This addendum is an update including changes to the property since its original documentation. The house associated with the property was constructed circa 1920, dating beyond the period of U.S. Census of Productions of Agriculture data. As a result, agricultural data for this property were not available.

7. Description

*Current Property Description*

The owner of the property did not respond to requests for access to F-5-123. The property is not visible from the public right-of-way due to its location on a private road behind several other dwellings and outbuildings. As a result, no photographs are included with this addendum. Frederick County, MD At a Glance 2011 aerial mapping was used to assess standing structures. Frederick County, MD At a Glance also provided aerial imagery from 1988, 2000, 2005, 2007, and 2009. These maps allowed limited analyses of the farm over time.

The following resources were documented in the 1997 MIHP form for F-5-123: a two-story frame dwelling (1920); a wood frame barn (circa 1920); two concrete block sheds (circa 1920); and, a wood frame shed. Based on a comparison of the aerial imagery and the sketch map provided with the 1997 MIHP form, the dwelling, two concrete block sheds, and barn are extant. Based on the aerial imagery, significant alterations were not made to the dwelling between 1997 and 2011. The concrete block shed south of the barn was described in the 1997 form as being "connected to the barn by a concrete block structure." Although the barn and shed both appear on the 2011 aerial imagery, a connection between the two no longer appears to be extant. The wood frame shed was not visible on the aerial imagery; it was described as being "in poor condition" on the 1997 MIHP form.

According to the latest Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation Real Property Data, the property currently includes 25 acres (Maryland Department of Assessments & Taxation 2013).

8. Significance

*Historic Context*

The first half of the nineteenth century saw the establishment and maturation of Frederick County as an agricultural center. The grain-based agriculture established during the previous century matured and intensified through the early 1800s. Advances in agricultural technology and transportation networks allowed for greater production and increased distribution across mid-Maryland. As a result, agricultural prosperity in Frederick County reached its peak in the years leading up to the American Civil War.

For much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, wheat was the preferred cash crop throughout Frederick County and the surrounding region (Reed 2011:25). For nearly two centuries, tobacco cultivation provided the economic foundation of tidewater Maryland and Virginia to the south and east; however, wheat gained popularity in mid-Maryland due to a number of factors. Grain cultivation was less labor and soil intensive, and grain exports faced fewer trade restrictions (Reed 2011:25). Much of the grain produced in Frederick County was sold through the Port of Baltimore, which had overtaken Philadelphia as the nation's principal milling center by 1805 (Reed 2011:25-26). Dozens of water-powered flour mills were established within Frederick County in an attempt to capitalize on the growing surplus of wheat (Reed 2011:31). By 1810, Maryland trailed only Pennsylvania and Virginia in flour production, with mid-Maryland mills producing over $1.5 million worth of flour annually. Much of the region's grain also was used in whiskey distillation; Frederick and Washington county distilleries produced over 350,000 gallons of whiskey in 1810. Rye often was planted in marginal areas for use in whiskey distillation during this period (Reed 2011:31-34).

The growth of grain-based agriculture during the early nineteenth century was facilitated in part by expanding networks of transportation, which allowed grain, flour, and whiskey to reach larger urban markets for sale and consumption. By 1800, the City of Frederick served as the commercial epicenter of the surrounding county. Over 2,600 citizens resided in Frederick at the turn of the century, providing numerous services to farmers in the surrounding countryside (Reed 2011:22-23). The importance of Frederick as an agricultural market town increased rapidly after the 1830s, when the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad completed a spur line into the city (Reed 2011:35). The new rail connection allowed grain and produce to be shipped to Baltimore quickly and inexpensively. Farms located in the southern part of the county also could rely on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, which paralleled the Potomac River from Cumberland to Georgetown (Reed 2011:35).

Grain production was driven by several breakthroughs in agricultural technology. The invention of the mechanical reaper in the 1830s "enabled a farmer to harvest ten to fifteen acres of wheat a day compared to one or two cut by hand" (Reed 2011:37). Mechanical threshers, improved horse rakes, and grain drills also were introduced during the first half of the nineteenth century, reducing the labor needed to plant and harvest wheat (Reed 2011:37-38). Frederick County farmers also experimented with new farming practices in order to maximize their yield. Crop rotation and fertilization were used to replenish nutrients depleted by grain cultivation; popular soil additives included manure, clover, and gypsum (Reed 2011:34). New tools and practices were propagated by local agricultural societies. The Agricultural Society of Frederick County organized the county's first agricultural fair in 1822; the Frederick County Fair would go on to be the largest agricultural fair in Maryland (Reed 2011:34).

Despite the many technological advances that took place during the antebellum years, farmers faced an ever-increasing need for labor. Many Frederick County farmers were descended from German immigrants, who "generally opposed slavery, or considered it too much of a luxury" (Reed 2011:39). As a result, the number of enslaved African Americans was lower in Frederick County than in tidewater Maryland, where plantation cultivation of tobacco was more common. Slaves comprised 15.6 percent of the population of mid-Maryland in 1820, as compared to 26.4 percent statewide (Reed 2011:39). By the outbreak of the Civil War, in 1861, free African Americans outnumbered enslaved African Americans in mid-Maryland 7,859 to 5,461 (Reed 2011:39). The majority of slaves in Frederick County worked in agriculture, although some were engaged in manufacturing and other industries. Agricultural slaves often worked alongside hired farmhands, especially during the busy planting and harvest seasons.

The agricultural prosperity of Frederick County is evident in the agricultural census of 1850. Wheat and "Indian" corn dominate the lists of crops grown in the county, illustrating the reliance on grains as cash crops (Reed 2011:40-41). Significantly smaller amounts of oats and rye also were reported; it is possible that the rye was being distilled into whiskey. Other crops, such as potatoes (both Irish and sweet), often were listed as well and likely were grown for consumption on the farm. Livestock numbers typically were small, with most farmers owning "fewer than a dozen horses, milch cows, cattle, and mules" (Reed 2011:41). Swine, however, typically were present in larger numbers, with 40 to 50 being common. Sheep also were common, with many farms producing over 30 pounds of wool annually. Large amounts of butter, ranging from 300 to over 1,000 pounds, also were manufactured. Converting raw dairy products to butter extended its marketable life (Reed 2011:41). Some larger landowners also produced small amounts of tobacco.

The onset of the American Civil War presented a substantial check to the agricultural prosperity of mid-Maryland. The divided loyalties of the inhabitants and the region's location in a contested border state ensured that Frederick County would play host to both armies. Mid-Maryland voters overwhelmingly rejected Abraham Lincoln in the 1860 election, instead casting the majority of their ballots for John Bell and the Constitutional Union Party (Reed 2011:46). Despite their antipathy towards the Republican Party, the majority of mid-Marylanders remained committed to the preservation of the Union during the secession crisis that followed the election; for most, the cultural and commercial ties with the north proved stronger than the desire to support secession and slavery (Reed 2011:46-47). The loyalty of the region was tested in the fall of 1862, when the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia invaded Maryland. Southern commanders expected rebel sympathizers to see the army as a liberating force and subsequently flock to the cause. The agricultural wealth of mid-Maryland also made the region a tempting target to the invading army, which looked to replenish dwindling supplies of food and forage (Reed 2011:47-48). The Confederates, however, soon found that there was little enthusiasm for their cause among the citizens of Frederick County and the surrounding region. The first military action in Maryland was turned back

following the Battle of Antietam on September 17, and in the subsequent actions in 1863 and 1864 the Confederate forces would treat mid-Maryland as hostile territory (Reed 2011:48, 54).

The war years brought hundreds of thousands of soldiers to the region, which took an enormous toll on the agricultural output. Both armies foraged extensively to feed soldiers and horses, barns and farmhouses became hospitals for the sick and wounded, fields of crops were trampled, and horses were pressed into army service. Southern forces initially attempted to compensate farmers for goods by paying them in Confederate money, but this process was abandoned by 1864 when Maryland was viewed as federal territory open for plunder (Reed 2011:48, 57-58). Federal forces also offered farmers compensation through a claims process, but proof of loyalty was required and the process sometimes took several years (Reed 2011:52-53). Over the course of the war the region saw three major actions and countless smaller raids, skirmishes, and other troop movements, resulting in thousands of dollars in damage to mid-Maryland farms. Recovery during the post-war decades was often slow, and many farmers were unable to reclaim their pre-war prosperity (Reed 2011:60).

The latter half of the nineteenth century brought unprecedented changes to mid-Maryland farms. As farmers struggled to recover from the destruction of the Civil War, they found themselves faced with increased competition, growing urbanization, and economic uncertainty. All of these factors would undermine the traditional grain-based economy of Frederick County and drive the transition towards more diversified economic practices.

The same rail connections that benefited Maryland grain farmers during earlier decades became a detriment after the war as they allowed for the shipment of massive amounts of Midwestern wheat to east coast milling centers (Reed 2011:63-64). The process of grinding the hard red wheat commonly grown on the Great Plains required new technology in order to maximize efficiency. Roller mills, patented in 1880, soon became the standard in milling technology, and many Maryland mill owners struggled to upgrade their facilities (Reed 2011:64). The majority of Frederick County mill owners were unable to pay for the expensive steel roller equipment in order to compete with larger industrial mills; by the end of the nineteenth century, the few mills that survived did so by producing livestock feed.

Mid-Maryland farmers also faced growing urbanization and labor migrations during the decades following the Civil War. By 1910, over 40 per cent of Maryland's population lived in the city of Baltimore, while the cities of Cumberland and Hagerstown also grew rapidly to become the second and third most populous cities in the state, respectively (Reed 2011:65). Industrial and manufacturing industries thrived in these cities, drawing in laborers from all over rural Maryland. Much of this industrial growth bypassed Frederick, due to the city's location along a rail spur rather than a main rail line. Frederick grew during this time, but at a slower rate than the aforementioned cities; by 1910, the

population had risen to only 10,411 (Reed 2011:65). Many farm laborers moved to cities in search of work as wheat prices stagnated and new machinery reduced the amount of labor required (Reed 2011:67).

The growth of Baltimore and other urban centers forced mid-Maryland farmers to transition away from wheat production and towards more diverse agricultural production. Dairy and orchard produce would overtake grains as mid-Maryland farms adapted to support growing urban populations in Baltimore and Washington. Faster rail transport, coupled with the invention of the refrigerated rail car in 1875, allowed fresh farm products to survive longer and be shipped further. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the number of orchards in Frederick County expanded and, by 1880, fruit processing was the third largest industry in Maryland (Reed 2011:70). Fresh fruit was taken directly to Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, and mid-Maryland produce was transported to markets all over the east coast (Reed 2011:70). Several canneries were established in Frederick to take advantage of the region's productivity.

Agricultural diversification during this period also led to the rise of commercial dairying, which would come to dominate Frederick County agriculture through much of the twentieth century. Small numbers of "milch cows" were common on mid-Maryland farms throughout the nineteenth century, and farmers typically produced several hundred pounds of butter annually. By 1910, the average dairy herd had increased to twenty cows, and excess milk was being sold to local creameries and to creameries in Baltimore (Reed 2011:71). Butter remained the most popular way to extend the shelf life of dairy products, and butter factories that could produce thousands of pounds of butter daily were established in Frederick and Carroll counties. Commercial ice cream manufacturers also were founded, beginning with C.F. Main of Middletown in 1911 (Reed 2011:71-72). The shift from grain to commercial dairy production altered the rural landscape as more fields were left in pasture or planted in clover or other hay crops (Reed 2011:74). Some wheat was still grown as a cash crop, however, corn was produced primarily for livestock feed. By the eve of the Great Depression, the statewide production of wheat amounted to $9,053,000, while dairy had grown to $25,156,000 in gross income (Reed 2011:75).

Urban migration was intensified by the Great Depression and America's involvement in the Second World War. The drought of 1930 cost Maryland farmers over $38 million in losses, while multiple bank failures exacerbated the situation for struggling farmers (Reed 2011:75). Many farmers left mid-Maryland in search of work in nearby cities. The farmers who remained continued to adapt towards dairy farming by altering and renovating farm buildings. Electricity became common place in rural Maryland during the 1930s, allowing dairies to adopt electrical refrigeration. Older bank barns were relegated to hay storage and housing for other livestock as specially constructed concrete-block dairy barns became commonplace (Reed 2011:76). The urban migration that typified the period preceding World War II was partially reversed during the decades following the war. Middle-class city dwellers, encouraged by the availability

of land and the new interstate highway system, moved to newly created suburban developments. Rural land that once comprised dairy and wheat farms transitioned into residential communities for commuters working in Washington or Baltimore, setting a precedent that continues into the twenty-first century (Reed 2011:76).

*Property History*

Research conducted for the 1997 MIHP form determined that the Vernon T. Watkins Farm was established circa 1920. Property-specific agricultural census data were recorded in 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880; all of which predate the farmstead. Consequently, there are no agricultural census data available for the Vernon T. Watkins Farm.

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Survey No. F-5-123
Vernon T. Watkins Farm ca. 1920
Monrovia Vicinity
Private

## CAPSULE SUMMARY

The Vernon T. Watkins Farmstead (F-5-123) is located on the west side of Maryland Route 75, northwest of Monrovia in Frederick County, Maryland. The Vernon T. Watkins Farm is an early twentieth century agricultural complex encompassing five buildings. The complex includes a two-story frame dwelling constructed ca 1920, a wood-frame barn constructed ca 1920, two ca 1920 concrete block sheds, and a wood-frame shed. The principal dwelling is an example of a house type common to the Northern Piedmont and is characterized by a symmetrical two-story block. The Vernon T. Watkins Farm historically is associated with the broad patterns of agricultural development in Frederick County. The complex does not retain its integrity of use as an operating farm. The principal dwelling is in fair condition and has been modified over time. The outbuildings are in poor to deteriorated condition.

Survey No. F-5-123

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF

Magi No.

# Maryland Historical Trust
# State Historic Sites Inventory Form

DOE __yes __no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Vernon T. Watkins Farm

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 5024A Green Valley Road ___ not for publication

city, town Monrovia _X_ vicinity of congressional district 6th

state Maryland county Frederick

## 3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ district | ___ public | _X_ occupied | ___ agriculture | ___ museum |
| _X_ building(s) | _X_ private | ___ unoccupied | ___ commercial | ___ park |
| ___ structure | ___ both | ___ work in progress | ___ educational | _X_ private residence |
| ___ site | **Public Acquisition** | **Accessible** | ___ entertainment | ___ religious |
| ___ object | ___ in process | _X_ yes: restricted | ___ government | ___ scientific |
| | ___ being considered | ___ yes: unrestricted | ___ industrial | ___ transportation |
| | _X_ not applicable | ___ no | ___ military | ___ other: |

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

name Rise Investments, LLC

street & number P.O. Box 228 telephone no.:

city, town Clarksville state and zip code MD 21029

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Frederick County Courthouse liber 2077

street & number North Court Street folio 1294

city, town Frederick state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title N/A

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. F-5-123

| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
|---|---|---|---|
| ___ excellent | ___ deteriorated | ___ unaltered | _X_ original site |
| ___ good | ___ ruins | _X_ altered | ___ moved date of move _____ |
| _X_ fair | ___ unexposed | | |

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

See Continuation Sheets

# 8. Significance

Survey No. F-5-123

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ prehistoric | ___ archeology-prehistoric | ___ community planning | ___ landscape architecture | ___ religion |
| ___ 1400–1499 | ___ archeology-historic | ___ conservation | ___ law | ___ science |
| 1500–1599 | X agriculture | ___ economics | ___ literature | ___ sculpture |
| ___ 1600–1699 | X architecture | ___ education | ___ military | ___ social/ humanitarian |
| ___ 1700–1799 | ___ art | ___ engineering | ___ music | |
| ___ 1800–1899 | ___ commerce | ___ exploration/settlement | ___ philosophy | ___ theater |
| X 1900– | ___ communications | ___ industry | ___ politics/government | ___ transportation |
| | | ___ invention | | ___ other (specify) |

**Specific dates** Ca 1920 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: __A __B X C __D
and/or
Applicable Exception: __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

Level of Significance: __national __state X local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

See Continuation Sheets

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. F-5-123

See Continuation Sheets

# 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of nominated property** 28 acres

**Quadrangle name** Urbana, MD

**Quadrangle scale** 1:24000

UTM **References** do NOT complete UTM references

| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | | | | B | | | |
| C | | | | D | | | |
| E | | | | F | | | |
| G | | | | H | | | |

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

Approximately 28 acres recorded in the land records of Frederick County, Maryland, in Liber 2077, Folio 1294

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries**

| state | code | county | code |
|---|---|---|---|
| state | code | county | code |

# 11. Form Prepared By

**name/title** Geoffrey E. Melhuish/ Assistant Project Manager

**organization** R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc. **date**

**street & number** 241 East Fourth Street, Suite 100 **telephone** (301) 694-0428

**city or town** Frederick **state** Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

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PS-2746

## General Description

The Vernon T. Watkins Farm is an agricultural complex comprising five structures built during the early twentieth century. The complex includes a two-story wood-frame dwelling, constructed ca. 1920; a wood-frame barn, constructed ca. 1920; two concrete block sheds, constructed ca. 1920; and a wood frame shed. The principal dwelling is an example of a house type common to the northern Piedmont and is characterized by a symmetrical two-story block. The design and ornamentation of the main dwelling exhibits the influence of the Folk Vernacular style.

The Vernon T. Watkins Farm is located off Green Valley Road on the west of Maryland Route 75, north of Monrovia. A gravel drive leads to the property from Green Valley Road. The dwelling faces east. The barn is situated on a rise north of the dwelling.

### Vernon T. Watkins Farmhouse

The Vernon T. Watkins Farmhouse is a two-story, three-by-two bay, wood-frame dwelling constructed ca. 1920. The house consists of a main block and rear ell that occupy an L-shaped footprint. The main block of the house is oriented to the east. The rear ell is connected to the west wall of the main block and extends west. The house is clad with synthetic siding. The building incorporates a gable roof over the main block and rear ell with an intersecting gable over the principal entrance. All roof planes are sheathed in corrugated metal panels. The building incorporates two brick chimneys; an interior end chimney rises from the west end and an interior chimney is centrally located on the roof ridge. Small four-light windows are located at the gable.

The main block of the house, which contains the primary entrance, is three bays wide and one room deep. The primary entrance, located in the center bay, features a replacement door and an infilled transom. The windows are aligned symmetrically and consist of one-over-one light, double-hung, wooden sash. Metal frame replacement windows are located at many of the window openings.

A one-story porch extends across the full width of the front (east) facade and extends on the north facade. The shed roof of the porch is sheathed in corrugated metal and is supported by simple, turned wooden posts. Two bays of the porch on the north elevation have been infilled.

### Wood-Frame Barn

The barn is located northwest of the principal dwelling and is a wood-frame, gable-roofed structure occupying a rectangular footprint. The building is oriented on a north-south axis, with wide openings along its east and west facades. The structure is constructed on a stone foundation and is clad in vertical board siding. The roof is clad in corrugated metal; ornate metal finials crown the north and south ends of the roof ridge. The barn is in fair condition.

### Concrete Block Shed

A concrete block shed is located south of the barn. The shed is a rectangular, one-story, one-bay structure. The shed terminates in a side gable roof sheathed with corrugated metal

seam panels. The primary (east) elevation features a replacement wood door. The shed is connected to the barn by a concrete block structure. The structure is open on the east elevation. The roof of this structure is in a deteriorated condition.

Concrete Block Shed

A concrete block shed is located northwest of the principal dwelling. The shed is a rectangular, one-story, one-bay structure. The structure terminates in a front gable roof sheathed with corrugated metal seam panels. The gable ends of the building are clad with beveled wood clapboards. The primary (east) elevation features a raised five-panel wooden door.

Wood-Frame Shed

A one-story, one-bay, wood-frame structure is located west of the principal dwelling. The building is oriented to the east. The walls and front-gable roof are constructed of corrugated metal panels. The building currently is in poor condition.

## Summary

The Vernon T. Watkins Farm is an agricultural complex associated with the broad pattern of agricultural development in Frederick County during the first half of the twentieth century. A dwelling, one barn, and three sheds occupy the site. All of the farm buildings are vernacular style structures, which adopt functional designs enlivened with minimal ornamentation. Archival research suggest that the dwelling and associated buildings were constructed between 1916 and 1932 during the ownership of the 28 acre tract by the Watkins family. The property currently is owned by Rise Investment, LLC, who purchased the property in 1994 from Hilltop Development Corporation.

The farm was evaluated for those qualities of significance and integrity identified in the *National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation* (36 CFR 60). The design and physical characteristics of the complex were analyzed for their potential local significance during the Industrial/Urban Dominance period (1870-1930) in the areas of agriculture and architecture, as defined in the *Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan* (Maryland Historical Trust 1986).

The broad regional pattern of local agricultural development is reflected by the farm complex (Criteria A and C). Although the Vernon T. Watkins Farm historically is associated with the broad patterns of agricultural development in Frederick County, the complex does not retain its integrity of use as an operating farm. The majority of the agricultural buildings within the complex are deteriorated and are used for storage. The main dwelling has been modified over time and is an example of a common rural form in the Piedmont region.

## Site Specific History

The approximately 28-acre property owned by Rise Investments, LLC was purchased in 1994 from the Hilltop Development Corporation. The tract of land was part of the land survey filed by Samuel Plummer on June 28, 1743 (Patent LG E:305). Designated "Pleasant Meddo," the tract encompassed approximately 150-acres "in the forks of Bush Creek" (Tracey & Dern 1987:234). In 1754, Joseph Plummer, Samuel's son increased the size of the tract to 412-acres. It was again increased in 1764 to approximately 1,777-acres. At this time the name was changed to "Land of Promise" (Tracey & Dern 1987:234).

It is unknown when the tract of the Vernon T. Watkins farm was formed. However, in 1916, Vernon T. Watkins, an established farmer, purchased 28-acres of land situated near Monrovia on the road leading from Monrovia to New Market (Williams 1979:723, Frederick County Land Record 316:274). He and his wife, Edith owned the property for approximately thirty years. When Vernon died in 1943, the property and "all that small farm in Monrovia" was sold to Harry D. Miller and his wife, Vada (Frederick County Land Record 439:520). Twenty years later the house was purchased by Lewis E. Horman Jr. and Phyllis H. Horman (Frederick County Land Records 681:347). In 1989, Hilltop Development corporation purchased the property from the Hormans. It was purchased in 1994 by Rise Investments, LLC, who currently retain title (Frederick County Land Records 2077:1294).

**Historic Context - Agriculture**

The agricultural history of Frederick County is documented through successive phases of crop and commodity specialization. During the eighteenth century, Frederick County was settled by English and Germans. Many of the German settlers were enroute to Virginia, but were lured to settle the Monocacy River Valley by Frederick County's rich Piedmont soils (Tracey and Dern 1987:21). The Germans settled mainly west of the Monocacy River.

The English and German settlers of this region established two distinctly different economic and cultural traditions. English settlers from the Maryland tidewater region transplanted their tobacco culture to the rolling meadows of Frederick County. Their plantations required slave labor and large plots of land located near water routes. Pennsylvania German immigrants also transplanted their lifestyles into Frederick County. These settlers generally farmed smaller plots in the hills, providing enough food for their families; corn and wheat were the primary staple crops during this period (Tracey and Dern 1987:131).

Innovations in farming techniques were emphasized during the early and mid-nineteenth century, while new machines were developed to improve agricultural production. Farmers began to utilize new methods of soil maintenance and improvement. Lime became important to these methods and the lime industry in Frederick County was established during the mid-nineteenth century. Farmers throughout the Monocacy Valley burned lime in their home kilns.

Transportation also improved dramatically during the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1828, the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal Company began construction of a canal along the Potomac River from Georgetown to Cumberland. This waterway passed along the southwestern border of Frederick County (Miller 1886:136). That same year, the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad Company also began laying track between Baltimore and Frederick. The railroad was completed in 1830. A depot opened in Monrovia one year later (Whitmore and Cannon 1981:38). The C&O and B&O provided Frederick County's farms access to the urban markets of Washington, D.C. and Baltimore.

A demand for better roads, common before the C&O and B&O improvements, intensified as farmers required accessible routes to transport their products to transshipment points. Improved road surfaces encouraged a shift from draft oxen to horses; this shift allowed farmers to concentrate on breeding cattle for better beef and milk production (Lee 1982:42).

The American Civil War temporarily interrupted Frederick County's prosperity. Military operations overshadowed the everyday life of Frederick County residents. The area suffered substantial damage due to looting by both armies. Food, draft animals, and money were forfeited to both Union and Confederate troops; the tracks at Monrovia were burned by Rebel Troops in 1863. Farmers and manufacturers suffered losses due to the shortage of labor. However, with the return of the labor force at the war's end, Frederick County quickly regained its economic prosperity.

During the years following the Civil War, the Federal government reimbursed farmers for their crop and livestock losses, and banks provided loans to aid in the recovery. Frederick County farmers, benefiting from high-quality farmland and good transportation routes, quickly regained their previous prominence (Whitmore and Cannon 1981:62). Agricultural output continued to increase; by 1870, more than one million bushels of corn and wheat were produced county-wide (Scharf 1881:370).

The land outside the city limits of Frederick remained essentially free of industrial development as farming continued to dominate the community. Lake's *Atlas of Frederick County* indicates that in 1873 most of the fertile land east of the Monocacy was open farmland. Wheat and corn continued to be significant crops. By the early twentieth century, more corn was grown than wheat, and tobacco production dropped (Wesler et al. 1981:144). At the same time, dairying increased. The expanding populations in the nearby urban centers of Baltimore and Washington D.C. continued to expand Frederick County's market for agricultural goods, especially dairy products (Grisby and Hoffsommer 1949:12).

Farming continued to be lucrative until the end of World War I, when foreign markets closed. A surplus of agricultural products resulted and many farmers were forced out of business (Whitmore and Cannon 1981:100). Rising costs induced by increased mechanization and by new government health regulations, such requirements for pasteurization, also caused additional hardship for some farmers. However, Frederick County maintained its level of agricultural output. Between 1920 and 1930, Frederick County was the sole Maryland county to escape a drop in agricultural production (Wesler et al. 1981:144).

The county experienced the effects of stagnation at the beginning of the twentieth century. Increased mechanization replaced manual labor and reduced the number of jobs (Whitmore and Cannon 1981:63). In addition, the number of industries operating in the county dropped as conglomerates became more common (Wesler et al. 1981:144). As a result, many people moved to nearby cities in search of work. This problem increased after World War I, as those forced out of farming also sought work.

As a result of the absence of a significant industrial base in Frederick County, the depression years were followed by a longer than normal recovery period (Whitmore and Cannon:100). Consequently, the county's population increased slowly during the 1930s (Wesler et al. 1981:144).

Frederick County entered a new era after World War II. The expansion of the U.S. Army installation Fort Detrick provided new jobs, and many persons involved with this facility remained in Frederick, stimulating the county's economy (Whitmore and Cannon 1981:101). The construction of one of the first segments of President Dwight Eisenhower's highway program influenced the county; during the early 1950s, the Baltimore to Frederick Road (Interstate 70) was completed, reducing transportation time between the two cities by thirty minutes (Jones 1974:11).

The proximity of Frederick to Washington, D.C. and to Baltimore has increased its appeal as a bedroom community, and major roadways have been constructed to accommodate growing commuter traffic. However, much of the county has retained an agricultural character. The urban center of Frederick, with a population approaching 40,000, remains surrounded by rolling farmland and pastureland and the county continues to be one of the state's top producers of dairy products, corn, and wheat, it also maintains the rural atmosphere that makes the county a desirable place to live.

The Vernon T. Watkins Farm complex comprises the complement of built resources anticipated for a small farm active during the early twentieth century. These resources include a dwelling, a barn and storage sheds.

**Historic Context - Architecture**

The vernacular tradition of the Piedmont region reflects the architectural influence from two primary areas -- the Mid-Atlantic and Tidewater, each of which had district architectural folk traditions. The Pennsylvania-German introduced log and stone construction, as well as massed plan around a central chimney and banked construction. English folk housing traditions introduced to the county by Tidewater settlers were influential on the architectural development of the region. The Tidewater influences of the English are seen in timber framed houses with linear plans, end chimneys, and symmetrical facades. Hall-and-Parlor and I-House forms reflect this influence.

Frederick County's early land use patterns focused on the development of small family farmsteads, as opposed to plantations. This pattern was influenced by the topography of the area, and the absence of an extensive transportation network. Farmhouses and buildings demonstrated this development through their architectural forms. Simple, utilitarian log and stone buildings with an emphasis on function rather than ornamentation typify the Frederick County farmstead.

Late nineteenth century examples of the Frederick County farmhouse expanded the basic Georgian forms to include a five bay facade, greater emphasis on symmetry, and fashionable stylistic detailing. Advances in construction technology and building materials contributed to these changes. Milled lumber was less expensive and more widely available; balloon framing made possible greater flexibility in scale and massing. Architectural designs available through pattern books and mail order catalogues of prefabricated architectural components resulted in greater uniformity in design as well as design references to "high style" forms. The result of these influences was a middle class farmhouse design easily acquired by the average moderately successful Frederick County farmer.

The Vernon T. Watkins farm includes both residential and agricultural building types. The dwelling exhibits the I-house exterior form and mass produced architectural components, such as doors and windows. By the early twentieth century, manufacturing and distribution systems made standardized building components widely accessible and introduced a greater selection of building materials and architectural ornamentation.

**Conclusion**

The Vernon T. Watkins Farm is an example of a typical early twentieth century Frederick County farm complex. While, the complex historically is associated with the broad pattern of agricultural development in the county (Criteria A & C), historic documentation of the Watkins farm does not suggest that the complex is associated with significant events or the lives of a person significant in the past (Criteria A & B). The ability of the complex to convey its historic association has been compromised through building modifications. Modifications to the dwelling over time have abrogated the structures' integrity of materials and workmanship. Deterioration of the agricultural structures has abrogated those structures' integrity of workmanship and compromised the complex's integrity of feeling and association. Though historical research indicates that Vernon T. Watkins farm is associated with broad agricultural historical trends in Frederick County, architectural survey indicates that the complex does not possess the qualities of integrity necessary to convey that association and qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Data**

**Geographic Organization:**
Piedmont

**Chronological/Development Periods:**
Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Modern Period, 1930-present.

**Historic Period Themes:**
Agriculture
Architecture

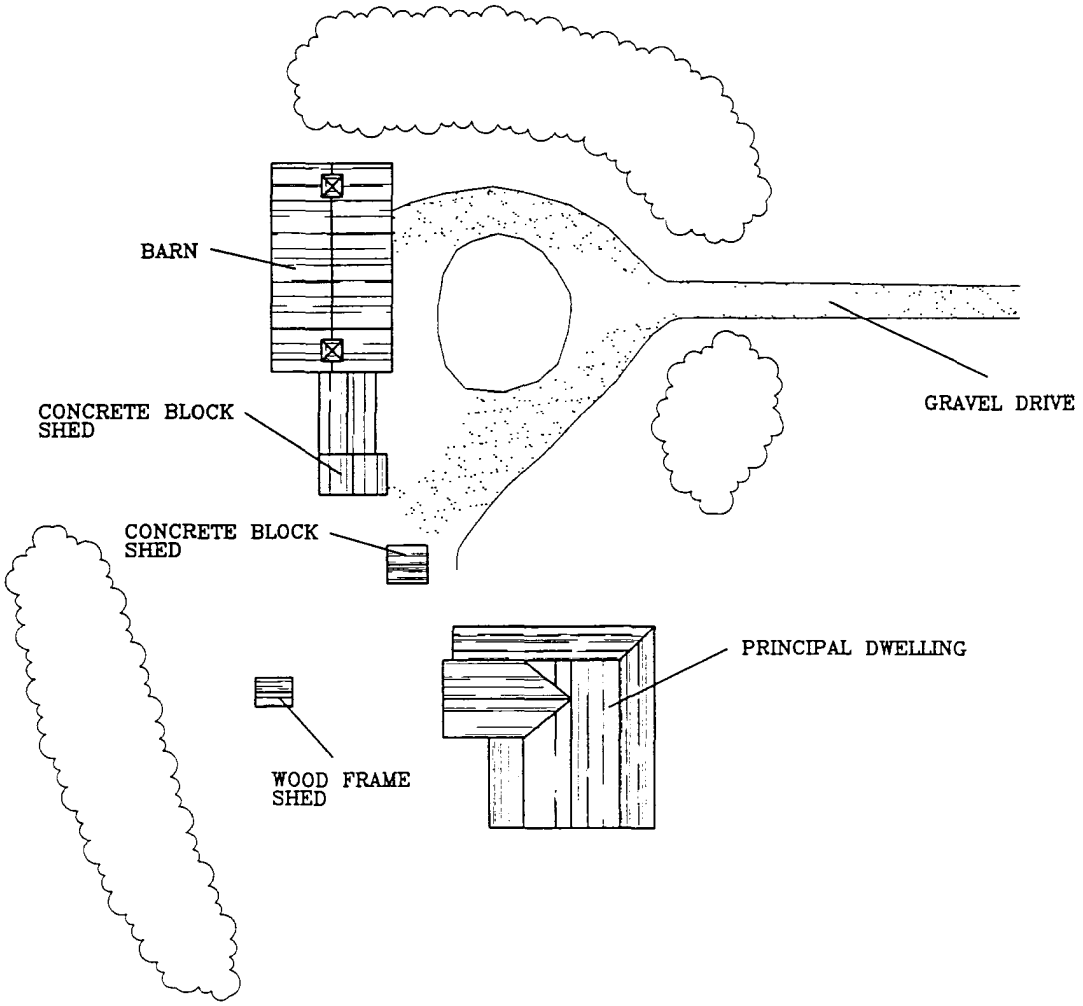
**Resource Type:**
Category: Buildings
Historic Environment: Rural
Historic Function(s) and Use(s):
Agricultural/single dwelling/residence
Known Design Source: None

## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Frederick City Directories Consulted:
1923, 1915, 1906, 1895.

Grisby, Earl S. and Harold Hoffsommer
1949 *Rural Social Organization in Frederick County, Maryland.* University of Maryland

Survey No. F-5-123
Vernon T. Watkins Farm
Sketch Map




N

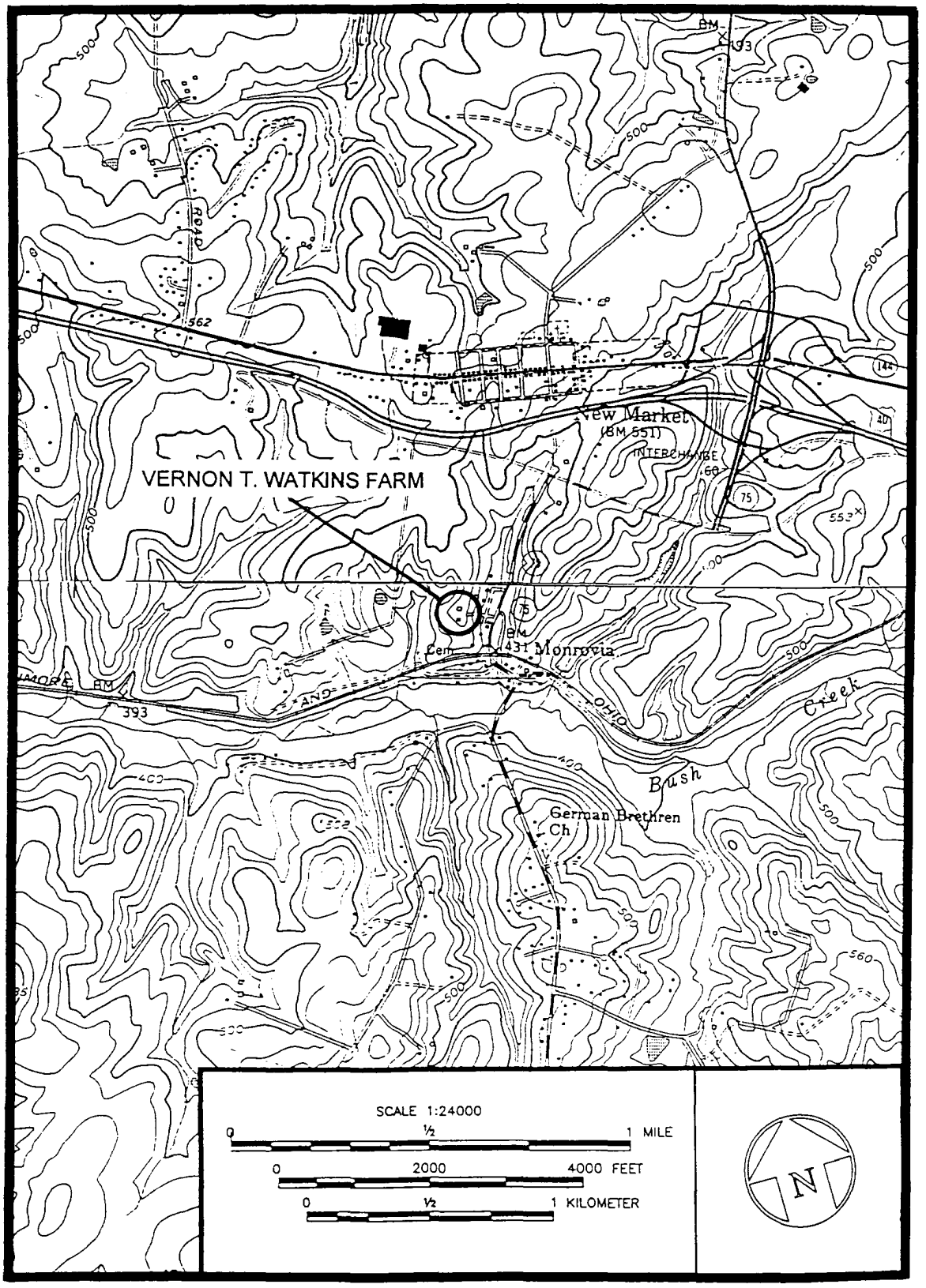
NO SCALE AVAILABLE

MONROVIA MHT
Building Layout:
Vernon T. Watkins Farm

DATE: 6/6/97 | PREPARED BY: BW

R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc.
241 EAST FOURTH STREET, FREDERICK, MD 21701

Survey No. F-5-123
Vernon T. Watkins Farm
USGS Quad Map



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