



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

30 North Market Street, Third Floor Frederick, Maryland 21701 (301) 600-1147



CASE NO. CR 24-01 COUNTY REGISTER NOMINATION STAFF REPORT

SUMMARY

Property: F.W. Fraley General Merchandise Store
12623 Catoctin Furnace Road, Thurmont

Applicant: James A. Fraley, Jr., Vicky D. Fraley, Rockie Lee Fraley, and William A. Fraley

Public Hearing for consideration of nominating the property located at 12623 Catoctin Furnace Road, F.W. Fraley General Merchandise Store, to the Frederick County Register of Historic Places. Submitted by Elizabeth Comer, Catoctin Furnace Historical Society on behalf of the property owners of record.

The public hearing for the nomination to the Frederick County Register of Historic Places will be held at 6:30 p.m., or thereafter, on March 6, 2024.



Figure 1: Subject Property outlined in red.

DESIGNATION STATUS

The property is located within the Catoctin Furnace Historic District as a contributing resource (F-6-45). The property does have a Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) easement. MHT has stated they would have no objection to the historic designation. The property contains the general store. The nominated property encompasses 0.0913 acres of land.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

A completed County Register nomination form, maps, a statement of significance, and photographs were submitted.

SITE VISITS

Since the property is easily viewable from the public right-of-way, no specific site visit dates were scheduled. Commissioners were urged to familiarize themselves with the exterior on their own time from the public right-of-way.

REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

1) Analysis

The architectural and historical significance of the F.W. Fraley General Merchandise Store is documented in the supporting materials. The property is associated with the industrial and commercial history of Catoctin Furnace. Based on the information provided, Staff finds the property is eligible for listing under Criteria 6B(1A), 6B(1C), 6B(2A), and 6B(2F). The period of significance for the property is circa 1906 to 1974, the time the general store was constructed through the last year it was in operation.

2) History Summary

The F.W. Fraley General Merchandise Store was once part of a larger tract of land called "Auburn" that was patented in 1804 for 934 acres. Over the years the tract was broken apart into smaller parcels until, in 1855 7.5 acres was parceled off for the Vestry of Catoctin Parish. Once Catoctin Furnace closed for good in 1903, Frank W. Fraley purchased a portion of the 7.5 acres in 1907 to operate a general store. It has remained in the Fraley family ever since.

The general store is in the heart of Catoctin Village. The property is bordered by Harriet Chapel parish hall to the north, State Route 806/Catoctin Furnace Road to the west, an open parking lot and driveway to the south, and the remainder of Rocko Meats to the east.

3) Historic, Archaeological, and Cultural Significance Criteria

The property is eligible for listing under this category for meeting criteria 6B(1A) and 6B(1C) as outlined in Chapter 1-23-6B(1) of the Frederick County Code:

- 6B(1A): *The property has significant character, interest, or value as part of development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation.*
- 6B(1C): *The property exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political, or historic heritage of the County and its communities.*

The property has significant character, interest, and value in the development and heritage of the County and exemplifies economic, social, and historic heritage of the County. The F.W. Fraley General Merchandise Store was a product of the closing of the Catoctin Iron Furnace in 1903. Prior to the Catoctin Iron Furnace's closure, members of the Fraley family were employed by the Furnace. The patriarch of the family, Johann Henry Frolich (anglicized to Fraley), was a drummer in the Hessian Army. Apparently captured at the Battle of Yorktown in 1781, he was brought to Frederick to be imprisoned. After the war ended, he, like many other Hessian soldiers, decided to stay in the county and the newly victorious United States of America. Johann would eventually gain employment at the Furnace and lived in the village until his death in 1830. His son Solomon and grandson Jonathan also were employed by the Furnace.

Frank W. Fraley worked at the Catoctin Furnace company store in the late 1800s through to the Furnace's closing in 1903. The company store operated using script in place of money. All the supplies a worker needed could be purchased at the company store. The company store also served a social function too. Here the workers and their families met with each other, exchanging news and gossip. The store was located next to the Ironmaster's Mansion and Isabella furnace stack. After the Furnace closed, the company store closed. The houses were sold mostly to former workers in the mines and Furnace. F.W. Fraley opened the general store to serve this small community and surrounding farms. In 1928, the store was enlarged to include the two-story, four bay side gable addition on the front.

4) Architectural and Design Significance Criteria

The property is eligible under this category for meeting criteria 6B(2A) and 6B(2F) as outlined in Chapter 1-23-6B(2) of Frederick County Code:

- 6B(2A): *The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or architecture.*
- 6B(2F): *The property is a rare example of a particular period, style, material, or construction type.*

The F.W. Fraley General Merchandise Store embodies characteristics of a typical general store. The wood framed structure with a gable roof form, a large store front window with a recessed double door entry, wooden German siding, and one-story front porch are typical characteristics often found in historic general stores. The front porch is supported by turned posts connected by a single rail. The porch and two-story side gable structure were added to the original 1906 store in 1928. The 1906 structure is now to the rear of the entire building and is one-and-a-half stories in height with a front gable running west-east. The 1906 portion sits on a stone foundation while the 1928 addition sits on a poured concrete foundation.

Additionally, wood framed general stores are a rare property type in Frederick County. Many general stores have either been demolished, are in poor condition, or altered beyond recognition of its original use. The F.W. Fraley General Merchandise Store is an excellent example of an early 20th century rural general store in Frederick County. The entire property retains its integrity in location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the F.W. Fraley General Merchandise Store for designation to the Frederick County Register of Historic Places pursuant to Criterion 6B(1A), 6B(1C), 6B(2A), and 6B(2F) as described in Section 1-23-6B of the County Code.