

SCHMITT'S REXALL

55 EAST MAIN STREET

Now known as Schmitt's Rexall, this building was built about 1870 to house the Ira C. Crouse family. It is, basically, a three-bay, 2-story, brick box with commercial activities on the ground floor and an apartment above. Although originally built as a private residence, the building has long been adapted for commercial purposes.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Carr 417  
070417 4511

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Ira C. Crouse House

AND/OR COMMON

Schmitt's Rexall

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

55 East Main Street (MD 32)

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

7

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Carroll

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Fred J. Schmitt

Telephone #: 876-1684

STREET & NUMBER

341 Mary Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21157

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Carroll County Office Building

Liber #: 193

Folio #: 104

STREET & NUMBER

Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

Now known as Schmitt's Rexall, no. 155 East Main Street presents its flat-roofed main facade to the north side of Main Street (St. Route 32) in Westminster. The building is, basically, a 3-bay, 2-story, brick box with commercial activities on the ground floor and an apartment above.

Although originally built as a private residence, the building has long been adapted for commercial purposes, a role continued by the present owners after they took title in 1946. The owners made changes on the ground floor, which now has a fairly standard glass and aluminum store front. The large, horizontal, orange and blue sign which covers the modern store front adds to the building's already colorful appearance (rose painted brick and white wooden trim). To the east, on the ground floor, are the remains of the building's first commercial adaptation (this is supposition on my part and on the part of the present owner). An exaggerated 2-part entablature, about 3 feet tall, is now all that is left of the entablature that presumably once stretched across the entire front of the building, dividing the first and second floors; now, rather uneasily, it emerges from the aluminum store front and tops the door that leads to the apartment above. The entablature, in memory of its once grand role, still stretches a few inches beyond the building to the east. The door beneath it is a modern reproduction, 4-panel, six-pane door, topped by a narrow rectangular transom. This, and all other woodwork, is painted white.

Above, on the second floor, 3 elongated, double-hung sash windows emerge out of a modern store front, piercing the Flemish Bond brick of the wall. The windows have two over two panes, and are fairly modestly enframed, with white wooden sills, and quiet bracketed 2-part entablatures above. The roof is finished by a finely modillioned cornice, which is treated much as that of no. 197-199-201 East Main Street, i.e., there are four scroll brackets symmetrically placed between the windows; the bases of the brackets are joined by a wooden string course. Fine carving characterizes all this upper woodwork - the brackets and the modillions. An interesting effect is created at the top of the brackets, where another string course runs; however, this one is treated a bit more imaginatively; the sections directly below the modillions are left white, while the rest is painted the same shade as the building's brick, giving the effect of dashes.

Narrow alleys border the building to the east and west (a phenomenon rare in Westminster's business district) and provide access between Main Street and the fairly utilitarian rear (north facade) of the building, and the parking area immediately beyond. The north facade is laid in 7 course common bond, as are the east and west walls of the building. The ground is sheltered by a shed-roof porch which is in turn filled in by a board and batten construction to the west. This infill is solid except for the small

**CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY**

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

**SPECIFIC DATES**

c. 1870

**BUILDER/ARCHITECT**

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Crouse-Schmitt building is yet another example of how adaptable the basic 3-bay form can be, of how easily commercial and residential motifs can successfully intermingle in the same building. This is true here, despite the lack of care given to window and door alignment, and disregard shown for the use of symmetry which usually plays such an important part in the City's buildings. Although the second story windows are perfectly regularly placed, and although they relate well to the cornice-bracket arrangement above, and despite the obvious thought given to the modillion-string course arrangement, the ground floor shatters all these good intentions. The modern commercial store front works within itself (double doors are centrally placed between two large display windows and the entire system is enclosed by a not unattractive 4-band panel) but it totally disregards the existing spatial arrangements in the building; nor does it attempt to relate in any way to neighboring structures. Nevertheless, the building does not seem displeasing (indeed, it is more pleasing than several buildings which are almost painfully regular, e.g. no. 51-53 East Main Street). Perhaps the building is "saved" because of a possibly pleasing tension created by this lack of coherence, or perhaps it is merely a result of the basic strength of the original fabric.

Perhaps the success of the building is a result of the title information, which is, mercifully, straight forward. On March 13, 1857, one S. L. Swormstedt sold lot 5 in "Winter's Addition" to Robert Kirby for \$200 Carroll County Deed Book 22, Page 89. A decade later, Kirby sold the lot to Ira C. Crouse for \$800 - December 7, 1867 (35/153). It was probably Crouse who built the building now standing as he sold off the eastern 30 feet of the building to Martin L. Lantz for \$900 on April 8, 1881, (55/1). An 1877 plat of the City shows a long, narrow rectangle sited where the Rexall store is today. The 1881 price for the 30 foot lot was \$900. The 1887 City Directory lists Lantz as living at 55 East Main Street. A series of straw deeds took place in 1907 (107/168, 107/171) but Lantz was able to retain title until the Ides of March 1926, when he sold the property to Randolph Wehler, but reserved a life tenance in four rooms. Wehler sold to the present owner on December 30, 1946, after Lantz and his wife, Annie, had died.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Being the eastern half of lot no. 5 as shown on a plat of "Winter's Addition" to Westminster and recorded among the Land Records of Frederick County in Book JS 2, Page 195, 196.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Christopher Weeks, Consultant

February, 1977

ORGANIZATION

Westminster Historical Sites Survey

DATE

STREET &amp; NUMBER

c/o City Hall - Public Works Department

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

#7

square, 4-light casement window in its upper center. To the east, on the ground floor, is a central wooden door (with a small central window) and a 4/4 casement window. The porch is approached by the single flight of wooden steps from the east, and is somewhat shakily supported by crumbling brick piers. The second floor is blind.

407.



45 40%

(e-9)

CARR 417

~~Sch~~ 55 E. Main St.

Westminster s/c

c. week 2/77



CARR 417  
55 E. Main Street  
Westport  
N Judeville 2/77  
C. Wood