

CAPSULE SUMMARY

BA-3126

St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church

1601 Old Eastern Avenue

Essex, Baltimore County

Private

St. Stephen's first began in 1870 as a small congregation of a few members whom gathered in family homes to worship. The size of this congregation grew and by 1878 an official church was constructed to hold the worshipping members. This church was replaced in 1907 and again in 1972. It was under Reverend Reginald Boston that the congregation began to consider plans for replacing the wood-frame church of 1907. The current church was built in 1966 under the pastorate of Reverend Richard P. Hall. A total of 43 pastors have served St. Stephen's beginning in 1878. St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church is not depicted on the 1915 Baltimore County Atlas other than as a 'colored school.' The cemetery is marked as adjacent to the school on the Bromley Atlas. Neither the school house nor the cemetery are depicted on the 1877 Hopkins Atlas of Baltimore County. The area became thickly settled sometime between the last quarter of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century.

St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church, built in 1966, is a one-story high church clad with a brick exterior capped with a front-gable roof typical of many African American churches throughout Baltimore County. It measures four bays deep and three bays across on the façade. The original church rests on a brick foundation and the roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles. The 1/1 windows are vinyl-sash and are visually supported with rowlock sills. Atop the roof is a pyramidal steeple. The façade has a central double-leaf entrance flanked by two 1/1 windows. A large multi-faceted addition was constructed on the rear elevation in 1994. This section of the church is constructed of concrete and rests on a concrete foundation.

A small cemetery stands to the rear (northeast) of St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church. The cemetery contains approximately 20 markers. Most of the headstones are flat markers while others are either upright or tilted. The oldest grave appears to belong to Johnson from the early 20th century. It is most likely that there are many interments in this cemetery that are unmarked, a common practice throughout Baltimore County African American burial sites. The last burial in St. Stephen's cemetery was in 1989.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-3126

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church
 other

2. Location

street and number 1601 Old Eastern Avenue not for publication
 city, town Essex vicinity
 county Baltimore County

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

name St. Stephens A.M.E. Church
 street and number 1603 Old Eastern Avenue telephone Not Available
 city, town Baltimore state MD zip code 21221-2602

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse tax map and parcel: 90/524
 city, town Towson liber n/a folio n/a

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- Historic Structure Report or Research Report
- Other

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
			Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	1	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	1	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic		structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education		objects
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> funerary	2	0 Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry		
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape		
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion		
		<input type="checkbox"/> social		
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress		
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
			0	

7. Description

Inventory No. BA-3126

Condition

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> altered |
-

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

St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal Church, at 1601 Old Eastern Avenue in Essex, was built in 1966. This one-story high church is clad with a brick exterior and features a front-gable roof typical of many African American churches throughout Baltimore County. It measures four bays deep and three bays across on the façade. The original church rests on a brick foundation and the roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles. The 1/1 windows are vinyl-sash and are visually supported with rowlock sills. Atop the roof is a pyramidal steeple. The façade has a central double-leaf entrance flanked by two 1/1 windows. A large multi-faceted addition was constructed on the rear elevation in 1994. This section of the church is constructed of concrete and rests on a concrete foundation.

A small cemetery stands to the rear (northeast) of St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church. The cemetery contains approximately 20 markers. Most of the headstones are flat markers while others are either upright or tilted. The oldest grave appears to belong to Johnson from the early 20th century. It is most likely that there are many interments in this cemetery that are unmarked, a common practice throughout Baltimore County African American burial sites. The last burial in St. Stephen's cemetery was in 1989.

8. Significance

Inventory No. BA-3126

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

Specific dates 1878,1907,1966

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates 1966, 1989

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

St. Stephen's first began in 1870 as a small congregation of a few members whom gathered in family homes to worship. The size of this congregation grew and by 1878 an official church was constructed to hold the worshipping members. The first church was a log structure. The building was three bays wide, one story high, and contained a central entry. The double-leaf paneled wood door was illuminated with a two-light transom. Flanking the entrance were two 6/6 wood-sash windows. The façade was covered with weatherboard siding and the side elevations appear to have been clad with board and batten siding. The gable roof featured overhanging eaves and the parapet façade features scroll-sawn eave brackets. The Baltimore County Public Library Legacy Web has a photographic print of the 1878 log church.(1)

The founding members of St. Stephen's Church were George Howe, Charles Dutton, Daniel E. Camper, John H. Smith, Charles Hamilton, Charles Hawkins, Exeter Smith, John W. Smith, Daniel Evans, Charles Randall, George Young, Reverend and Mrs. Basil Brown, Reverend and Mrs. Washington Brown, Brother Lewis Price. By the end of the first decade of the 20th century Reverend James A. Briscoe, became the first full-time pastor for St. Stephen's Church. It was under his leadership that the log church was replaced.(2)

This church was replaced in 1907 and again in 1972. The new edifice in 1907 was a front-gable roof structure constructed of a wood-frame structural system. Measuring one-story high, three bays wide, and three bays deep this church was pierced with lancet-arched 2/2 wood-sash windows. The center entry was covered with a gable vestibule with a pointed-arch two-light transom and a double-leaf wood door. This church was clad with weatherboard siding. The roof features overhanging eaves, cornice returns, and a bell-tower. The Baltimore County Public Library Legacy Web has a photographic print of the 1907 church.(3)

The next building undertaken by St. Stephen's Church was in 1918 to construct a parsonage under the directorship of Reverend P.O. Bundick. It was under Reverend Reginald Boston that the congregation began to consider plans for replacing the wood-frame church of 1907. The current church was built in 1966 under the pastorate of Reverend Richard P. Hall. A total of 43 pastors have served St. Stephen's beginning in 1878.(4)

The Pastors of St. Stephen's Church include: (5)

Rev. Charles Young

Rev. William Walters

Rev. James E. Williams

Rev. Chris Jones

Rev. James H. Robinson

Rev. James T. Morris

Rev. L.M. Beckett

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No BA-3126

Name St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

Rev. James T. Gilmore
Rev. Don Draper
Rev. J. Brantly
Rev. J. H. Martin
Rev. Joseph Nicholas
Rev. M.W. Travers
Rev. Henry Dutton
Rev. Sam Butler
Rev. J.H. Robinson
Rev. P.H. Grinage
Rev. John H. Porter
Rev. James A. Briscoe
Rev. T.Sinkfield
Rev. J.R. Nelson
Rev. R.A. Green
Rev. J.W. Armstrong
Rev. P.H. Green
Rev. P.O. Bundick
Rev. William Chew
Rev. F.L. Hertzfeld
Rev. J.J. Baker
Rev. A.A. Murray
Rev. P.R. Jackson
Rev. Joseph Gwynn
Rev. J. Dutton
Rev. W.J. Dunlap
Rev. W. Pickett
Rev. Olen Molock
Rev. M.B. Simpson
Rev. C.E. Johnson
Rev. Reginald Boston
Rev. Richard P. Hall
Rev. Oscar Christmas
Rev. Frederick O. Murphy
Rev. Dr. William A. Gray, III

The African Methodist Episcopal Church was started in 1787 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This church was established by African American congregates that seceded from St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. Richard Allen (1760-1831), the founder of the newly established church, was born a slave in 1760 and purchased his freedom prior to 1780. It was in 1780 that Allen began preaching and then in 1799 he was officially ordained a minister. The Blacksmith Shop Meeting House was the first church that was organized by Allen and other African American men that left the St. George's M.E. Church. Sited on 6th Street between Lombard and Pine Streets in Philadelphia, the first A.M.E. Church was established and has remained since. The first church was called the Bethel A.M.E. Church beginning in 1791. The African Methodist Episcopal denomination was officially organized in 1816 in Philadelphia and Allen was elected as the first Bishop of the General Conference. Eighteen active Bishops reside over the conferences of the A.M.E. Church and more than a million members are in the church throughout the United States,

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No BA-3126

Name St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

Canada, South America, West Africa, South African, and the West Indies.(6)

St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church is not depicted on the 1915 Baltimore County Atlas other than as a 'colored school.' The cemetery is marked as adjacent to the school on the Bromley Atlas. Neither the school house nor the cemetery are depicted on the 1877 Hopkins Atlas of Baltimore County. The area became thickly settled sometime between the last quarter of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century.(7)

ENDNOTES

1. Baltimore County Public Library, "Churches-Methodist-Essex," Baltimore County Legacy Web [home page on-line]; Available from <http://external.bcpl.lib.md.us/hcdo/cfdocs/photopage.cfm?id=18512>; Internet accessed; 10 July 2003.
2. Written unpublished history of St. Stephen's Church provided by a current member of the congregation, (August 18, 2003).
3. Baltimore County Public Library, "Churches-Methodist-Essex," Baltimore County Legacy Web [home page on-line]; Available from <http://external.bcpl.lib.md.us/hcdo/cfdocs/photopage.cfm?id=16199>; Internet accessed; 10 July 2003.
4. Written unpublished history of St. Stephen's Church provided by a current member of the congregation, (August 18, 2003).
5. Written unpublished history of St. Stephen's Church provided by a current member of the congregation, (August 18, 2003).
6. Kristie Baynard, "Lomax African Methodist Episcopal Church," National Register Nomination. Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond: April 2003.
7. Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland (Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877); Map of Baltimore County (Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-3126

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 1.40 acres

Acreage of historical setting Unknown

Quadrangle name Middle River, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church is located at 1601 Old Eastern Avenue in Essex in the Fifteenth District of Baltimore County. It has historically been associated with tax map 90 and parcel 524 since the construction of the first church in 1878.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kristie Baynard, Architectural Historian

organization EHT Traceries

date 7/10/03

street and number 1121 Fifth Street, NW

telephone 202-393-1199

city or town Washington

state DC zip code 20001

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-3126

Name St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church

Continuation Sheet

Number 9 Page 1

Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory, Office of Planning, Towson.

Baynard, Kristie. Lomax African Methodist Episcopal Church, National Register Nomination. Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond: April 2003.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. A History of Baltimore County. Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

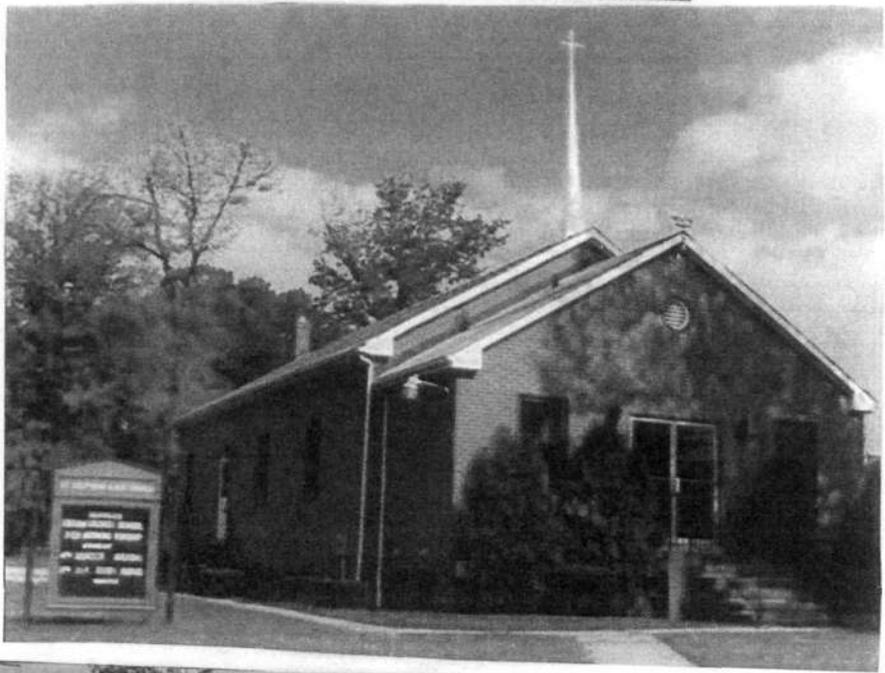
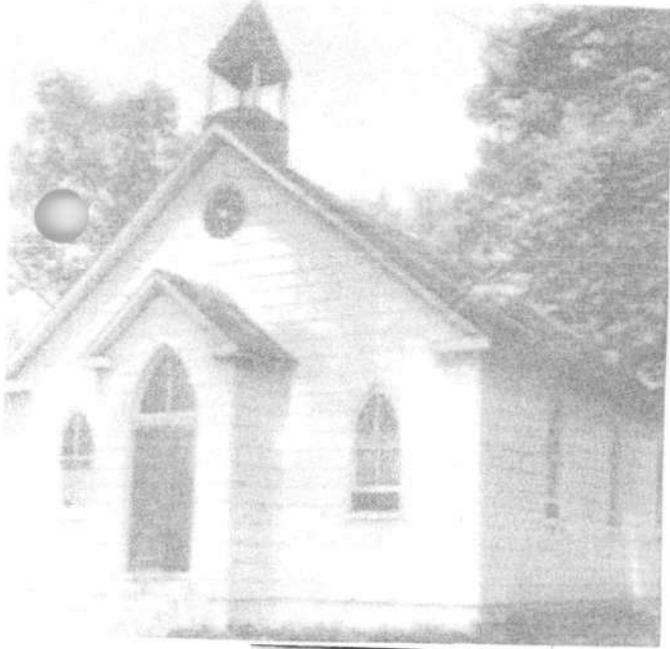
Map of Baltimore County. Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.

Roberts, Keith. A History of the Back River Neck Peninsula. Baltimore, MD: Best Press, 1993.

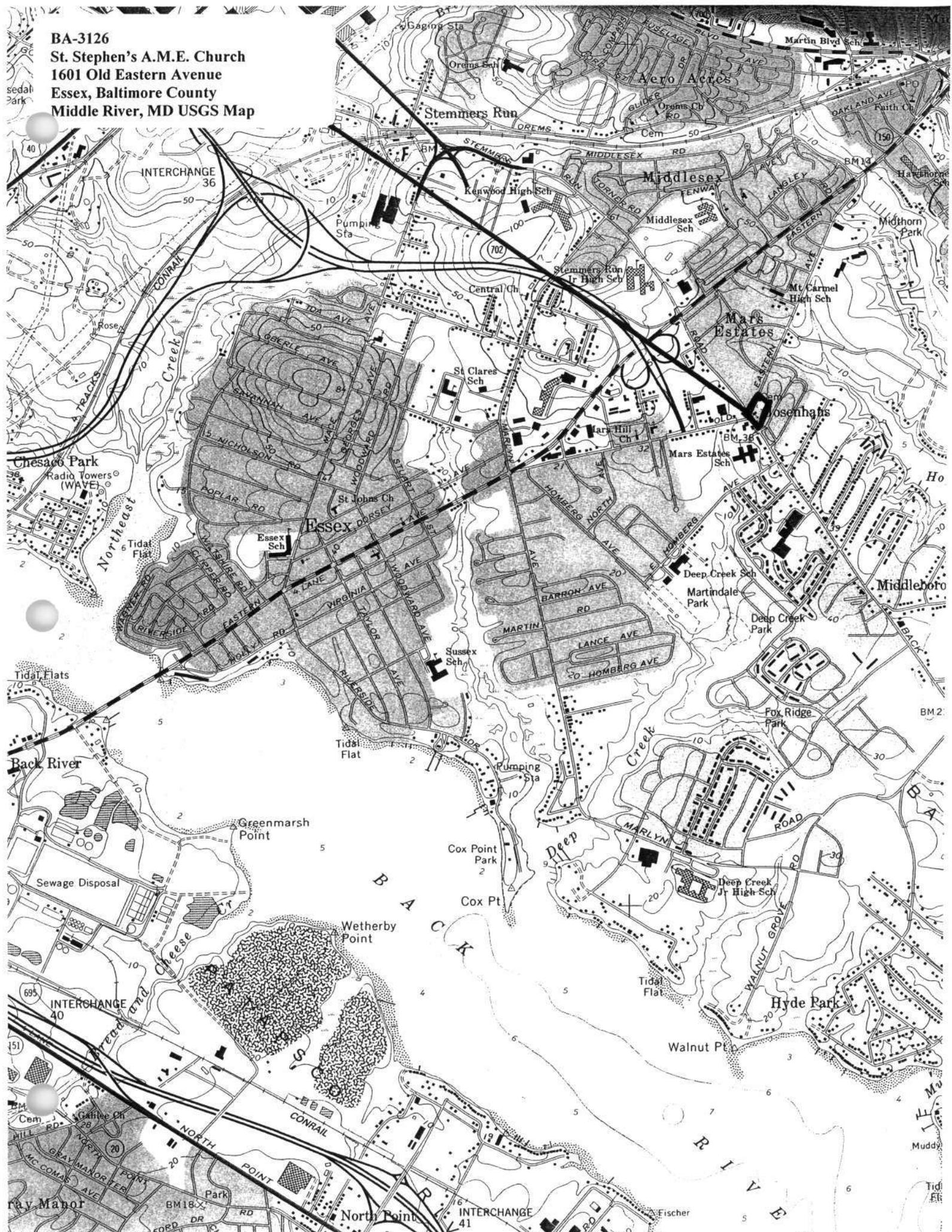
Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men. Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.

Sidney, J. C. Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys. Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

BA-3124
St. Stephens African Methodist Episcopal Church
1601 Old Eastern Avenue Essex, Maryland 21221



BA-3126
St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church
1601 Old Eastern Avenue
Essex, Baltimore County
Middle River, MD USGS Map





BA-3126

ST. STEPHENS A.M.E. CHURCH

1601 OLD EASTERN AVENUE

Essey

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

6/2003

MD SHPO

SW CORNER

1 of 2



BA - 3126

ST. STEPHEN'S A.M.E. CHURCH
1601 OLD EASTERN AVENUE
ESSEX

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

6/2003

MD SHPD

CEMETERY, VIEW LOOKING NE

2 of 2