NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 (Expires 5/31/2012)

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Capital Traction Company Car Barn

other names/site number Decatur Street Car Barn; Northern Bus Garage

2. Location

street & number 4615 14th Street, N.W. [ ] not for publication

city or town Washington, D.C. [ ] vicinity

state District of Columbia code DC county _____ code 001 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ **national** ___ **statewide** X **local**

DAVID MALONEY, DC SHPO 3/15/2013
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

for Edson W. Beall 5.22.13
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Capital Traction Company Car Barn
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- [ ] private
- [X] public - Local
- [ ] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- [X] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION/Rail-related
TRANSPORTATION/Road-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION/Road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Renaissance Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete with granite facing
walls: Brick
roof: Slate
other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Capital Traction Car Barn at 4615 14th Street, N.W. is a distinctive and low-lying, Italian Renaissance-style brick building designed in 1906 as a streetcar car barn at 14th and Decatur Streets, NW at the end of the Capital Traction Company's Fourteenth Street streetcar line. Often referred to as the Decatur Street Car Barn and presently known as the Northern Bus Garage, the building is a high style and sophisticated piece of architecture designed by the prominent local architecture firm of Wood, Donn and Deming, Deliberately designed to serve as a company landmark, the two-story brick building with some stucco surfaces, concrete and stone trimmings along with its prominent tower, was at once historicist and thoroughly modern: the building housed two turntables and the most up-to-date electrified rolling stock powered by underground conduit within its Italian Renaissance-inspired envelope. The building is massed and detailed as two complementary villas side by side with one being the administrative offices and the other the repair shops and the actual storage barn. The repair shop/storage barn is identified and characterized by its grand campanile.

As originally built by the construction firm of Richardson and Burgess in 1906, the car barn measured 537 feet by 208 feet and occupied nearly half of its site on Square 2811. In 1959, the building was converted into a bus garage, having already been leased in part to the Washington Rapid Transit for this use since 1926. At the time of conversion, a bus garage addition was built at the building's rear (east) elevation. In 1966, the car barn was transferred to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and, in 1989-1992, was substantially enlarged by the construction of a one-story bus maintenance facility and storage area. With the completion of this addition, the building consumed all of Squares 2811 and 2815. As a result of these alterations, the building now presents a pentagram-shaped footprint.

The building is constructed of brick laid in an American bond that varies from three to five courses. Ranging in height from one story to three stories, the structure sits on a concrete foundation accented by a granite-faced water table. The functions of the building are visually distinct – the office portion located at the approximate northwest corner along 14th and Decatur Streets, and the storage and repair facilities to the south and rear. Despite a modern addition and a modification in use, the original use and style remain clearly defined along 14th Street. The greatest stylistic statement is presented on the oldest portion of the building, within the ornate primary façade on 14th Street. Designed in the Italian Renaissance Revival style, the building mimics the Italian villas of the early 16th century with square towers, uniform brick walls accented by stone belt courses, quoins, keystones, and the shallow-pitched hipped roofs with expansive bracketed eaves. The office portion of the building features an imposing hipped roof of slate tiles with a flat peak and expansive overhang supported by fan brackets. This section of the building is flanked by vehicular entries that originally provided entry and exit openings for the streetcars. The original 1906 storage facility, or garage area, to the south has a flat roof with a front gable parapet and three-story tower. In 1987, all windows and doors were replaced in the original portion of the building. The 1989 addition to the south and east of the main block consists of an open one-story garage with parking on the roof. A thirteen-foot high red brick wall, the majority of which was erected in 1983, surrounds the property. The height of this wall largely obscures the structure of the 1989 one-story addition.

The site of the Capital Traction Company Car Barn is bounded by 14th Street to the east, Decatur Street to the north, Iowa Avenue to the northeast, Arkansas Avenue to the southeast, and Buchanan Street to the south. As platted at the turn of the 20th century, the two squares were to be divided by Crittenden Street (then listed as 36th Street); however, because of the construction of the car barn in 1906, the road was never laid and the squares remained joined. The original portion of the building, as designed by Wood, Donn, and Deming, faces 14th Street. All pedestrian and vehicular entry into the building was located on this thoroughfare. The 1989 addition engulfed the open portions of the property, surrounding the original main block on the south and east. With the building's conversion bus use, and the erection of a surrounding wall in 1983, the primary vehicular entries were moved to Buchanan Street and the northern end of the property. The doublewide entries in the original portion of the building, fronting 14th Street, also provide vehicular access for the buses. Entry to the rooftop parking set aside for employees was placed on 14th Street.

The property is located in a predominately residential community that developed simultaneously to the extension of the streetcar line and the construction of the car barn. As a result of the streetcar extension, 14th Street became partially

commercialized, as it became a major transportation artery into and out of the city. The residential community surrounding the car barn, however, has remained intact.

Narrative Description

Exterior Description

The primary (west) façade of the Capital Traction Car Barn along 14th Street is divided into two distinct sections – the two-story office and the one-story car barn and repair facility. The two-story office, designed in an Italian villa-type form, is located on the northern portion of the façade and extends eight bays long. This section of the building is distinctly separate from the storage facility, although the two parts are contemporaneous and stylistically consistent. It features a first story of brick and a second story clad with stucco and lit with round-arched windows, and a broad hipped roof with overhanging eaves and fan brackets. The roof projects at the northeast side to shelter a tower-like addition dating from 1987. The office is constructed of brick set on a granite-faced base with an ogee molded concrete cap. The brick coursing alternates between three and five course American bond with glazed brick quoins and a glazed brick stringcourse. The contrasting colors and textures of the brick surface, concrete details, and stuccoed second-story, richly decorate the Italian villa office. A vehicular entry abuts the north end of the office block, balanced by a similar entry between the office and repair facility.

The first story of the office section is divided into eight bays by two, single entry doors; five, single window openings; and a projecting canted bay window. The entries, located in the first and fifth bays from the north end, display classically inspired pedimented architrave surrounds. The casings are composed of molded base blocks, a double surround with crosseting and pendants, and a smooth soffit. Molded concrete pediments, accented with a recessed tympanum and convex architrave, cap the openings. The architrave over the entry in the fourth bay is carved with the words "Capital Traction Co." The openings have been partially enclosed because of the replacement of the original entry doors, a renovation activity that took place in 1987. These single-leaf replacement doors each have nine-lights and two-panels topped by double-glazed ten-light transoms. Three-light-and-panel sidelights are located on the north side of the doors, aiding to infill the opening. Two canted lanterns with scrolled metal brackets and finials illuminate the entry openings.

The southernmost end of the office is pierced by three equally spaced window openings recessed within the brick wall. The elongated openings have replacement 8/8-metal double-hung windows, molded concrete sills, keystones, and brick jack-arched lintels. The stringcourse, which is flush with the plane of the wall, acts as a backdrop for the sills. The center bay of the first story is augmented by a three-sided bay window. Three similarly detailed 8/8-metal windows divided by brick muntins pierce this canted bay. The flat roof of the bay is ornamented with a molded concrete cornice that has an ovolo profile. A single elongated 8/8-metal window is located between the bay and the north entry opening. A poured concrete handicapped accessibility ramp leads to this entry.

The second story of the office structure is coarsely stuccoed and is divided from the first story by a molded concrete stringcourse. Nine symmetrically arranged round-arched windows with 10/8 metal sash, alternate with round-arched blind openings. Parged fan brackets, which include pilaster-like bases and a splayed soffit, serve as implied imposts between the windows and blind openings. The brackets extend upward to support the expansive overhang of the roof. A molded metal architrave hidden beneath the overhanging roof, reads as capitals for the false pilasters and the column-like quoins at the corners of the building.

The southern elevation of the office structure stands proud of the car barn section to its south and is detailed in a similar, yet less elaborate style than the front facade. Two 8/8-metal windows with concrete wrap-around sills and brick jack arches with concrete three-part keystones are located in the first story, while three blind arch windows and two symmetrically placed 10/8-arched metal windows characterize the second story. A molded concrete stringcourse divides the stories. The rear corner comprises part of the storage and repair portion of the building.

The car barn section of the building is recessed from the office section, yet still abuts it at its corner. It is a long, one-story section that extends along 14th Street and is defined primarily by repeating bays of arched openings and by a prominent tower towards its north end. At this northern end, two vehicular entries with metal roll-up replacement doors open to either side of the tower. The primary garage, located at the approximate center of the building, has a flared front-gable parapet with a molded concrete cap and projects slightly with glazed brick quoins at the corners. The opening has a segmentally arched concrete surround with a stepped architrave. A blind roundel light composed of glazed brick is located centrally above the paneled roll-up door. It has a rounded brick surround that is cut-off on the base by the door surround. Two

single entry openings with header arches and concrete keystones flank the projecting garage bay. The northern opening holds a retrofitted flush metal single-leaf door, while the southern opening has been completely infilled with metal sheets.

A tall Italian Renaissance Revival style tower, constructed of four-course American bond brick, rises above the garage facility between the two garage door openings. It has a granite-block-faced foundation with a striated brick and concrete buttress and is capped by a slate-clad, shallow-pitched hipped roof. At its base, the three-story tower is ornamented with concrete facing and is equipped with a round-arched pedestrian entry, separated from the concrete facing by a projecting buttress. The shaft of the tower rises above its base and is finished on all four corners with glazed brick quoins. Three narrow and elongated, three-light metal windows, ornamented with concrete lug sills and jack arches, pierce the west elevation. The remaining elevations are similarly fenestrated, displaying two pairs of elongated three-light metal fixed windows. The second story is differentiated from the top story by a glazed brick course capped by a molded concrete stringcourse. The stuccoed third story or attic-level echoes that of the office portion of the building with symmetrically placed round-arched window openings alternating between blind arches. Parged fan brackets, which include pilaster-like bases and a splayed soffit, act as muntins between the fixed windows and blind openings. The brackets extend upward to support the expansive overhang of the roof. A molded metal architrave has been applied to the story and reads as capitals for the false pilasters and the column-like quoins at the corners of the building.

The main block of the car barn extends south of the vehicle entries and tower, and consists of an arcade of window openings measuring nineteen bays in length. This part of the building, covered by a flat roof with a parapet and molded concrete cornice, is constructed on a glazed brick foundation, with a water table and a stringcourse acting as the windowsills. The slope of the site allows the wall to be further accentuated by two additional stringcourses at the southern end. The semi-circular arched arcade holds four-part metal windows. Each arched window consists of two modern three-light lunettes and two vertical eight-lights. They have arched brick surrounds with a splayed brick keystone. Several of the openings hold louvered metal vents. A slightly recessed garage opening with a twenty-panel and eight-light roll-up wood door is located to the south of the arcade. The molded concrete segmental-arch surround displays a splayed concrete keystone and a poured concrete entry ramp with a metal railing.

A projecting bay topped by a flared front gable parapet visually anchors the southern end of the building. Again, this parapet has a square-edged concrete molding that mimics the gable shape. A round-arched central opening with a brick surround and concrete splayed keystone has been infilled with brick. Located at the center of the bay, the former opening rests on an ogee molded concrete stringcourse. A recessed fourteen-light wooden roundel window with a circular brick surround crowns it. The projecting bay, and its slightly recessed wings, is ornamented with glazed stringcourses and quoins. The wings are each pierced by 4/4-metal fixed windows with brick jack arches, keystones, and concrete sills. The northern wing also has a single-leaf flush metal door with a rowlock lintel and poured concrete steps with tube metal railings.

The southernmost corner of the structure is adorned with three arched openings and a rounded corner. In 1989, this portion of the building was altered to provide facilities for the employees. Two of the entry openings display two-leaf wood twelve-light and two-panel doors with rounded arch two-light transoms. The third opening, located near the southwest corner of the building, has been filled in with brick and a small louvered metal vent. All of the openings have brick surrounds and splayed glazed brick keystones, located just below the concrete stringcourse. A poured concrete stair with a metal tube railing provides access to the doors. The water table is constructed of square-edged concrete blocks. The southwest corner of the building is decoratively detailed with a slightly recessed rounded corner constructed of Flemish bond brick. The two glazed brick stringcourses and a concrete block belt course wrap around the corner from the façade. The continuous concrete capped parapet is slightly stepped on each side of the curved corner.

In 1989, an extensive one-story garage addition was constructed covering the remainder of Square 2811 and all of 2815, and encasing the 1906 building on the east side and the north and south ends. This one-story addition is a partially open structure with rooftop parking at the southern end. It obscures the south and east elevations of the main block, though the symmetrically arranged line of windows on the second floor of both of these elevations is still visible from the parking deck. Like those of the façade, the round-arched windows on both elevations have four-part metal windows consisting of two, three-light lunettes and two vertical eight-lights. They have arched brick surrounds with a splayed brick keystone. Several of the openings hold louvered metal vents or have been filled in with brick. A square brick chimney rises above the roofline between the first two bays of the south elevation. The concrete parking deck expands from the original building elevations to the perimeter walls. A portion of this space houses the building's mechanical equipment. Additionally, an enclosed stair accesses the interior below.

The easterly sloping northern elevation of the building fronts Decatur Street, which was closed to through traffic in 1983 when the wall was constructed. This sound barrier wall, an extension of the parking garage perimeter wall, is constructed of brick and stands thirteen feet in height. It wraps around the north, east, and part of the south sides of the property. A vehicular opening has been created in the wall at the northwest corner to allow buses to travel from 14th Street to the rear of the property.

Originally, the entire north elevation consisted of an arcade of arched windows, except in the projecting pavilions that were each pierced with a smaller wooden sash 6/6 window. On the western end of the wall is the remaining original wooden 6/6-window with a molded wood surround, brick jack arch with a glazed brick keystone, and a concrete surround sill. Slightly setback from the pavilion's glazed brick quoins, the northwest corner of the building is formed by a two-sided brick pier with a molded concrete flat-topped capital.

A bank of five garage openings now constitutes the easternmost end of the north elevation. This section of the building has a stepped-corner parapet with a concrete cap and metal flashing. The bays also exhibit a glazed brick base, granite block belt course and a glazed brick stringcourse that is located above the thirty-panel metal roll-up doors. The two hipped-roof pavilions, with overhanging eaves, anchor the western end of the north elevation. A molded concrete-capped parapet joins the two slate pavilion roofs, creating a flush wall plane. The pavilions feature glazed brick quoins and a molded concrete cornice and water table. The easternmost pavilion has been altered to accommodate the buses, which are taller than the streetcars for which the building was erected. The entry has a square opening with a rowlock lintel and a roll-up twenty-four panel and four-light wooden door. The remaining portion of this elevation displays a granite block base capped by glazed brick and concrete block belt courses. Additionally, it features two glazed brick stringcourses. A second bus entry, similar in scale and design, was also added just to the west in 1989. It displays infilled brick and a square opening with a rowlock lintel and a twenty-four panel and four-light roll-up wooden door with a glazed brick surround base. There are also two semi-circular arched window openings, which are all that remain of the original arcade of windows. They were infilled with brick laid in a four-course American bond pattern and display brick lintels with glazed brick keystones. The concrete block belt course serves as sills for the, now blind, windows. On the roof, located behind the parapet, is an Italian tower, which was erected in 1987. The tower addition was constructed in a manner and style consistent with the office and the original Italianate tower. It features a slate hipped-roof and is constructed of brick with glazed brick quoins. Many of the details of this tower are obstructed due to its remote rooftop location. However, following the previously dictated style, the tower addition features a stuccoed upper floor with a symmetrically placed row of arched blind windows with glazed brick stringcourses.

To the east of the garage bays on the north elevation, the buses travel in a southeasterly direction. Having turned the northeast corner of the main block, there is a one-bay wide diagonal wall pierced by a doublewide vehicular entry with a metal door and a brick infilled arched opening. This diagonal wall marks the end of the original building. The 1989 one-story addition was designed as an open structure, allowing buses to enter any of three bays. Square brick piers support the steel frame structure. The slope of the site allows buses to either enter the two interior levels of this addition. As the site slopes further to the south, buses enter an enclosed two-bay wide portion of the building that is pierced by a single doublewide entry.

Interior Description

As described above, the Capital Traction Company Car Barn consists of two parts: the office section and the actual car barn. The interior of the car barn, of concrete construction, includes two levels—a below grade level and on-grade level—that were historically devoted to streetcar storage, repair, and vehicular mobility. Originally, the main level had two transfer tables and fifty parking spaces. The transfer tables ran parallel to each other and ran from the front to the rear of the building. The basement provided one transfer table with fifteen parking spaces. Both levels were accessed from the car door openings on 14th Street. Chamfered poles supporting a coffered ceiling divided the interior spaces. In 1959, the car barn was converted to bus storage and the streetcar rails and transfer tables were removed. Currently, the interior includes the same large open spaces defined by the chamfered columns, but it has a concrete floor with no streetcar tracks and transfer tables intact, and is dedicated to the storage of buses as opposed to streetcars.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1906-1959

Significant Dates

1906

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Wood, Donn & Deming

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance extends from 1906 when the building was constructed until 1959 when the building was converted into a bus barn.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

In 1906, the Capital Traction Company contracted for a car barn to be erected at 4615 14th in northwest Washington, D.C. The firm of Richardson and Burgess, Inc. built the structure to the design specification of the esteemed Washington-based architectural firm of Wood, Donn and Deming after the foundation was constructed by Edward Sastor in January of that same year. Although Waddy Wood designed a number of car barns and powerhouses during the latter part of the 19th century in Washington, D.C., the Capital Traction Company Car Barn at 4516 14th Street, N.W. is the only such facility designed by the firm of Wood, Donn and Deming. The Capital Traction Company embarked upon the building venture at the turn of the 20th century in an attempt to improve streetcar service by extending the 14th Street line from Park Road to Colorado Avenue. This extension was entirely constructed of electric conduit tracks and marked the beginning of the company's commitment to double track cars. In addition to improving streetcar travel in the nation's capital, this extension promoted the settlement of previously less accessible areas of the city's northwest quadrant, particularly north of Piney Branch Parkway. The high style Italian Renaissance Revival building on 14th Street, which has been described as being "by far the most attractive in the city," was fashionably ornamented to attract residents to the surrounding neighborhood and to promote the success of Capital Traction Company and the streetcar industry.[i] The Capital Traction Company Car Barn, unlike many streetcar-related resources, continues to function as a transportation facility, with the gradual mixed use of streetcars and buses beginning in 1926. It was completely converted for use as a bus garage, known as Northern Garage, after the era of the streetcar began to wane in 1959 and continues to serve that purpose. This transportation facility remains a hallmark of both a stylish industrial building in a residential neighborhood and as a symbolic historic electric traction streetcar resource.

The Capital Traction Company Car Barn meets National Register Criterion A for being associated with the streetcar system, a public transportation system that helped to develop, and to determine the development patterns of, the District of Columbia. It also meets National Register Criterion C for architecture, as an outstanding example of its building type. The building is eligible for designation under the multiple-property document *Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962* as an excellent example of the property sub-type "Car Barns and Yards."

Of nearly thirty known and built streetcar car barns in the District of Columbia, six car barns remain in various conditions. Architecturally, the Capital Traction Company Car Barn stands among the best, including those lost. The multiple-property document acknowledges car barns as the most significant extant property type related to the former streetcar system:

> The car barn… is a significant property type for its role in the early public transportation system of the District of Columbia. Within the general context of Historic Streetcar Resources in Washington, D.C., the car barn holds a principal role as the most prevalent [and prominent] example of a property type constructed during the reign of the streetcar. The car barns, which are often quite imposing on the streetscape, represent the transportation system's direct influence on the growth of the city, as well as the development and the social/economic status of its residents.

According to the Multiple Property document, for the period between 1862 and 1962, car barns are eligible under Criterion A and Criterion C. Properties eligible under Criterion C include those resources exhibiting the high-style architectural designs of the period, elements of the functional industrial vernacular, or the mechanical equipment necessary for the movement of the streetcars. The eligible property must retain its original form or shed-like appearance, as well as the streetcar entry openings. Despite its replaced windows, a largely restructured roof, and the partial encapsulation of the north side and half the rear wall, the Capital Traction Company still very much retains the features that have defined its character as a car barn at the end of a streetcar line, including its design, with a beautiful façade unobscured by later alterations, its original massing, and vehicular openings.

[i] LeRoy O. King, Jr. *100 Years of Capital Traction: The Story of Streetcars in the Nations Capital.* (Dallas, TX: LeRoy O. King, Jr., 1972), p. 75

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Capital Traction Company Car Barn is significant in the Areas of Architecture and Transportation as an excellent example of a now-obsolete and increasingly rare example of a streetcar car barn as a building type. The low-lying, red brick building is defined by its complementary, side-by-side villa form, and is characterized by its stone and terra cotta trimmings and judicious use of stucco wall cladding. The building's wide vehicular entries are important features of its façade extending along 14th Street and clearly identify access to the storage "barn" of the building. Designed by the noted architectural firm of Wood, Donn & Deming, the car barn was intentionally executed to attract passengers to the rising residential neighborhood and to serve as a calling card for the Capital Traction Company. The Capital Traction Company Car Barn is one of seven (out of thirty) surviving car barns, and was considered at the time, one of the architecturally most stylish and sophisticated. The building not only provides an excellent example of the building type, but is an fine illustration of the work of the architecture firm of Wood, Donn & Deming.

The Car Barn is significant in the Area of Community Planning and Development for the role that Capital Traction Company's Fourteenth Street streetcar line served in the development of 14th Street beyond the city's original boundary. The extension of the streetcar line, which stretched from park Road to Colorado Avenue, offered the prospect of easy transportation access to the city and thus provided developers the principal catalyst for residential development to either side of the proposed 14th Street. In a three-year period between 1906 and 1909, developers purchased the area farmlands and upon them platted a series of abutting residential subdivisions filled with single family dwellings. By the second quarter of the 20th century, the adjacent neighborhood was fully established as a residential community with supporting institutions such as schools, gasoline stations, telephone equipment houses, churches, and stores. Stretching to 16th Street on the west, the community's identity was ultimately subsumed within Argyle Park.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Capital Traction Company

The car barn at 615 14th Street, N.W. is a storage and repair facility that serviced the Capital Traction Company's streetcars in northwest Washington, D.C. The company that had this building erected in 1906 was formed in 1895 by an act of Congress that authorized the Rock Creek Railway to acquire the assets of the Washington and Georgetown Railroad Company (W&G). The Rock Creek Railway Company was chartered on June 23, 1888, and emerged as an integral part of the Chevy Chase Land Company's plan for development along Connecticut Avenue. W&G, the first chartered streetcar company in Washington, D.C., was organized in 1862 by Henry D. Cooke, a Philadelphia businessman who relocated to Georgetown about 1860, and his brother Jay Cooke.[ii] Working as one, the two companies attempted to develop neighborhoods along existing streetcar routes north of Florida Avenue. The primary reason for the smaller company's acquisition of the larger and more successful W&G was that the charter for the Rock Creek Railway was more liberal on capitalization. As recounted by LeRoy O. King, Jr. in *100 Years of Capital Traction*, "the W&G's charter, dating from 1862, limited its capital to $500,000, too small a figure for so successful a road. Rock Creek's charter, however, had no top limit. It was easier to use this method of merger than to get Congressional approval to increase W&G's capitalization."[iii] The assets included streetcar lines, buildings, and rolling stock. The new enterprise was named the Capital Traction Company.

In its first several years, the Capital Traction Company streamlined and modernized Washington's public transportation system. Streetcar routes were reworked and tracks were simplified in several locations in order to eliminate congestion, particularly in the area between New York and Pennsylvania Avenues and 14th and 15th Streets. The modernization efforts included the demolition of the Mount Pleasant Car Barn at 3200 14th Street, which was replaced by the Capital Traction Company Car Barn at 4615 14th Street in 1906. Kansas City-based architect Walter C. Root had designed the Mount Pleasant Car Barn for the Washington and Georgetown Railroad Company in 1891. The car barn was one of four such facilities erected by the railway company in an effort to establish a transportation model for the country in the 1890s.

[ii] John W. Boettjer, "Street Railways in the District of Columbia," Master's thesis, George Washington University, 1963, pp. 18-23.
[iii] King, p. 31.

Prior to the construction of the Capital Traction Company Car Barn at 4615 14th Street, the area north of Spring Road in northwest Washington, particularly along 14th Street, was largely undeveloped. Between 1903 and 1906, the Capital Traction Company purchased several acres of property flanking 14th Street from the Osburn family.[iv] Historic maps indicate a single primary dwelling and one supporting outbuilding improved the land. Access to the buildings was gained from the existing portion of what was to be Buchanan Street, with a gravel road winding north to northeast. The railway company appears to have been responsible for razing these buildings in order to erect the car barn in 1906.

The extension of the 14th Street streetcar line stretched the capital's boundaries northward to Park Road and Colorado Avenue, promoting substantial neighborhood development as it progressed. As a result, the surrounding squares began to be subdivided and improved by the construction of single-family dwellings. The lots immediately to the north, flanking 14th Street at its intersection with the diagonal Iowa Avenue, were part of the Mary C. Saul Subdivision Tract, which was part of the property owned by John Saul. The development of this neighborhood was directly tied to the extension of the streetcar line and the construction of the car barn at 4615 14th Street. By the second quarter of the 20th century, the adjacent neighborhood was established as a residential community with supporting institutions such as schools, gasoline stations, telephone equipment houses, churches, and stores. Stretching to 16th Street on the west, the community's identity was ultimately subsumed within Argyle Park.

The firm of Wood, Donn, and Deming was commissioned by the railway company to design this new car barn facility. LeRoy O. King, Jr. recounted the acceptance of the building in *100 Years of Capital Traction*, "The new barn was an outstanding one, by far the most attractive in the city. For this it received much favorable comment in the trade press of the times."[v] The Capital Traction Company Car Barn was designed to face 14th Street with vehicular entries flanking the primary office space, which was located in the two-story villa-like section of the building. The Italian Renaissance Revival style employed by the architectural firm lent itself well to the functions of the building, with the illusion of a separation between the garage and office created through the structure's massing and form. The original building permits for the foundation were granted on January 9, 1906 (permit #1811). Edmund Sastor was commissioned to erect the concrete foundation and retaining walls for a proposed building that was to measure 537 feet by 208 feet. The permit estimated the construction of the foundation and retaining walls to cost $20,000. By May 18, 1906, the permit for the construction of the building had been secured (permit #3130), with an estimated construction cost of $180,000. The brick structure, built by the firm of Richardson and Burgess, Inc., averaged a height of twenty-two feet from the sidewalk with a three-story tower crowning the roof. The interior of the car barn consisted of two levels devoted to streetcar storage, repair, and vehicular mobility. The main level had two transfer tables and fifty parking spaces. The basement provided one transfer table with fifteen parking spaces. Chamfered metal poles supporting a coffered wood ceiling divided the spaces.[vi]

The Washington Rapid Transit Company, established in 1921, leased a portion of the building from the Capital Traction Company. The streetcar companies viewed bus service as an enhanced feature of their transportation services, a theory that proved valuable in the eventual conversion of streetcars to the bus system. Thus, in 1926, an addition was placed on the rear of the structure to provide storage facilities for the buses that now shared the building with the streetcars. The basement level of the original building was also used for bus maintenance and storage. The bus company initially operated routes between 16th Street and Potomac Avenue and between upper 16th Street and the central shopping district. Later extensions were made into the community of Petworth with a connection across the 16th Street line.[vii]

Capital Transit Company

Peak usage, congestion, re-organization, and the gradual replacement of the street railway system with a more economical and more flexible bus system marked the final chapter in the story of Washington's streetcars. This transformation was under the direction of the Capital Transit Company, which was formed in December 1933. The company combined all street railways in the District of Columbia, including the Capital Traction Company, under one management for the first time. During the 1930s and 1940s, the Capital Transit Company was conservatively managed under the utility power company known as the North American Company, which retained most of the earnings for reinvestment. This situation changed in 1949, when a long-postponed divestment required by the Public Utility Holding

[iv] Hopkins and Baist Maps of Washington, 1903.
[v] King, pp. 75 and 293.
[vi] King, p. 293.
[vii] Edward D. Merrill "Changing Fashions in Transportation." *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* V. 48-49 (1946-1947), p. 167.

Company Act led to the purchase of the Capital Transit Company by Louis Wolfson of Jacksonville, Florida. The North American Company had been ordered to divest itself of either the power company or the transit company; however, the problem of finding a buyer had delayed the sale for a number of years. The new managers, under Wolfson, increased stock dividends, cut back on maintenance expenditures, and sought fare increases.

As a result of deteriorating labor management, a five-week strike occurred in the summer of 1955, bringing tensions between the Wolfson management, Congress, and the Public Utilities Commission to a head. Congress enacted Public Law 389 that enabled the District of Columbia Commissioners to settle the strike, and also revoked Wolfson's franchise as of August 14, 1956. Furthermore, and most importantly, the law specified that the new operator of the franchise was required to provide an all-bus system. As anticipated by all but Congress, bidders did not materialize. Eventually New York financier O. Roy Chalk arranged to purchase the franchise. The charter of his new company, D.C. Transit, specified the elimination of streetcars from Washington's streets by 1963, although Chalk had initially proposed retaining some rail lines. Ultimately, the lines were phased out over a five-year period, an activity coordinated with other major public works projects in the city and suburbs. Thus, between 1956 and early 1962, all the remaining streetcar lines were either eliminated or converted to bus routes. The streetcars, which had provided transit in and around Washington since 1862, made their last trips on January 28, 1962, thereby ending an era of transportation that had directly affected the residential development and economic growth of the nation's capital.

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Following the end of the streetcar industry, the Capital Traction Company Car Barn remained under the ownership of D.C. Transit Systems, serving solely as a bus garage since 1959. In 1966, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) was formed to operate the national capital's bus and subway system. The assets and operation of D.C. Transit Systems and all other private bus companies were taken over by the new transit authority, which had no ties to the era of streetcar traction. This transformation of ownership, despite the cessation of streetcar use in the city several years prior, unconditionally ended all ties to the streetcar industry and its operating companies.

In an effort to confine the noisy operations of the busy bus terminal within the predominately residential neighborhood, a thirteen-foot high red brick wall was erected around the WMATA property on 14th Street (permit #B293636, November 8, 1982 and #B368185, December 14, 1982). The wall encircled nearly all of Squares 2811 and 2815, except for the southwest corner at Buchanan and 14th Streets, which was not owned by WMATA.

The Capital Traction Company Car Barn was renovated in 1987 (permit # B324348, September 16, 1987) under the direction of architect Austin L. Spriggs. This work included replacing all of the original windows with metal frames, replacing part of the existing roof with a steel frame roof, installing new bus service lanes, and erecting a new concrete slab parking area. In addition, new emergency generators and diesel storage tanks were installed to replace those placed on the property in the 1970s. The work, estimated to cost $5,800,000, was noted as a "substantial renovation" on the building permit, although the form and design of the original main block remained intact.

Two years later, in 1989, WMATA applied for another building permit (permit # B344507, November 22, 1989) that enabled the construction of a one-story bus maintenance building and employee parking garage. The permit, estimating the work would cost $11,000,000, also included repairs to the existing two-story building. Austin L. Sprigg served as the architect, with Parsons Associates acting as the engineers. The construction of this one-story addition required the demolition of the five extant rowhouses and store at 4603-4611 14th Street and the auto repair garage at 1333-1335 Buchanan Street. Furthermore, the one-story addition, erected on the east elevation of the former car barn in 1926, was razed. The new construction work was completed in 1992, as suggested by the 1999 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. It resulted in a one-story open deck addition to the south and east of the original car barn, encompassing all of Squares 2811 and 2815. The structure of the addition protected the integrity of the original main block by maintaining the existing fenestration on the first and second stories of the car barn. The buses, entering from Buchanan Street, were serviced and stored on the first floor of the addition, with access to the original building at the northernmost end. A concrete ramp located on 14th Street provided access to the rooftop employee parking. This new design converted the original office space of the main block into a community area for employees. The bus activity regulated the service lanes to the east of the former office and bus parking to the south.

Wood, Donn and Deming: Architectural Firm

The architectural firm of Wood, Donn and Deming was founded in 1903 with the partnership of established architects Waddy Butler Wood, Edward Wilton Donn, Jr. and William I. Deming.[viii] Wood procured the business, Donn provided the designs and Deming oversaw the engineering aspects of the projects. The firm was responsible for a number of notable governmental and residential buildings in Washington, D.C. These include the Union Trust (1st American) Bank (1906) at 740 15th Street, N.W., the Masonic Temple (1908, now the National Museum of Women in the Arts) at 13th Street and New York Avenue, and the Bureau of Standards Building (razed). In addition, the firm designed the Chancery for the Chinese Embassy (1902, now a residential condominium) at 1901 Vernon Street, N.W. and the Capital Traction Company Car Barn at 4615 14th Street, N.W. Wood left the firm in 1912, but Donn and Deming continued to practice as a team until 1923, when they also established individual ventures. Examples of Donn and Deming's collaborations include the now razed Morton's Department Store at 314-316 7th Street, N.W. (1914) and the townhouse at 2328 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. in 1922 for Mrs. Edith McAllister Newlands.

Waddy Butler Wood (1869-1944) was born in St. Louis, Missouri and raised in Ivy, Virginia. He attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute for two years and gained experience with the Army Corps before settling into a drafting job in Washington, D.C. in 1891. In 1892, Wood opened his own firm. In 1895, he received a commission for the Capital Transit Company Georgetown Car Barn at 3600 M Street, N.W. Following this commission, he designed several car barns and terminals, including the East Capitol Street Car Barn at 1400 East Capitol Street, N.E. (1896) and the Rock Creek Terminal on the north side of Calvert Street, N.W. (1899, razed). After leaving the firm he established with Donn and Deming, Wood was successful with governmental and commercial projects, including the All States Hotel for Women (1926-1927) located at 514 19th Street, as well as prominent Washington-area residences.

Edward Wilton Donn, Jr. (1869-1953) graduated from the Boston Institute of Technology (now MIT) and Cornell University. A native Washingtonian, Donn was employed as the chief designer for the Office of the Treasury (1900-1902). Donn, after his partnership with Deming dissolved in 1923, established himself as a pioneer of architectural restoration with his successful projects at Woodlawn Plantation in Alexandria and Wakefield, George Washington's Birthplace in Westmoreland County. In Fredericksburg, he restored Kenmore (1201 Washington Street) and in Falmouth, Donn worked on the George Washington schoolhouse and apothecary.

William I. Deming (1871-1939) was born in Washington, D.C. and graduated from George Washington University. His expertise was in architectural engineering. After dissolving his partnership with Donn, Deming independently designed numerous schools, hospitals, and commercial buildings in the Washington, D.C. area. Noted examples in Virginia include the Fairfax County Courthouse in 1928, and several buildings at Fort Belvoir in 1935 (William Building, Abbott Hall, and Thayer Library).

Richardson and Burgess, Inc.: Original Contractors

Joseph Richardson and James Burgess established the construction firm of Richardson and Burgess, Inc. in 1891. Prominent builders in Washington, D.C., the pair built numerous buildings in the city. Examples include the Washington Public Library (Carnegie Library) at 800 Mt. Vernon Place, N.W., the Chesapeake and Potomac Building at 730 12th Street, N.W., the Chancery for the Chinese Embassy at 1901 Vernon Street, N.W., and Grace Reformed Church at 1405 15th Street, N.W. In addition, their expertise of transportation-related resources was firmly established having erected the Eckington and Soldier's Home Horsecar Barn and Stable at 13th and D Street, N.E. (1894, razed), the Rock Creek Terminal on the north side of Calvert Street, N.W. (1899, razed), the 11th Street Car Barn at 2244 10th Street, N.W. (1892, razed), as well as the Capital Traction Company Car Barn at 4615 14th Street, N.W.

[viii] Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (deceased)*. (Los Angeles, CA: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1970), p. 670.

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Capital Traction Company Car Barn
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #_____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #_____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 7.277 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	323864	43 12681	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Capital Traction Car Barn building at 4615 14th Street, N.W. occupies all of Squares 2811 and 2815, which are bounded by 14th Street to the west, Buchanan Street to the south, Arkansas Avenue to the southeast, Iowa Avenue to the northeast, and Decatur Street to the north.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The car barn has historically been associated with the property at 4615 14th Street, N.W. in Squares 2811 and 2815 since its construction in 1906 and its enlargement in 1989.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laura V. Trieschmann and Jennifer J. Bunting, Architectural Historians
organization EHT Traceries date September 2000
street & number 1121 5th Street, NW telephone 202 393-1199
city or town Washington, D.C. state DC zip code 20001
e-mail

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Capital Traction Car Barn

City or Vicinity: Washington, D.C.

County: State:

Photographer: Angeliki Kourelis

Date Photographed: February 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

West elevation; view looking NE
1 of 13

West elevation showing tower and car barn door opening
2 of 13

West elevation looking northeast from south end
3 of 13

View looking north at west elevation from south end
4 of 13

View looking east at west elevation of office section.
5 of 13

Detail of garage door on north end of office section looking east
6 of 13

West elevation of office section; view looking east
7 of 13

Detail of tower; view looking east
8 of 13

Detail of car barn storage section looking to interior

9 of 13

Detail of entry door in office section
10 of 13

Detail of car barn door looking into car barn
11 of 13

Interior View of car barn from 14th Street entrance looking east
12 of 13

Interior View of car barn from 14th Street entrance looking south
13 of 13

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Office of Engineering and Architecture)

street & number 600 5th Street, NW telephone

city or town Washington, D.C. state zip code 20001

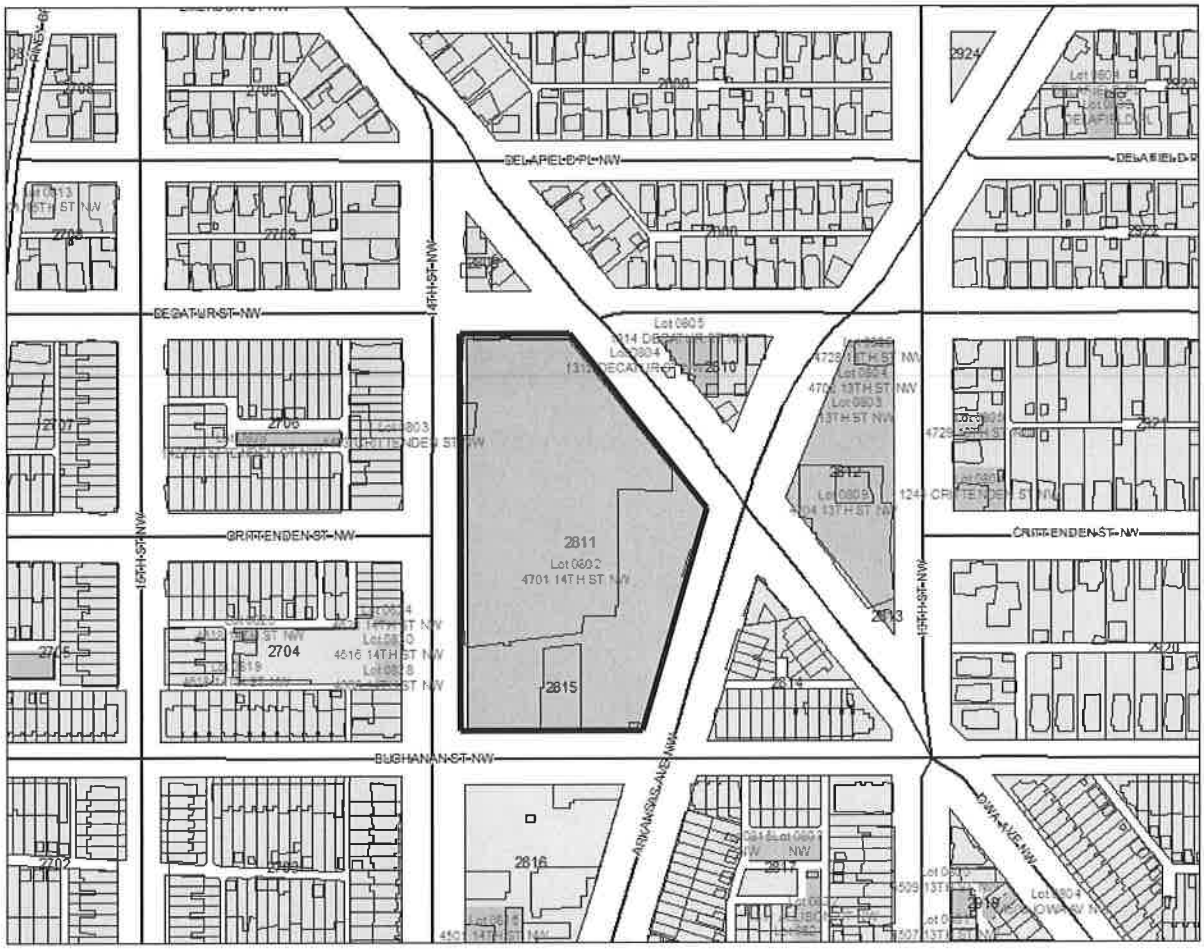
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

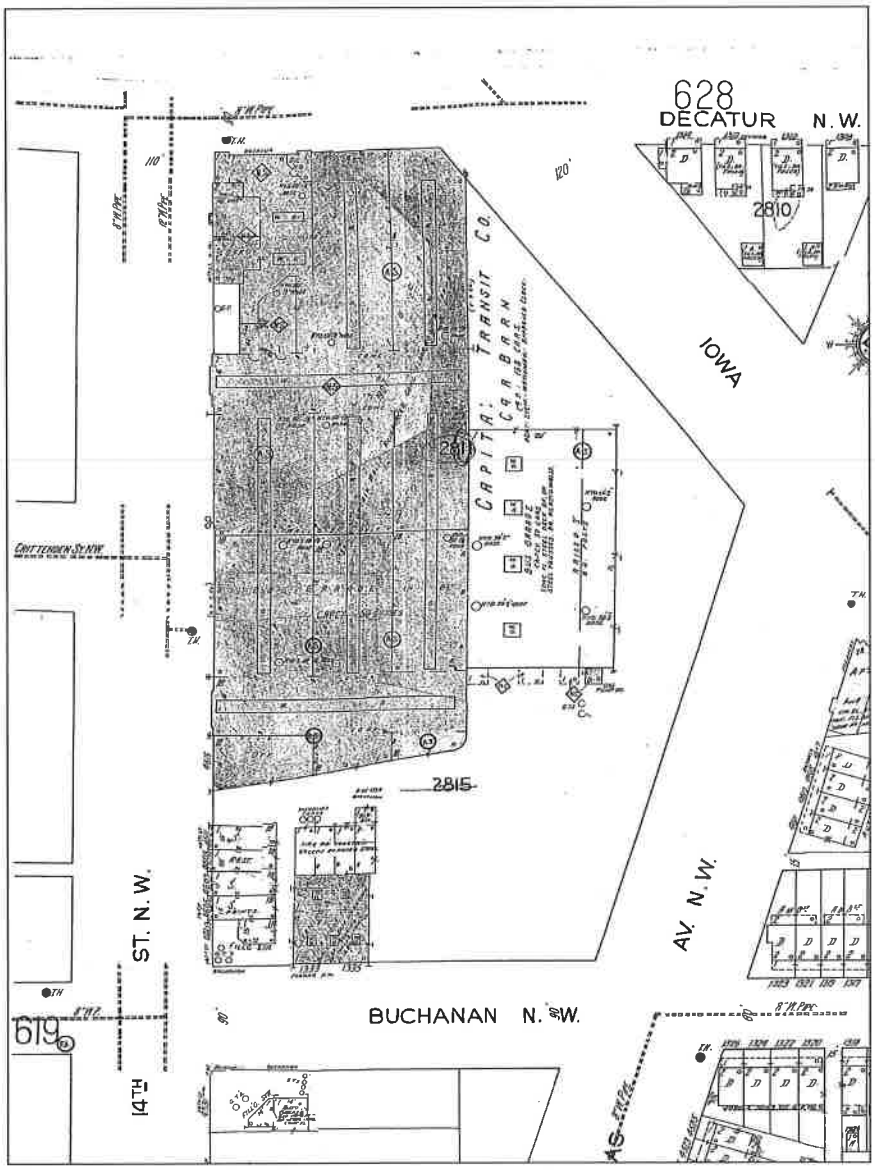
Capital Traction Company Car Barn
Name of Property
Washington, D.C.
County and State
Streetcar and Bus Resources of Washington, D.C., 1862-1962
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

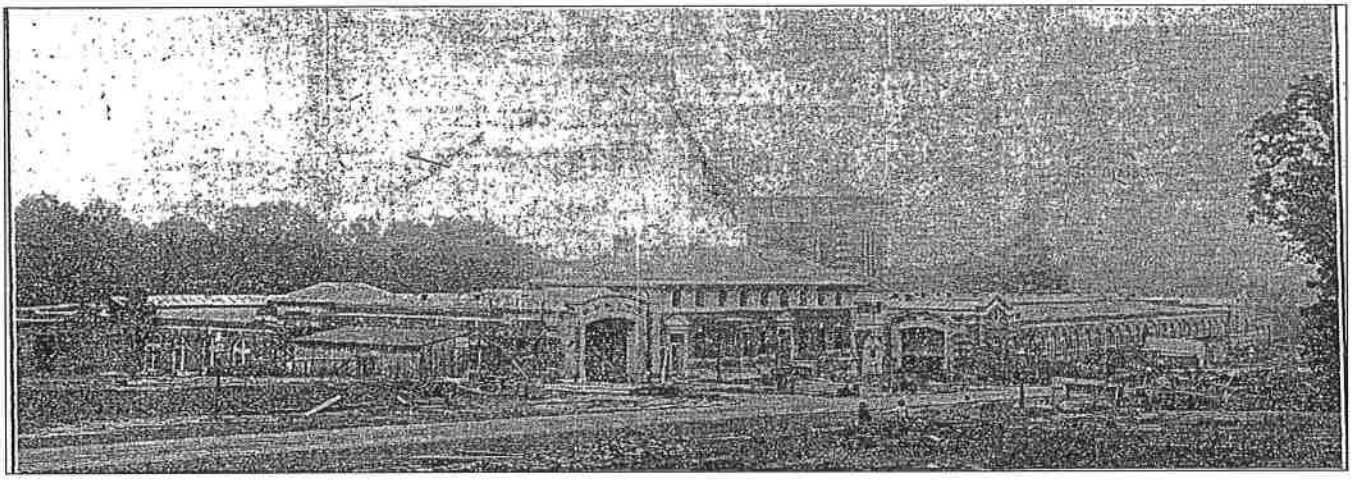
Section number Maps and Images Page 1



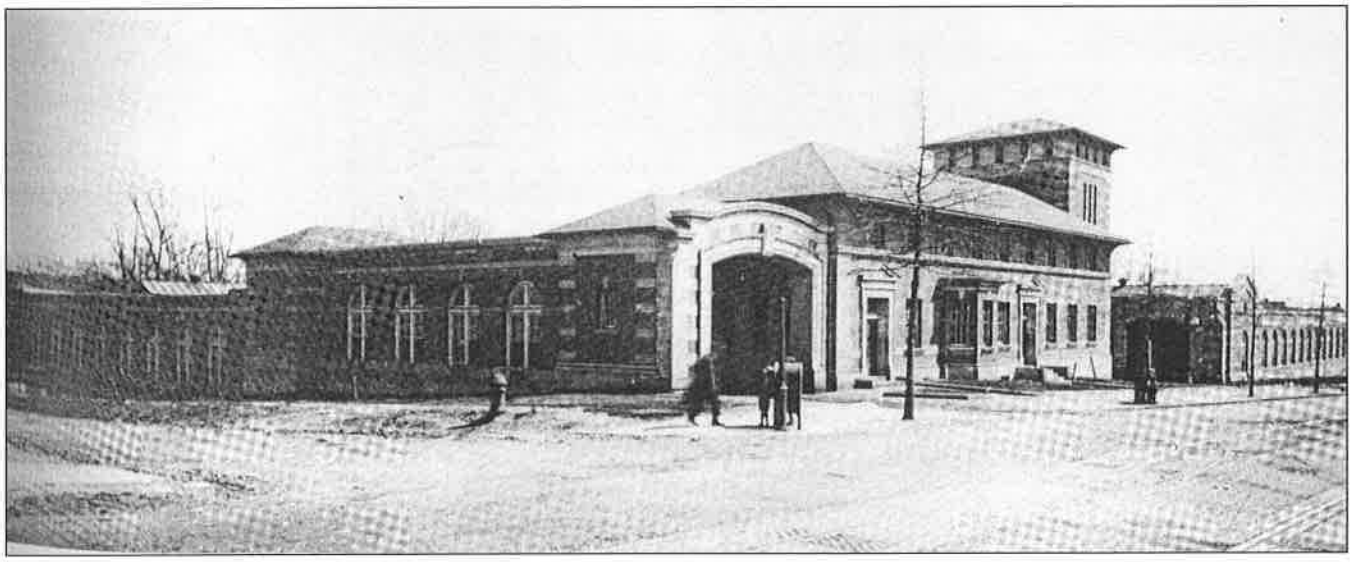
Capital Traction Company Car Barn
4615 14th Street, NW (Square 2811 Lot 802)
Site Plan showing National Register boundaries



Map showing Capital Traction Company Car Barn
(From Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1959)



Capital Traction Company Car Barn nearing completion
(From *The Washington Post*, June 16, 1907)



Capital Traction Company Car Barn, ca. 1914
(From LeRoy O. King, *100 Years of Capital Traction*, 1972. P. 73)

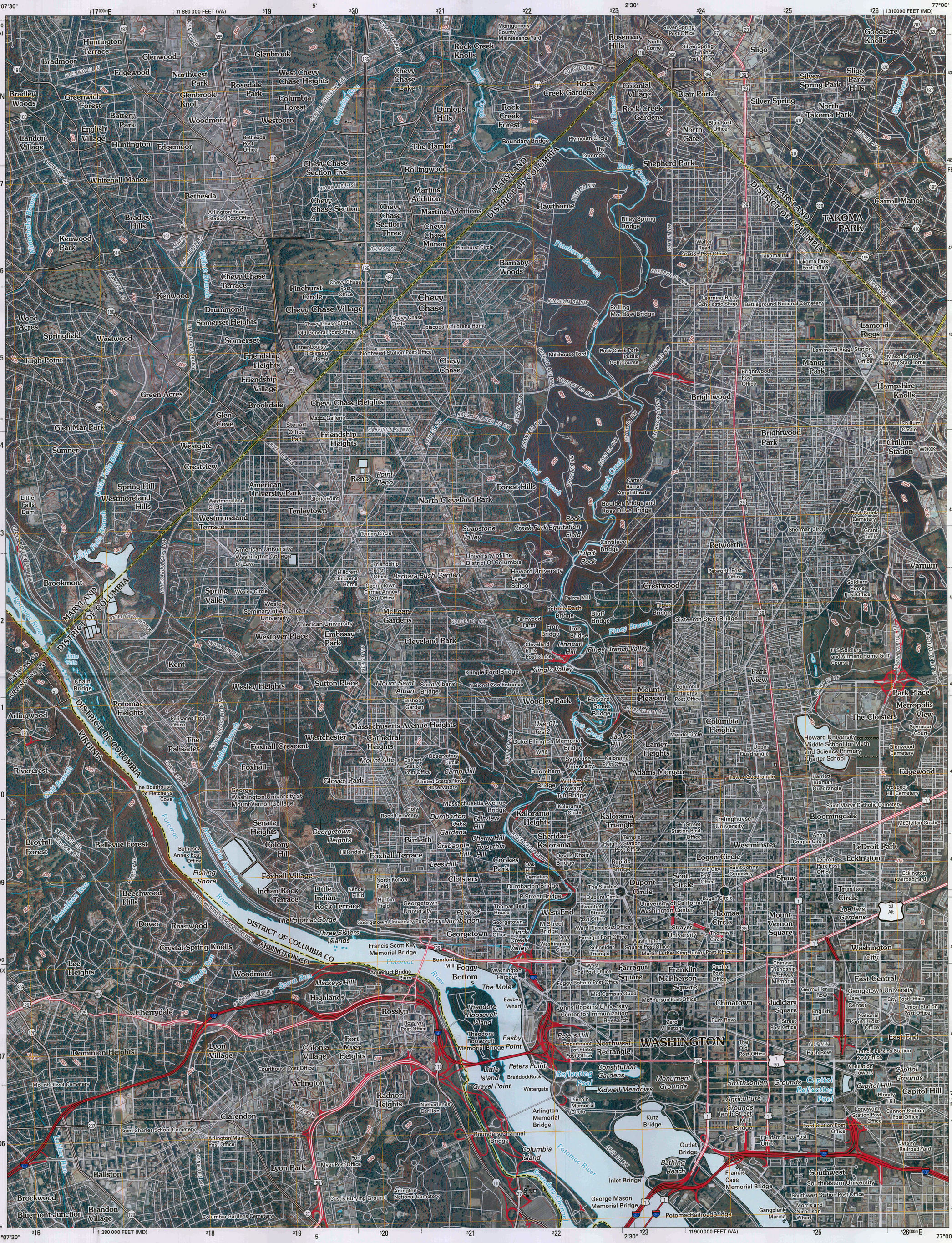
Capital Traction Company Car Barn
Washington, DC

USGS
science for a changing world

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

The National Map
US Topo

WASHINGTON WEST QUADRANGLE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA-MARYLAND-VIRGINIA
7.5-MINUTE SERIES



UTMs
18 323 864 E
43 126 81 N

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)
World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84). Projection and 1 000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, Zone 18S
10 000-foot ticks: Maryland Coordinate System of 1983, Virginia Coordinate System of 1983 (north zone)

Imagery.....NAIP, June 2009
Roads.....©2006-2010 Tele Atlas
Names.....GNIS, 2010
Hydrography.....National Hydrography Dataset, 2009
Contours.....National Elevation Dataset, 2008
Boundaries.....Census, IBWC, IBC, USGS, 1972 - 2010

MN
10° 47'
192 MILS
GN
1° 18'
23 MILS

UTM GRID AND 2011 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

U.S. National Grid
100,000-m Square ID
UJ
Grid Zone Designation 18S

SCALE 1:24 000

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METERS 1000 500 0 1000 2000
MILES 1 0.5 0 1
FEET 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 8000 9000 10000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NORTH AMERICAN VERTICAL DATUM OF 1988

This map was produced to conform with version 0.5.10
of the USGS US Topo Product Standard.
A metadata file associated with this product is draft version 0.5.15

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Rockville	Kensington	Beltsville
Falls Church	Washington West	Washington East
Annandale	Alexandria	Anacostia

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLES

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Interstate Route
US Route
Ramp
State Route
Local Road
4WD

Interstate Route
US Route
State Route

WASHINGTON WEST, DC-MD-VA
2011

ATTENTION
SHUT OFF ENGINE
BEFORE EXITING
BUS

ATTENTION
SHUT OFF ENGINE
BEFORE EXITING
BUS
NO
CNG BUSES
ALLOWED
ON
PROPERTY
ATTENTION
SHUT OFF ENGINE
BEFORE EXITING
BUS

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NORTHERN
GARAGE
REGION II
4729

PARKING FOR DIRECTOR ONLY
PARKING FOR DIRECTOR ONLY
R.M.A.
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BATES
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CAPITAL TRACTION CO
4729
PLEASE USE
NORTH ENTRANCE

ATTENTION
SHUT OFF ENGINE
BEFORE EXITING
BUS
NO
CNG BUSES
ALLOWED
ON
PROPERTY
NO
TRESPASSING
BY ORDER
OF
METRO
TRANSIT
POLICE
ATTENTION
SHUT OFF ENGINE
BEFORE EXITING
BUS

6507
Metro Extra

WTOP
Because...
TRAFFIC
103.5FM
Metro Extra