

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: Bacontown Survey Number: AA-2082

Project: CDBG Bacontown Sewer Installation (9203650) Agency: Anne Arundel County

Site visit by MHT Staff: no yes Name _____ Date _____

Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G None

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)

Bacontown, a small African-American community in northwestern Anne Arundel County, traces its origins to Maria Bacon, a freed slave of the prominent Dorsey family. The town consists of several houses (mostly 20th century), a church, a church hall and cemetery, all clustered along Whiskey Bottom Road. In 1860, Achsah Dorsey manumitted Maria Bacon, a mulatto, and her four children and gave her property upon which Maria built a house. This became the nucleus of the Bacontown community.

The Henson House, St. Jacob's lodge and cemetery and Mt. Zion Church are eligible for the National Register under criterion A because they possess symbolic historical significance as a grouping of structures that represent the development of African-American communities in Anne Arundel County. The remaining structures in Bacontown are modern and therefore non-contributing. As a collection, these buildings hold local significance in the history of African-Americans in Anne Arundel County. Bacontown represents one of a handful of free-black communities which have survived and maintained their identity.

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Review and Compliance Files and Maryland Inventory files

Prepared by: Donna M. Ware, Anne Arundel County

J. Ellen Fruse 12/17/92
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

NR program concurrence: yes no not applicable
R. [Signature] 12-26-93
Reviewer, NR program Date

Jmg

Survey No. AA-2082

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

I. Geographic Region:

- Eastern Shore (all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil)
 Western Shore (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's)
 Piedmont (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)
 Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett and Washington)

II. Chronological/Developmental Periods:

- Paleo-Indian 10000-7500 B.C.
 Early Archaic 7500-6000 B.C.
 Middle Archaic 6000-4000 B.C.
 Late Archaic 4000-2000 B.C.
 Early Woodland 2000-500 B.C.
 Middle Woodland 500 B.C. - A.D. 900
 Late Woodland/Archaic A.D. 900-1600
 Contact and Settlement A.D. 1570-1750
 Rural Agrarian Intensification A.D. 1680-1815
 Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870
 Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930
 Modern Period A.D. 1930-Present
 Unknown Period (prehistoric historic)

III. Prehistoric Period Themes:

- Subsistence
 Settlement
 Political
 Demographic
 Religion
 Technology
 Environmental Adaptation

IV. Historic Period Themes:

- Agriculture
 Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning
 Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
 Government/Law
 Military
 Religion
 Social/Educational/Cultural
 Transportation

V. Resource Type:

Category: Buildings

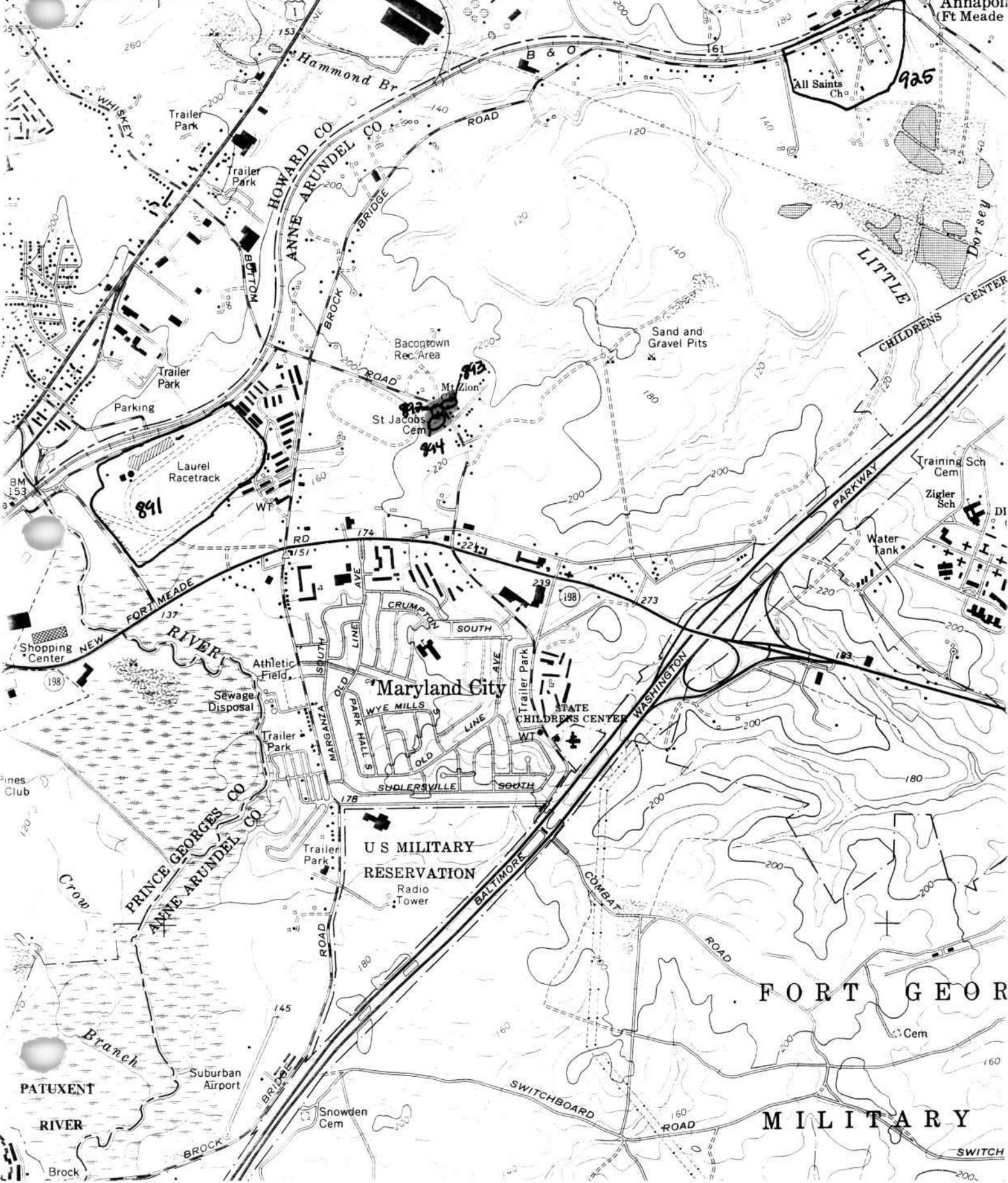
Historic Environment: Village

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Residential

Known Design Source: None

AA-2082

341 50' 342 BALTIMORE 18 MI. SAVAGE 1 MI. 5662 III NE (SAVAGE) 343 344 345 47'30" 1.8 MI. TO U.S.



FORT GEOR
MILITARY

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AA-2082

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Bacontown

other

2. Location

street and number Multiple Address, Whiskey Bottom Road __ not for publication

city, town Bacontown __ vicinity

county Anne Arundel

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

name Multiple Ownership

street and number telephone

city, town Bacontown state MD zip code 20724

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel County Courthouse liber Multiple folio

city, town Annapolis tax map 19 tax parcel tax ID number

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

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

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	<u>7</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<u>7</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
				<u>3</u>	

7. Description

Inventory No. AA-2082

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

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

Bacontown is comprised of a small collection of domestic, ecclesiastical, and social structures of significant note as expressions of vernacular architectural forms that are direct byproducts of the African American experience in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Anne Arundel County. Three buildings of particular significance are the Henson dwelling (AA-893), Mt. Zion Church (AA-892), and St. Jacob's Lodge # 28 Benevolent Sons and Daughters of Abraham (AA-894). None of these structures are of particular note for their architecture; however, each possesses symbolic historical significance as representations of the development of African-American communities in Anne Arundel County.

Mary Elizabeth Henson, daughter of Maria Bacon, the manumitted slave for whom Bacontown is named, constructed a small, vernacular, two-story, board and batten dwelling sometime between 1870 and 1890. The Henson House represents a rare surviving Anne Arundel County example of a shotgun house. This folk form of dwelling has strong regional connections to early African American housing types. This structure survives today but has recently become vacant and seems to be in an alarmingly accelerated stage of dilapidation.

Across the street from the Henson House are both the Mt. Zion Church and St. Jacob's Lodge and Cemetery. The current Mt. Zion Church is the second or third generation structure on the site; a late nineteenth century log structure had stood just east of the present church. From most accounts, the current structure dates to the first decade of the twentieth-century, possibly circa 1909. The building, a center-steeple vernacular example of Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture, has witnessed several additions but retains its significance for its association within the African American community.

St. Jacob's Lodge is a two-story, gable-end, frame structure one-bay wide and two-bays deep that dates to 1909. The building rests on a low foundation and has two-over-two sash in all window openings. The original clapboards have been covered with vinyl siding. In addition to serving the needs of the beneficial society, this structure also housed a school for African-Americans in the community during the early 20th century. Both the Mt. Zion United Methodist Church and St. Jacob's Lodge remain important social institutions that grew out of the early African American experiences in the district. All three of these buildings contribute strongly the feeling, integrity and historical continuity found in Bacontown today.

Other contributing resources are four small, gable-end frame dwellings dating to the twentieth century. Whether one- or two-stories in height, these dwellings are simple in expression with little ornamentation and are of forms common to Anne Arundel County's African American communities.

8. Significance

Inventory No. AA-2082

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

Specific dates	1870-1940	Architect/Builder	unknown
Construction dates	various		

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not evaluated

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

Bacontown, located on the Anne Arundel County’s western boundary with Howard County, was settled by former slave Maria Bacon after the Dorsey family granted her her freedom in 1860. Bacon received thirty acres from the Dorseys, and settled with her three children and three other manumitted slaves in what is now known as Bacontown. Bacontown evolved throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a small, African American community, centered on the current Mt. Zion Church and St. Jacob’s Lodge.

Bacontown is a small mid-nineteenth-century African American community located on the western fringe of Anne Arundel County just north of Maryland City and just a few hundred yards east of the Howard County line. The district is located along the elbow of Whiskey Bottom Road and runs about one hundred yards in a linear fashion. Several gravel roads shoot off from Whiskey Bottom Road in the subject area and are populated with non-contributing dwellings. In general, the terrain within the district gently slopes from a small rise to the northwest off to the southeast. Several very large hardwood trees of advanced age remain but otherwise much of the area is cleared.¹

The community is quickly becoming infringed upon by aggressive developments to the east and south along Maryland route 198, and by the purchase and intended development of additional land to the immediate west by the Laurel Racetrack. The district today is sparsely populated with a variety of structures. Several small twentieth-century domestic structures share a strong association with each other and the earlier buildings. The district retains an overall feeling and association with its nineteenth-century history, and particularly with the three resources noted elsewhere in this document.

The lands that form Bacontown developed around Maria Bacon, a manumitted slave from the Dorsey family in 1860. The Dorsey family had, by the beginning of the Civil War, established a long tradition of manumitting their slaves; by the time of Maria Bacon’s release, the family had freed over ninety slaves since 1799. As they freed their former slaves, the Dorsey family typically parceled out some of the land they owned. The thirty acres that Maria Bacon received and shared with her children and three other former slaves constitutes the center of the present Bacontown district.

As a collection, the buildings forming the Bacontown Historic District hold local significance in the history of African Americans in Anne Arundel County. Included are the Henson dwelling, Mt. Zion Church, and St. Jacob’s Lodge, three resources of significant note for their embodiment of expressions of vernacular architectural forms that are direct byproducts of the African American experience in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Anne Arundel County.

A rare survivor in Anne Arundel County, Bacontown is representative of evolution of the county’s African American communities founded by freed slaves. According to Donna Ware, Anne Arundel County historic preservation planner:

... Freedom did lead to the formation of free black communities, small enclaves of simply built houses at the edges of the landscape, often located on the back margin of the farm of a former slaveholder. After emancipation, these previously established communities became the core of larger villages. New construction and better quality houses supplemented the rough dwellings of the ante-bellum founders, and soon churches, schools and community halls transformed tenuous residential clusters into fully developed communities. These villages prospered for much of the next century, with properties descending through successive generations from free, ante-bellum ancestors... More recently, many of these villages have begun to decline.²

¹ Section 8 narrative adapted from research prepared by Todd Goff.

² Donna Ware, *Architecture and Change in the Chesapeake*, MHT Press, 1998, p 10.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. AA-2082

William L. Calderhead, "Anne Arundel Blacks: Three Centuries of Change," in *Anne Arundel County, Maryland: A bicentennial History 1649-1977*, James C. Bradford, Ed., 1977.

Tanya Jones, "Bacontown gets aid, but needs more", *The Baltimore Sun*, Section B, June 8, 1997.

Donna Ware, Bacontown Determination of Eligibility Form (AA-2082).

Donna Ware, Mt. Zion Church Determination of Eligibility Form (AA-892).

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property _____

Acreage of historical setting _____

Quadrangle name Laurel

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries of the Bacontown Historic District are indicated by the black line on the attached map. This linear district includes properties on both the southwest and northeast sides of Whiskey Bottom Road west of Spring Rod and east of Old Stage Coach Road.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Scott D. Whipple, Administrator, Local Preservation Programs		
organization	Maryland Historical Trust	date	6/30/2004
street & number	100 Community Place	telephone	410-514-7600
city or town	Crownsville	state	MD 21032

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

**Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form**

Inventory No. AA-2082

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 9 Page 1

Donna Ware, Mary Elizabeth Henson House Determination of Eligibility Form (AA-893).

Donna Ware, St. Jacob's Lodge #28 Determination of Eligibility Form (AA-894).

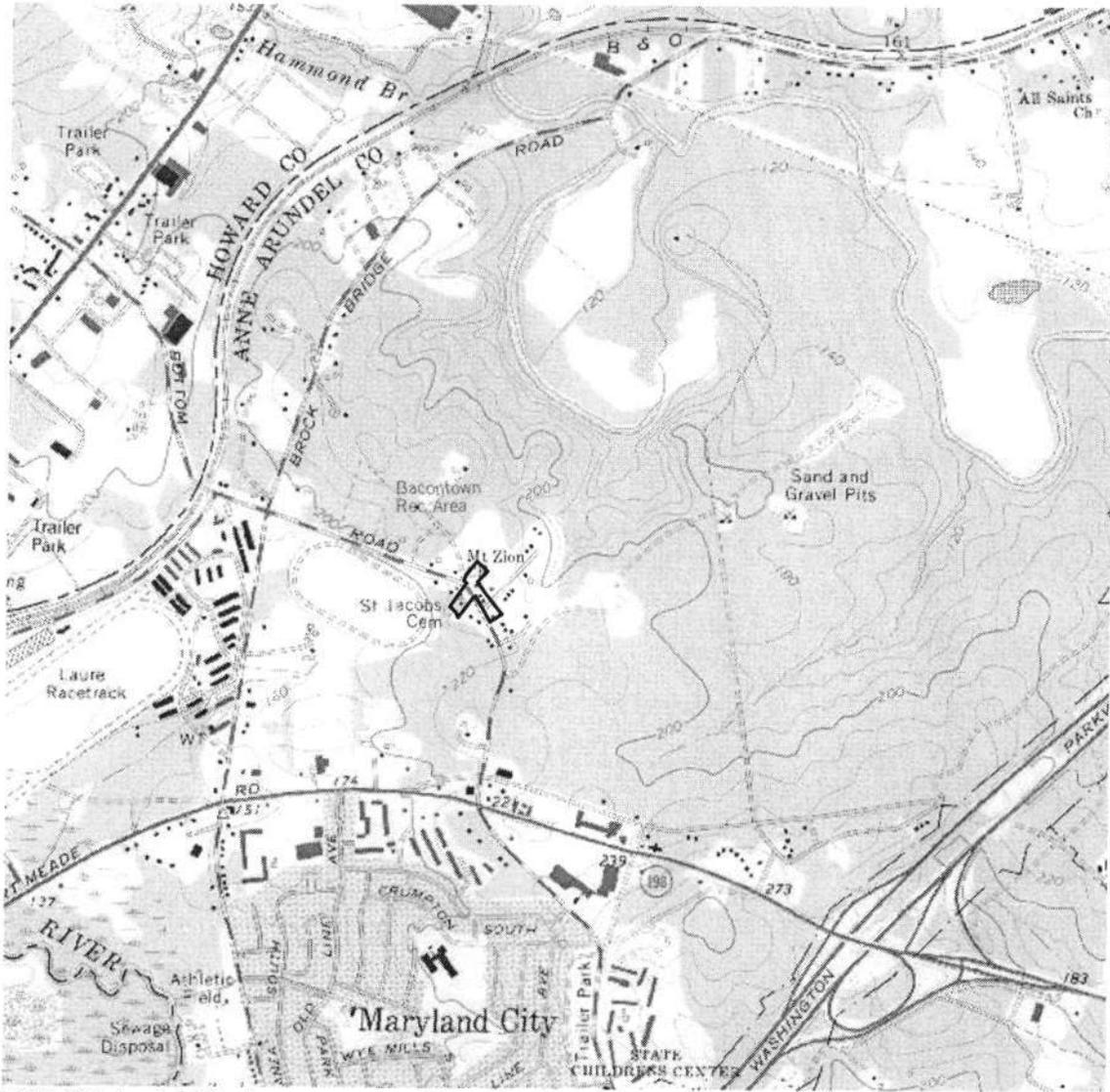
Contributing & Noncontributing Resources

District Name: Bacontown Historic District

Inventory Number: AA-2082

Property Address	Tax Map	Tax Parcel	Contributing Resource?	Inventory Number of Property
Whiskey Bottom Road	19	111	Contributing	AA-893
3573 Whiskey Bottom Road	19	113,7	Contributing	
3577 Whiskey Bottom Road	19	113,6	Contributing	
3579 Whiskey Bottom Road	19	113,4	Contributing	
3581 Whiskey Bottom Road	19	113,3	Contributing	
3586 Whiskey Bottom Road	19	26	Contributing	AA-894
3592 Whiskey Bottom Road	19	68	Contributing	AA-892

AA-2082
Bacontown Historic District
Laurel Quadrangle



1993-94 Aerial Photo





AA - 2082

3579 Whiskey Bottom Road

Bacantown Historic District

Anne Arundel County, MD

Tom Reinhart

5/30/2000

MD SHPO

#1 of 4



AA-2082

3581 Whiskey Bottom Road

Bacantown Historic District

Anne Arundel County, MD

Tom Reinhart

5/30/2000

MD SHPO

#2084



AA-208Z

Mt. Zion U.M. Church (AA-892)

Bacantown Historic District

Anne Arundel County, MD

Scott Whipple

5/27/2004

MD SHPO

3 of 4



AA-2082

St. Jacob Lodge #28 (AA-899A)

Bacontown Historic District

Anne Arundel County, MD

Scott Whipple

5/27/2004

MD SHPO

#4 of 4