

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes   
no

Property Name: Bellclare Circle Inventory Number: BA-3216

Address: Bellclare Circle Historic district:  yes  no

City: Sparks Zip Code: 21152 County: Baltimore County

USGS Quadrangle(s): Hereford

Property Owner: multiple Tax Account ID Number: multiple

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): multiple Tax Map Number: 34

Project: I-83 SB Belfast Road Noise Wall Agency: Maryland State Highway Administration

Agency Prepared By: Maryland State Highway Administration

Preparer's Name: Melissa Blair Date Prepared: 10/05/2007

Documentation is presented in: \_\_\_\_\_

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation:  Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: Western Run-Belfast Road Historic District

Inventory Number: BA-2214 Eligible:  yes Listed:  yes

Site visit by MHT Staff  yes  no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

The residential subdivision of Bellclare Circle is located in the Sparks Glencoe vicinity in northern Baltimore County, east of Priceville Road, south of Belfast Road, and west of the Baltimore-Harrisburg Expressway (I-83). The neighborhood is named after its principal street, Bellclare Circle, which makes a U-shaped loop through the subdivision. The neighborhood is laid out into rectangular lots fronting the street, with lot sizes averaging approximately one acre. The terrain is relatively flat with a slight slope from a high point in the northeast portion of the neighborhood, downward towards a tributary of Piney Creek, which cuts across the southwest portion of the neighborhood.

Bellclare Circle appears to have been subdivided by a single real estate developer, but due to the variance in house types and construction dates, it is not likely that this neighborhood was comprehensively planned and constructed by a single developer. The neighborhood contains examples of the tract housing that was built in massive numbers all across the country during the 1950s. During this period, new homes were primarily built according to standardized construction practices and architectural styles. Builders chose designs that were easy and economical to build, but that would appeal to consumers interested in open and flexible living spaces.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

MHT Comments:

Sam Stalman ✓  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

11/30/07  
Date

[Signature]  
Reviewer, National Register Program

12/3/07  
Date

The neighborhood consists of twenty-four detached, single-family homes. Dwellings conform to two basic types; simplified Ranch houses and split level houses. The majority of the dwellings in Bellclare Circle were built between 1956 and 1958, with several houses built in the 1960s and one house built in 1991. There are no industrial, commercial, or community resources within Bellclare Circle.

The neighborhood's Ranch houses are one story in height and have asymmetrical plans. Split level versions are similar in style, but feature a two-story unit intercepted at mid-height by a one-story wing to make three floor levels of interior space. Roofs are low-pitched side gable roofs covered with asphalt shingles. Most dwellings have interior brick chimneys. Wall cladding materials consists of brick veneer, asbestos shingles, aluminum siding, or vinyl siding. Front entrances are often slightly recessed, and feature original wood or metal doors or replaced doors. Many windows have been updated since the initial construction of the neighborhood, although several dwelling retain original aluminum sash windows. Most houses feature a bay or picture window on the front façade. Several retain open carports, while others have enclosed carports that provide additional living space. Foundations are concrete or cement block. Almost all the houses in the neighborhood have been altered in some way, including replaced materials and rear or second story additions.

Although Bellclare Circle is located in a rural area, its historical association is with the suburbanization of Baltimore County. Rapid population growth and a resultant housing shortage following World War II led to the construction of thousands of new homes throughout Baltimore County. The rise of an automobile culture allowed suburban housing to spread far from Baltimore City. Two attitudes of the time towards suburbanization persist to this day; some considered these new developments to be the fulfillment of the American dream of home ownership for more people than any other time in history, while others felt that it was uninspired architecture and haphazard planning that represented the homogenization of culture. Regardless of these views, massive suburban growth did have major environmental consequences and radically altered much of Baltimore County's formerly rural landscape.

Baltimore County's suburbanization was marked by political corruption. Real estate developers contributed more to Baltimore County campaigns than all other contributors combined, and large real estate contributors were named to the county's fledgling zoning board, which was established in 1947 (Callcott 1985, 65). The 1950s were a time of uncontrolled growth in Baltimore County, due to the absence of strong planning and zoning. In 1957, authors writing a history of the county for the public school board commented on the rapid suburbanization of the county saying that, "the transition from old life to the new in Baltimore County has involved lack of foresight and therefore of planning and has many problems." They noted that northern Baltimore County was a strong-hold of the rural way of life, but predicted that the construction of the Baltimore-Harrisburg Expressway would open the area to the type of development found closer to Baltimore City (Hultenaur 1957, 240, 247).

The Bellclare Circle development was tied to the construction of the Baltimore-Harrisburg Expressway. While the State Roads Commission constructed the highway in 1959, three years after the first Bellclare Circle houses were built, planning for the expressway began in the early 1950s and right-of-way was purchased prior to the construction of the neighborhood. In this rural setting, close proximity to the highway was a benefit to the neighborhood's property values, in comparison to when new highways cut through older urban areas causing property values to fall. What is notable about the Sparks Glencoe area in general is how limited mid twentieth-century growth actually was, most likely due to distance from Baltimore City, but also to active support for rural preservation from the local community. In this sense, Bellclare Circle is more of anomaly than a typical pattern for the local area.

Bellclare Circle is a planned suburban neighborhood. According the Maryland State Highway Administration's Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology, these types of communities can be eligible for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criteria A, B, or C, but they must be intact, excellent examples of their type and feature character-defining elements

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_  
Criteria: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D Considerations: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ E \_\_\_ F \_\_\_ G

MHT Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program Date

including cohesive groupings of buildings by function, construction date, and architectural styles; consistent lot sizes and building set-backs; landscape features; community amenities; and location near major transportation corridors (KCI Technologies, Inc. D-10). While Belleclare Circle represents a concentration of historically and aesthetically cohesive buildings and is located next to I-83, the neighborhood lacks notable community design elements, such as planned landscapes and public amenities.

Belleclare Circle is not eligible for the NRHP. Belleclare Circle is not eligible under Criterion A. While the subdivision is associated with mid twentieth-century suburban building trends, the construction of this particular development does not represent a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the nation, state, or local community. The development is not eligible under Criterion B as the community has no known association with persons who have made specific contributions to history. Belleclare Circle is not eligible under Criterion C. The majority of dwellings are from a signal period of construction (1956-1958), but they are not architecturally significant building types. The housing types represented in the neighborhood are found in abundance in suburban areas across the nation. Furthermore, many houses in the neighborhood have been modified or altered resulting in a loss of architectural integrity. Investigations have not been conducted to determine whether the land the community occupies has the potential to yield information important in history or prehistory, therefore eligibility under Criterion D can not be assessed at this time.

Belleclare Circle is within the boundaries of the Western Run-Belfast Road Historic District, which is listed in the NRHP. The neighborhood post-dates the district's period of significance and does not convey the district's sense of place and historical development. Belleclare Circle does not contribute to the Western Run-Belfast Road Historic District.

References

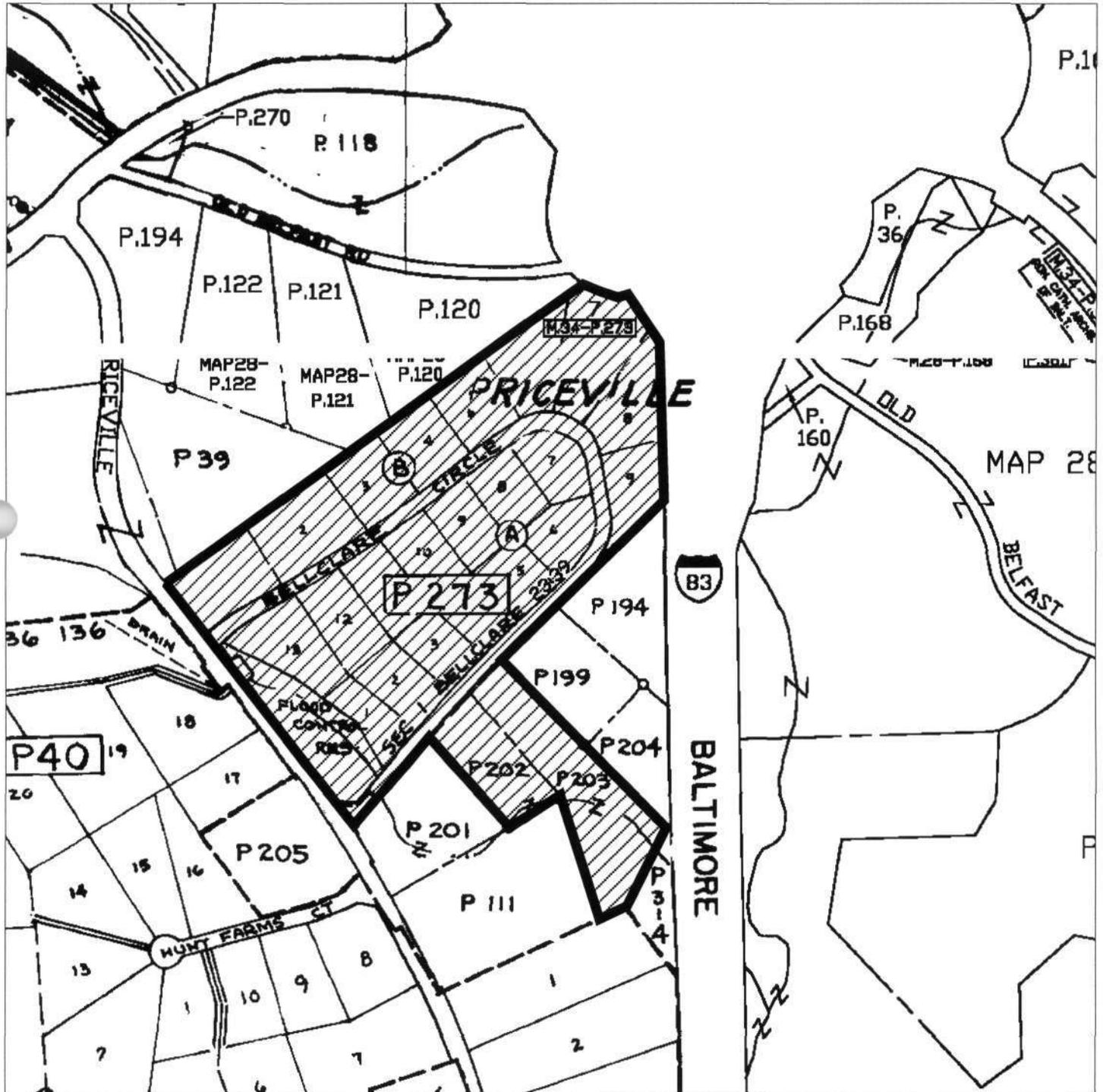
Callcott, George H. Maryland & American: 1940 to 1980. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.

Hultenhaur, Helen G. and G. Alfred Helwig. Baltimore County in the State and Nation. Prepared for Baltimore County Public Schools. Baltimore, MD: H.G. Roebuck & Son, Inc., 1957

KCI Technologies, Inc. Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology: I-495/I-95 Capital Beltway Corridor Transportation Study. Prepared for the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration, November 1999.

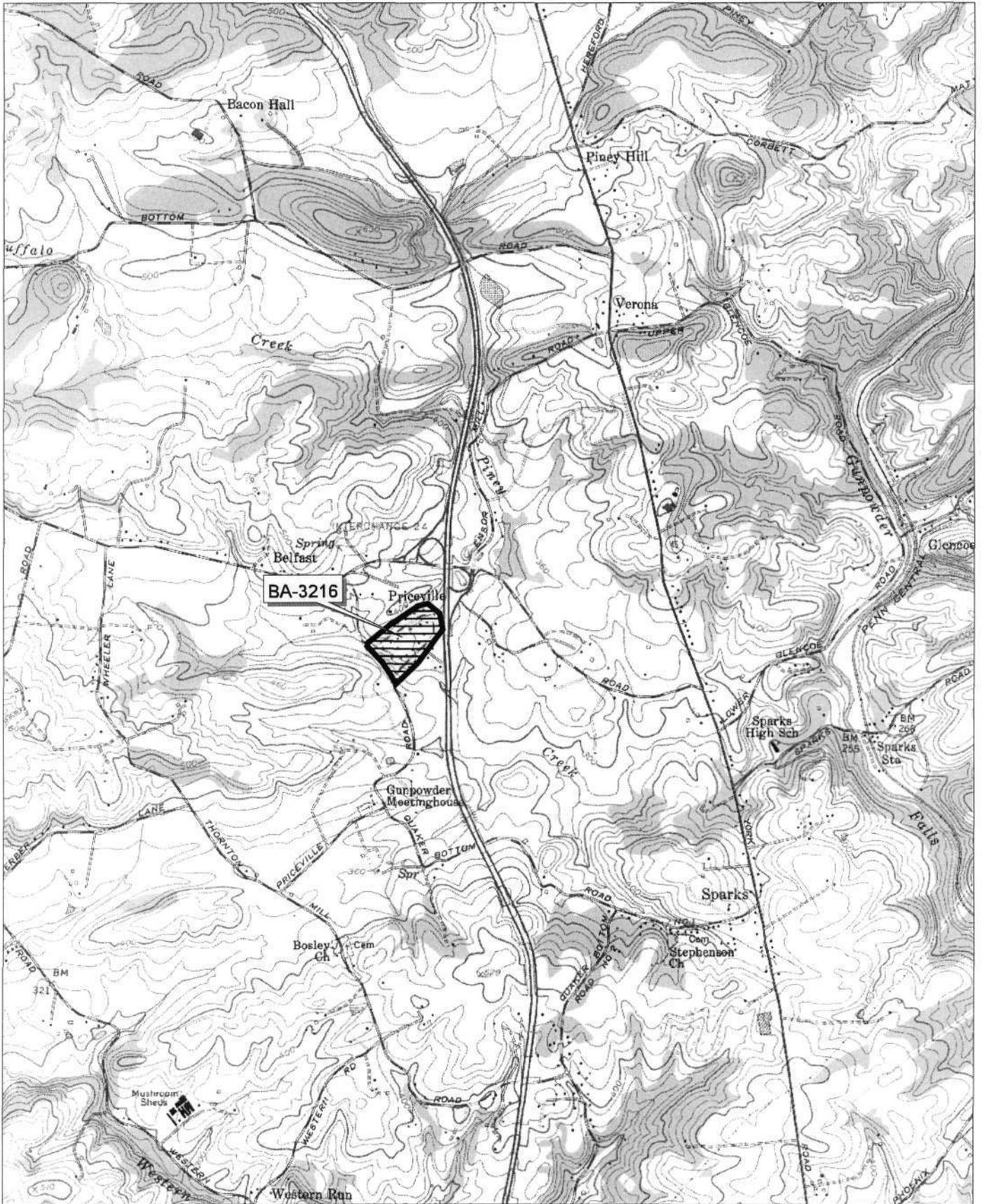
<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended _____	Eligibility not recommended _____
Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D	Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G
MHT Comments:	
_____	_____
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	Date
_____	_____
Reviewer, National Register Program	Date

# Bellclare Circle BA-3216 Boundary of Surveyed Area



Baltimore County  
Tax Map 34, Parcels 273, 202, and 203





BA-3216  
 Bellclare Circle  
 Priceville  
 Baltimore County  
 USGS Hereford Quad





BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Pricville

Baltimore County

Melissa Blair

August 2007

MD SHPO

17 Bellclare Circle, View Northwest

Photo 1 of 12

built 1956



BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Pricville

Baltimore County

M. Blair

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August 2007

MD SHPO

18 Bellclare Circle, View East

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Photo 2 of 12

built 1957



BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Priceville

Baltimore County

M. Blair

9 00 M0 Y0 00 08/31/07

August 2007

MD SHPO

13 Bellclare Circle, View North

Photo 3 of 12

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built 1957



BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Pricetown

Baltimore County

M. Blair

8 00 MO Y0 D+1 08/31/07

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16 Bellclare Circle, View Northeast

Photo 4 of 12

hilt1957



BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Priceville

Baltimore County

M. Blair

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MD SHPO

11 Bellclare Circle, View South

007633 4/40 <SR36 11>

Photo 5 of 12

Kodak  
ENT

built 1958



BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Priceville

Baltimore County

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MD SHPO

10 Bellclare Circle, View Northwest

007633 5/40 <SR36 11>

Photo 6 of 12

built 1962



BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Pricville

Baltimore County

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9 Bellclare Circle, View South

Photo 7 of 12

built 1960



BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Priceville

Baltimore County

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8 Bellclare Circle, View Northwest

Photo 8 of 12

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BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Priceville

Baltimore County

M. Blair

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MD SHPO

6 Bellclare Circle, View Northwest

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Photo 9 of 12



BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Riceville

Baltimore County

M. Blair

7 00 M0 Y0 D0 08/31/07

August 2007

MD SHPO

14 Bellclare Circle, View Northeast

007633 8/40 <SR36 11>

Photo 10 of 12

Wilt 1991



BA-3216

Bellclare Circle

Pricerille

Baltimore County

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Streetscape View West

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Streetscape View Southeast

007633 6/40 <SR36 11>

Photo 12 of 12