

CT-1251  
Bay Avenue & 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
North Beach, Calvert County  
Private

The North Beach Amusement Company acquired the property located between 3rd and 5th Streets in 1927, now known as the North Beach Amusement Complex. Since 1927, when the North Beach Amusement Company built the first amusement arcade, the property has hosted a variety of recreational and commercial buildings, including the House of Titillation and Uncle Billy's Tavern. The present group of buildings was built around 1942 and formerly housed a variety of games, amusements, souvenirs, and food operations. The three 1 1/2 story frame buildings comprising the North Beach Amusement Complex are arranged in a horse-shoe complex around a central courtyard area. The northern-most building is the most modified and only occupied building of the three, currently housing a grocery store.

**MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA**

**North Beach, Calvert County Survey  
Survey Number CT-1251  
North Beach Amusement Complex**

**Geographic Organization:** Western Shore

**Chronological/Developmental Period(s):** 1870-1930; 1930-Present

**Historic Period Theme(s):** 2) Architecture, Landscape and Community Planning

7) Social/Education/Cultural

**Resource Type:**

**Category:** building

**Historic Environment:** urban

**Historic Function(s) and Use(s):** dwelling

**Known Design Source:** none

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. CT-1251

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common North Beach Amusement Complex

## 2. Location

street & number Bay Avenue (between 3rd & 5th Streets)  not for publicationcity, town North Beach  vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Calvert

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Robert and Anna Callis

street &amp; number 5801 Old Branch Avenue telephone no.:

city, town Temple Hills state and zip code: Maryland 20748

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Calvert County Courthouse liber JLB 178

street &amp; number 310 Main Street folio 195

city, town Prince Frederick state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Evaluated in *Architectural Survey and Historic District Evaluation: North Beach, Maryland*date June, 1998  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Crownsville state Maryland

# 7. Description

Survey No.

CT-1251

## Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

## Check one

unaltered  
 altered

## Check one

original site  
 moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The North Beach Amusement Complex occupies the northeast quarter of its block at the northwest corner of Bay Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. It consists of three, long (approximately 60'), one-and-a-half story frame buildings. These are arranged in an horseshoe-shaped configuration that provides a central court yard-like area. The buildings are similar, though not identical, with the northern most structure (currently an IGA grocery store) having experienced the most modification. This is the only one of the three buildings that is currently occupied.

The south building features a jerkin head, or clipped-gable, roof that is covered with standing seam metal and pierced by a short cupola. The open eaves are decorated with exposed rafter ends. Walls rest on a slab-on-grade foundation. They are sheathed in German siding and punctuated at irregular interval by large garage-type doors. These openings occupy a large percentage of the wall area and provide easy access to pedestrian traffic, and semi-open feeling to the building.

The center building is oriented parallel to Bay Avenue and shares many of the same physical features as its flanking neighbors. This building is distinguished by its two-bay, jerkin-head dormers (four on the east facade and two on the west) and the center, jerkin-head pavilion that projects from both the east and west walls. The east facade has been altered by the construction of a shed-roofed addition, but the west facade retains its two pairs of windows and its sliding door. Windows throughout the building are principally 6/1 types. Other openings include both full- and half-height garage-type doors.

The northern most building is the most altered and features several relatively modern additions. Originally, it was almost identical to the southern-most building, and enough original building fabric remain to visually relate it to this complex.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. CT-1251

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) (recreation)

Specific dates	Builder/Architect						
Check: Applicable Criteria: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D							
and/or Applicable Exception: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G							
Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local							

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This building is significant for its association with the architectural development of the early-20th century summer colony and resort community of North Beach, Maryland. Please refer to the continuation sheet for an historical sketch of the town.

This horse shoe-shaped complex of buildings once housed a variety of games, amusements, souvenir shops, and food service operations. While these buildings were constructed in the mid-20th century, these types of tourist-oriented businesses have operated in this same location since the 1920s.

In 1919 Dr. P. Fender, a major North Beach land owner, held title to most of the lots where these buildings presently stand. Dr. Fender also owned a number of rental properties on Dayton Avenue, but insolvency prevented him from improving this property. His financial difficulties forced the sale of this property to John Hays, also a major North Beach investor. About 1927 the North beach Amusement Company, whose officers included Hays, purchased the land and built the original amusement arcade. Early businesses housed in this complex include The House of Titillation and Uncle Billie's Tavern. Fire destroyed the original complex. The present structures were constructed about 1942.

# Continuation Sheet

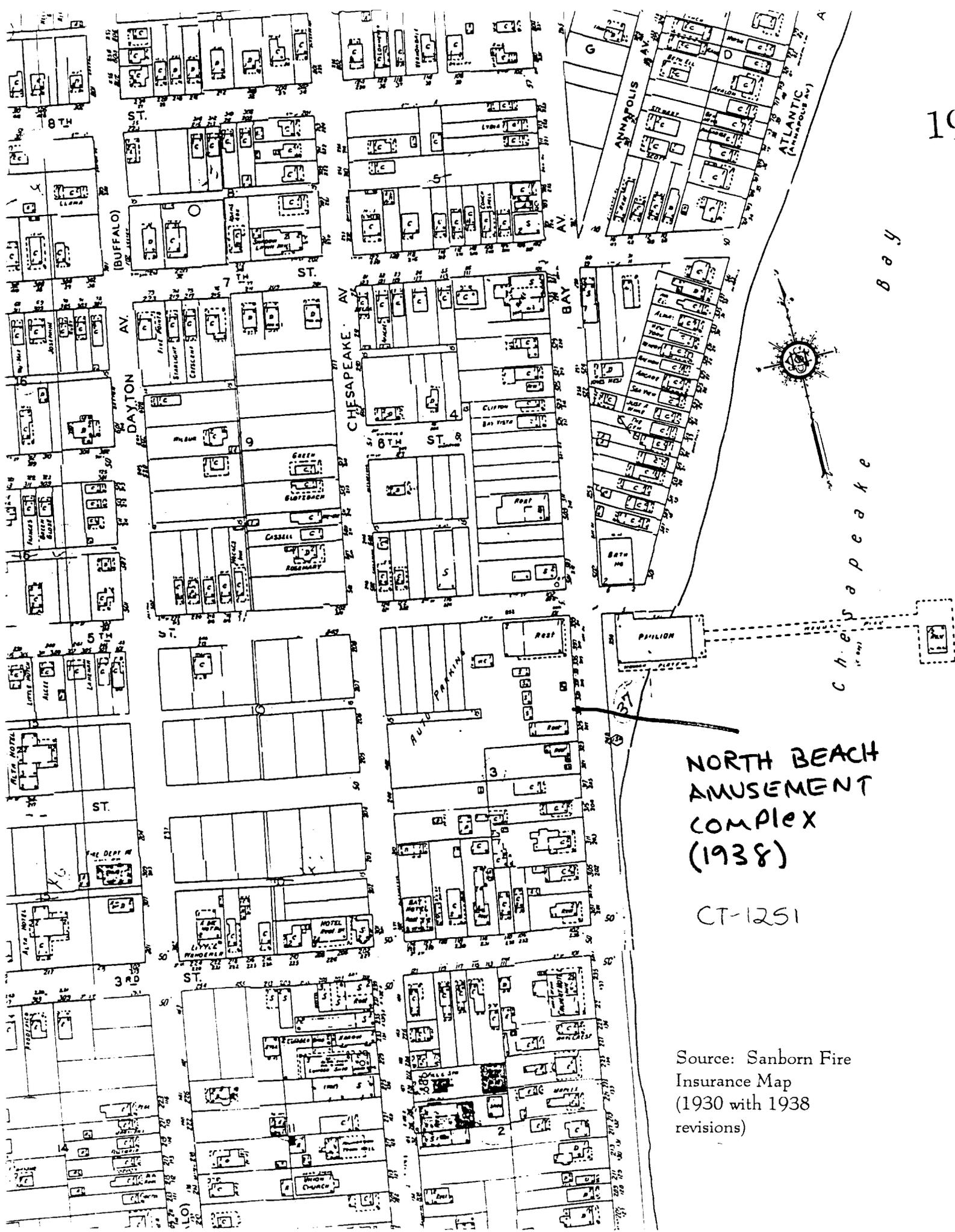
## Section 8: History and Significance

North Beach is a fair to good example of an early 20th century summer resort colony and is a Maryland example of a national trend in community development initiated by the Industrial Revolution. Communities such as North Beach were a result of the growing middle class, mobility and consumerism resulting from the industrial economy that dominated the period. Dozens of beach resorts developed around the Chesapeake Bay in the years between the end of the Civil War and the Great Depression. Some, such as Gibson Island, catered to a rich, white, gentile clientele, while Highland Beach is an example of an African-American summer colony. North Beach was in the middle of the social spectrum. While deed restrictions excluded blacks, Jews were well represented in early North Beach. Excepting this major exclusion, by the standards of the day, North Beach was a heterogeneous middle-class summer community.

North Beach was platted in 1900 (revised in 1908) and incorporated in 1910. The town was developed by a group of principally Washington-based businessmen with ties to railroad, labor and banking. Conceived as a summer residential community and resort, the town was laid out according to a standard grid. In addition to houses, the town featured a variety of tourist and recreation-oriented businesses including theaters, restaurants, dance halls, bingo parlors, amusement arcades, and night clubs--including several gay clubs.

Most surviving historic buildings were constructed in the 1920s and 1930s, and include a good collection of early-20th century vernacular buildings. Represented building types include bungalows, shotguns, American Four Square and gable-front cottages. Most commercial buildings are either destroyed or extremely altered. Many of the town's historic structures were altered in the years immediately following World War II. In the post-war years North Beach completed a transformation begun in the 1930s, from a resort and summer colony to a permanent suburban community.



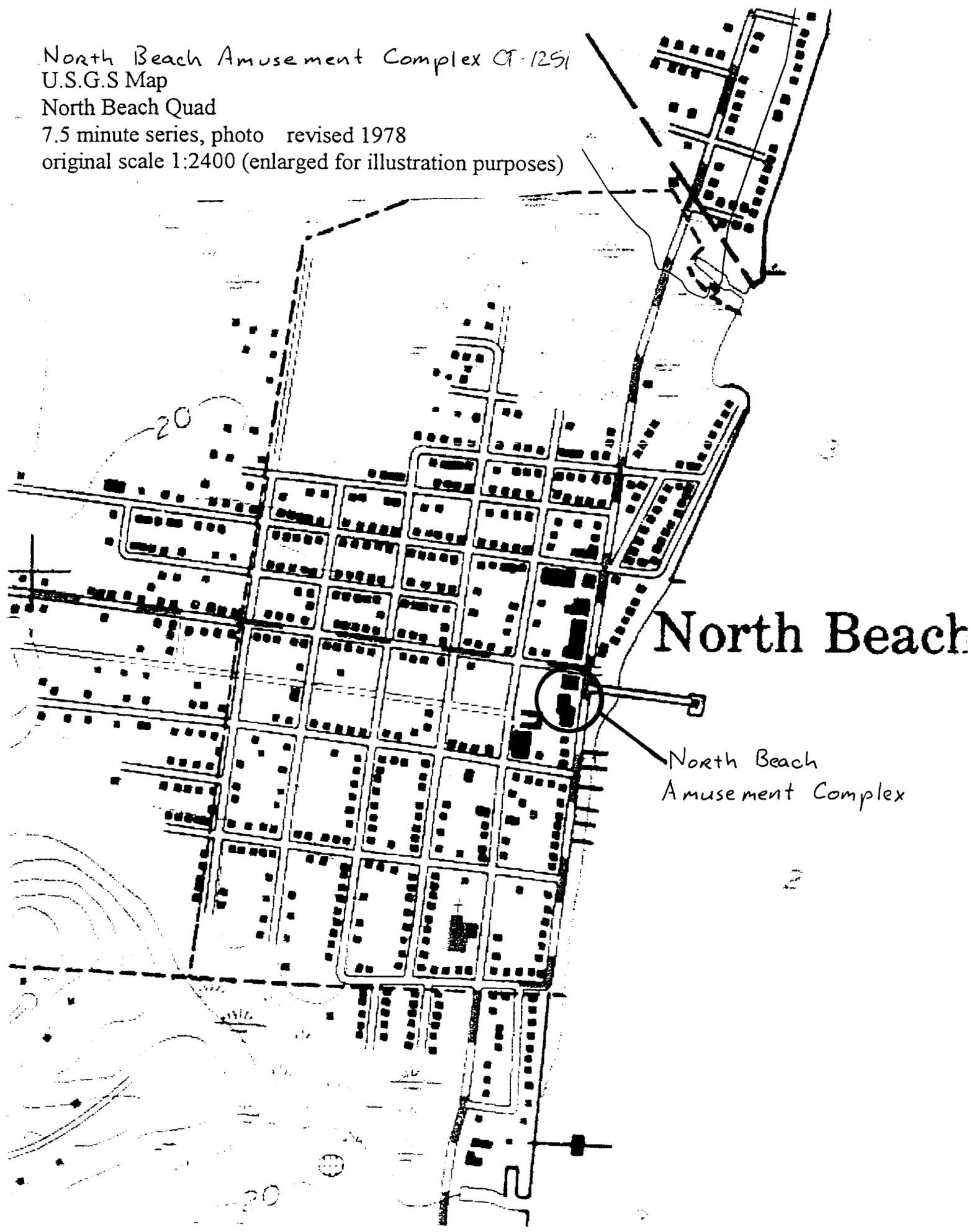


**NORTH BEACH  
AMUSEMENT  
COMPLEX  
(1938)**

CT-1251

Source: Sanborn Fire  
Insurance Map  
(1930 with 1938  
revisions)

North Beach Amusement Complex CF-1251  
U.S.G.S Map  
North Beach Quad  
7.5 minute series, photo revised 1978  
original scale 1:2400 (enlarged for illustration purposes)





CT-1251

NORTH BEACH AMUSEMENT COMPLEX

NORTH BEACH, CALVERT COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY SHERRI MARSIT

MARCH 1998

NE PERSPECTIVE

1 OF 2



LT- 1251

North Beach Amusement complex

North Beach, Calvert County, Maryland

by Sherril Marsh

MARCH 1998

east elevation

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