MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes X
no ___

Property Name: Elkton West Residential District Inventory Number: CE-1532

Address: ___ City: Elkton Zip Code: ___

County: Cecil USGS Topographic Map: Elkton

Owner: ___ Is the property being evaluated a district? X yes

Tax Parcel Number: ___ Tax Map Number: ___ Tax Account ID Number: ___

Project: ___ Agency: ___

Site visit by MHT staff: X no ___ yes Name: ___ Date: ___

Is the property is located within a historic district? ___ yes X no

If the property is within a district District Inventory Number: ___

NR-listed district ___ yes Eligible district ___ yes Name of District: ___

Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource ___ yes ___ no Non-contributing but eligible in another context ___ yes

If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district) Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible X yes ___ no

Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G ___ None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

The West Residential District also [like the North Residential District] exemplifies workers' housing of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The houses in this district are generally somewhat larger and more stylish than those in the North District, and occupy larger, tree0-shaded lots. Several brick buildings appear here, although most are of frame construction. Decorative features typical of the period are evident, such as the sawn vergeboard trim of 217 West Main Street, and the stickwork detailing of 222 and 224 West High Street. There have been few alterations or intrusions in the West Residential District, which includes buildings on both sides of West Main Street between Maffit and Blue Ball Streets, the east side of Blue Ball Street between West Main Street and the Conrail tracks, both sides of West High Street between Blue Ball and Maffit Streets, and both sides of Maffit Street between West High and West Main Streets.

Significance:
Elkton's advantageous location at the juncture of major transportation corridors was instrumental in its achievement of significance in the military, commercial, and industrial history of the region.

Elkton figures prominently in the military history of the nation. It served as a key point of embarkation during the Revolutionary War: in 1777 the British general Howe landed his armies here en route to Philadelphia; it was this maneuver

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Eligibility recommended X **Eligibility not recommended** ___

Criteria: X **A** ___ **B** X **C** ___ **D** **Considerations:** ___ **A** ___ **B** ___ **C** ___ **D** ___ **E** ___ **F** ___ **G** ___ **None**

MHT Comments

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services **Date**

Reviewer, NR Program 9/11/02 **Date**

which doomed General Burgoyne at Saratoga. In March, 1781, Lafayette embarked from Elkton with his troops bound for Annapolis, and in September of the same year, Washington also embarked from Elkton to inaugurate the climactic Yorktown campaign. Elkton retained its strategic importance during the War of 1812 when British marines under Admiral Cockburn mounted an unsuccessful attack on the town.

Elkton preceded Baltimore in the development of the flour-packing industry and was hailed by 1807 as an important wheat market, with trade at that time having attained a level of 250,000 bushels per year. After the War of 1812, packet lines continued to run between Elkton and Baltimore, and the New Castle Frenchtown Railroad (1832) increased Elkton's importance as a transportation center. Numerous mills were established on the Elk River, evidenced by surviving millraces, and the town thrived. Prosperity waned in subsequent years until the post-Civil War period, when new industries, including pulp mills, machine shops, fertilizer plants, and canneries came to the town, stimulating housing construction, as reflected in the late 19th c. residential districts.

Elkton's history and development are clearly reflected in the five districts and four individual structures within the Multiple Resource Area. The town is architecturally significant in possessing a large and varied collection of well-preserved structures representing changes in fashions in residential, commercial, and ecclesiastical architecture from the mid-18th to early 20th centuries, with an especially fine concentration of houses, churches, and commercial buildings dating from the latter half of the 19th c.
[extracted from P. Kurtze & P. Weissman]

Prepared by: P. Kurtze & P. Weissman,MHT (1980 & 82) Date Prepared: _____

CE-1295

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ELKTON MULTIPLE RESOURCE AREA

Surveyed for N.R. Eligible Resources only

DESCRIPTION

Elkton West Residential District (See p. 5)

The town of Elkton was incorporated and designated the seat of Cecil County, Maryland, in 1787. Elkton's growth and development from the earliest patent in the 17th century through the twentieth can largely be attributed to its location at the juncture of the headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay and overland travel routes, including the original Post Road between Philadelphia and Baltimore. An important commercial and industrial center in its early years, Elkton suffered a decline in prosperity in the mid-19th century, but the coming of new industries circa 1880-1900 again spurred the town's development.

The history of Elkton's development is amply reflected in its architecture, although a series of fires beginning in 1838 and recent redevelopment have affected the survival of historic structures. Surviving resources are broadly separated by recent or substantially altered structures; it is for this reason that a determination of National Register eligibility as a multiple resource area is being sought. In its present form, Elkton exhibits a variety of styles, types, and levels of architecture clearly representing aspects of its long and various history, including a civic and commercial district, three areas of working-class housing and a neighborhood of fashionable homes of more affluent residents, and a number of individual sites representing different architectural forms and historic periods.

BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of Elkton multiple resource area are very similar to the corporate boundaries of the town as shown in Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson's 1877 Atlas of Cecil County. The area is bounded on the east and south by Big Elk Creek, on the north by the Conrail Tracks, and on the west by Landing Lane. Within the area are five smaller cohesive historic districts, including the Commercial district, the East, North, West, and East High Street Residential Districts, and interspersed among these are several individual sites worthy of listing in the National Register.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

The Commercial District comprises a number of architecturally-related structures dating from the second half of the 19th century through the first quarter of the 20th, located on both sides of North Street between Main and High Streets and on both sides of Main Street from Bridge Street to Groome Lane.

The Clayton Building or Odd Fellows Lodge (1857)(1) stands at 114-118 North Street, a three-story gable-front brick building embodying features of the Romanesque Revival and Italianate styles. Above the first story, the facade is divided into five recessed bays holding tall, round-arched openings on the second story and arched 6/6 sash above, terminating in an elaborate arched corbel table under the bracketed eaves. The Elkton Police Department headquarters, (2) just south of the Clayton Building, is a massive two-story three-bay brick structure with a central tower suggesting the Italianate style. The Whig Building (1841, rebuilt 1882) (3) at 125 North Street, is a two-story, two-bay brick building representing a combination of mid to late 19th century architectural fashions. The Cecil County Banking and Trust Company, (4) 121

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North Street, is an early 20th century Neoclassical building with a granite-block facade. The remaining structures on North Street are brick vernacular commercial buildings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. (5)

The three-story stuccoed Howard Hotel (6) at the northwest corner of North and Main Streets provides an important visual anchor with its two-story porch and seven-bay facade. For a block's distance east and west of the hotel, Main Street is lined on both sides with two or three story commercial buildings, usually of brick, dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which convey a feeling of "downtown" characteristic of small towns throughout the region. (7) (8)

West of Bow Street, the south side of Main Street is lined with a group of adjoining two and three story 18th and 19th century buildings. Formerly houses, several are now partially modernized and converted to commercial use. 154 West Main Street (8) is one of the earliest; it has beaded siding and still reflects its original character. Just west of this group are several detached mid and late 19th century residences; several of these are also converted to commercial use, such as 158 West Main Street (9), a mid-century hipped roofed house reflecting Greek Revival and Italian influence. At the corner of Main and Bridge Streets, the western boundary of this district, is a group of adjoining late 19th century brick buildings, including a three-story row house (10) and three story commercial block. (11)

The north side of this section of Main Street differs from the south side in that it contains a series of large, detached structures of varying types and periods, set back from the street. The Chevron gas station (12) on the northwest corner of Main and Bow Streets was erected circa 1935 as a Pure Oil Company station; its picturesque cottage form is typical of the "Domestic" style which characterized gas station architecture from the mid-twenties through the 1930's. Just west of this building is Partridge Hill, (13) 129 West Main Street, a fine, well preserved brick house of 1768 with many of its original interior features. It was built by Colonel Henry Hollingsworth, who was Quartermaster and Commissary of the Eastern Shore during the Revolutionary War.

The Colonial Revival House at 135 West Main (14), a brick, gambrel roofed house with a date of 1885 in its north gable, is an early building in this style and still retains many of its original decorative details. The two-story, hip roofed Elkton Post Office at 137 West Main was built in 1939 of Port Deposit granite. The size height, scale, and design of this simplified Federal Revival style building contribute to the quality of the streetscape in the area. At the western end of the block, at the northeast corner of Main and Bridge Streets, is the First National Bank Building (15), 139 West Main, a tall, three-story Federal style brick building originally a residence. Its unusual four bay wide, asymmetrical fenestration and original appearance are still clearly visible despite a modern balcony and two-story portico. It also has a curved projecting bay on its northwest corner, a feature typical of Federal and Neo-classical design but not frequently seen.

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EAST RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

The East Residential District contains buildings fronting on the north side of East Main Street from Groome Lane to the north branch of Big Elk Creek. On the south side of Main Street, it extends from South Street to a short distance west of the branch. It also contains part of Locust Lane and Church Street, north of Main Street.

In addition, it includes the area south of Main Street bounded on the west by South Street, on the south by Howard Street, and along the east side of Delaware Avenue to the creek.

The East Residential District is the largest in size of the four residential districts, and is the richest and most varied in its architecture. It contains well preserved buildings from the 18th century to the 20th century, of varying sizes, ages, levels of complexity, and architectural styles. Buildings reflecting almost every architectural fashion during this period blend easily and comfortably, providing a sense of cohesiveness, continuity, gradual change and evolution (16, 17, 18, 19). There are only a few recent houses, which are small and in traditional design, blending unobtrusively with the older buildings. Many of the district's houses are unified by similar settings of shady yards, tree lined streets, front porches, and in many places, old brick sidewalks (20, 21).

Although there are a number of buildings dating from the late 18th and early 19th century concentrated on the western end of East Main Street within the district, the overall character of the district is dominated by the large and substantial houses built on East Main Street in the late 19th century, (22) a time of commercial prosperity and growth in Elkton. East Main Street can be characterized as Elkton's most fashionable and affluent neighborhood, with the area to its south along Delaware Avenue, South and Howard Streets containing smaller, less elaborate workers' homes like those in the other three residential districts.

The western end of Main Street within the district (23) contains a few late 18th and early 19th century buildings, including the Mitchell House, (24) listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These are often of brick, two stories high, three bays wide, and set close to the street (25). The Hermitage, another early residence, is located further east, off Main Street (26). Further east on Main Street, are a number of mid-19th century houses reflecting Greek Revival and Italian Villa influence (18, 27). These are usually 2 or 2 1/2 stories, three bays wide, and severe and cubical in form with hipped roofs. Several of these are ornamented with unusually elaborate cast iron porches as at 220 (28) and 222 (29) East Main Street.

Several other houses along Main Street reflect the Gothic Revival influence of the mid-19th century (16), with center cross gables, porches, scrollwork brackets, bargeboards and finials. Several homes reflect the architectural fashions of the years following the Civil War, the Italianate and Second Empire, either constructed in these styles or altered with mansard roofs, bracketed cornices, and projecting three-sided bays, as at 257 East Main Street (30). 157 East Main Street (31) is a particularly good example of the Italianate, retaining its mansard roof, quoins, window hoods, bracketed cornice, panelled doors, and long windows, and stucco scored to simulate ashlar.

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The buildings which perhaps dominate East Main Street are the large homes built from the 1880's to the early decades of the 20th century, the time of Elkton's commercial expansion. These houses provide excellent examples of several architectural movements of the period. Collectively and also within individual buildings, the eclecticism of the period is clearly reflected.

250 East Main Street (32) features an excellent Stick Style two-story porch on an asymmetrically composed, many gabled Queen Anne house with patterned shingles, the suggestion of medieval overhangs and half-timbering, and many chimneys. A rear wing, however, contains Colonial Revival decoration in its two-story closed-in porch. Next to this, at 252 East Main (33) is another Queen Anne house with similar features and decorative details.

254 East Main (34) combines Queen Anne, Shingle Style, and Colonial Revival elements in a unified design, with a shingled exterior, large porch, interesting sequence of roof lines, and the free interpretation of architectural motifs in the dormer and the recessed window in the front gable. 235 East Main (35) is a Colonial Revival house with a hipped roof main block, sheathed with both shingles and clapboards, and retaining its Colonial Revival decorative detailing. The asymmetrical composition, and the octagonal tower on the southwest corner, however, show the influence of the Queen Anne rather than adherence to principles of classical design.

An unusual house at 242 East Main Street (36), is basically Colonial Revival with a Dutch flavor combined with the influence of the Shingle Style and the bungalow mode. The curved front gable and the treatment of the interrupted east gable chimney with patterned brickwork are interesting features. The district also includes some good small early 20th century bungalows on the west side of Locust Lane, north of East Main Street.

To the south of Main Street, along the east side of South Street, north side of Howard, and both sides of Delaware Avenue, (Md. Rt. 281) is a small area of smaller, less elaborate 19th century houses. Many of these were built to house local workers and are similar to those described in the other three Elkton residential districts. Several two story frame buildings with gable end facades and one story porches are located on the east side of Delaware Avenue (37). Along Howard and South Streets are a number of identical two and three story, gable roofed, duplex houses with roof ridge aligned parallel to the street (38).

The district also contains two churches, both good examples of different phases of 19th century Gothic design. The 1859 Elkton Methodist Church (39) of monochromatic brownstone, is in a simple, traditional ecclesiastical form with a central shingled square tower, and imitative and superficial Gothic motifs. It is typical mid-century Gothic Revival churches built in many Maryland towns. The Presbyterian Church, (40) originally built in 1833 and enlarged to its present form in 1873 is red brick. Its contrasting stone trim, tower and entrance to one side, large central window, increased freedom in the design and in the use of Gothic elements, and increased solidity and sense of massiveness all reflect developments in architectural design in the Victorian Gothic of the 1870's.

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NORTH AND WEST RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

The North Residential District, comprising those buildings on the east side of North Street, north of Railroad Avenue, and on both sides of Stockton Street, east of North Street, reflects the housing boom which accompanied the influx of new industries into Elkton in the last quarter of the 19th century. These buildings typify workers' housing of the period (41): predominantly 2 1/2 story, three bay frame houses with gable fronts or central cross-gables, and with one-story porches spanning the facades. Several of these buildings are duplexes. All are located on small lots, spaced close to each other and to the street. Alterations are for the most part minor and reversible, and do not obscure the essential form of these buildings.

The West Residential District also exemplifies workers' housing of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The houses in this district are generally somewhat larger and more stylish than those in the North, and occupy larger, tree-shaded lots. Several brick buildings appear here, although most are of frame construction. Decorative features typical of the period are evident, such as the sawn vergeboard trim of 217 West Main Street (42) and the stickwork detailing of 222 and 224 West High Street. There have been few alterations or intrusions in the West Residential District, which includes buildings on both sides of West Main Street between Maffit and Blue Ball Streets, the east side of Blue Ball Street between West Main and the Conrail Tracks, both sides of West High Street between Blue Ball and Maffit Streets, and both sides of Maffit Street between West High and West Main Streets.

EAST HIGH STREET RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

The East High Street Residential District, comprising the houses on both sides of High Street between North Street and Landing Lane, on both sides of Collins Avenue, Millburn Street, Clinton Street and Bethel Street, and on the west side of Boothe Street, is signficant as a community of industrial housing representing the various periods of Elkton's prosperity during the 19th century. While several late 19th century houses similar to those in the North and West residential districts are scattered throughout the neighborhood, the predominant form appears to date from Elkton's ascendancy as a commercial and industrial center around mid-century. These are simple two or three story, gable-roofed frame houses, 3 or 4 bays wide, mostly duplexes, arranged in rows very close to the street. (43, 44) Many retain their original 6/6 sash and clapboard siding; such alterations as have been made to houses within the district are reversible and limited to more recent forms of sash and siding which do not compromise the form and character of these structures.

Two very plain, vernacular Gothic churches are located within the district; both are stuccoed, gable-front structures, three bays wide by four bays deep, with peaked windows. The entrances are centered in the facades, with circular windows above. These buildings are typical of late 19th century churches serving black congregations. (45, 46)

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INDIVIDUAL SITES

The following individual structures are also included in the Elkton Multiple Resource Area:

The Cecil County Sheriff's Office (47) on North Street, a long, narrow building with a pedimented gable end facade, is built in two sections. A brick Italianate front section, three bays wide with paired segmentally arched windows and an elaborate doorway, is connected to the rear stone portion and unified under a long gable roof and continuous bracketed cornice.

Hollingsworth Tavern (48) 205-207 West Main Street, is a mid-18th century brick tavern with important associations with Elkton's history as a strategic point on travel and military routes. Similar in form to Partridge Hill, its original appearance and details such as its keystone lintels are still clearly visible despite the modernization of its front doorway.

Brick House (49) 200 West Main Street, is a good example of the typical town houses of the late 18th-early 19th century in Elkton; few of these remain intact and unaltered in Elkton.

Trinity Episcopal Church (50) Northwest corner of West Main Street and Bridge Street, is a carefully designed Victorian Gothic church which is in excellent condition and very well preserved. It features a polychromatic combination of dark stone and contrasting red brickwork which is used in horizontal bands and as trim around openings. It also has a striking bell-tower, buttresses, original large door hinges, stained glass, tiles, and slate roof. To the rear is a small hipped roof brick and stone parish house of similar design (51).

SIGNIFICANCE

Elkton's advantageous location at the juncture of major transportation corridors was instrumental in its achievement of significance in the military, commercial, and industrial history of the region.

Elkton figures prominently in the military history of the nation. It served as a key point of embarcation during the Revolutionary War: in 1777 the British General Howe landed his armies here en route to Philadelphia; it was this maneuver which doomed General Burgoyne at Saratoga. In March, 1781, Lafayette embarked from Elkton with troops bound for Annapolis, and in September of the same year, Washington also embarked from Elkton to inaugurate the climactic Yorktown campaign. Elkton retained its strategic importance during the War of 1812, when British marines under Admiral Cockburn mounted an unsuccessful attack on the town.

Elkton preceded Baltimore in the development of the flour-packing industry and was hailed in 1807 as an important wheat market, with trade at that time having attained a level of 250,000 bushels per year. After the War of 1812, packet lines continued to run between Elkton and Baltimore, and the New Castle Frenchtown Railroad (1832) increased Elkton's importance as a transportation center.

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Numerous mills were established on the Elk River, evidenced by surviving mill-races (52), and the town thrived. Prosperity waned in subsequent years until the post-Civil War period, when new industries including pulp mills, machine shops, fertilizer plants and canneries came to the town, stimulating housing construction as reflected in the late 19th century residential districts.

Elkton's history and development are clearly reflected in the five districts and four individual structures within the Multiple Resource Area. The town is architecturally significant in possessing a large and varied collection of well-preserved structures representing changing fashions in residential, commercial and ecclesiastical architecture from the mid-eighteenth to early twentieth centuries, with an especially fine concentration of houses, churches, and commercial buildings dating from the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Peter E. Kurtze and Peggy Bruns Weissman
Maryland Historical Trust
21 State Circle - Shaw House
Annapolis, Maryland (301) 269-2438

~~July 16, 1980~~
Text Revised slightly August 1982 (PBW)
Same boundaries etc. as in 1980

CE-1537

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

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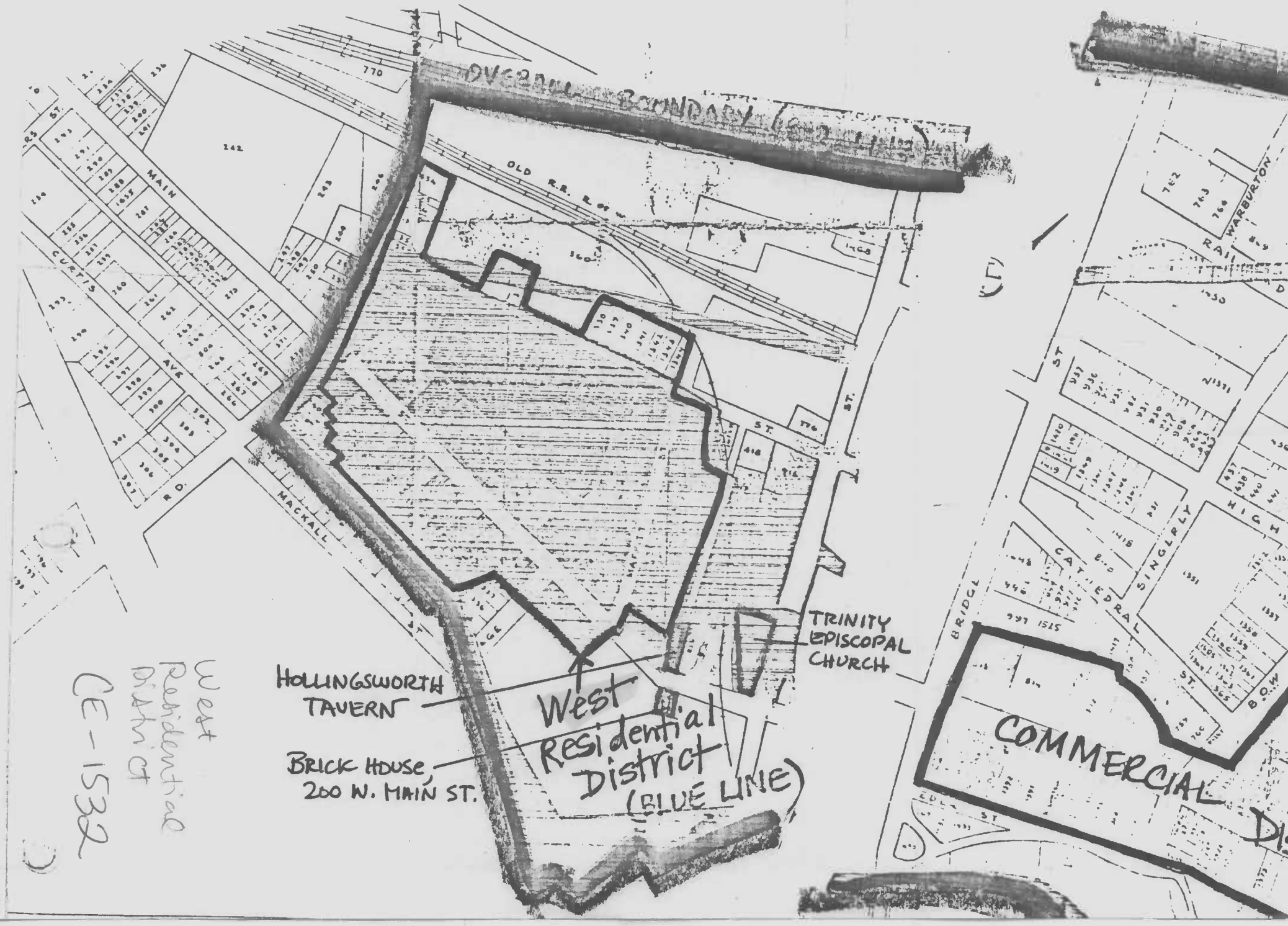
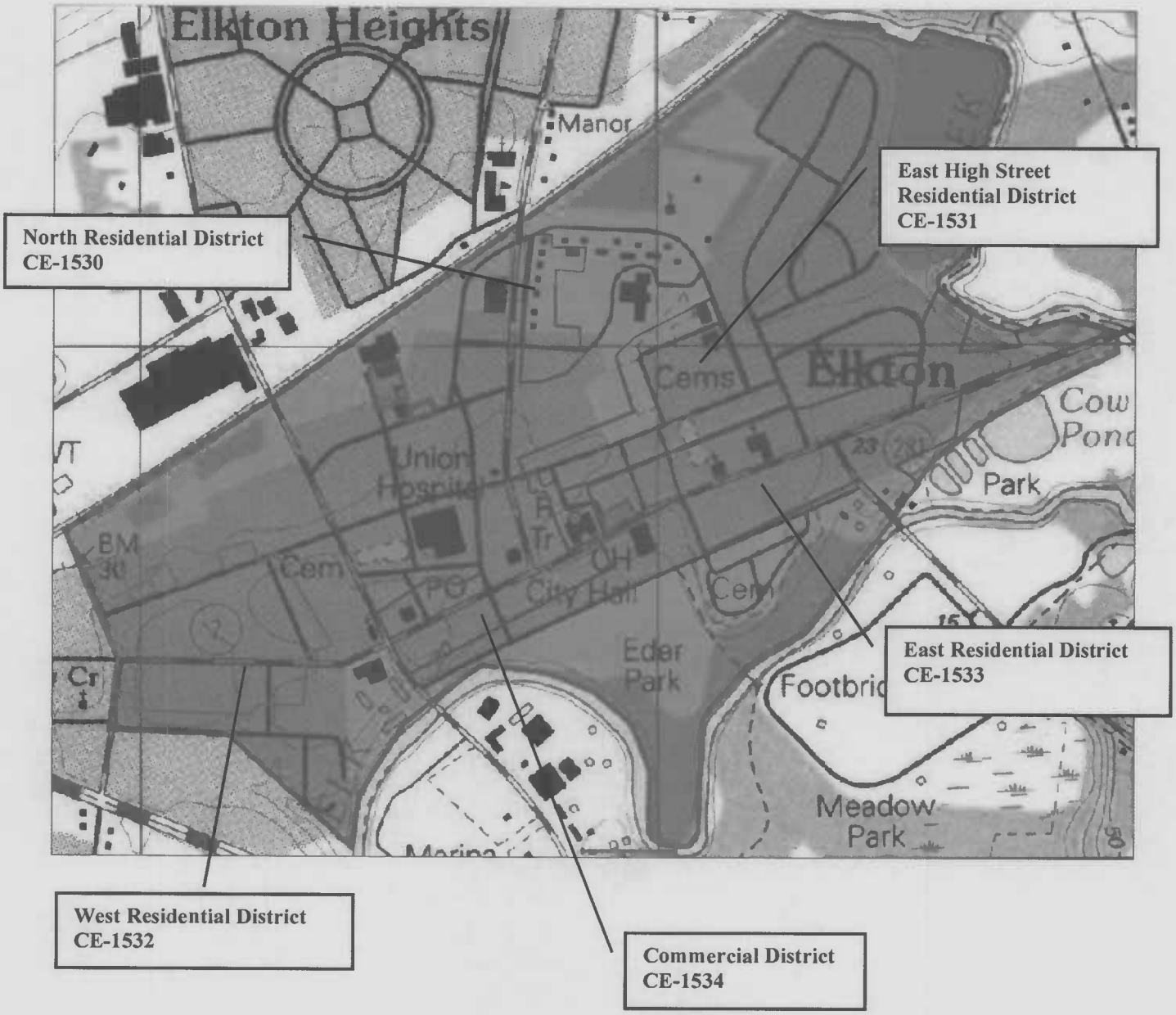

OVERALL BOUNDARY
OLD R.R.
MAIN
CURTIS
AVE
MACKALL
ST.
WARBURTON
RAIL
BRIDGE
CATHEDRAL
SINGERLY
HIGH
B.O.W.
TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
HOLLINGSWORTH TAVERN
BRICK HOUSE, 200 W. MAIN ST.
West Residential District (BLUE LINE)
COMMERCIAL
West Residential District
CE-1532

CE-1532
Elkton West Residential District

Elkton Quad
Cecil County

NR-Eligible Districts within the Elkton Multiple Resource Area (CE-1295)