

BA-1588

Ruins of Farm Complex  
Near Aberdeen, Md.

Capsule-Summary

The site of this former farm complex is slated to become a light industrial park. There was no recordable fabric left, but there were a number of building ruins, indicating that this was at one time a typical large scale farming operation, no doubt connected in some way with the canning industry that played such an important role in Harford County's economy.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Mitchell Farm Complex

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Southwest corner Old Philadelphia Rd. and Short Lane (MD. 175)

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

MARYLAND

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES RESTRICTED
- YES UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Aberdeen Industrial Center Partnership

c/o Mr. Bruce Hegstad  
Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

Ha P.O. Box 700

CITY, TOWN

Aberdeen

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code  
Maryland 21001

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 715 and others  
Folio #: 297

STREET & NUMBER

40 South Main Street

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**

HA-1587

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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**

At the request of the Maryland Historical Trust, two sites surveyors visited this site in late December, 1980. A brief walking tour revealed a number of residential and agricultural structures, all in advanced states of deterioration or collapse. No measurements or photographs were taken at this time: loss of state funding and time constraints imposed by the Dept. of Planning prevented any additional visits to gather more information.

This was a large agricultural complex that has been abandoned for a number of years. It occupies the entire southwest corner of the intersection of Old Philadelphia Road and Short Lane. Two balloon frame residences—two story L-plan structures with gable end roofs were observed. Circular sawn materials, cut nails and mouldings, as well as the lack of large cooking fireplaces suggest late 19th century construction dates. These may have been tenant houses. They are both on the verge of total collapse.

There was an open equipment shed, constructed by the post in ground method, and incorporating circular sawn materials, with a modern metal roof. Two small (15'x 25') sheds that appeared to have been living quarters for farm workers were seen. These incorporated interior brick flues and were built on the ground with no basement or crawl space. Also, there was a single story shed/garage combination (15' x 35') that appeared to have been short term housing. A large bank barn with a stone foundation had burned long before this visit, and nothing of recordable value was left.

The 1964 aerial photographs, and the aerial photos from more current years that are used by the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning show this complex as it was in those years. A better understanding of the buildings and the size of the complex will be had from examining them.

**CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY**

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The land around the buildings on this site was still being used to grow corn when this site was visited in December 1980. However the area was far from being a farm in the traditional sense of the word. In fact, this land is slated to become an industrial site on the edge of the City of Aberdeen, and may even be annexed. Such a conversion underscores the dramatic shift in land use and life styles occurring not only here, but in other parts of Harford County. Light industry has replaced agriculture in many areas.

Unfortunately there was no recordable fabric left at this site. However, it was in all probability a typical large scale farming operation with 19th century trappings, including numerous outbuildings.

Note-no title search done for this site.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE		Phillip Lord/Wayne Nield      Historic Site Surveyors	
ORGANIZATION	Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning	DATE	January 1981
STREET & NUMBER	45 South Main Street	TELEPHONE	830-6000
CITY OR TOWN	Bel Air	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  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

HA-1588



J. Thomas Barranger  
County Executive

Guy W. Hager, AICP

December 29, 1980

Mr. Bruce Hegstad, President  
Hazleton Systems, Inc.  
P.O. Box 700  
Aberdeen, Maryland 21001

Dear Mr. Hegstad,

In response to a request from the Maryland Historical Trust, on December 16, 1980, Harford County Historic Sites Surveyors, Wayne Nield and Phillip Lord, visited a tract of land located at the southeast corner of Old Philadelphia Road and Short Lane (Md. Rt. 715) owned by the Aberdeen Industrial Center Partnership. Contained in this area are the ruins of an extensive agricultural complex dating from the late 19th century and early 20th centuries, once owned by the Mitchell family. The Mitchells are significant for their association with agriculture and the canning industry in Harford County.

Since it is likely that planned development will require the demolition of this site for an industrial center, we would ask that razing be delayed until we can record these older structures. This process would take less than a week, and would ensure that an important component of Harford County's history is not lost forever.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Very truly yours,

Guy W. Hager, AICP  
Director, Department of  
Planning and Zoning

GWH:mm

cc: Aberdeen Town Commisioners

