtown Manhattan office. At about 6:00 PM, he asked his bookkeeper to pick up a newspaper downstairs. When the bookkeeper returned a few minutes later, he found Comstock dead on the floor, with a bullet in his head and a pistol in his hand. Documents on his desk showed that he was several months behind in the office rent and that he wished his ashes to be scattered from the new George Washington Bridge, an engineering feat he greatly admired.^{xliii}

The Bond Bread Factory as Architecture

The construction of the Bond Bread Factory bridged the divide from the boom times of the summer of 1929 to the lengthening shadows of the Great Depression in the summer of 1930. It was designed by at a time of intense competition in the baking industry both locally and nationally, which only grew more acute as the public's purchasing power declined. Bond Bread was a national brand which depended on more than the Washington, DC market, but the fact that the Bond Bread Factory in use through the depression and for thirty years beyond suggests that it was a highly efficient industrial building. However, its architectural qualities extended beyond the merely functional.

The Bond Bread Factory's stark art moderne lines represent the apogee of the values represented in Comstock's bakery designs since the Ward plants of 1910. The building's expansive planes of white surface suggested the cleanliness and sanitary conditions the customer would hope to find within. Its symmetrical yet dramatic massing, ziggurat-style roofline, and central tower projected its era's conception of modernity; they suggest that it employs the latest technology and produces products that reflect more finely-wrought tastes than the typical utilitarian loaf of bread. The Bread Factory creates an interesting contrast with the nearby Dorsch's White Cross Bakery, which was constructed section-by-section earlier in the twentieth century.

The Dorsch Bakery reflects the anxieties of its era by essentially keeping a foot in both past and present. It symbolically evokes the conception of industrial baking as healthy and sanitary with the famous white crosses; yet the arts and crafts styling of its façade also evokes something homey and artisanal: Rather than the impersonal and tasteless sterility associated with a mass-produced product, our bread is as tasty and wholesome as mother's homemade loaf but far safer than the neighborhood baker's! The Bond Factory's message contains no such equivocation. Its era placed its faith in science and its industrial applications, symbolized by the plant's crisp horizontal symmetry of its facade, reflecting the orderly production line within, and its smooth white surfaces, so unlike the unmatched brick textures and irregular projections of the Dorsch Bakery. One feature of the Bond Factory was as remarkable in 1929 as it had been in 1910, when it appeared in Comstock's original Ward bakeries. This was an auditorium, intended primarily for employee meetings, but also loaned out for community events. Letting the cleanliness and order of the production process sell bread through word of mouth was further advanced by factory facilities for hosting tours for school children and tea parties for women's groups.

Corry B. Comstock was an industrial architect who nonetheless designed bakeries that are aesthetically-pleasing as well as highly-functional. Despite the austere factory construction budgets of its time, the Bond

^{xlii} "New Ward Baking Row; Rival Factions Set Different Dates for Directors' Meeting," *New York Times*, January 28, 1931 and "Ward Baking Ousts Kent And Evans; Comstock-Gwinner Faction Wins In All-Night Meeting Of Stockholders," *New York Times*, January 28, 1931, 31.

^{xliii} "Engineer Ends Life In 42d St. Office," *New York Times*, October 25, 1932 and "Comstock Funeral Today," *New York Times*, October 27, 1932, 19.

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Bread Factory is a distinguished and dignified structure. By splitting the face of the main façade into multiple visual planes through protrusions and setbacks, Comstock avoided presenting passers-by and neighbors with blank expanses of white wall. While the factory could have presented a squat profile to the street, Comstock enhanced its verticality with the protruding piers which sweep from sidewalk height to the top of the façade and are accentuated with dramatically-angled contrasting capstones. The integration of the penthouse on the center bay of the central pavilion suggests a tower which further contributes to this effect. Comstock's use of the moderne style removes it from the utilitarian category and raises it to the level of a public building, in much the same way that Arthur B. Heaton's design elevated the neighboring WRECO Bus Garage.^{xliv} This style is associated with such prominent skyscraper projects of the time and would soon become a staple style for federal construction. Its employment helped integrate this factory building into the landscape of a community far different than that of "smokestack cities" like Detroit or Pittsburgh. This recognition of the stately architectural quality of the Bond Bread Factory is not merely a matter of individual taste. Rather, it was validated by the 1970s project to repurpose it as a "little city hall" and community center in the 1970s.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Bread Facts, (New York: Research Products Division, Ward Baking Company, 1920) \ Lane, F.C. . "Famous Magnates of the Federal League," in *Baseball Magazine*, July 3, 1915
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Whitten , David O. and Whitten, Bessie Emrick, editors. *Handbook of American Business History: Manufacturing* (Greenwood, 1997)
Wirz, Hans and Richard Striner, *Washington Deco: Art Deco Design in the Nation's Capital*, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984)

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): _____

^{xliv} See *Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962*, E87.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

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

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter Sefton and John DeFerrari, Trustees

organization D.C. Preservation League

date 1/30/2013

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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:

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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.

Name of Property: **See Attached Photograph Log**

City or Vicinity:

County:

State:

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of ____.

Property Owner:

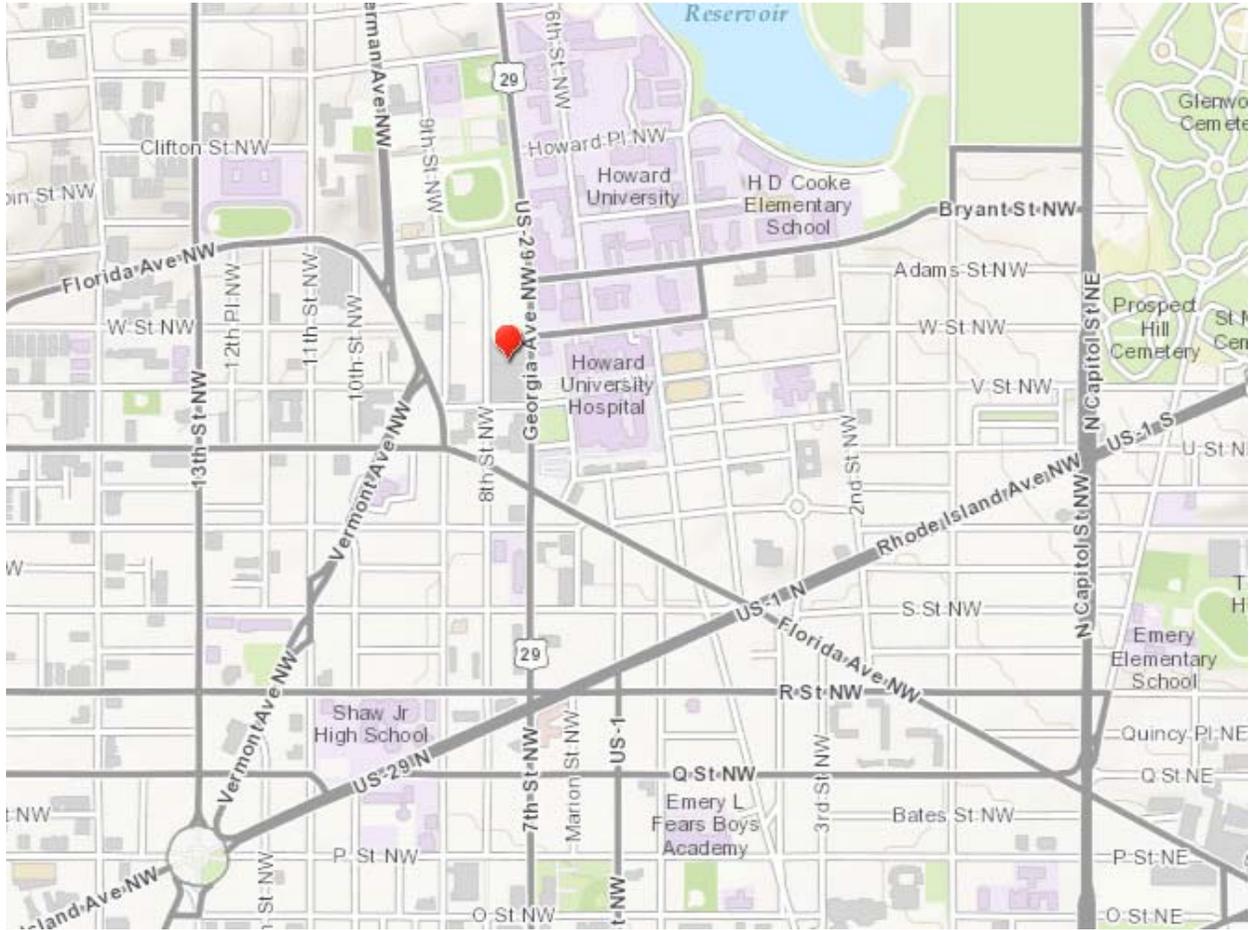
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street & number 2041 Georgia Avenue, NW telephone _____
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20060-0001

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General Baking Company/Bond Bread Factory Building
2146 Georgia Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001



Bond Bread Factory Building Nomination Photograph Log

Illustration 1: (WDC_1958_arial_bond)

Aerial view of Griffith Stadium during the 1958 football season showing the Bond Bread Factory.

Illustration 2: (WDC_Bond_Bread_002)

The Bond Bread Factory's Georgia Avenue NW façade, viewed looking southwest from the corner of W Street.

Photographer: John DeFerrari

Illustration 2a: (WDC_Bond_Bread_002a)

1929 architect's rendering presents the Bond Bread Factory as more massive and elongated than the actual building. Its most exaggerated dimension is its depth. Image: John DeFerrari

Illustration 3: (WDC_Bond_Bread_003)

Detail view of central pavilion "tower" with parapet wall, upper and lower cornices and pier capstones.

Photographer: Peter Sefton

Illustration 4: (WDC_Bond_Bread_004)

The full-height piers of the Bond Bread Factory's central pavilion enhance the building's sense of verticality. The central tower suggests a skyscraper configuration for this three story structure.

Photographer: John DeFerrari

Illustration 5: (WDC_Bond_Bread_005)

Setbacks and contrasting brickwork patterns lend vitality to the monochromatic white façade of the Bond Bread Factory. Additional contrast is provided by courses of terra cotta block.

Photographer: Peter Sefton

Illustration 6: (WDC_Bond_Bread_006)

The pediment above the main entrance is one of the Bond Bread Factory's few neoclassical details.

Photographer: John DeFerrari

Illustration 7: (WDC_Bond_Bread_007)

Georgia Avenue truck entrance.

Photographer: Peter Sefton

Illustration 8: (WDC_Bond_Bread_008)

North façade of the Bond Bread Factory, showing smokestack.

Photographer: Peter Sefton

Illustration 9: (WDC_Bond_Bread_009)

Eighth Street NW façade of the Bond Bread Factory, showing smokestack.

Photographer: Peter Sefton

Originals located: DC Preservation League, 401 F Street, NW, Room 324, Washington, DC 20001



Illustration 1: The Bond Bread Factory (X) viewed looking north during the football season of 1958. (<http://www.mearsonlineauctions.com>)



Illustration 2: The Bond Bread Factory's Georgia Avenue NW façade, viewed looking southwest from the corner of W Street. (John DeFerrari)

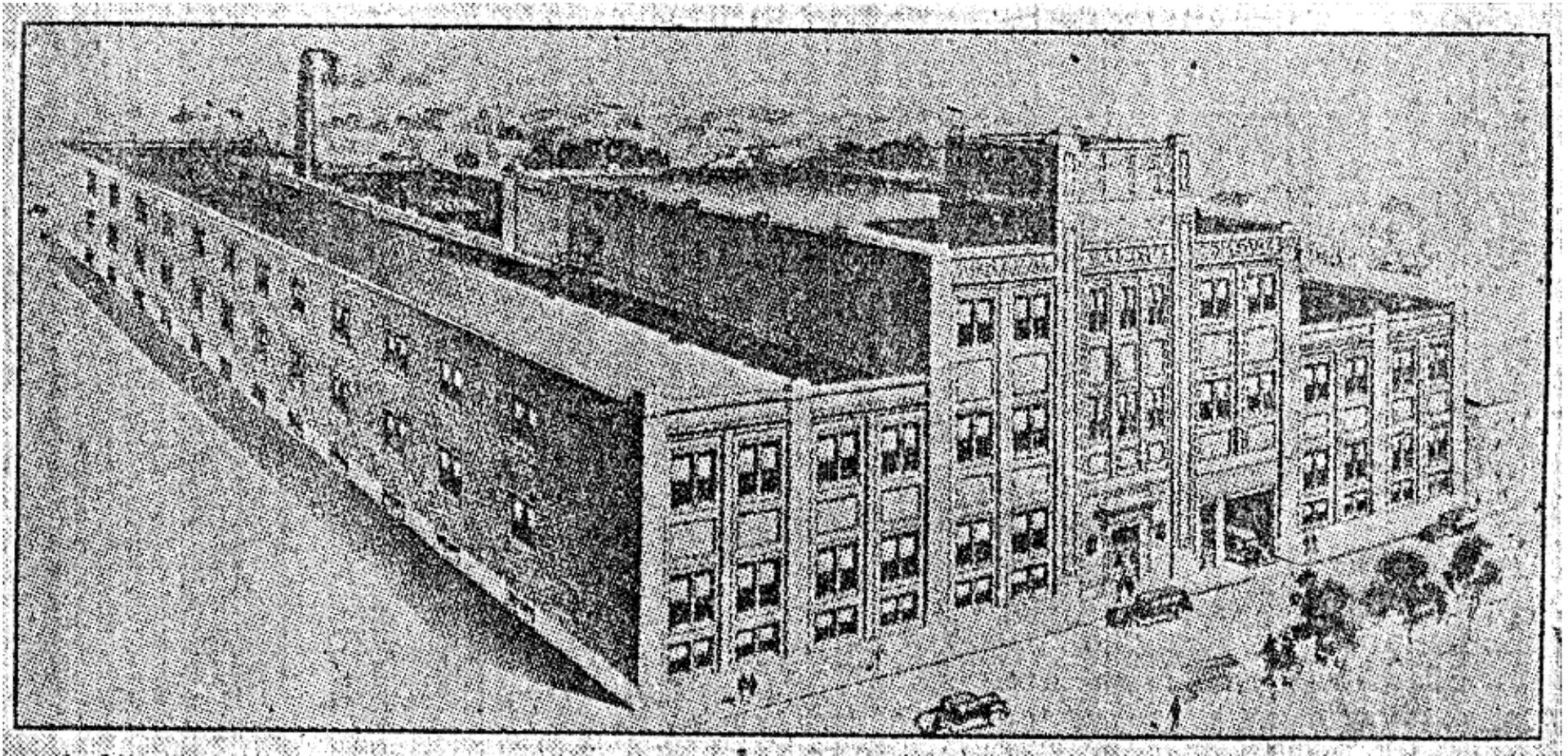


Illustration 2a: This 1929 architect's rendering presents the Bond Bread Factory as more massive and elongated than the actual building. Its most exaggerated dimension is its depth. (Image: John DeFerrari)



Illustration 3: Detail view of central pavilion “tower” with parapet wall, upper and lower cornices and pier capstones. (Peter Sefton)



Illustration 4: The full-height piers of the Bond Bread Factory's central pavilion enhance the building's sense of verticality. The central tower suggests a skyscraper configuration for this three story structure. (John DeFerrari)



Illustration 5: Setbacks and contrasting brickwork patterns lend vitality to the monochromatic white façade of the Bond Bread Factory. Additional contrast is provided by courses of terra cotta block. (Peter Sefton)



Illustration 6: The pediment above the main entrance is one of the Bond Bread Factory's few neoclassical details. (John DeFerrari)

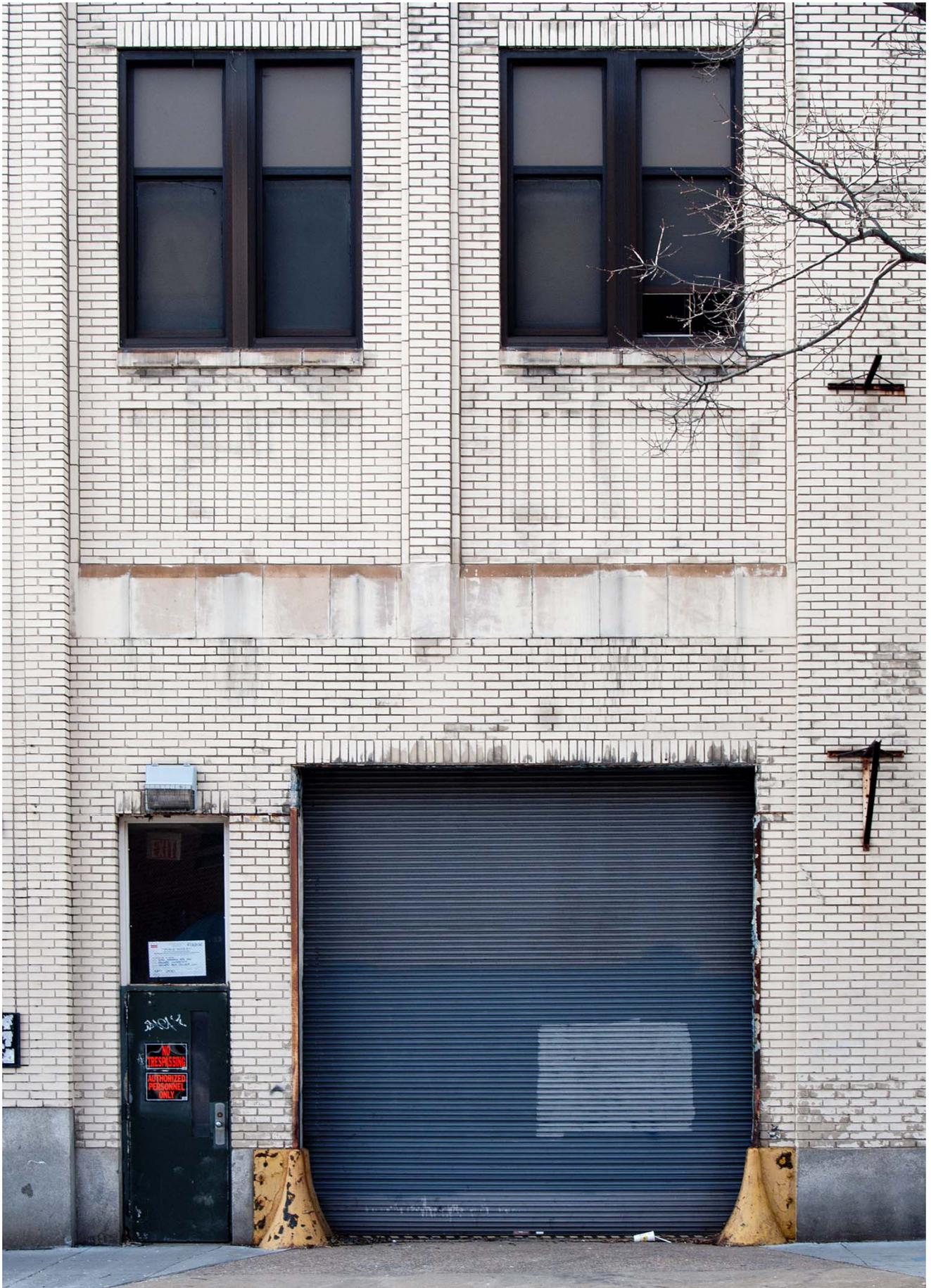


Illustration 7: Georgia Avenue truck entrance. (Peter Sefton)



Illustration 8: North façade of the Bond Bread Factory, showing smokestack. (Peter Sefton)



Illustration 9: Eighth Street NW façade of the Bond Bread Factory, showing smokestack. (Peter Sefton)