

A JOURNEY THROUGH HOLLINS

INTRO

A Journey Through Hollins is a research-based project documenting the history and ongoing changes in the Hollins Market neighborhood of southwest Baltimore. As part of the American Studies course “Preserving Places, Making Spaces in Baltimore,” UMBC students have conducted historical research and interviews to better understand the diverse stories of the people and places in the neighborhood. For more on these projects.

Visit the website: www.baltimoretraces.umbc.edu

We welcome you to the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (CAHSS) @ UMBC’s downtown classroom in the Lion

Brothers Building, for a zine release + walking tour + open mic

Schedule:

2pm: Meet and mingle at the Lion Brothers Building + zine debut

2:30pm: Debut of StoryMap website <https://tinyurl.com/ybkrn297>

3-4pm: Walking tour of Hollins Market with Curtis Eaddy (Southwest Partnership)

4pm: Open Mic @ Hollins Place (1116 Hollins Street)

In addition to conducting research and interviews, students took a tour of the neighborhood led by Curtis Eaddy of the Southwest Partnership, one of the community’s influential organizations. Students also took an active role in attending various community events and assisting with local projects. For example, students shared their research projects with Neighborhood Lights (Hollins Market) artist Malaika Clements for her Stories from Sowebo newspaper that was part of the Light City programming. Like this zine, the newspaper was designed by Markele Cullins (VARTS @ UMBC).





Back (left): Curtis Eaddy (Southwest Partnership), Liz Ridinger (B.A. American Studies), Zachary Utz (M.A. Historical Studies - Public History), DeAndre Bright (B.A. American Studies, Education), Jonathan Portuesi (B.S. Biological Sciences & Entrepreneurship minor), Anthony Portuesi (B.S. Biological Sciences & Entrepreneurship minor), Jameka Wiggins (Chemical Engineering), Terece Young (B.A. American Studies & Sociology)

Front (left): Sydney McCain (B.A. American Studies, Education), Elizabeth Piet (B.A. American Studies, Education), Lia Adams (M.A. Applied Sociology), Professor Nicole King (American Studies)

“I love the history... It’s a lot of stories here and a lot of history. I think that it would be beautiful if we can document all of this history or find ways of just going back and documenting the past 40 years.”

-- Curtis Eaddy (Events and Marketing Manager, Southwest Partnership)

When I first moved to Baltimore over a decade ago...

I remember playing ball on the sidewalk of Hollins street

I remember exploring the Market and getting a chicken box from Jack’s, still unaware that it was a chicken box

I remember driving late at night to Zella’s, one of the few pizzeria’s with really yummy pizza.

Now, eleven years later....

I realize that my early presence in the neighborhood was connected to the process of development

I realize that the Market is now threatened by the impending revitalization efforts of current developers

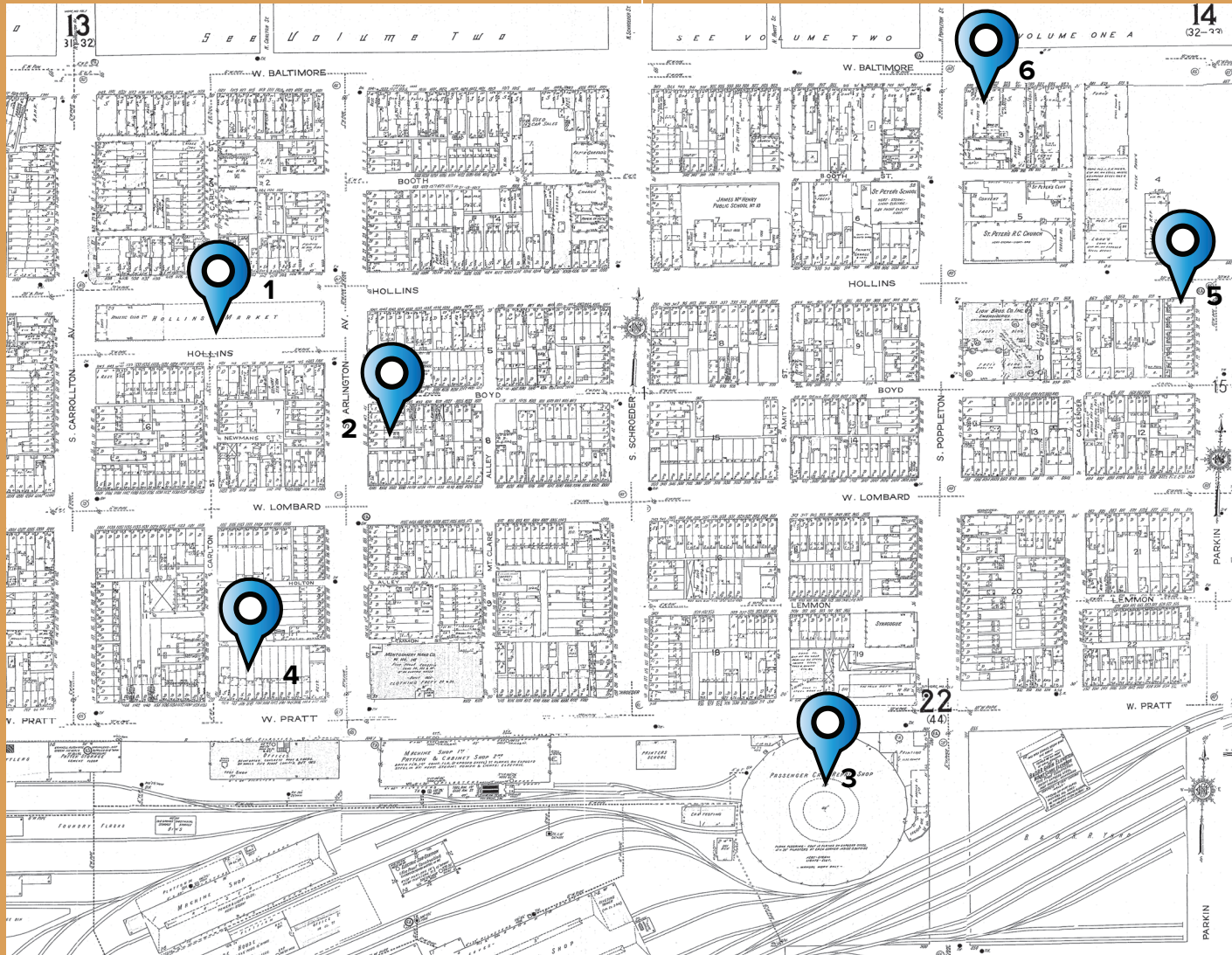
I realize that small businesses, like Zella’s, can resist urban renewal efforts and still succeed

-- Lia Adams (UMBC graduate student, Sociology)

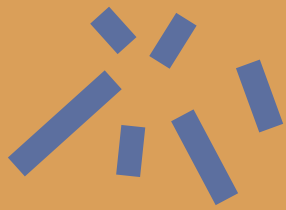
Thanks to ... Curtis Eaddy, Malaika Clements, Nia Hampton... and all the people who took the time to talk with us such as Leonard Taylor, Gready, William “Bugs” Lewis, Dan Van Allen, Robert Williams, Troy, JR Lee, Michael Lamason, Abigail Breiseth, Lumpy (L&R produce vendor) and all the residents and business owners who welcomed us into their neighborhood. Thank you DeAndre Bright, Lia Adams and Zach Utz (historical photos). Special shout out to all the kind folks at Zella’s Pizzeria... our classroom away from the Lion Brothers Building...home to amazing people and pizza. We all love Hollins Market!

For more information on the class or the project contact Professor Nicole King
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PAST



(1) Hollins Market **(2)** Alley Housing along Carlton Street: African Americans in Pre-civil War Hollins **(3)** Mt. Claire Station: Industrialization and the Railroad **(4)** Lion Brothers Building **(5)** Lithuanian Hall: Cultural Center of a New Immigrant Community in Hollins **(6)** St. Peter The Apostle Church: European Immigrants Come to Work on The Railroad



Before I started digging into the history of Hollins Market, I must admit that I didn't know much about either the building or the neighborhood surrounding it. I think I had heard some vague stories about Scott Plank, and redevelopment plans, but that was about it. However it didn't take long to realize just how dynamic the nearly 200 year story of Hollins Roundhouse was. Our presentation of Hollins Roundhouse's past has focused on the themes of diversity. Like so much of Baltimore history, Hollins was largely a by-product of the railroad. But rather than just telling another story from the perspective of the entrepreneurs, businessmen and tycoons, the following historical narrative has intentionally tried to focus on the smaller stories of the many diverse persons who have lived and worked in Hollins. Our vehicle for telling these stories are the many historic buildings in the neighborhood. Some of these buildings you might pass by without a second glance, while others stand out as obviously important. By presenting the past in this way, I hoped to illuminate the endless amount of important history that is present around every corner of Hollins Roundhouse. I hope you enjoy your journey through Hollins past as much as I did.

-Zach Utz (UMBC, Public History)



HOLLINS MARKET'S PAST 1830-1990



The Hollins Roundhouse neighborhood has historically been one of the more ethnically and economically diverse areas of Baltimore. The current Hollins Market building, which dates to 1864, is the oldest existing public market structure in the city. Over time, a large number of working men and women from many different backgrounds have called the neighborhood home. The area has served as a place for important social and cultural changes in the city. On this tour of Hollins Market's past, we will explore the neighborhood's history through its buildings. Each historic building was chosen to represent an important era in the history of Hollins. This is also an American story, with each site representing some important part of that story. Along this journey the neighborhood, you will see how Hollins has been a place where waves of immigrants and natives lived and worked together to build their own unique, and sometimes shared, version of the American experience. For a more in depth tour of Hollins Market check out the Story Map website at <https://tinyurl.com/ybkrn297> Below is a sampling of 6 out of 11 of the places on the digital map...

Hollins Market: A Market for Many Publics

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Hollins Market: A Market for Many Publics



As the community continued to grow so too did the need for a public market place to purchase food and other goods. By the end of the 1830s the B&O alone employed over 1,000 workers. In response to this growing need, two brother piano makers named Elias and Joseph Newman opened the first Hollins Market place at 26 South Arlington Avenue in 1836. The market structure was a single story and wooden, similar to the picture on the left. Not long after opening it was destroyed by a wind storm. It was rebuilt and opened again in 1838.

The iconic two story brick building on Carrollton Street wasn't actually constructed until 1864. The downstairs portion was part of the market, and the upstairs was used as a public meeting and assembly Hall for local workers and residents.

ALLEY HOUSING ALONG CARLTON STREET

african americans in pre-civil war
hollins

By mid 1800s, the Hollins Market area was home to a growing eclectic mix of workers including African Americans. Baltimore had the largest free black population in the country prior to the Civil War. African Americans began moving into the Hollins Market area in the Antebellum period, where they lived primarily in the smaller cramped alley houses, intentionally hidden from the main streets. For example, Carlton Street, which was just south of Hollins Market Hall.



Mt. Clare Station

Industrialization and the Railroad



The story of the Hollins Market neighborhood really begins with the construction of the Mount Clare Station in 1830 by the B&O Railroad. Mount Clare was the first passenger rail station built by the B&O, thus making it the oldest in the country. Soon after it opened industry began to flourish in the surrounding area. In 1833, the Mount Clare shops opened adjacent to the station. Virtually overnight the formerly undeveloped area of southwest Baltimore City began to see an increase in population as workers from all over came in search of work in the railroad industry. By the end of the decade the neighborhood that would later become Hollins Market was an economically diverse mix of peoples from and equally diverse mix of backgrounds.

LION BROTHERS: Industrial Decline in Hollins

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By the end of the 1950s many of Baltimore's industrial businesses began to follow their workforces out of the city and into the suburbs. Highway construction and the proliferation of automobiles had remade American cities. In 1958, the Lions Brothers Clothing Company relocated

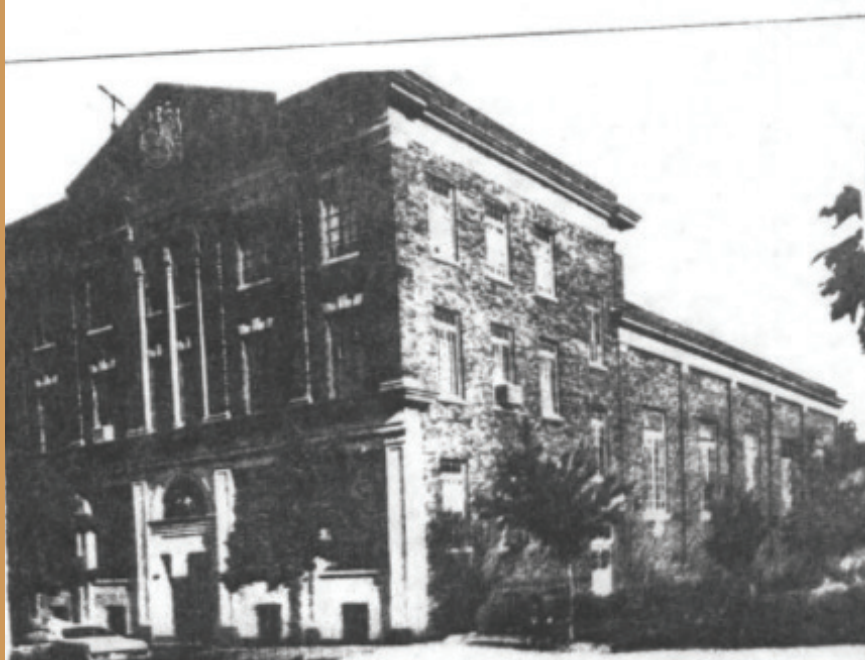
from its home of nearly 50 years at 875 Hollins Street to Owings Mills in northwest Baltimore County. The company had been at the Hollins Street location since the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904 forced them to relocate their factory to the growing area near Hollins Market.

During that time the company had grown exponentially to become the leading embroidery company in the United States. Its departure marked the beginning of a period of general decline in Hollins. Soon other industries too began to leave Hollins for the cheaper and more plentiful land of the suburbs.

In April of 1977, Mayor William Donald Schafer symbolically hammered a nail into the side of the Hollins Market Hall. He did so in announcement of a \$1.2 million plan to revitalize the aging building. This marked a significant step in the beginnings of revitalization of Hollins, a process which is still underway today. In 1981, Hollins was named by Johns Hopkins as one of the "10 neighborhoods [in the city] that remained mixed from 1970 to 1980."

LITHUANIAN HALL

a new immigrant community
in hollins



Starting in the 1880s Lithuanians began to arrive en masse in Baltimore. Many would come to Hollins-Roundhouse to work in the growing textile industry. By the turn of the century, they had established themselves as one of the more prominent ethnic communities in Hollins. World War I created a great need for uniforms which drew even more Lithuanians to the community. By the end of the decade, the Lithuanian population in Hollins had grown so sizable that community leaders decided to purchase two row homes at 851-853 Hollins Street and convert them into a new large assembly hall. The Lithuanian Hall opened in 1921. It hosted an wide array of events for the Lithuanian community from political rallies to banquets and concerts. Including a speech by the exiled President of the then Nazi-occupied Republic of Lithuania during World War II. After the war, many Lithuanians began to leave Hollins for the suburbs of Baltimore County which led to a decline in the usage of the Lithuanian Hall.

ST PETER APOSTLE CHURCH

irish come to work on the railroad



Around the time Hollins Market was built, European immigrants had begun to pour into the area looking for jobs in the growing industrial complex surrounding the railroad. One of the largest immigrant communities to respond to this need was the Irish. Irish railroad workers played an integral role in the rapid expansion of the B&O railroad westward. By 1842, the Irish population in Hollins had grown so large that the ethnic community decided to build a large church for the growing congregation. St. Peter the Apostles Church at 13 South Poppleton opened in 1844 and would become the first Catholic Church in west Baltimore.

BRIDGE



Image source: Sarah Meehan, "H.L. Mencken's Cultured Pearl to return for candidate's campaign launch," Baltimore Sun, July 10, 2017.

"What makes the city great is the diversity of city life. If you're looking to live with rich people, you can live in the suburbs where everyone is the same. The texture of life in a city builds a deeper person."

--Stephan Lowentheil as quoted in Cindy Harper-Evans, "Neighborhood Developer Still Finds Dreams Elusive," Baltimore Sun, May 7, 1989.

In the late 1970s, Stephan Lowentheil, a young New York lawyer turned developer and rare book dealer, attempted to redevelop the Hollins Market neighborhood. His father Howard Lowentheil had purchased over 100 properties mostly along Hollins Street surrounding the market.

In addition to the investment from his family and friends, Stephan Lowentheil received over \$4 million in federal and state grants such as the Urban Development Action Grant. Lowentheil's 19th Century Bookstore, which sold rare books, was homebase for the development efforts. Like 19th Century Bookstore (today New Beginnings barbershop), the Cultured Pearl (now Hollins Place) and Tell Tale Hearth (now Zella's pizzeria) all were hip, artsy businesses during the 1980s when Artscape and then the Sowebo Festival made Baltimore known for its arts counterculture.

But by 1989, the Baltimore Department of Housing and Community Development filed documents against Lowentheil because of neglect of his vacant properties and he fell behind on payments. The Baltimore Sun reported in 1996 that the failed development project cost the state \$2.5 million and was a major hit to the neighborhood.

Lowentheil had strong financial support as well as millions in federal and state grants, but his redevelopment effort was a failure. Why did it fail? Are there any lessons to be learned for today?

HAVE YOU SEEN THE GHOST OF HOLLINS MARKET

Have you seen the ghost signs of Hollins Market?

by Sydney McCain

Have you ever noticed the “ghost signs” on the front and side of Hollins Liquors?

Ghost signs are hand painted advertisements from the past that survive on historic buildings. Ghost signs in the Hollins Market area and throughout Baltimore represent a long, rich history of commerce and a forgotten art form.

What do they say?

On the side of the building are signs that say things such as Knoblock’s Coffee, Use Chris Lipp’s Premium Soap, and the beginning of a phrase saying Save the... along with other faded out writing. On the front of the building it noticeably says Knoblock’s.

What was Knoblock’s?

Knoblock’s was a grocery store in Hollins Market under the ownership of Edna May Knoblock until 1959 when she signed the building over to new owners. Although the owners have changed over time, the building has stayed the same along with the ghost writing that reminds us that the past may fade but leaves its trace.



**Can you figure
out the stories...
behind the ghost
signs of Hollins
Market?**



Pictured are UMBC alumni visiting to advise current AMST students: Courtney Hobson (HIST), Christina Kwegan (AMST), Katie Hern (AMST), Andrew Holter (HIST), and Michael Stone (HIST)

PRESENT

“This area, this piece of Baltimore is glorious in the kind of American story that it has to tell. And that’s what I appreciate so much and enjoy and remain committed to about Baltimore and in general is that every American issue that you want to work on is right here. Race and poverty and the environment and urbanization and the rustbelt and all of it. It’s all right here.”

--Abigail Breiseth, Hollins Roundhouse resident since 2000

Present Day Hollins Market

Today, Hollins Market neighborhood continues to be a microcosm of Baltimore. The neighborhood, like the city, has endured the rise and decline of industrialization, white flight to the suburbs, isolation by highway construction, and unsuccessful attempts at redevelopment. Yet this historic neighborhood is home to gems such as the city’s oldest public market, an Arabber stable, local businesses, and original arts and culture ventures. Hollins Market fosters a unique identity through its eclectic mix of people and places. Pulling from a combination of historical research and interviews, we hope you get a glimpse of what Hollins Market is today...

Demographics

Figure 1 illustrates population and racial breakdown of Hollins Market, part of the US Census Tract 1803. The boundaries include Baltimore St (North), W Pratt St (South), S Carey St. (West) and N MLK Jr. Blvd (East). The left axis is population (the blue bars) in numbers. The right axis is the percentage of Black and White residents (purple and orange lines) for that given year.

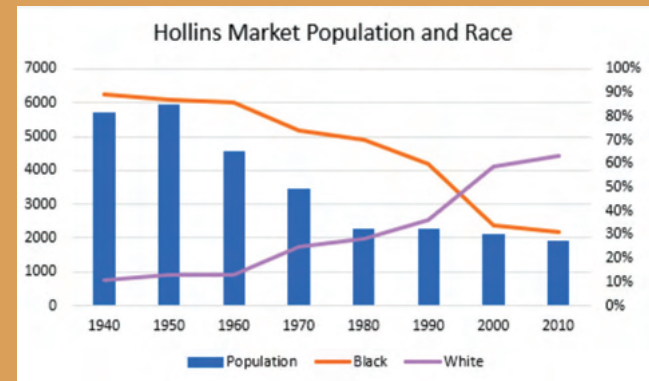


Figure 1. Population and Race Demographic Information (US Census Bureau, 1940-2010)

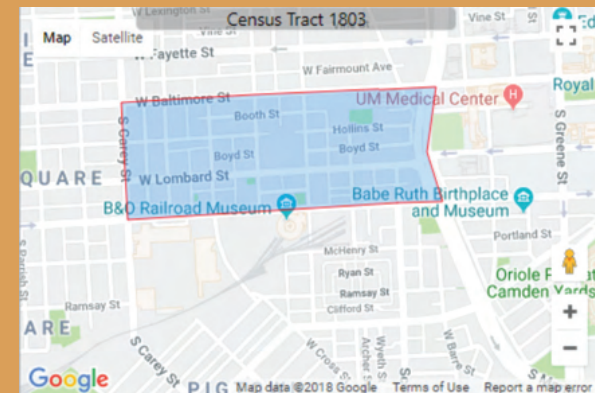


Table 1. Population, Household and Income Data (Census, 2010)

	Poppleton/ The Terraces/ Hollins Market	Baltimore City
Total Population	5,086	620,961
Total Households	2,181	249,903
Median Household Income	\$24,274	\$42,213

Figure 2. Race and Age in Poppleton/The Terraces/Hollins Market CSA (Census, 2010)

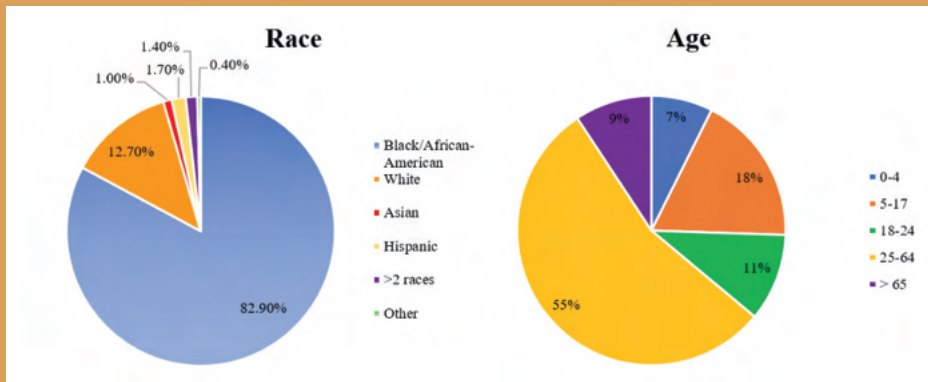


Table 2 Housing and Community Development (BNIA, 2010-2016)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Totals
Total Number of Homes Sold	41	31	39	30	44	19	69	273
Median Sale Prices	\$48,000	\$69,900	\$69,000	\$117,450	\$73,600	\$59,000	\$100,000	\$536,950
Median # of Days on the Market	116	53	42	38	27	69	39	384
% of Homes Sold in Foreclosure	-	37.90%	26.10%	0%	6.10%	3.20%	1.50%	12.47%
% of Properties that are Owner-Occupied	33.40%	31.20%	30.80%	30.80%	30.30%	30.30%	29.40%	30.89%
% of Properties that are Vacant and Abandoned	18.7%	16.6%	15.3%	0.0%	16.4%	15.3%	0%	11.76%

“I’ve seen numerous changes in the market over the years L&R used to have three stands in the market, one owned by my parents at the top of the market, and one diagonally across from us and all three were busy, and I mean busy, but now its not like it used to be.”



“Best time I have ever experienced was about 10-15 years ago when the market was so full that we all knew how our businesses are going to run, but now that its slow, all of us don’t understand what to buy. When the older generation came here it was better because they helped business more.”

Lumpy, L&R produce vendor at Hollins Market (DeAndre Bright)

114-116 S. Carlton Street

Nested in a secluded alley a block and a half south of the market is the Carlton Street stable, the oldest active horse stable in Baltimore. The stable is one of only three surviving Arabber stables in the city. Arabbers are predominately African-American men who traverse the city streets selling fruits and vegetables from horse-drawn carts. The city has applied stricter regulations significantly limiting the hours Arabbers are allowed to be on the street. With limited economic resources, workers at the Carlton Street stable are challenged with finding the funds to repair broken wagons. As a result, there are currently no wagons coming out of the Carlton Street stable. However, Gready, a stable worker; Leonard Taylor, a friend of the stable; and William Lewis, founder and President of the Urban Horse Corporation, do their best to maintain the stable and the eight horses. While their goal is to have working wagons and to get back onto the street, their motivation for keeping the stables open is because it is what they love to do, it has kept them off the streets, and it “keep[s] the young people coming in, keep[s] the generation going.”

*Update: Lia stopped by the stable on May 2nd where she spoke with Gready who informed her that a couple of days ago, himself and William Lewis purchased a wagon out of pocket. While they are still working on the finalizing touches of the wagon, like painting it, they hope to be out on the streets soon!

“We come from a city where trouble is easy to find, where it finds you. Trouble will find you, so if you can’t find something to do, you become either victimized or a statistic...You get up there, you go through the whole city seeing people, everyone happy to see the horse and the buggy and the fruit man, everyone happy to see that guy when he come through. And you kind of appreciate it when you get older, you’re like dang, I had a good day today”

- Gready



“The most important thing is to support politically the arabbers by making sure your council [member] is a supporter of them and that they can continue and whatever the city can do to help them do what they do. The second thing is funding.”

- William Lewis



“One day I would like for all of us to get together, with different fruit in here and food, and let the community come in here and see what we do. And they can come in here and don’t have to pay for nothing. Just come and eat the fruit, taste the different fruit. We can have the grill out, let the community come in here and party with us.”

-Leonard Taylor
Arabber’s Stable (Lia Adams)



Image source: Valentino Wiebel

“I love the fact that the Arabbers are right behind me...we can hear the wagons come down the street with the steel wheels on the concrete and the bells and the hollerin’ and the click clock and all that and beautiful wagons full of fruit.”

- Dan Van Allen

“From about eight to twelve I just told all my friends I was going to own the horse stables....I just remember coming down here, late nights, middle of the days after school...taking his horses out on a walk in the little square they got, feeding the horses apples, brushing the horses. Like my most fondest memory I have in this area is the horse stable and spending time with my grandfather learning about arabbing. I wish that I had more time there and with him.”

--Curtis Eaddy

Urimi Siki or New Day Gallery

(DeAndre Bright)

The historic building at 1100 Hollins Street has been home to local independent businesses for over a century. Back in 1891, the building was Eitemiller Bros Grocery, a grocery store owned by German immigrants to Baltimore. The owner, Christian Eitemiller, was the Individual Grocery Association President. In 1983 an application was filed for the building to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places, which included a narrative written by Christian’s daughter Irma E. Morris. The application discusses how the “Eitemiller brothers were involved in the independent grocers association and its struggle against chain grocery stores.” Despite its eventual closure, the local store was a model of success for over fifty years. Now, the building is home to one of the largest collections of African Art in the city. Since 2000, Robert Williams has run Urimi Siki or New Day Gallery, where he sells a plethora of unique African Art. Williams explains, “What I sell right here is tribal art, most of the tribes I sell from are from West Africa...” Much of the art represents the history of Africans and African American people, including the colonization of Africa but also the civil rights movement.

New Beginnings

(Jameka Wiggins & DeAndre Bright)

1047 Hollins Street was built in 1845 and is a three-story Italianate attached building constructed of masonry in scale with the Hollins Market. In 1872, the building served as the location of the C.D. Kenny Company, where owner Cornelius Kenny, a native of Ireland, sold coffee, tea, and sugars. In 1890 the building served as a local pharmacy and by the beginning of the 20th century it was a drugstore owned by Charles M. Benson. Throughout the early 20th century there were two storefronts located on the first floor, which hosted businesses such as a tea store, restaurant, and a grocery and meat shops.

The second and third floors had rooms that could be rented out. In the late 1940s the space was for sale for a period of time but then in the 1950s and 1960s the space was used to host a variety of events and fundraisers for women’s societies. Following that time, there was a period of vacancy. However, by the 1980s, the building was back in business, this time as a 19th Century Bookshop, which featured rare books in the store front. New York lawyer and antiquarian, Stephan Loewentheil, owned and operated the Bookshop where he also rented the rooms above. Loewentheil was a driving force in the neighborhood redevelopment effort led by. In the 1990s, The 19th Century Bookshop closed and Loewentheil left southwest Baltimore, the Great Gift Book Shop took over the space. In 2008, the New Beginnings Unisex Barbershop opened in 1047 Hollins Street.



Image source: Malaika Aminata Clements

“What I perceive in the future for the Hollins Roundhouse can no longer be the Hollins Roundhouse of the past. I see it to be a bit more contemporary progressive... Well we as people in this community have been able to maintain is that same sense of community tradition with the same traditional feel but we still moving towards the future and the present will give those same modern accessories.”

- Troy, New Beginnings Barbershop

In the past decade the New Beginnings Barbershop has witnessed many changes. Recently, UMBC student DeAndre Bright sat down to interview Troy, a barber at New Beginnings. Troy describes the gentrification and redevelopment he has seen within the community, such as the “remodeling of the [local] elementary school, [Hollins Market], and [various] homes are being remodeled.” He explains that this is creating a “different sense of economic stability” for the community. While some members of the area would like to see the neighborhood stay the same and keep its historic edgy feel, others want to see more development. For instance, Troy insists he wants to “maintain that sense of community tradition with the same traditional feel,” but suggests that the neighborhood “can no longer be the Hollins Roundhouse of the past.” As a member of the community, Troy feels the future Hollins Roundhouse should “be a bit more contemporary, a more progressive urban community.” In regards to developer Scott Plank’s War Horse Cities, Troy feels “they [are] actually putting rubber to pavement,” working to refurbish and fix some of the properties within the neighborhood. In fact, New Beginnings Barbershop is one of its many sites; Troy states he is “happy to see the [changes] taking place.” Like its name suggests, the New Beginnings Barbershop represents the great potential for a rebirth of community and energy in the Hollins Market neighborhood and southwest Baltimore.

“Yeah I witnessed quite a few changes. You have now what’s taking place for the remodeling of the elementary school. That’s major. The market now is going under remodeling as well as the homes are being remodeled, re-gentrification is taking place. I’ve been here long enough to see and also see the transitioning between the generations.”

- Troy, New Beginnings Barbershop



Zella's Pizzeria (Terece)

1145 Hollins Street is located at the southern intersection of Hollins and S. Carrollton Avenue. In the late-19th century, local resident John J.Ullrich ran a grocery store in the space until his death in 1912. The building also housed the Williams Brothers meat and seafood business. During the 1980's, the space became a restaurant specializing in New York-style wood oven pizza, the Tell-tale Hearth, which opened during the redevelopment of the area as a hip arts district. In 2007, Zella's Pizzeria opened to serve delicious pizza and provide a gathering space near the historic market. Zella's Pizzeria is a thriving business that works with the local community to host art shows and community events.



**25%
OFF APPETIZERS AT
HOLLINS PLACE WITH
A COPY OF “A Journey
Through Hollins” ZINE**

**IRISH RAILROAD
WORKERS MUSEUM**

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HOURS

FRIDAY 11-3

SATURDAY 11-4

Check out the The Irish Railroad Workers Museum, a historic site celebrates the history of the immense Irish presence in Southwest Baltimore in the late 1840's. 918 Lemmon St - Open Fridays 11am-3pm & Saturdays 11am-4pm

Hollins Place

(Liz Ridinger)

Built in the late-19th century, 1116 Hollins St. is a three-story brick building with a storefront on the first floor and rooms above. In 1900 John V. Manning, a resident of the building, sued the United Railways and Electric Company following the death of his five-year-old daughter Mary, who was hit and killed by a streetcar. The storefront was many different businesses throughout the 20th century--the Dietz Feed store, a butcher shop, a furniture store, and then a glassware and pottery store known as Smitty's, which was later renamed Smith's Chinaware. In the 1980s the property was rehabbed with an Urban Development Action Grant as a storefront with artist studios and living quarters above. In the storefront, a café opened known as The Cultured Pearl. The café was part of an effort to redevelop the area for artists and young professionals. The Cultured Pearl was a success in the 1980s with poetry readings, art openings, and a general bohemian feel. By the 1990s the business began to suffer due to "perception issues" and a lack of attention by the city, according to manager Ted Getzel. After the Cultured Pearl Café closed, the building space became home to a handful of businesses, like an electrical company, a sushi restaurant, pho restaurant, Mi Ranchito's... and it has now reopened as Hollins Place.



Image source: Malaika Aminata Clements

“ I love the neighborhood, I know what this neighborhood could be, if we roll our sleeves up and make it work.”

-- JR, board of Hollins Roundhouse, co-owner of 116 Hollins location

Black Cherry Puppet Theater

(Anthony Portuesi)

Located at 1115 Hollins Street is the Black Cherry Puppet Theater. Before it became known as a place of puppetry, back in the 1950s the building served as a tomato processing plant. Following the closure of the tomato processing plant, the building remained vacant for a period of time. In the late 1990s, Michael Lamason, owner of the Puppet Theater, purchased the property and began putting on puppet shows with his colleagues for the community.



1145 Hollins Street is located at the southern intersection of Hollins and S. Carrollton Avenue. In the late-19th century, local resident John J.Ullrich ran a grocery store in the space until his death in 1912. The building also housed the Williams Brothers meat and seafood business. During the 1980's, the space became a restaurant specializing in New York-style wood oven pizza, the Tell-tale Hearth, which opened during the redevelopment of the area as a hip arts district.

In 2010, the outdoor puppet theater, the “Performance Garden,” opened up that held free events to attract more of the surrounding community members. The art experience the theater brings to the area is unique. Artists from many different backgrounds and disciplines come and gather to play music and network with community members and artists, and, of course, to see the puppet shows. For Lamason, the impending changes that could contribute to gentrification of the neighborhood could be “a real enemy” to the quality of life in the neighborhood. He views that the future of Hollins rests in the hands of local businesses. Black Cherry Puppet Theater shows the importance of community spaces in bringing people together.

“I think this neighborhood revitalization is good for the most part. Plank just got control of the market. There is a need for it. I’m not expecting them to give money. I think as the neighborhood improves, the area becomes more attractive and would have less of an issue with getting an audience. I feel that people that live in the suburbs will boost the economic benefit of the neighborhood and the theater as whole. It would help get rid of the vacant buildings, crime, and drugs. Having more people in the area and more foot traffic would be a positive effect overall.”

--Michael Lamason, Black Cherry Puppet Theater



FUTURE FUTURE

The Future of Hollins

(by Liz Piet)

Hollins Market is an example of the growth of public-private partnerships in American cities. Baltimore City has signed a long-term lease with War Horse CDC to operate Hollins Market but will remain the owner of the Market. War Horse Community Development Corporation (CDC) is the non-profit branch of War Horse Cities, and according to War Horse representative Jim Mills, War Horse “saw an opportunity to stabilize the neighborhood by improving the Market and large buildings around the area.”

War Horse has agreed to redevelop the 10,000 sq. ft. “shed” of Hollins Market. Currently, the most recent plans include giving the shed a fresh exterior look with larger windows allowing natural light as well as a large opening that will lead to Hollins Square. There will be 21 vendor spaces of various sizes, a common seating area that will stretch down the center aisle for patrons to gather, and bathrooms that are fully accessible to all customers. Plans also include installing a completely new mechanical and infrastructure systems, as well as upgrades to the HVAC and electrical systems.

Outside the market, plans include a transformation of the sidewalk around the Market to invite open air concerts, summer outdoor movies, outside vendors, and a farmer’s market. Plans also include conversion of a parking lot near the market into a community park. There are plans to address public safety and transportation issues by including sidewalks, crosswalks, and more street lighting. War Horse hopes to complete and approve this design by the fall. The hope is to revive the Hollins Market area as a public gathering place with a diverse spectrum of patrons.

Thoughts from residents

“The question is not even about War Horse. War Horse, developers coming in and seeing opportunities and either being responsive to or trampling over the feelings, interests, and needs of the neighbors who already live there is a symptom, a outgrowth of a phenomenon happening before that which is larger patterns of city planning and infrastructure. So the University of Maryland hopping MLK with the biopark seems to me like this sort of catalyzing event that then is making all these other people feel like ‘oh well this is a lucrative place to be’”

--Abigail Breiseth, Hollins Roundhouse resident since 2000

“I think it would be a big mistake for the city to rent the market. The city needs to operate the market themselves.”

--Dan Van Allen, Hollins Market resident since 1985

“Warhorse is the question of the moment but the question of the longer trends and decisions that are being made by the city, trends, the whole TIF and PILOT debate, the black butterfly, the white L, and reckoning with infrastructural racism, and Baltimore’s pioneer role in those practices and reckoning with the voices of regular people, Black Lives Matter, Me too. How do they impact large economic decision making that impacts your ability to buy fresh protein in a place that you can actually get to from your home and have green space.”

--Abigail Breiseth, Hollins Roundhouse resident since 2000

“I’m still trying to find out about [War Horse], I want to know when they are gonna do it, how they are going to do it, and if the rent is going to raise because no one in here will be able to afford it. I just want to know what is going to happen so I can tell my staff and be fully aware.”

--Lumpy, L&R produce vendor, Hollins Market

“I want a developer who’s going to be part of all that stuff that needs to have its song sung, and not just write a new tune, without even seeing if the people around actually even like that melody, forget whether it is an accurate song or not.”

--Abigail Breiseth, Hollins Roundhouse resident since 2000



Thoughts from students

This semester I walked into a classroom in an area I've never heard about with less than high hopes. What I didn't know was that I would be immersed into a community that would show me things I never expected. Hollins Market is a place full of history and great people. My favorite part of this semester was taking a walking tour of the Hollins Market area. We got to speak with people in businesses such as New Beginnings and visit the arabber stable. This area has shown me a sense of pride in their history that is rare to find.

--Sydney McCain (AMST)

It was great to actually be at a class in Baltimore City, focusing on a project that is directly about the city. My research focus, independent of this class, has and will continue to be Baltimore. To me, Baltimore is like this never-ending novel that I can't help but keep reading. This is despite a reality that constantly seems to be telling me to give up. Many of my old friends have left the city, and many others talk about doing so everyday. I think part of what keeps me here is that novel idea. That tomorrow I might learn something new, and potentially extremely disturbing, about the place I've called home for the better part of a decade. It kind of feels like this impossible quest that I have to finish, like reading Infinite Jest or something (which I haven't done). Either way it keeps me coming back. This class succeeded in filling out a missing chapter in that greater story. I didn't know much about the southwest, and now I do. I'm grateful for that.

--Zach Utz (HIST)

Through taking American Studies 422, I have learned more about myself and ways I want to contribute to my community in the future. During this course, the experience that impacted me the most was going on the walking tour with Curtis Eaddy. Being able to meet with store owners and community members, seeing the different dynamics of the neighborhood, and just exploring an area that I had never been to was really nice. Taking AMST 422 has been rewarding; it has strengthened my research skills, pushed me out my comfort zone, and gave me a new perspective, I am so glad I took this course!

--Jameka Wiggins (Chemical Engineering)

My favorite part about having class in SoWeBo, was my after class ritual of going to Zella's for a drink and dinner. Every time I went there I was welcomed in and treated as if I lived in the neighborhood. I was always able to have a conversation with people from the area, who were all very interested to hear about our class project and my thoughts about their community. Being in Zella's gave me a local's perspective of what it is like living in the neighborhood.

--Terece Young (AMST)



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE FUTURE OF HOLLINS MARKET?



