

HA - 1527

1938-1939

Benson Barracks

Benson

Public (Restricted Access)

The Benson Barracks of the Maryland State Police is one of three barracks built 1938-39 on major U.S. routes in response to the changing needs of the Police force who were becoming increasingly involved with crime detection work and law enforcement in addition to patrol of an ever-larger volume of traffic on State highways. The barracks is very similar in plan to the Waterloo Barracks (HO-569) near Jessup, Howard County, and the Salisbury Barracks (WI-127) near Salisbury, Wicomico County. The Benson Barracks is a 2½ story brick structure, executed in Flemish bond, in a severely streamlined interpretation of the Federal style.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Benson Barracks, Maryland State Police

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 1401 Belair Road

CITY, TOWN Bel Air, Md

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY Harford

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME State of Maryland Telephone #: 321-3686

STREET & NUMBER Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

CITY, TOWN Suite 500 - One Investment Place STATE, zip code  
Towson, Md 21204

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 248  
Folio #: 337

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Benson Barracks of the Maryland State Police is located on Belair Road three miles south of the town of Bel Air in a rural residential and wooded area.

The Benson Barracks is one of three Barracks constructed 1938-39 with a nearly identical plan and is similar to the Waterloo Barracks (HO-569) near Jessup, in Howard County, and Salisbury Barracks (WI-127) near Salisbury in Wicomico County. All are two and one-half story brick structures executed in Flemish bond, and rest on full fieldstone basements. The roofs are hipped and covered with slate tile. The front facades are wide and symmetrical with center pedimented doorway, and constitute a severely streamlined interpretation of the Federal style. The original floor plans for these Barracks allowed for office spaces and bedrooms on the first floor, bedrooms and bath on the second floor, storage areas or additional sleeping quarters on the third floor, and temporary jail cells and storage rooms in the basement. The changing needs of the State Police, who became increasingly engaged in crime detection work as well as increased patrolling of a rapidly growing volume of motor vehicle traffic after World War II, led to the phasing out of dormitory uses of the Barracks. By the 1950's interior rooms had been almost exclusively converted to office and administrative uses.

The front (Belair Road) facade of Benson Barracks faces west. The facade is five bays wide, with single pane windows with six lights at basement level on the right of center and one in the farthest left bay on the opposite side which is boarded with plywood. At first and second floor levels, two 6/6 sash windows flank the center doorway, all with splayed brick lintels and plain brick sills. At ground level 6 cement steps with ornamental iron railings lead to a cement landing in front of the modern steel and plate glass door. The door is flanked by a painted wooden door surround and surmounted by a five pane transom. A painted wooden pediment tops the doorway. A wooden plaque inscribed "Maryland State Police" is located on the wall directly above the pediment.

At third floor level, a wood trimmed gabled dormer with 6/6 sash window projects from the hipped, slate tiled roof.

The south facade is four bays wide, containing two single pane windows with six lights at basement level, while the last window, near the southeast corner, is barred. At first floor level, two 6/6 sash windows are found in the first two bays from the southeast corner, and one small window containing an air conditioning unit occupies the bay nearest the southwest corner. A tall brick chimney projects directly to the right of this bay. At second floor level are four windows, one to the left of the chimney, three to the right of it. All windows on the facade except basement level have splayed brick lintels and simple brick sills. Centered at third floor level is one wood trimmed dormer identical to that on the front facade.

The north facade is three bays wide, with one bricked-over window at basement level. Two windows in the first and second bays from the northwest corner are found at first floor level, three windows at second floor level, and third floor dormer window, all treated in a fashion corresponding to their counterparts on the rest of the building. A one story five-car garage adjoins the Barracks on the north side.

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1939 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Builder: Price Construction Co., Baltimore

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
 The precursor of the Benson Barracks of the Maryland State Police was the substation which opened in downtown Bel Air in the Armory building in 1921. Growing burdens of crime detection work and rapidly increasing motor vehicle use necessitated new and specially built police barracks at decentralized locations throughout the State. The establishment of the three police barracks at Benson, Waterloo, and Salisbury along major U.S. routes paralleled the growth of the State Police from a small force of motorcycle patrolmen to an increasingly important crime detection and law enforcement body.

In December, 1937, 2.36 acres of land were purchased from Harry T. Shriver by the State for the purpose of building a new barracks. Construction was undertaken by the Price Construction Company of Baltimore. The barracks were completed and opened in January, 1939.

Recommendations:  
 Continue present use as Maryland State Police barracks.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Land Records, Harford County, Liber 248, Folio 337

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.36

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See attached continuation sheet # 1

## LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE	Susanne Moore, Historic Sites Surveyor	
ORGANIZATION	Maryland Historical Trust 21 State Circle/Shaw House Annapolis, Md 21401	DATE December 1980
STREET & NUMBER		TELEPHONE
CITY OR TOWN		STATE

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  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

The east (rear) facade has been joined at basement and first floor level by a large modern one story brick addition (utilized as additional office space). The original Barracks building, visible only above first floor level, contains, five bays at second floor level. The five full-size windows at second floor correspond to those at second floor on other sides of the building. An enlarged dormer with 6/6 sash window trimmed with wood and slate tiles projects from the third floor.

Other structures on the lot are a modern radio tower to the rear (east) and parking lot on the south.

Benson Barracks  
Maryland State Police

Verbal Boundary Description:

In Harford County, State of Maryland, and particularly described as follows:

Beginning at a point on the southeast side of the main Bel Air to Baltimore Turnpike or highway, commonly known as Bel Air Road, as recently widened by the State Roads Commission of Maryland, said point being South 55 degrees 18 minutes west 234.78 feet from the beginning of the 13th line in the land described in a deed from Francis V. Ridgely to the said Harry T. Shriver, recorded among the Land Records of Harford County on or about the 10th day of December, 1931, in Liber S. W. C. No. 223, folio 416; running thence south 61 degrees 27 minutes 10 seconds east 250.8 feet to intersect the aforementioned 13th line in the land described in the deed above referred to, at a point thereon distant 322.76 feet from beginning of said line, binding on said 13th line south 15 degrees 12 minutes 10 seconds east 69.33 feet; thence south 28 degrees 32 minutes 50 seconds west 299.92; thence north 61 degrees 27 minutes 10 seconds west parallel with the first line in this description 280.31 feet to intersect the southeast side of the said Bel Air Road; thence binding on the southeast side of said road by a line curving toward the northeast with a radius of 1402.4 feet for a distance of 350.48 feet to the place of beginning (the chord of said arc bears north 25 degrees 32 minutes east and is 351.28 feet long); containing an area of 2.36 acres, more or less.

CHAIN OF TITLE

Benson Barracks  
Maryland State Police

---

248/337  
12/1/1937  
Deed (with restrictions)\*

From: Harry T. Shriver

To: Maryland State Police Department

Consideration: \$25.00

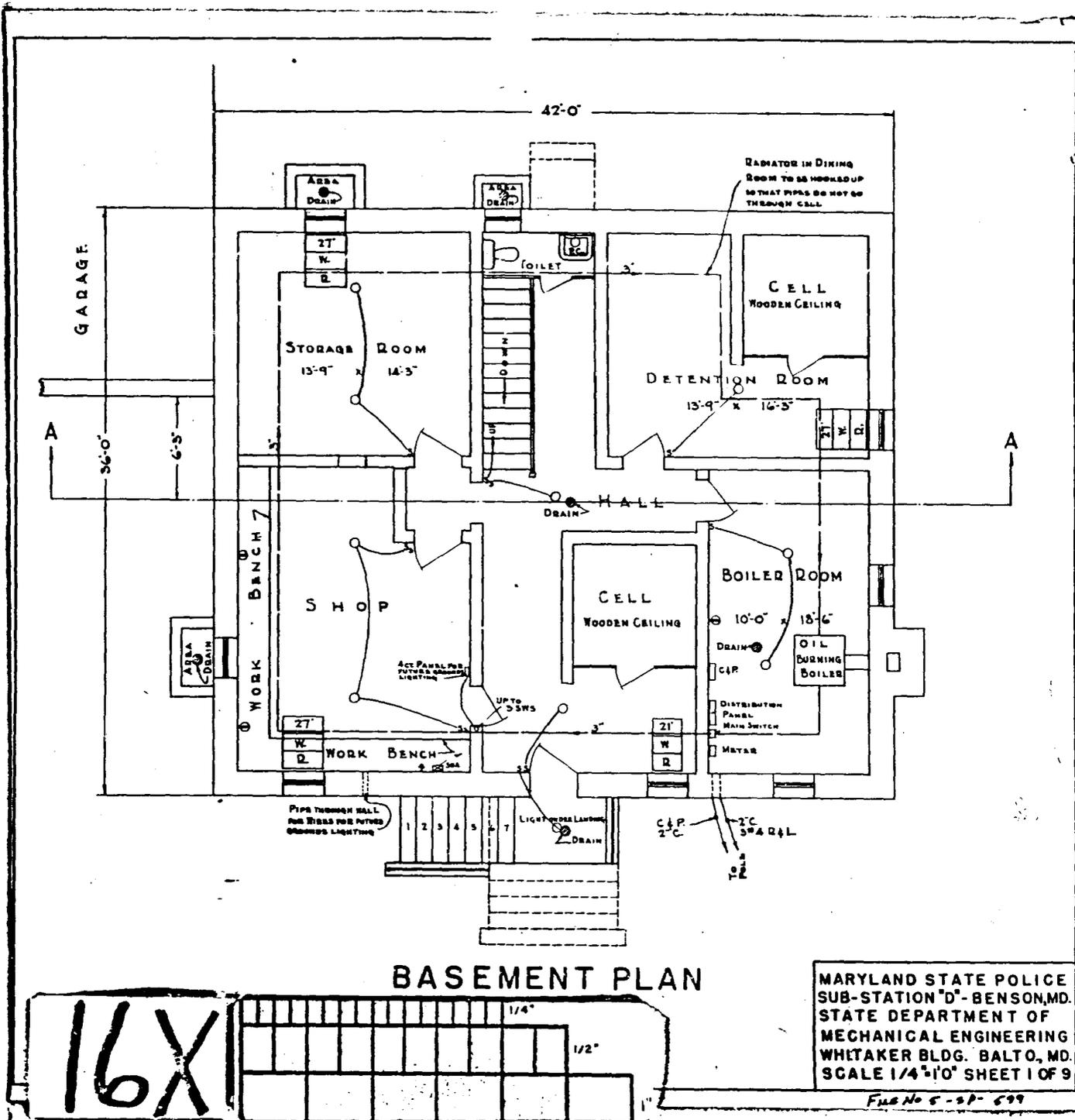
---

\*

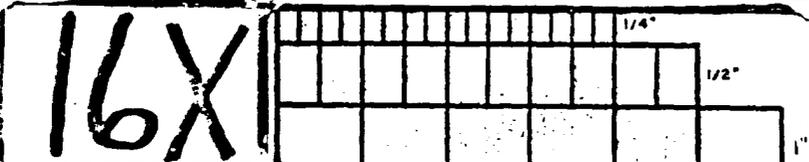
So long as the said property is actively used for police purposes and no longer, including the right to build, erect, and maintain any and all structures on said land that may be needed or convenient in connection with the maintenance and operation of the Maryland State Police Department, and especially the construction and maintenance of a sub-station at or near the intersection of the Harford and Bel Air Roads.

Benson Barracks  
 Maryland State Police  
 Reduction from original on file at  
 Md Dept of General Services

NA-1527



BASEMENT PLAN



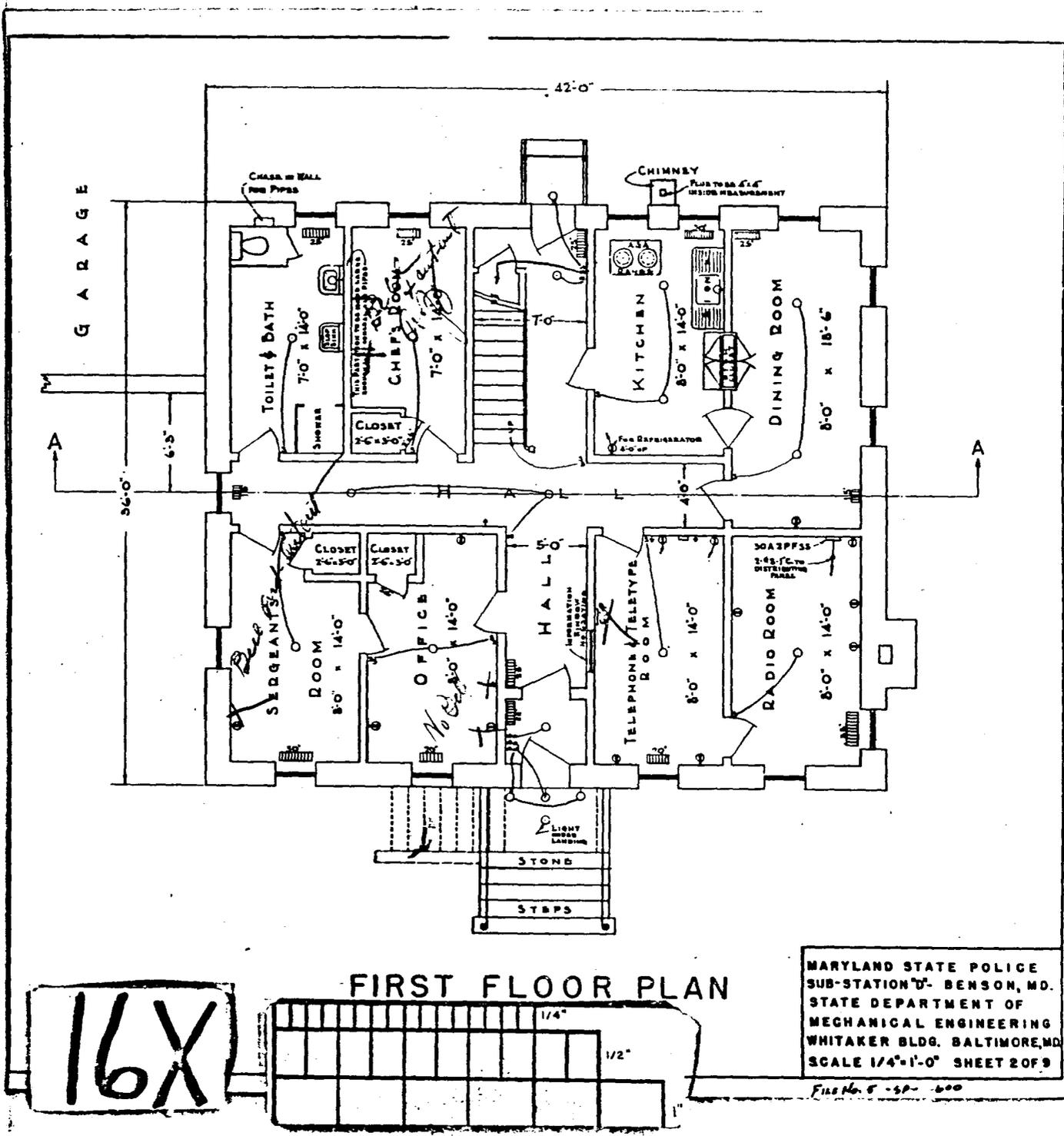
MARYLAND STATE POLICE  
 SUB-STATION "D" - BENSON, MD.  
 STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
 MECHANICAL ENGINEERING  
 WHITAKER BLDG. BALTO, MD.  
 SCALE 1/4" = 1'0" SHEET 1 OF 9

FILE NO 5-27-599

HA-1527

Benson Barracks  
 Maryland State Police  
 Reduction from original on file at  
 Md Dept of General Services

HA-1527



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

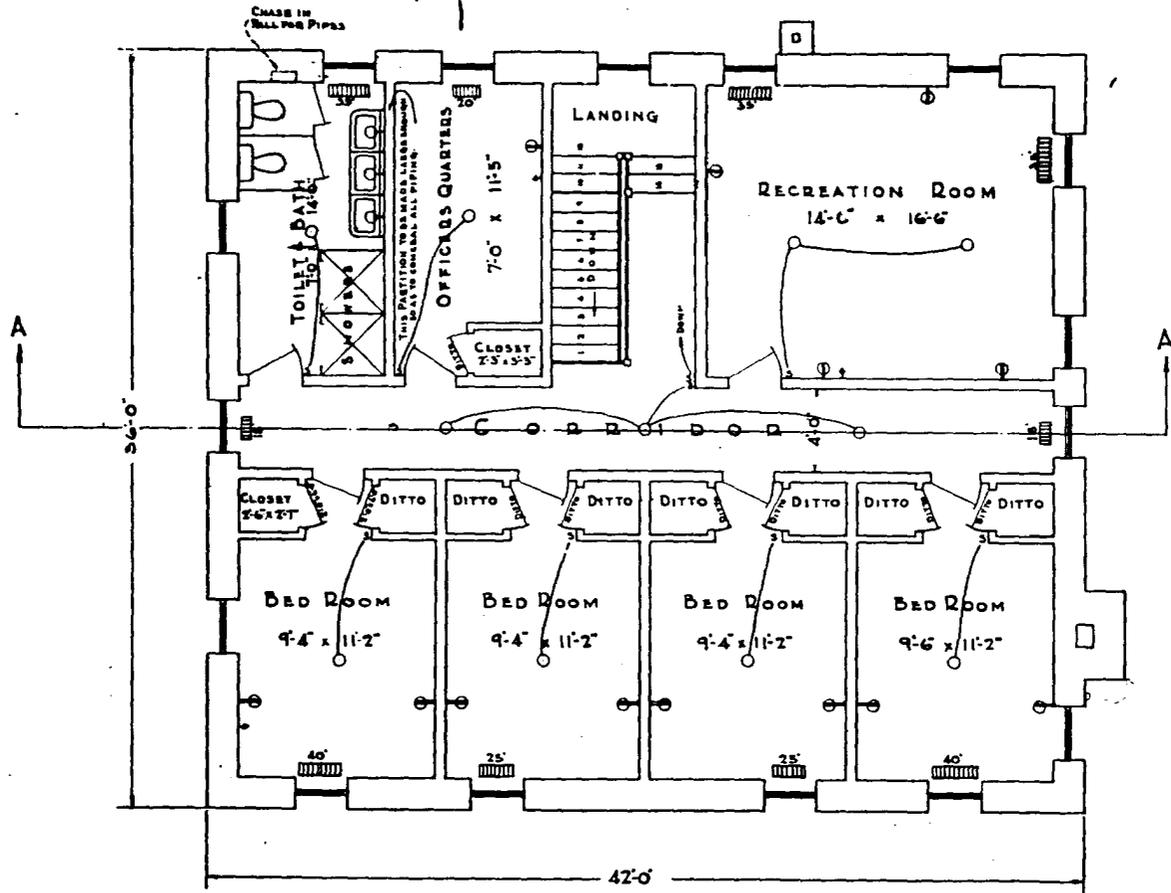
MARYLAND STATE POLICE  
 SUB-STATION "B" - BENSON, MD.  
 STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
 MECHANICAL ENGINEERING  
 WHITAKER BLDG. BALTIMORE, MD  
 SCALE 1/4"=1'-0" SHEET 20F9

File No. 5-5P-600

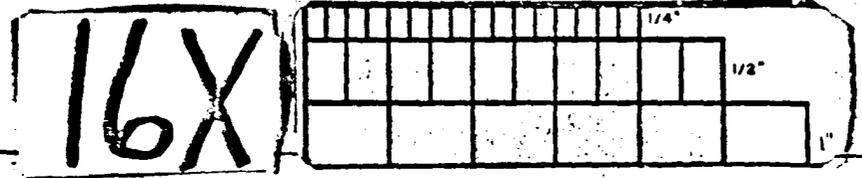
HA-1527

Benson Barracks  
 Maryland State Police  
 Reduction from original on file at  
 Md Dept of General Services

NA-1527



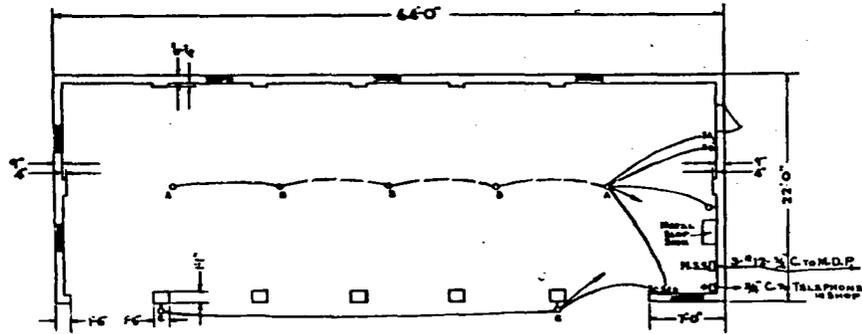
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



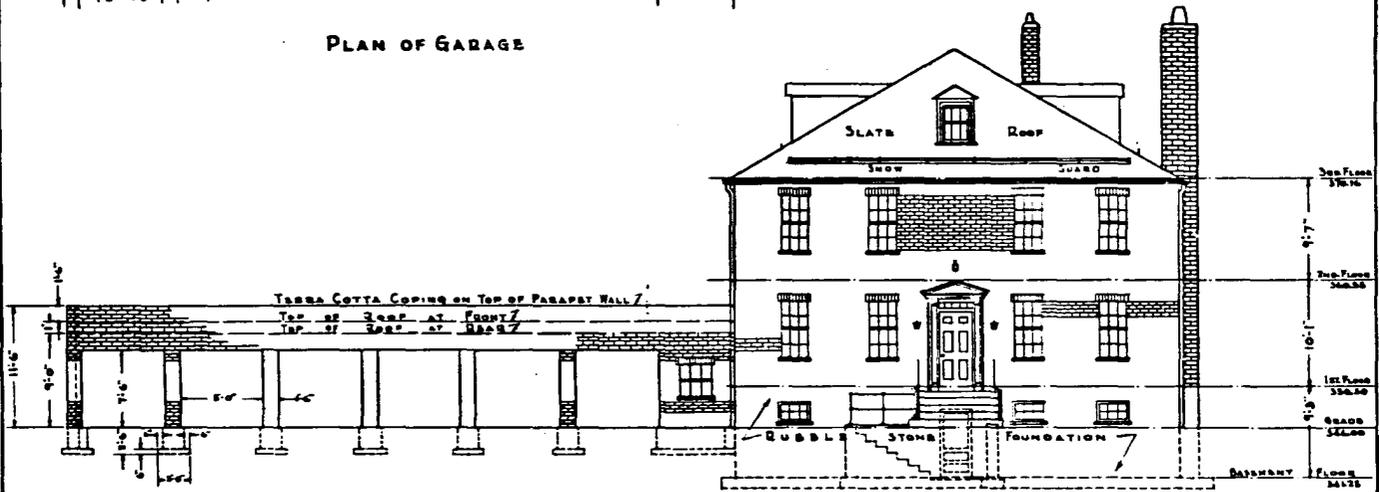
MARYLAND STATE POLICE  
 SUB-STATION "D" - BENSON, MD.  
 STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
 MECHANICAL ENGINEERING  
 WHITAKER BLDG. BALTO., MD.  
 SCALE 1/4"=1'-0" SHEET 3 OF 9

FIG. No. 5-SP-601

HA-1527



PLAN OF GARAGE

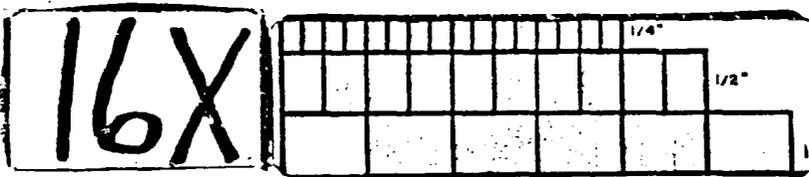


FRONT ELEVATION

Benson Barracks  
 Maryland State Police  
 Reduction from original on file at  
 Md Dept of General Services

HA-1527

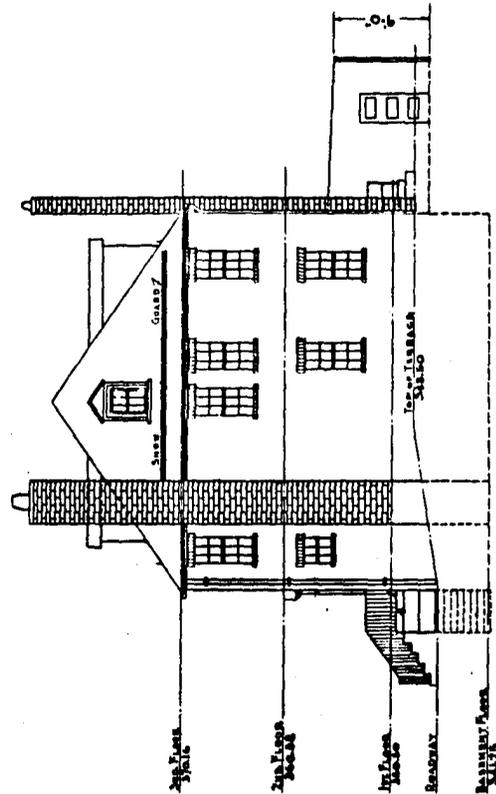
NOTE -  
 ALL GUTTERS 5"  
 ALL DOWNSPOUTS 5"



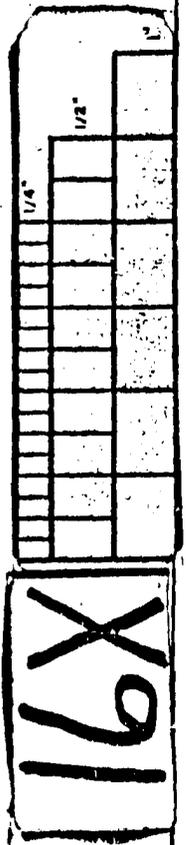
MARYLAND STATE POLICE  
 SUB-STATION "D" - BENSON, MD.  
 STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
 MECHANICAL ENGINEERING  
 WHITAKER BLDG. BALTO., MD.  
 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0" SHEET 4 OF 9

File No. 5 170- 602

HA-1527



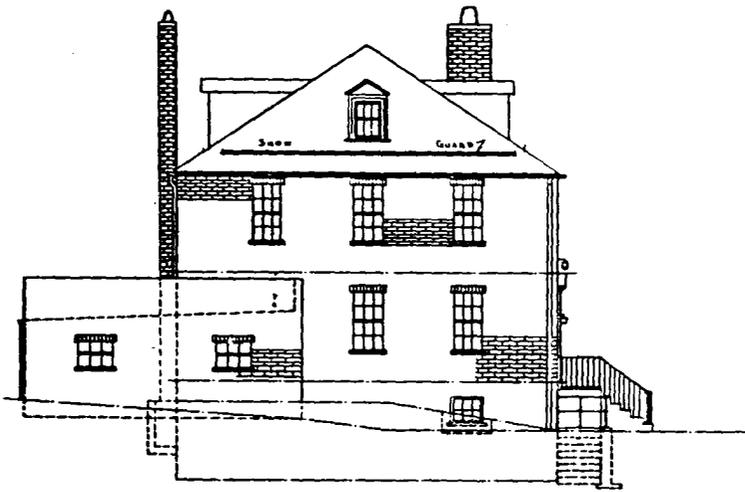
SOUTH ELEVATION



MARYLAND STATE POLICE  
 SUB-STATION 'D'-BENSON, MD.  
 STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
 MECHANICAL ENGINEERING  
 WHITAKER BLDG., BALTO., MD.  
 SCALE 1/8"=1'-0" SHEET 7 OF 9

Face No. 5 - SP - 605

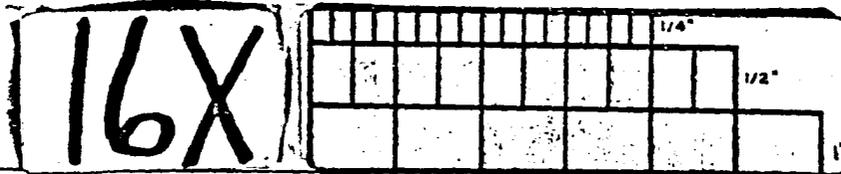
Benson Barracks HA-1527  
 Maryland State Police  
 Reduction from original on file at  
 Md Dept of General Services



NORTH ELEVATION

Benson Barracks  
 Maryland State Police  
 Reduction from original on file at  
 Md Dept of General Services

NA-1527

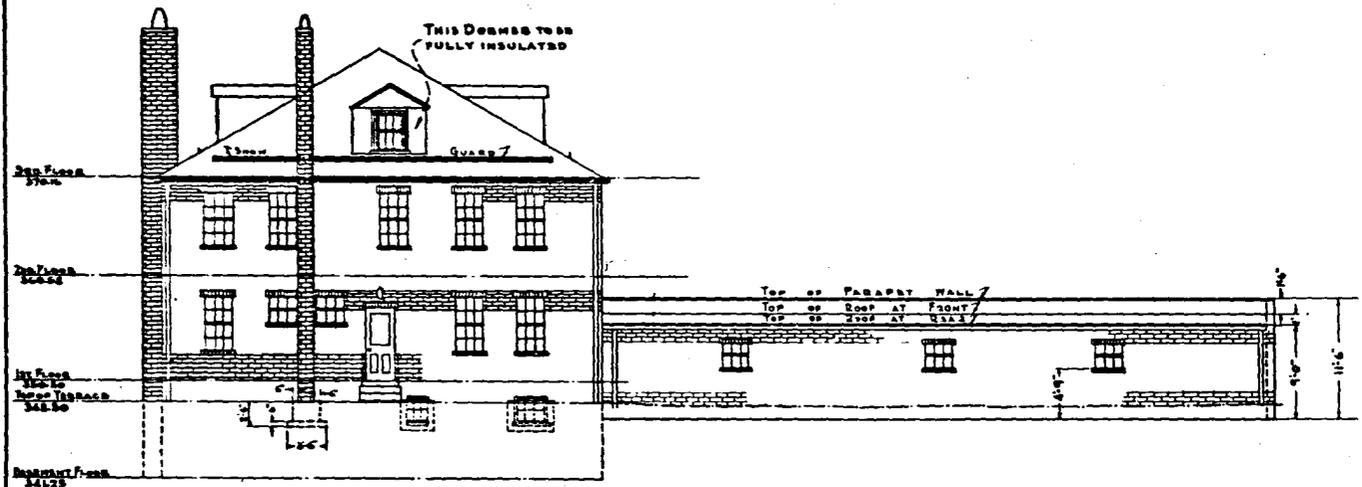


MARYLAND STATE POLICE  
 SUB-STATION D-BENSON, MD  
 STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
 MECHANICAL ENGINEERING  
 WHITAKER BLDG. BALTO., MD.  
 SCALE 1/8"=1'-0" SHEET 6 OF 9

File No. 5-60-604

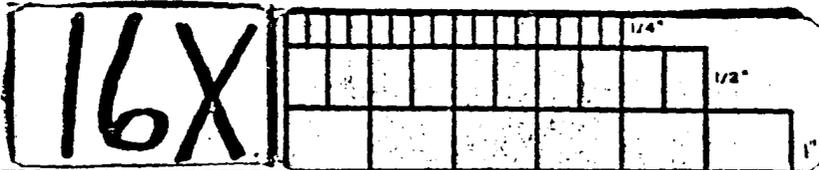
HA-1527

Benson Barracks *NY-1527*  
 Maryland State Police  
 Reduction from original on file at  
 Md Dept of General Services



REAR ELEVATION

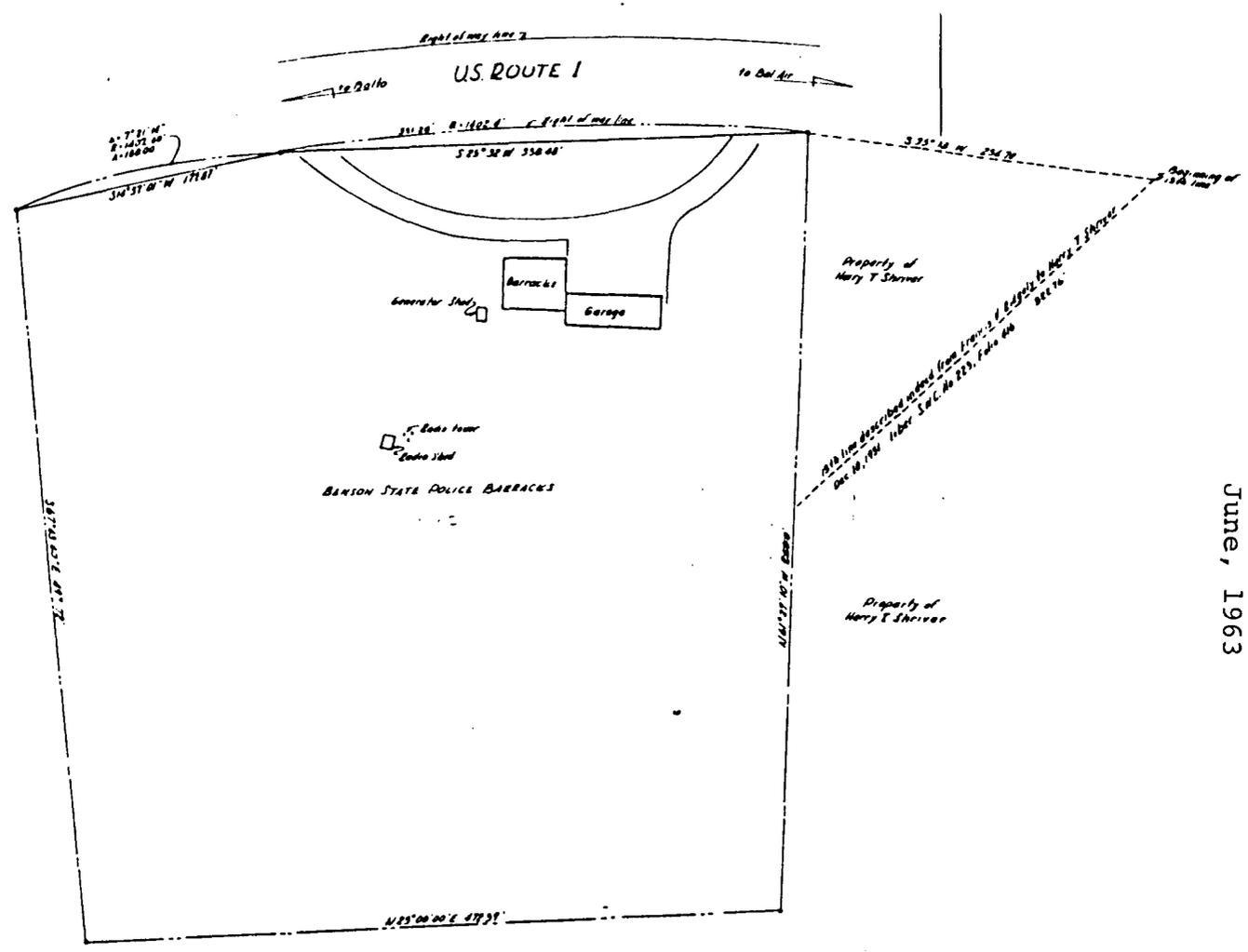
NOTE-  
 ALL GUTTERS 5"  
 ALL DOWNSPOUTS 3"



MARYLAND STATE POLICE  
 SUB-STATION "D" - BENSON, MD.  
 STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
 MECHANICAL ENGINEERING  
 WHITAKER BLDG. BALTO, MD.  
 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0" SHEET 5 OF 9

File No. 5 - SP - 603

HA-1527



HA-1527  
 BENSON BARRACKS  
 MARYLAND STATE POLICE  
 Property Plat  
 1" = 40'  
 June, 1963

HA-1527

5

*Edgely*

REVISIONS  	BENSON STATE POLICE BARRACK BENSON, MARYLAND	PROPERTY PLAT MARYLAND STATE POLICE SCALE: 1" = 40'	Approved by <i>John H. Russell</i> Director <i>John H. Russell</i> City Engineer Department of Public Improvements State of Maryland	DEPT. OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS STATE OF MARYLAND DRAWN BY W. GABLER SURVEY BY F. WARD & ASSOC DATE: JUNE 12, 1963
-------------------	---	---	--	---



COPYRIGHT - MAP DIVISION - 1967,  
MD. DEPT. OF ASSESS. & TAX.

MAP 55	BLOCK	PARCEL
-----------	-------	--------

1" = 600'

**MAP DIVISION**  
DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION  
ROOM #805 STATE OFFICE BLDG.  
301 W. PRESTON ST.  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201

HA-1527

BENSON BARRACKS  
MARYLAND STATE POLICE  
USGS 7.5 minute map  
Jarrettsville Quadrangle  
1:24000  
1954

2.36 acres



HA-1527

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty  
Medium-duty - - - - Unimproved dirt

39°31' 76°22'30"



Benson Barracks                      HA-1527  
Maryland State Police  
Harford County, Maryland  
Susanne Moore  
October 1980  
Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, Md  
South Facade

3/4



Benson Barracks HA-1527  
Maryland State Police  
Harford County, Maryland  
Susanne Moore  
October 1980  
Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, Md  
North (rear) facade  
4/4



HA-1527 .

Benson Barracks  
Maryland State Police  
Harford County, Maryland  
Susanne Moore  
October 1980  
Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, Md  
Southwest corner  
2/24

A black and white photograph of a two-story brick building. The building has a central entrance with a white door and a small pediment above it. There are six windows in total, arranged in two rows of three. A dormer window is located on the roof. The text "MARYLAND STATE POLICE" is visible on the front facade. A tall chimney is on the right side of the building. The building is surrounded by trees and a sidewalk.

MARYLAND STATE POLICE

Benson Barracks  
Maryland State Police  
Harford County, Maryland  
Susanne Moore  
October 1980  
Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, Md  
Front (west) facade

HA-1527

1/4