



College Heights Cultural Resource Survey



Ellie Jeanes, Emily Elliott, Mary Fesak, Mic Townsend



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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....3

Methodology.....4

History.....6

Analysis.....9

Recommendations.....17

Bibliography.....19

Appendix.....21

Glossary.....24

Table of Figures

Decade of Construction Graph.....9

Decade of Construction Map.....10

Historic and Current Use Graph.....11

Current Use Map.....12

Style Graph.....14

Condition Map.....15

Eligibility Map.....18

Executive Summary

This Cultural Resource Survey Report documents the results of a survey of the College Heights neighborhood's historic built environment. Through the detailed collection of information on each property's number and type of structures, the building's current and historic uses, the compatibility of the building with its surroundings, its architectural style, the integrity of its building materials, the community's history and significance is revealed. The survey and report were completed during the fall of 2015 for the University of Mary Washington's Survey and Preservation Planning course.

Producing this report required field data collection, archival research, and data analysis using SPSS and Excel. Maps were created using GIS and Adobe Photoshop, while the final report was made in inDesign.

Analysis revealed that the neighborhood is significant for its reflection of interwar and post World War II suburban development patterns. College Heights was built as a suburban residential neighborhood from the 1930s through the 1960s. The predominant architectural styles are Ranch, Neocolonial and Cape Cod, as are characteristic of its period of development. In all, 68.8% of the properties could contribute to a National Register Historic District; and the vast majority of houses are in good or excellent condition.

The report concludes that the College Heights neighborhood should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places because it exemplifies post World War II suburbanization, as well as inter war suburban growth. If the residents are supportive, the neighborhood should become a local historic district to limit encroachment from Route 1, the university, and religious institutions, helping the neighborhood retain its character and raise property values.

Methodology

Introduction

A Cultural Resource Survey (CRS) report is a publication that contains the results of the cultural resource survey of a community's historic built environment. The Cultural Resource Survey collects information on each property's number and types of structures, the building's current and historic uses, use compatibility, architectural style, building materials, material integrity, additions or alterations, condition, and construction date. The CRS report provides a historical context for the community, an analysis of the survey results, and preservation planning recommendations. The analysis shows trends in the surveyed buildings' styles, construction dates, current and historic use, and condition. In addition to analyzing the survey results, CRS reports also provide preservation planning suggestions as well as recommendations for whether or not the community is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This CRS report contains the survey results for the College Heights neighborhood in Fredericksburg, Virginia. The survey and the report were completed during September and October of 2015 for the University of Mary Washington's Survey and Preservation Planning class.

Field Data Collection

The student teams conducted a survey of 458 properties in the College Heights neighborhood using a standardized form found in the Appendix. Before surveying, the teams assigned a unique identifier to each property. The survey forms, photographs, and site plans were marked with the unique identifier to facilitate data compilation and analysis. The team members conducted the surveys in groups of two or three. One team member completed the survey form determining the massing, architectural style, building materials, roof type, and structural system of the buildings, as well as their condition, material integrity, notable features, alterations, and use. The other team members took pictures of the fronts of the buildings and their notable features, in addition to creating site plan sketches of each property.

Archival Research

The survey criteria also required determining each building's date of construction. The team found approximately half of the dates using building permits digitized by the University of Mary Washington's Historic Preservation department. The team determined the other construction dates through deed and land tax records research at the City of Fredericksburg's Clerk's Office and Archives. The creation of the neighborhood's contextual history also required archival research. The Historic Preservation department provided digitized census records for Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania. Aerial photographs showing the neighborhood's

development came from the University of Mary Washington's Digital Collections Repository, while the Google News Archive provided newspaper articles from the Free Lance-Star. Maps dating to the neighborhood's development were located at the Library of Congress and the University of Mary Washington's Simpson Library. Simpson Library also offered a number of scholarly books and articles on the history of Fredericksburg as well as postwar suburbanization.

Synthesis

The team used SPSS to analyze the survey data for trends such as dates of construction, current and historic building use, architectural style, and condition. Additionally, the team created charts in Microsoft Excel and maps in Adobe Photoshop using the data analyzed in SPSS. The data had to be cleaned in SPSS before it could be analyzed. The team checked for incorrect information in the condition, National Register eligibility, style, and date fields, as well as for missing information. Several of the data fields required substantial editing. Some buildings of recent construction needed their condition changed from excellent to good since only historic buildings that retain most of their original materials can qualify as excellent. Additionally, a number of survey teams designated properties as having borderline eligibility for the National Register. Since properties are either contributing or non contributing to a National Register Historic District, the data analysis team had to reevaluate their eligibility based on their material integrity and construction dates. Many of the survey teams also selected "other" for some of the buildings' styles, requiring the data analysis team to assign a style. Further, the team also added a new data grouping column in SPSS labeled "decade." This column grouped the properties by decade starting in 1889 through 2015. Finally, the team entered "99" in all the fields with missing data.

History

Background History

The Virginia Assembly established Fredericksburg in 1728 as a port town to export tobacco grown in the colony to England. The town experienced little growth until Henry Willis created a tobacco inspection station in the 1730s. The flourishing trade and the establishment of the court attracted a number of merchants and businesses by the American Revolution. After the war, Fredericksburg continued to prosper and expand during the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries despite wheat, cotton, and lumber replacing tobacco as the predominant cash crops (Felder, 2003).

However, the Civil War brought devastation to Fredericksburg. The town's location between Richmond and Washington, D.C. resulted in the occurrence of four major battles in the area from 1862 to 1864. The Battle of Fredericksburg in 1862 caused the most destruction as much of the fighting occurred within the town. College Heights, then known as Marye's Heights, featured prominently in the battle as the location of the Confederate Army's artillery placements (Ibid).

After the Civil War, the establishment of the Sylvania Industrial Company's plant vastly aided in Fredericksburg's subsequent recovery and growth during the 1930s. The factory was the world's largest cellophane plant at the time. The factory stimulated the local economy, minimizing the effects of the Great Depression and resulting in the town's expansion. The factory continued to be a major source of labor until it closed in 1978. Other factories located in Fredericksburg also contributed to the town's growth during the twentieth century including the G&H Manufacturing Company, Morganstern and Company, and the Virginia Shoe Company, as did retail stores in downtown Fredericksburg (Powell, 2000).

Fredericksburg's growth continued after World War II as the Truman administration determined that the influx of American veterans returning home from overseas and forming new families needed affordable housing. The area experienced significant suburban development with the federal government's initiation of the Veterans Emergency Housing program to lead efforts in domestic construction in 1946. This federal program stimulated construction to provide new housing at costs that were affordable to the veterans (Remington, 1947, p. 145). As a result of the program, there was a significant rise in construction across the country, much of it in new suburban developments like Levittown. Locally, the program stimulated the development of the Normandy Village and College Heights neighborhoods.

College Heights

Except for its prominent role as a strategic land feature during the Civil War, Marye's Heights was farmland from the area's settlement period through the early-twentieth century. The oldest extant buildings in the neighborhood were constructed in the 1820s as farm houses. They were located along William Street, which was one of the Fredericksburg area's most important roads during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Felder, 2003).

At the end of the nineteenth century, developers anticipated the city's expansion onto Marye's Heights, laying out the neighborhood's rectilinear streets and lots. However, the area saw little development until the State Normal School, now known as the University of Mary Washington, was established in 1908 (Alvey, 1978). Some of the houses on and near College Avenue were built around this time to house faculty, staff, and their families (Spotsylvania Census, 1910). Additional suburban growth occurred in the College Heights neighborhood during the 1920s and 1930s in response to Fredericksburg's economic prosperity and the creation of blue collar jobs. While a number of the residences continued to house the Normal School employees, a few also housed salesmen and factory workers during the 1920s. Significantly, one of the residences remained a farm, reflecting the transitional nature of Fredericksburg's western edge (Spotsylvania Census, 1920). The expansion of the neighborhood in the 1930s saw the increased occupancy of salesmen and factory workers, as well as their families (Fredericksburg Census, 1930).



This 1931 map shows that construction in the College Heights neighborhood was initially centered around College Avenue and the State Teachers College.

Although World War II slowed the College Heights neighborhood's development due to regulations restricting construction, Fredericksburg's growth was not completely limited as the city annexed 482 acres in 1940 (Remington, 1947). The annexed area included the eastern part of the College Heights neighborhood and increased the city's population by 1,400 people



Similarly, this 1947 Sanborn Map shows the neighborhood on the cusp of its rapid expansion during the late 1940s and 1950s.

(Free Lance-Star, 1954). Many of the College Heights residents continued to be employed by industry and retail (Fredericksburg Census, 1940).

After World War II, the combination of federal programs and the construction of the Route 1 bypass in 1946 led to increased suburban development as the College Heights lots platted in the 1890s were rapidly built upon (Powell, 2000). The neighborhood's streets followed the 1891 grid instead of the loop and lollipop pattern common in suburban developments. College Heights' extensive growth led to the city's annexation of 234 acres in 1951. This annexation added an additional 57 acres west of Stafford Avenue to College Heights neighborhood, resulting in construction peaking in the 1950s and

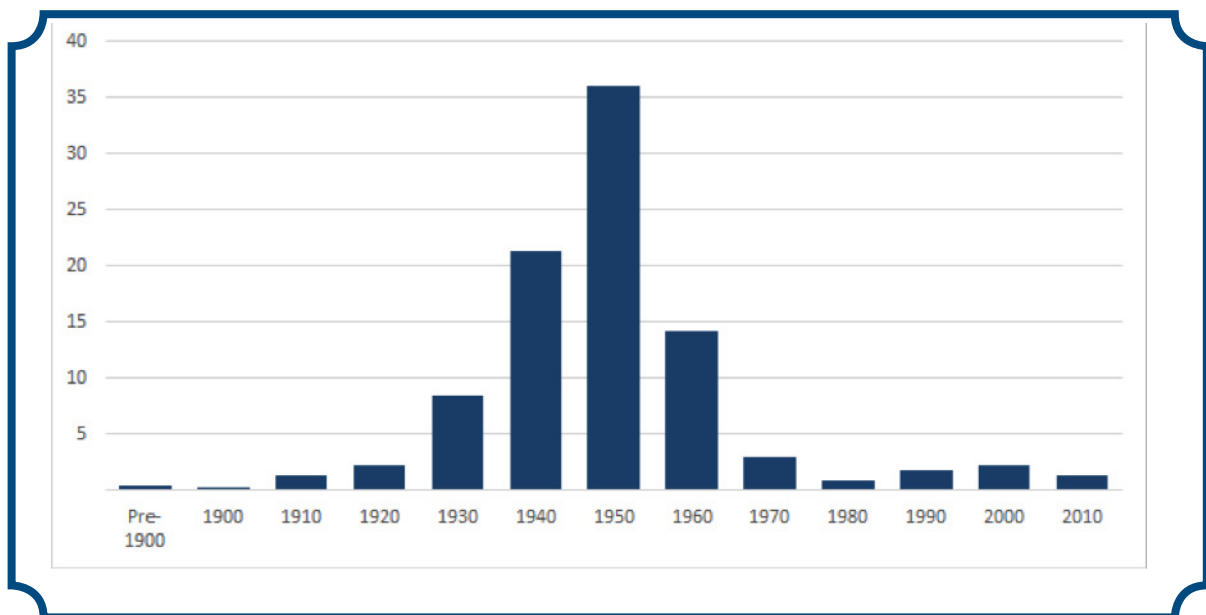
continuing through the 1960s (Free Lance-Star, 1954). By the end of 1970s, the neighborhood was almost completely developed. Subsequent construction has predominantly been infill or the replacement of older houses with new construction.

Analysis

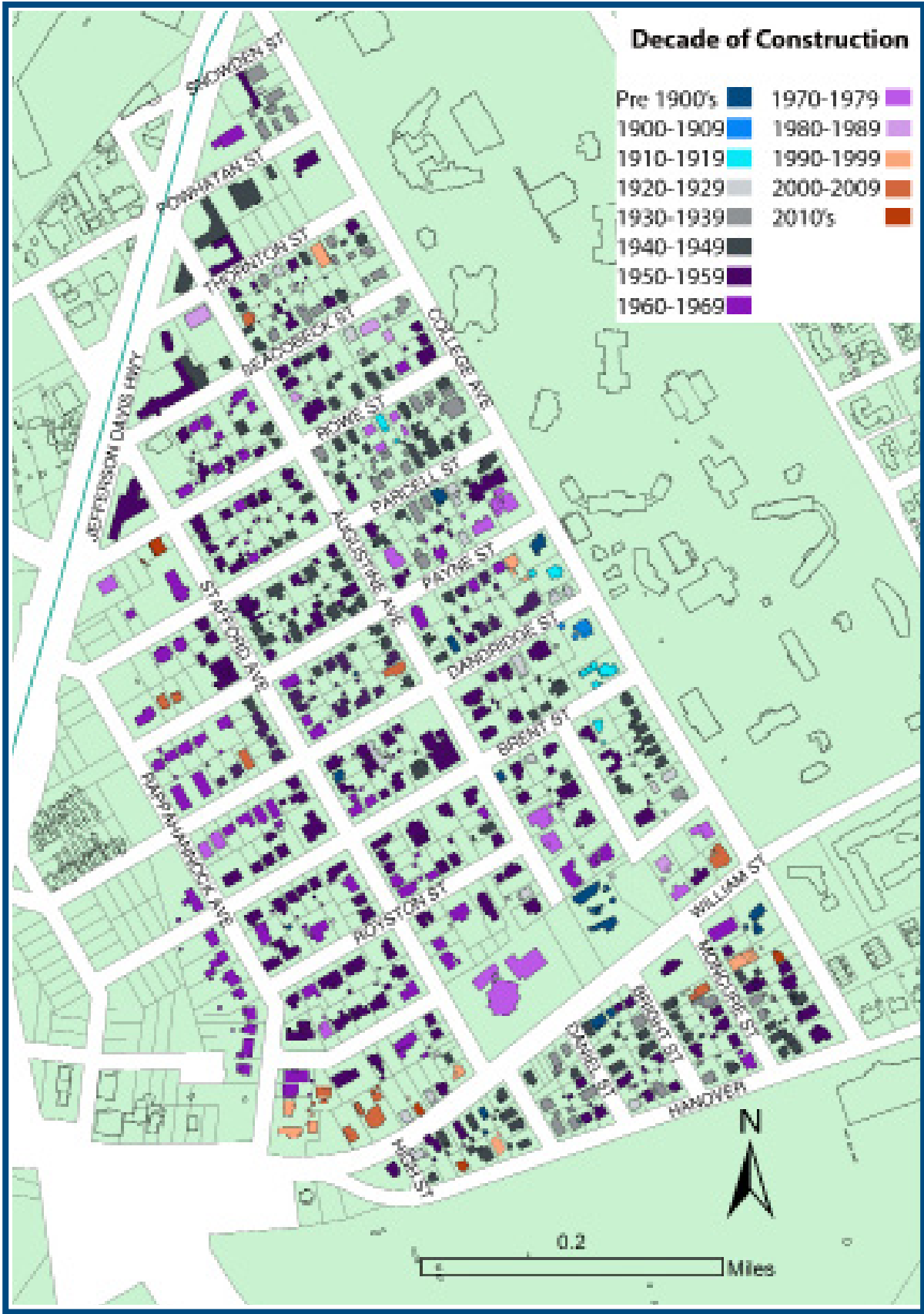
Information regarding the date, use, style, condition and National Register eligibility of the 458 properties in the College Heights neighborhood was collected during the Cultural Resource Survey. Analysis of the survey results show that Ranch and Cape Cod are the most prevalent architectural styles, while the predominant current and historic use is single family residences. Construction in the neighborhood primarily took place from the 1940s through the 1960s. The majority of the buildings in the neighborhood are in good condition. Based on the age of the buildings and their condition, 68.8% of the properties would contribute to a National Register Historic District.

I. Decade of Construction

The buildings in the College Heights neighborhood were constructed between 1821 and 2015. Two houses were built in 1821, while the remainder were constructed in the 1900s and 2000s. There were seven buildings constructed in the 1910s, ten in the 1920s, 38 in the 1930s, 98 in the 1940s, 164 in the 1950s, 64 in the 1960s, 14 in the 1970s, four in the 1980s, eight in the 1990s, ten in the 2000s, and six from 2010 onward. As shown in Graph I, the greatest percentage of buildings were constructed during the 1950s, followed by the 1940s and 1960s. The neighborhood's period of major growth started in the 1930s, peaked in the 1950s, and tapered off by the 1970s, reflecting the its early history as suburban housing for factory workers and salesmen during the Great Depression and World War II, as well as its dramatic expansion after World War II.



Graph I. Decade of Construction

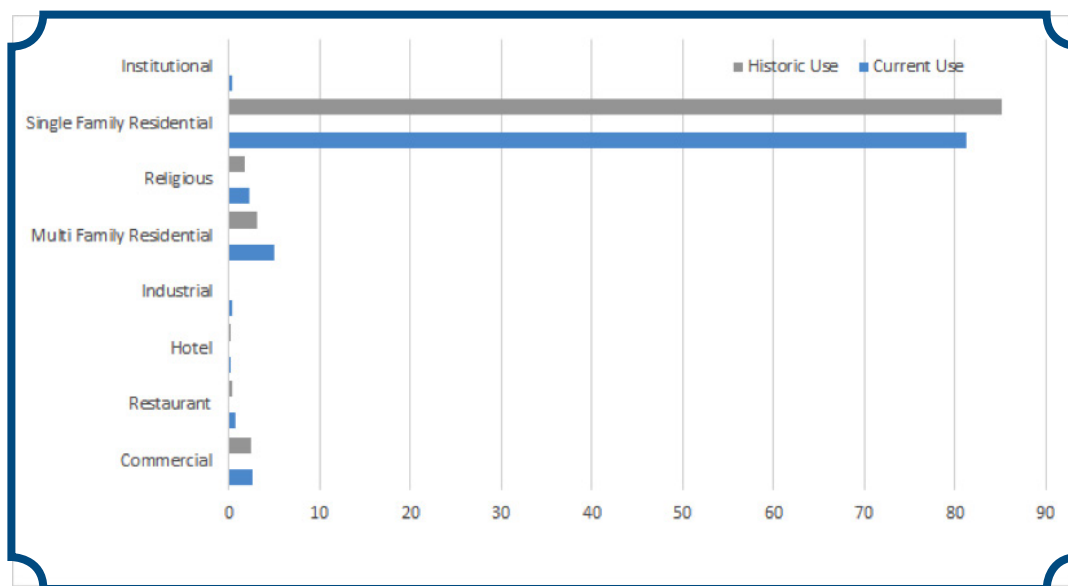


II. Use

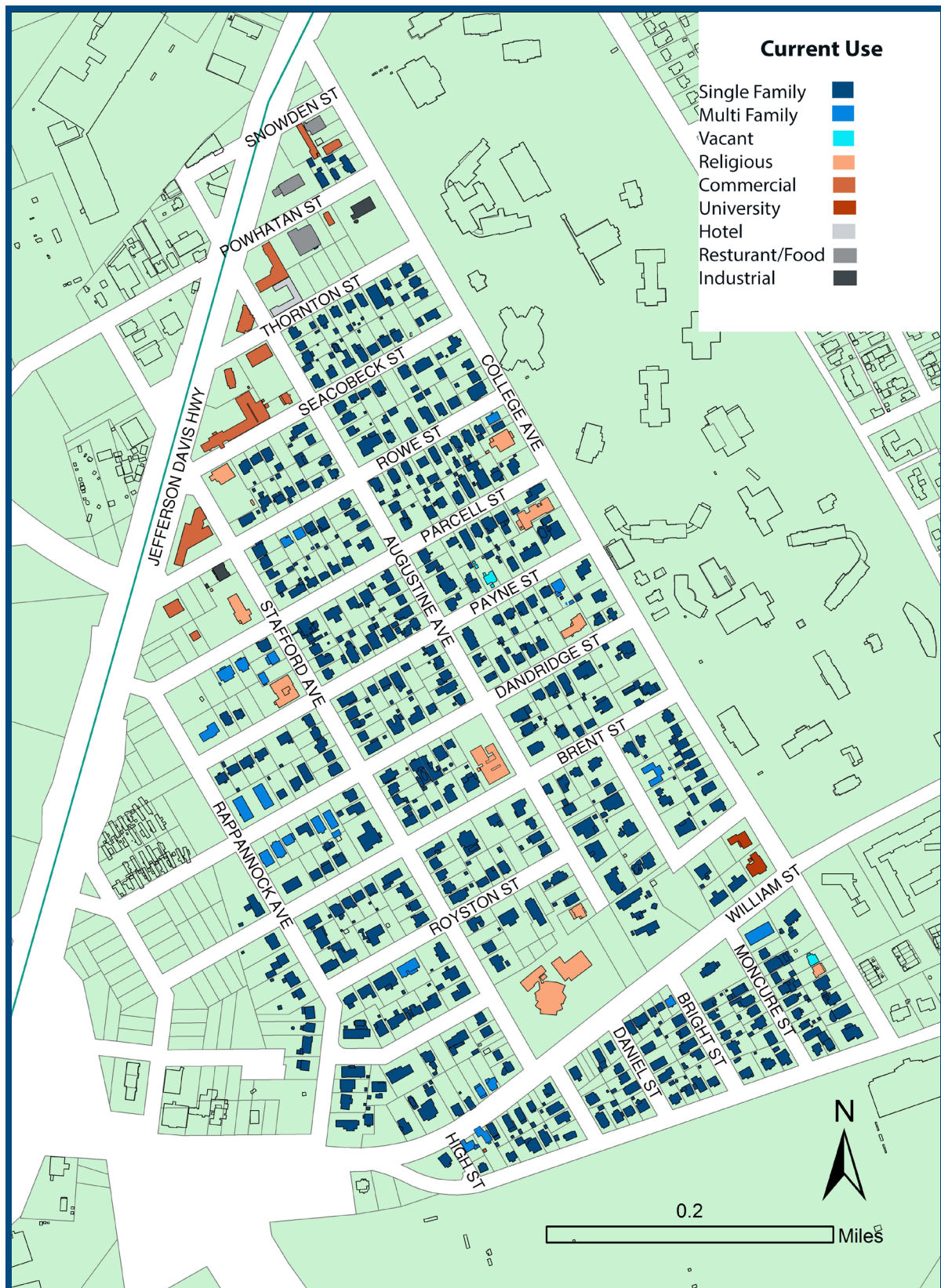
The most widespread historic and current use is single family residential. As shown in Graph II, the next most prevalent current use is empty lots, followed by multi-family residential, then religious, commercial, vacant, restaurants, institutional, and finally industrial and hotels.

While the neighborhood is predominantly single family residential, there are religious and multi-family residential properties scattered throughout. However, the greatest number of multi-family residences are located towards the western side of the neighborhood. There are only two institutional buildings associated with the university that are located on College Avenue. The commercial, industrial, and restaurant properties are located on the northern edge of the neighborhood along Route 1, the major arterial road as seen in the Current Use Map.

Fifteen single family residences and one commercial property have been adaptively reused. Seven of the single family residences have been converted into multi-family residences. Of the remaining single family residences, three have been adaptively reused as commercial properties, three as restaurants, and two as institutional buildings, showing the commercial developmental pressure associated with Route 1 and the potential for university encroachment along College Avenue. Only one commercial property on William Street has been adaptively reused as a single family residence, reflecting William Street's loss of importance as one of Fredericksburg's major arterial roads with the creation of the Route 1 bypass.



Graph II. Historic and Current Use

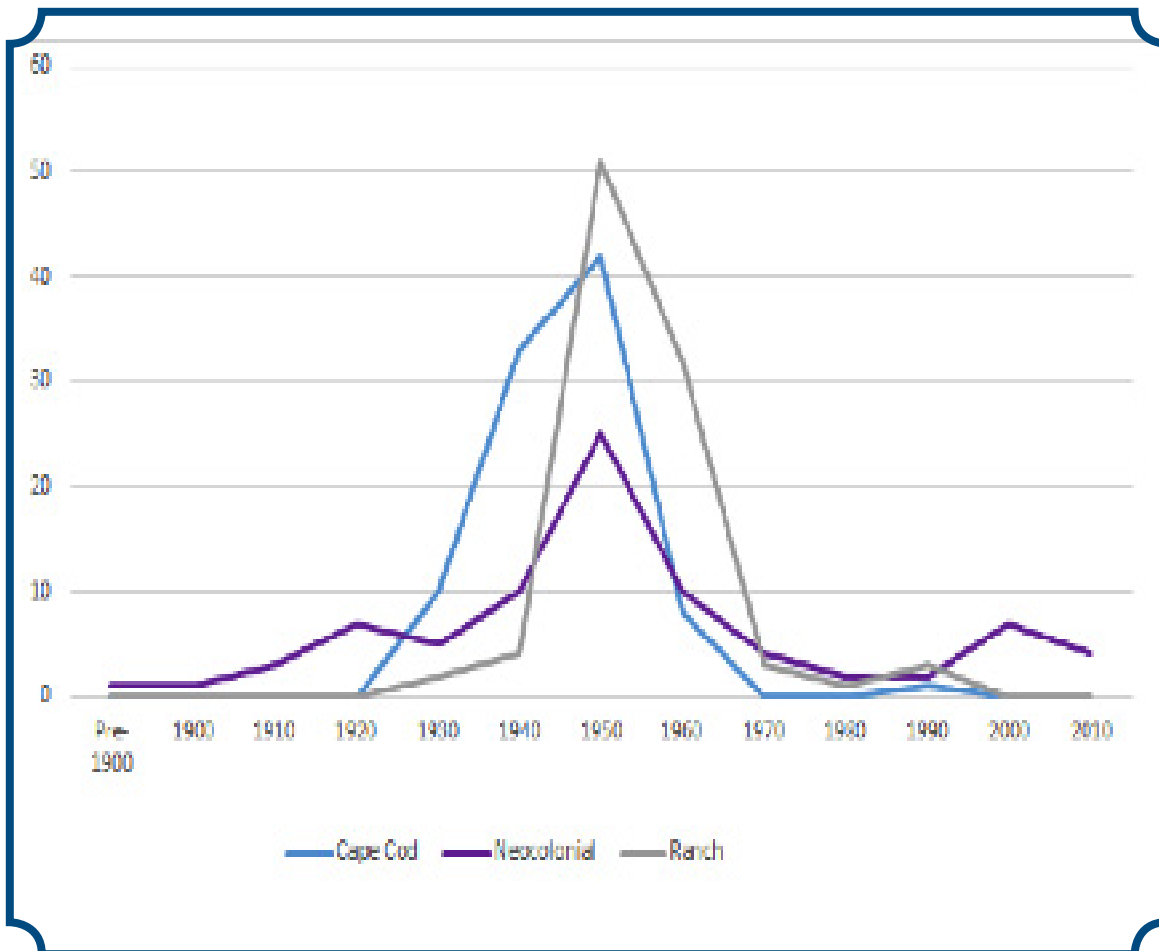


III. Style

The majority of the houses are either Ranch (21%) or Cape Cod (20.5%). The least prevalent styles are Industrial (0.2%), Queen Anne (0.2%), and Tudor Revival (0.4%). As shown in Graph III, the Ranch and Cape Cod styles reached their peak in 1950s and then quickly declined in popularity. The Neocolonial style peaked in the 1950s but then unlike the other two, it slowly lost popularity before regaining prevalence in the 2000s. The other styles, not included on this graph, include the Bungalow/Craftsman and American Foursquare styles which reached their greatest popularity in the 1940s. The Minimal Traditional style reached its peak in the 1950s. Split Level homes were also popular in the 1950s, but they never reached the predominance of the Neocolonial, Cape Cod, and Ranch homes. The 1940s also see the rise of Commercial style buildings constructed in response to the creation of the Route 1 bypass.

According to “A Field Guide to American Houses,” the Ranch style was popular from 1935 through 1975 while the Cape Cod style was dominant through the mid to late 20th century. The popularity of these styles is reflected by their prevalence in the College Heights neighborhood. Because the Queen Anne styles were common in 1880 through 1910, there is only one building with this style. While this house was constructed in 1821, it later received extensive renovations in the Queen Anne style. Tudor styles were popular from 1890 through 1940. While there are a few Tudor houses in the neighborhood, their lack of prevalence reflects the style’s waning popularity during the neighborhood’s development. The neighborhood also demonstrates the popularity of the Neocolonial style from the 1950s through present day. While most of the Neocolonial houses were built in the 1950s, they continued to be popular and have even experienced a resurgence in recent years. The neighborhood also reflects the prominence of Bungalow and Craftsman style homes, which were nationally prominent from 1905 through 1930. However, this style continued to be popular through the 1940s in the College Heights neighborhood. The American Foursquare style was popular from 1895 through 1940, paralleled by the presence of these houses in the neighborhood through the 1940s. Minimal Traditional houses were popular from 1935 to 1950. The vast number of Minimal Traditional houses built in the 1940s and 1950s show the extent of its popularity in the College Heights neighborhood. Lastly, while the Split Level style was popular from 1955 to 1975. However, the Split Level style is not as predominant in the College Heights neighborhood since much of the construction took place before the mid 1950s (McAlester, 2013).

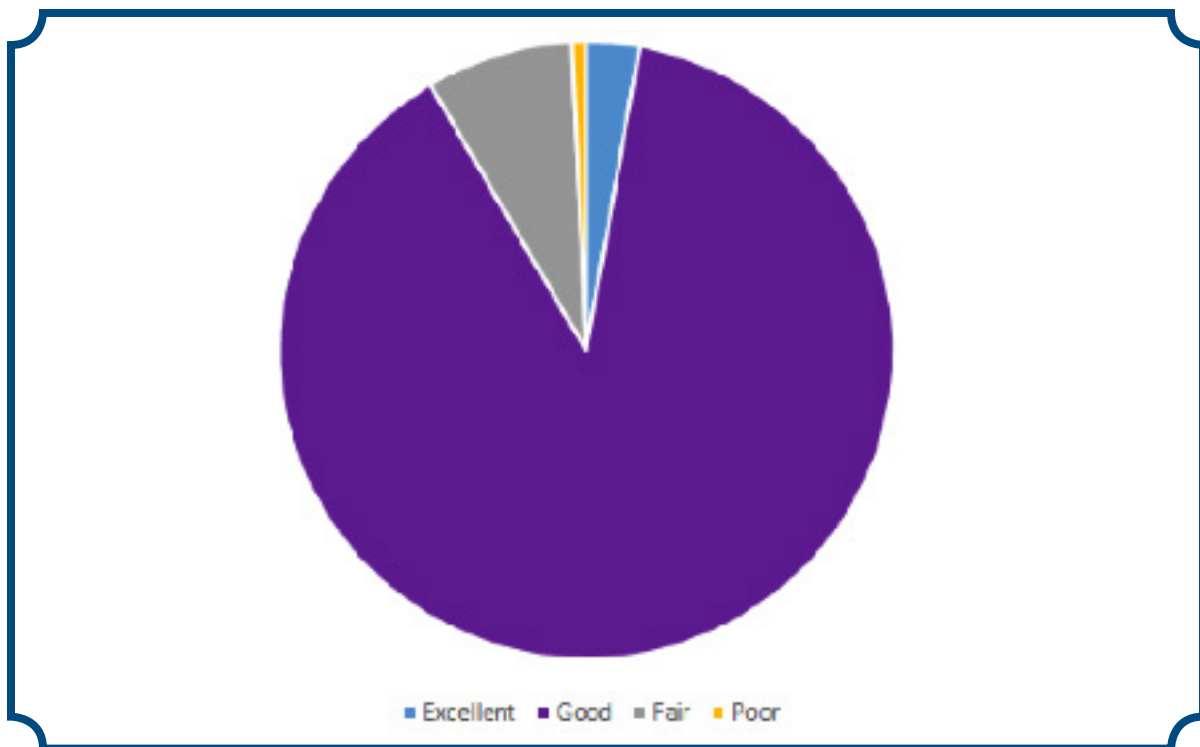
The lot shapes in the neighborhood are predominantly rectangular as the streets are laid out in a grid pattern as opposed to the loop and lollipop pattern more commonly found in suburbs. There are no secondary structures on 48.3% of the lots, while 35.6% have sheds and 12.9% have garages. The prevalence of sheds reflects the need to store lawn and gardening equipment to maintain the lower density suburban lots. While cars were vital to the suburbs, the lack of garages as secondary structures reflects their incorporation into the primary residence as was common among Ranch houses. Other houses that lack garages feature driveways or on street parking to accommodate the cars.



Graph III. Style

IV. Condition

The buildings were ranked as being in either poor, fair, good, or excellent condition. There are three that are in poor condition (0.7% of the properties), 33 in fair condition (7.2%), 379 in good condition (82.8%), and 12 in excellent condition (2.8%). Thirty one properties have not been assigned conditions because they are vacant lots (6.8%). Graph IV shows that while the majority of the buildings were constructed from the 1930s through the 1960s, most are still in good condition. Good condition is defined as the building showing no damage or neglect, but some of the original materials have been replaced, which is reflected throughout the neighborhood. Back additions are most common in the neighborhood as are replaced roofs and siding. (Definitions for conditions can be found in the glossary on pg. 27)



Graph IV. Condition

V. National Register Eligibility

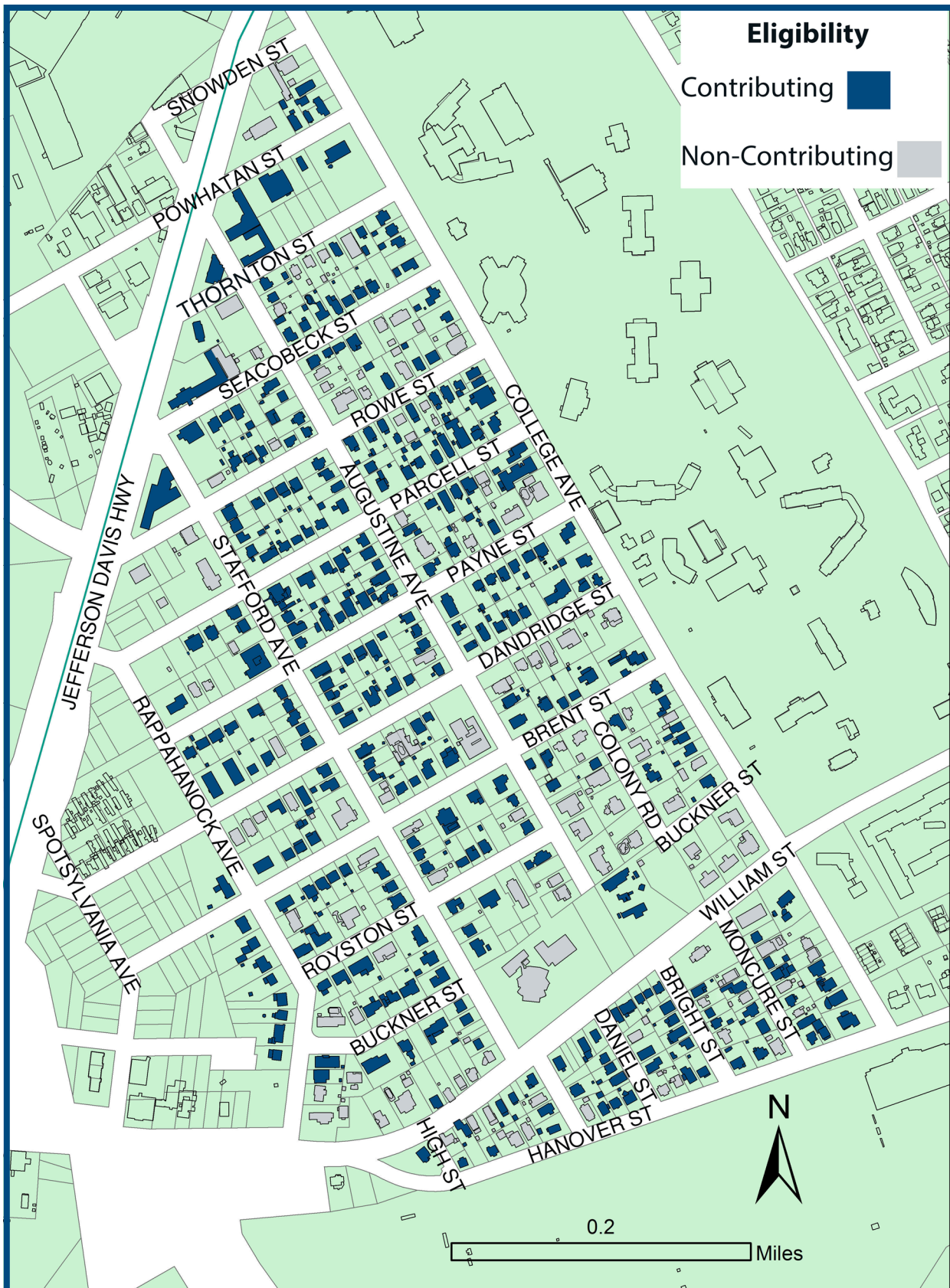
The buildings are either contributing or non contributing since the team did not consider any of the buildings to be individually eligible due to their lack of material integrity. In the neighborhood 68.8% of the properties are contributing and 31.2% are non contributing. Contributing properties were determined based on the building being 50 years of age or older, having material integrity, and lacking additions or alterations that obscure the building's original form and style.

While there are non contributing buildings scattered throughout the neighborhood, the greatest concentration of these buildings are located in the vicinity of William Street as well as between Colony Road and Augustine Avenue, on Dandridge Street between College Avenue and Augustine Avenue, and the block between Rowe Street, Stafford Avenue, and Parcell Street. (See Eligibility Map on pg. 18)

Recommendations

The College Heights neighborhood in Fredericksburg, Virginia should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places due to its association with Post World War II suburbanization as well as its representation of interwar suburban growth. The neighborhood has a total of 458 properties, 68.8% of which could contribute to the district. While 31.2% of the properties are non-contributing, they are intermixed with contributing properties as shown in the Eligibility Map. Furthermore, 85.6% of the neighborhood's properties are in good or excellent condition, meaning that they have retained much of their material integrity. The neighborhood's main period of construction, and its period of significance, spans from the 1930s through the 1960s. The neighborhood is unique in that its street pattern is a grid, reflecting its 1890s layout. Although there are two properties dating to the 1820s, they are outside of the neighborhood's period of significance and they do not have enough material integrity to be considered individually eligible for the National Register.

The neighborhood faces encroachment from the University of Mary Washington, religious organizations, and Route 1 developmental pressure. If residents are supportive, a local historic district could be established to limit additional infringement. The creation of a local historic district would help the neighborhood retain its character by encouraging sensitive designs for new construction, additions, and alterations. Outside of establishing a local historic district, little can be done to prevent encroachment. However, a community focus group could be established to monitor threats and provide education to residents about the historic character of the neighborhood, as well as practical information on how to do preservation-minded alterations and repairs to their property.



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Appendix

Site Survey Data Entry Form

Use this form to enter initial data about the sites you are reviewing. After you have created this entry, the author will be able to edit the data (and add to it) from the individual entry page.

YOU MUST BE LOGGED INTO THIS WEBSITE IN ORDER TO SUBMIT DATA.

Site Number

Choose Your Group
☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5
☐ 6
☐ 7
☐ 8
☐ 9

Name of Surveyors

Survey Date

Street Name

Street Number

No. of Structures

Choose One ▼

Use of Secondary Structure(s)

Style of Primary Building

Number of Stories

Width (bays)

Foundation Material

Depth (rooms)

Structural System

Wall Cladding Material <input type="checkbox"/> Brick <input type="checkbox"/> Vinyl <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Clapboards <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingles <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco <input type="checkbox"/> Stone <input type="checkbox"/> Fiber Cement <input type="checkbox"/> Cement <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos
Roof Shape <div>Choose One ▾</div>
Roof Material <input type="checkbox"/> Slate <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Standing Seam Metal <input type="checkbox"/> Tile <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Decorative Details/Unique Features <div></div>
Evidence of Integrity Location/Materials <div></div>
Additions/Alterations to Primary Building <div></div>
Condition of Primary Building <div>Choose One ▾</div>
Observable Threats <input type="checkbox"/> none <input type="checkbox"/> large trees <input type="checkbox"/> neglect <input type="checkbox"/> University encroachment <input type="checkbox"/> Route 1 Development <input type="checkbox"/> other
Compatibility with Adjacent Land Uses <div></div>
Photo View 1: 3/4 Front View <div>Choose File No file chosen</div>
Photo View 2 <div>Choose File No file chosen</div>
Photo View 3 <div>Choose File No file chosen</div>
Photo View 4 <div>Choose File No file chosen</div>

Potential NR Eligibility

Choose One ▾

Sketch of Site

Choose File No file chosen

Construction Date

Evidence of Construction Date

Other Comments/Salient Details

Submit

Glossary

Architectural Styles



American Foursquare - Characterized by a square-shaped design with two and a half stories and a pyramidal pitched roof, in addition to a central dormer and a large front porch. Most popular from 1895 to 1930.

Bungalow/Craftsman - Characterized by a low-pitched gable roof with a wide eave overhang, exposed roof rafters, and a porch with a roof supported by columns. Most popular from 1905 to 1930.



Cape Cod - A simple, unadorned colonial-era architectural style characterized by a low roof with one and a half stories and a high-pitched side gable. Saw a revival in the mid-20th century.



Minimal Traditional - Most notable for its lack of decorative detailing. Characterized by a low or intermediate pitched roof, sometimes with a large chimney or front-facing gable. Built with a variety of materials, including wood, brick, stone, or a mix of different ones. Most popular from 1935 to 1950, but especially after World War II.

Neocolonial - Characterized by very loose recreations of colonial architectural designs, such as widely overhanging eaves and either low or steep-pitched roofs. Most popular from 1950 to the present day.



Queen Anne - Characterized by steeply-pitched roofs of irregular shapes, usually with a front-facing gable, an asymmetrical facade with a one-story porch. Most popular from 1880 to 1910.



Ranch - Characterized by an asymmetrical one-story shape with a low-pitched roof and a wide eave overhang. Buildings of this type use wooden or brick wall cladding, sometimes both. They also utilize three different roof forms: hipped, side gable, and front gable. Most popular from 1935 to 1975, but especially after World War II.

Split Level - Utilized design elements from the Ranch style such as a low-pitched roof and overhanging eaves, but also built with two main stories and a smaller wing between the floors. Most popular from 1955 to 1975.



Roof Types

Gable - Two sides of the roof are angled to meet each other, which forms a triangular shape in the space between them.

Front gable - Gable faces towards the front of the structure's facade.

Side gable - Gable faces perpendicular to the facade.

Gambrel - Two-sided roof is hipped so that a shallower slope meets above a steeper one.

Pyramidal - A four-sided roof that creates a pyramid-like shape with the four sides meeting at the top.

Other Architectural Terms

Eave - Edges of a roof that hang over the top of a structure's walls.

Pitch - Angle of the roof, which can be at a low, intermediate, or high angle.

Building Condition

Excellent - Building shows no signs of damage or neglect and retains almost all materials original to the structure.

Good - Building shows no damage or neglect, but some original materials have been replaced.

Fair - Building shows signs of damage or neglect, but restoration would return the structure to a good condition.

Poor - Building displays visible signs of damage or neglect and/or structural instability and is mostly unsalvageable.

Eligibility

Contributing - Structure contributes to the surrounding area's historical fabric.

Non-contributing - Structure does not relate or contribute to the surrounding area's historical fabric.

Individually Contributing - Structure has historical significance or uniqueness that distinguishes it from its surroundings and warrants special attention.