

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes   
no

Property Name: Conowingo Village House Inventory Number: HA-2183  
 Address: Village Road at Shuresville Rd. City: Darlington vicinity Zip Code: 21034  
 County: Harford USGS Topographic Map: Conowingo  
 Owner: State's Department of Natural Resources Is the property being evaluated a district? No  
 Tax Parcel Number: 358 Tax Map Number: 20 Tax Account ID Number: 05 062632  
 Project: DNR documentation of razing Agency: Department of Natural Resources  
 Site visit by MHT Staff:  no  yes Name: Unknown Date: January 13, 2009  
 Is the property located within a historic district?  yes  no

*If the property is within a district*  
 District Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 NR-listed district  yes Eligible district  yes District Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource  yes  no Non-contributing but eligible in another context

*If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)*  
 Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible  yes  no

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None  
 Documentation on the property/district is presented in: MIHP form for Conowingo Village House by Catherine Adams Masek 10/11 and MIHP form for Conowingo Village House by John-Bruce C. Alexander, M.A. 7/07.

**Description of Property and Eligibility Determination:** *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

Individually, the Conowingo Village House (built 1928) does not appear to be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Historically built as part of a complex of homes and separate garage structures known as Conowingo Village, to house the plant manager and management level personnel for the hydroelectric plant of the Conowingo Dam, it was the complex of homes in the Conowingo Village, rather than the individual house and water tower, which was significant. The context for the remaining Conowingo Village house has been lost. The significant loss of historical context, as the result of demolition is also mentioned in the 2007 MIHP form.

Criterion A:  
 The Conowingo Village house is associated with the Conowingo Dam, which was not an event, but was significant in the history of power for the Philadelphia-Baltimore region. An engineering feat of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Conowingo Dam and hydroelectric plant were completed in 1928. While attempts had been made since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, construction of the dam began in 1926 and was completed ahead of schedule, less than 2 years later. It was called the greatest development of its kind in the history of the power industry, steam or hydroelectric, and in

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended <input type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> None
Comments: <u>lacks integrity.</u>	
<u>Jonathan Bayn</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>10/28/11</u> Date
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, NR Program	<u>10/21/11</u> Date

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Continuation Sheet No. 1

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1973 it was still considered one of the nation's largest hydroelectric installations. And- when interconnected with neighboring utilities – Pennsylvania Power & Light and the Electric and Gas Company of NJ, each company was strengthened and could better be prepared to meet highest demand and peak periods. To construct the dam, approximately 5,000 acres of land were eventually acquired, in order to accommodate the upriver pool, the relocation of 16 miles of Pennsylvania RR tracks, the rerouting of 8 miles of Highway US 1 across the dam, and building 58 miles of electrical transmission lines to connect with the Philadelphia Electric system. To accomplish all the tasks necessary, a construction village, complete with water and sanitation systems, was erected to house 3,800 men. The actual construction was labor intensive, largely by hand and steam shovel, dangerous, and complicated. To permit riverbed construction work, huge cofferdams, using nearly 8 million feet of timber, were built, and over 660,000 cubic yards of concrete were poured before the project was complete. Additionally, 100,000 cubic yards of rock excavation was necessary to a depth of 30 feet. The resulting dam is nearly a mile long, stands 105 feet tall at the level of US 1, the highway which crosses it. It is about 85' in width at its base. The lake impounded by the dam is 14 miles long and covers 14 square miles. A recreational area, the lake has become popular with fishermen, boaters, bird watchers, hikers and picnickers. Today, the dam has an operating staff of approximately 65, provides approximately 2 million megawatt hours of electric power per year to more than 1.5 million customers.

Men who managed the hydroelectric plant at the Conowingo Dam lived, with their families, in the Conowingo Village, where the Conowingo Village house and water tower stands today. The 16 houses and detached garage buildings in the Conowingo Village were all constructed 1928-29 in the English Tudor Revival style and within a short distance of the dam. Less than one quarter mile away, such management level personnel were on call 24 hours/ day. Initially, the house and utilities were included in the employee's salary, then utilities were excluded and finally housing was excluded. So by the mid 1970s, plant families were beginning to move outside the Village for cheaper housing. When the houses were vacated by plant families, they were rented to outsiders and their condition deteriorated. By 2000, Susquehanna Power decided the structures were no longer affordable to maintain, they evicted the residents and demolished all but the water tower and one duplex house in 2001. The entire Conowingo Village may have been significant in its association with the Conowingo dam, but that village of buildings was largely destroyed and foundations filled in 2001.

Criterion B:

The Conowingo Village house is not associated with known families. It was rented by the owner, the power company, initially to families associated with the hydroelectric plant, and then to outside families. Unlike the plant manager's house, renters of this duplex house are unknown.

Criterion C:

The Conowingo Village house and water tower do stand in their original location, and are largely intact stylistically. Built in the English Tudor Revival style, the duplex does convey a visual montage of shapes and color in overall configuration. It utilizes a frame and stucco exterior, steeply pitched gable roofs, and varieties of materials/ textures, all typical of the style. Like the 15 other single family and duplex homes built 1928-29 in the Conowingo Village, this one utilized cream stucco walls, red brick, gray slate roof, protruding and receding bays, and varieties of window configurations to create interesting subtle variation in building design. Other than a rough stone faced brick fireplace in the living room, the interior contains simple woodwork, 2 panel solid wood doors and glass paned wood doors. The east and west sections of the duplex are mirror images, except for the location of their sunroom. The existing duplex house, however, does not present outstanding features of the style or period of construction, nor does it represent a known architect, designer or master builder. Its significance was associated with its now demolished neighboring houses of the same style and period of construction. Furthermore, since 2000, the vacant house has become the subject for break ins, robbed of its metal guttering/ piping/ copper flashing/ radiators/ wiring/ lighting, and deterioration aggravated by broken windows and doors which have allowed water to penetrate, vegetation to enter, and animals to nest.

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Criterion D:

It is known that the Susquehanock Indians traveled in the vicinity of the Conowingo Dam and named the area Conowingo, which meant "at the rapids" in the language of the Susquehanock Indians. And artifacts are on display in Delta and Bel Air museum locations, but there was great ground disturbance in the area of the Conowingo Village in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century related to the construction of the Conowingo Dam. Historic photographs of the period show varieties of earth moving equipment, a temporary railroad to carry away debris and to bring materials and equipment, construction of temporary roads, as well as a construction village completed nearby by 1926 to house and feed the 3,800 construction workers for the Conowingo dam. Additionally, underground piping was introduced to carry water from the water tower to the construction village, to the dam and the houses of the later Conowingo village. And finally, ground was disturbed for both the construction of (1928-29) and the demolition of (2001) the 16 houses and separate garage buildings in the Conowingo Village. It is possible that there is information of archaeological significance in the area of the Conowingo Village House, but it would, most likely, be greatly disturbed.

Prepared by: Catherine Adams Masek

Date Prepared: October 8, 2011

CAPSULE SUMMARY  
Conowingo Village House  
MIHP # HA-2183  
Village Rd. at Shuresville Rd.  
Darlington vicinity, MD  
1928  
Public- within Susquehanna State Park

The Conowingo Village House, historically one of sixteen houses and three to four detached garage buildings built 1928-29 in the Conowingo Village, now stands vacant and alone approximately one quarter mile south of US Rte 1 and the Conowingo Dam. An abandoned 100' tall water tower, built c.1926-27, stands uphill, about 50 meters northwest of the house. This area was once occupied by a small "company town" and its inhabitants could easily access their work destination, the hydroelectric plant at the Conowingo Dam. The plant manager and other key management personnel of the plant were provided such housing until the 1970s, when utilities and housing were excluded from their contracts. Since 2004, the property is located within the Susquehanna State Park, Harford County, at the intersection of Shuresville Road and the Village Road. Approaching the property via U.S. 1 from Bel Air, one leaves the bustling shopping areas and enters the relatively undeveloped woodlands of the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, where there is a swimming pool, visitor's information center / Greenway headquarters, parking, fishing and boat launch areas. Steeply inclined cliffs descend to the level of the Susquehanna River, where the Conowingo Dam and hydroelectric plant are located. Turning right or south onto Shuresville Road, at approximately 250 feet above water level, stands the duplex Conowingo Village house. The frame and stucco house has been damaged by vandalism and natural encroachment since 2000, when it was vacated.

English Tudor Revival in style, the three story duplex stands in its original location on a full height concrete basement with slate gable roofs. The house is approximately fifty by fifty foot square, with four protruding and receding bays on each facade, in which is located a row of attached windows. East and west sections of the house mirror each other in floor plan. There are six over six and casement styled wood framed windows, dormers, and a stone faced brick fireplace. There are no outbuildings. The nearby intact water tower initially supplied water to the 3,800 workers who built the Conowingo Dam and who were housed and fed in a now demolished construction village southwest of the dam. Later used to supply water to the hydroelectric plant and the Conowingo Village, it was abandoned in 2010 after wells were dug to meet water quality control requirements. While historically associated with the management of the Conowingo Dam, and in its original location, the Conowingo Village House has lost its context. The significance of the property was the overall complex of structures, which were largely dismantled and removed in 2001.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HA-2183

## 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE (Preferred)  
 other Conowingo Village House and water tower

## 2. Location

street and number Village Road at Shuresville Rd. (1/4 mile south of US 1)     not for publication  
 city, town Darlington vicinity X vicinity  
 county Harford

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

name State of Maryland's Department of Natural Resources  
 street and number 580 Taylor Avenue, Tawes State Office Building, D-3 telephone 410-260-8932  
 city, town Annapolis state MD zip code 21401

## 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clerk of the Circuit Court liber 5580 folio 549  
 city, town Bel Air tax map 12 tax parcel 31 tax ID number 05 062632

## 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: Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<u>1</u>	<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>2</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
				<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>	
				<u>Not previously listed</u>	

## 7. Description

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### Condition

excellent     deteriorated  
 good         ruins  
 fair          altered

### Summary:

The three story Conowingo Village house and Water tower are located in Harford County, on one-lane, concrete-topped Village Road, about 500 meters west of the Susquehanna River and ¼ mile south of two-lane U.S. 1, near the intersection of Shuresville Road and Village Road. Approaching via U.S. 1 from Bel Air, one leaves the bustling shopping areas and enters the relatively undeveloped Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, where there is a swimming pool, visitor's information center / Greenway headquarters, parking, fishing and boat launch areas. Steeply inclined cliffs descend to the level of the Susquehanna River, where the Conowingo Dam and hydroelectric plant are located. On the rolling hillside above the dam, at approximately 250 feet above water level, (USGS Conowingo Quad) stands the duplex Conowingo Village house. A 100' height water tower stands approximately 50 meters northwest of the house. This area was once occupied by a small "company town" and its inhabitants could easily access their work destination, the hydroelectric plant at the Conowingo Dam. Historically, this availability was important since the 16 total houses in the Conowingo Village were built in 1928-29 to house the plant manager and other key management personnel of the plant. While a construction village existed 1926-28 on the west shore of the dam, (when the dam was under construction), which was demolished after construction was completed, the Conowingo Village was built after the dam was completed and opened, and HA-2183 is the only one of the Village houses to remain intact. In 2001, under ownership of Susquehanna Power, 15 residences and approximately 3- 4 separate garage buildings in the Conowingo Village were leveled, their building materials carried off site and basement foundations filled with soil from the central green gathering area, called "the Green." Since they were vacated in 2000, the entire Village parcel of 26.632 acres, including the one remaining house, has suffered deterioration due to vandalism and natural encroachment. As of 2004, when the DNR acquired ownership, the entire parcel was included within the Susquehanna State Park.

The three- story, duplex Conowingo Village house was built in 1928 in the English Tudor Revival style, faced with stucco and wood framing, in the tradition of English construction of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Located halfway up the once residential Village Road, the house sits on a concrete foundation, with stone facing. There are 4 protruding and receding bays on each façade, which provide visual variety in design. There are 6/6 wood frame windows, roof level dormers with casement windows, and a gable slate roof on each section. A stone faced brick fireplace is positioned in the middle between each side of the duplex, and a one story sunroom is provided for each side of the house, but slightly varied in its location. Approximately 50' x 50' square, the duplex has a full height cement walled basement beneath each living room, dining room, kitchen and shed roofed one story mud room. The floor plan appears intact and little altered. There are no outbuildings associated with the house.

Surrounding the house were once 15 other homes built in 1928-29, as well as a water tower. The tower was repaired and repainted in 1970, but in 2010 was no longer used to provide water to the Village or the plant, as originally intended. The ground rises north and west of the house towards the tower and the land slopes east and south away from the house towards Shuresville Rd and the Susquehanna River. Landscape of significance consists of an 80' tall evergreen tree between the tower and the house, and approximately 4 sugar maple trees south of the house, each approximately 80' in height.

### Comprehensive Description:

The north or front façade of the duplex faces the narrow Village Road. The stucco and frame exterior is interrupted on the exterior by a brick chimney and surmounted by a slate roof. Each side of the duplex, the east section and the west section, is a mirror image of the other, except for the location of the sunroom. The most formal facades are the north and the east, which are visible to the public traveling along Village Road. These show the beige colored stucco and wood framing design, pointed, steeply pitched gable rooflines edged in gray colored trim on each section of the duplex, contrasting red brick chimney, protruding sunroom and receding living room of the east section, and dark gray slate roof. This visual montage of shapes and colors provides variety and interest in design. Each single family home and duplex in the Conowingo Village had subtle visual variations and while similar in color /material, was slightly different from one another in overall configuration. (per interview 15 September 2011 with Catherine L. Mateer) Unfortunately, exterior

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metal guttering/ downspouts and lighting have been stolen, as have interior metal and porcelain fixtures, and water has entered, damaging structural members throughout the house. On the interior, walls are of plaster, the doors are two panel, the door /window trim is simple, (rather than reeded, or carved), there is no mantel shelf in the living rooms, no chairrail nor ceiling cornice in any of the rooms. Floors, where visible amongst burnt carpets, snake skins and debris, are narrow hardwood.

At basement level, there is a full height cement walled and floored space beneath the living room, dining room, kitchen and shed roofed mud room of each side of the duplex. A wall of vertically beaded boards defines the fuel room, beneath the living room of each house. Two oil tanks are located in each room, leaking heating oil. A simple wood workbench is located on the west wall, beneath each kitchen. On the basement party wall of each section of the duplex is a simple wood straight -run staircase with simple wood balustrade, which is enclosed with vertically beaded boards and a closet is located beneath each staircase. Debris and building materials completely cover the floor. On the south or rear wall of each basement is located an exterior entrance doorway. This exterior door has been replaced with plywood, which is partially intact. This doorway leads to an exterior cement staircase leading outdoors, to which is attached a simple metal pipe railing. Vines, debris and glass fill this staircase.

On the north (front) façade, the entry to each section of the duplex is approached via individual winding cement steps/ walkways from Village Road. There are four bays and the main entrance to the west section of the duplex is in the fourth bay of the north facade- a 15 paned glass and frame door. Both doors and windows at first floor level are either missing or broken, and are partially covered with large sheets of plywood, making their design difficult to discern. Poison ivy vines, as well as animals of all sizes have entered the building and made nests. A pyramidal roofed sunroom projects north from the first bay, attached to the house. This sunroom is part of the east duplex. On the north wall of the sunroom are 4 joined wood windows, each 12- paned, which appear fixed. Above the sunroom on the second floor is a closet enclosed in the roofline and three joined windows (6/6 wood double hung sash) in the master bedroom of the east duplex. A dormer (6 paned wood casement) is located on the third floor, in a bedroom, above the master bedroom in the east duplex. To the west of the sunroom is a brick fireplace, which opens into the living room of each section of the duplex. This brick fireplace continues to the second and third floors, visible on the exterior of the north façade, defining the division between each section of the duplex. A wood double hung window on the second floor is located on either side of the chimney, which opens into a full bath in each section of the duplex. In the third bay are three joined wood windows in the living room of the west duplex and above them are three joined wood double hung windows in the master bedroom of the west duplex. On the third floor above the master bedroom of the west duplex is a bedroom in which is located a 6-paned wood casement window on the north façade. In the fourth bay are three joined windows in the first floor sunroom of the west duplex and the main entrance into the west section of the duplex. There are no sections of the house above this west sunroom. Deterioration and overgrowth increases as one moves west in or around the building, making exterior inspection of the westernmost bays impossible. Because much of the building's window glass has been broken, buzzards and snakes have, in particular, penetrated the interior.

On the east (side) façade of the building are four bays, with the first and third bays recessed. These are all within the east section of the duplex. In the first or left bay is the shed roofed one story mud room/ bathroom addition and exterior basement entrance. There are no sections of the house above this shed roofed addition. In the second bay are four joined windows on the first floor- the dining room of the east section of the duplex. Above the dining room on the second floor is a rear bedroom with two wood double hung 6/6 windows in the second bay. A dormer (6-paned wood casement) is located on the third floor, in a bedroom, above this second floor bedroom in the east duplex. In the third bay, which is recessed, are three joined windows- the living room of the east section of the duplex. Above the living room on the second floor are two joined wood 6/6 double hung sash windows in the third bay, master bedroom. On the third floor

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above the master bedroom, there are no windows but a bedroom and storage area/ hall exist. In the fourth or right bay are four joined windows in the sunroom of the east section of the duplex. No rooms exist above this, but the closet of the master bedroom is again located in the roofline of this sunroom at second floor level. Wood windows at first floor level are again covered with plywood and partially missing, but appear to be either 12 or 9 paned casement/ large fixed storm sash, or double hung sash. Most window screens are missing, but a few remain at second floor level.

The south (rear) façade shows most evidence of forced entry at the two rear entries in the one story shed roofed mud room/ bathroom additions. The windows may have been replaced in the bathroom, but both the windows and bathroom fixtures in the shed additions have been removed and walls demolished by vandals, searching for piping and wiring. From color slides taken 2004 by Charles Mazurek, DNR, it appears that in the left bay of the shed roofed addition was located a pair of joined windows (in the first floor bathroom of the west section of the duplex) and rear entrance doorway at first floor level. Their design is indiscernible, as only plywood sheets now exist at openings. Above this, in the main block of the house, at second floor level, are a single double hung 6/6 wood window and a pair of double hung 6/6 wood windows in the rear bedrooms of the west section of the duplex. On the third floor above the bedrooms is a single bedroom in the west section, with a pair of double hung 6/6 wood windows on the south façade. In the right bay of the south façade is located the rear addition, mirror image of that in the left bay. There was a pair of joined windows (in the first floor bathroom of the east section) and a rear entrance doorway at first floor level. Again, their design is indiscernible as only plywood sheets exist at the openings. Above this, at second and third floor levels, is a mirror image of what has been described in the left bay of the south façade.

On the west façade are four bays, and the design is a mirror image of that described for the east façade excepting for two areas. First, there is a sunroom for the west section of the duplex, which protrudes from the second bay, in which the first floor living room and second floor master bedroom are located. Second, if the west façade was drawn, the first bay would be the sunroom of the east section of the duplex, which is located at the northeast corner of the duplex. In this first bay, west façade, is located the main entry doorway into the east section of the duplex. Thus, the bands or lines of joined windows in the two sunrooms and the dining room define the four bays of the west façade at first floor level. Above this, at second and third floor levels, is a mirror image of what has been described above for the east façade.

Entering the east section of the house, (which is a mirror image of the west section), via the glass paned door in the west wall of the northeast sunroom, one stands in a once sunlit space with hardwood floor and simple baseboard. A 15 glass-paned wood door in the center of the south wall leads to the living room. In the living room, wallpaper and plaster are falling, the ceiling over the fireplace (where second floor bathroom is located) has collapsed into the living room and the balustrade of the staircase on the west party wall is missing. The room has wood baseboard, hardwood floor, gray stone faced fireplace, with no mantel, nor shelf. A center doorway opening, in which no doors were originally located, leads south into the dining room. In the closet and in gaping holes in the west wall of the dining room are portions of pipes (from the adjoining kitchen) protruding, as vandals have attempted to remove all metal piping in the house. Similar trim and floor exist in the dining room. A doorway, missing door, leads west into the Pullman style kitchen. To the north or right, wood faced replacement kitchen cabinetry line both walls, while to the left or south a small hall leads to the rear exterior entrance. The left or south section is the shed roofed one story addition in which a closet and bathroom are located. (The bathroom, currently, is only a shell, completely stripped of fixtures and metal.) To the right, at the north end of the kitchen, there is a two panel wood door leading to the basement staircase.

Ascending the staircase to the second floor, one is aware of severe water damaged stair carriage members, damaged as a result of break -ins and theft in the second floor bathroom. At the top of the straight run staircase there is an L-shaped hall, in which one can turn north/ left or straight/ east. To the north, is the now empty bathroom, in which a gaping hole is

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evident in the floor. From color slides taken by Charles Mazurek, DNR, 2004, it appears that the flooring may have been small 1" black and white square tile, while walls were of white 4-6" square tile. A two panel door on the west wall of the bathroom entered a small linen closet, and a small radiator was located beneath the double hung sash window. To the east of the bathroom, is the master bedroom, which is entered via an angled corner doorway in the stairhall. In the master bedroom, a storage closet, partially cedar-lined, is located on the north wall in the roofline area above the first floor sunroom. A clothing closet is located on the south wall and both closets have 2 panel wood doors. To the south, on the second floor, is a very shallow storage closet and two bedrooms. A corner closet was added to the west bedroom, and no door exists. Window sash are missing, exposing the interior to the natural elements.

An enclosed narrow staircase, without door, leads to the third floor. There is a front or north bedroom with dormer window facing north. There is a rear bedroom with dormer window facing east. Each bedroom has steeply sloping ceilings so that only half the bedroom space has a full height ceiling. There is a room that appears to have been a bathroom, although no fixtures exist and the space is filled with building materials/debris. Windows are all or partially missing.

The condition of the house is poor and the west section of the duplex is particularly affected by the families of buzzards who nest there. The isolated, vacant house has become the subject for break ins, robbed of its metal guttering/piping/copper flashing/radiators/wiring/lighting, and deterioration aggravated by broken windows and doors which have allowed water to penetrate, vegetation to enter, and animals to nest.

At one time there were approximately three or four garage buildings in the Village. No other outbuildings were known to exist prior to 2004. These appear to have been built between houses around the Green, and at the juncture of Village Road and Shuresville Rd. Currently, there are no outbuildings on the property.

A water tower stands approximately 50 meters northwest of the duplex. See attached drawing dated Sept. 17, 1970. Surface water which had been treated was stored in the 100' height tower and gravity fed. An historic photo dated June 12, 1927, copy of which is attached, shows the water tower standing in the foreground, in its current position, on the top of the hill overlooking the construction village and the Susquehanna River. At that time, the Conowingo dam was under construction and the tower supplied water for the 3,800 workers who were housed and fed while they worked at the site. After the construction village was dismantled, the water tower supplied water to houses in the Conowingo Village and to the hydroelectric plant. In 1970, certain repairs were made to the water tower, including repair/replacement to roof, tank supports, and painting. Due to water quality controls, wells were dug by the current owner, Exelon Power, for usage by the hydroelectric plant and swimming pool and tower usage was discontinued in December 2010. ( Interview of 4 August 2011 on site and subsequent emails with Shoreline Specialist, Fred Smith, Conowingo Visitors Center).

# 8. Significance

Inventory No. HA-2183

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" 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/	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/	<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

<b>Specific dates</b>	1926-1928	<b>Architect/Builder</b>	unknown
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<b>Construction dates</b>	1926-27 –water tower; 1928- house
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Evaluation for:

National Register                       Maryland Register                       not evaluated

Summary:

The Conowingo Village house and water tower, while in a deteriorated state, are the sole representatives of a housing complex built in conjunction with the Conowingo Dam in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The structures were once part of small community or small "company town", whose occupants were primarily concerned with the maintenance and operation of the hydroelectric plant at the dam. The tower provided water to those building the dam, which was constructed in an unusually short time of two years, and then provided water to both the plant and the village, for a total of approximately 80 years. The English Tudor revival styled duplex house, while simple, is typical of its style and period. It represents the approximately 16 houses and 3-4 garage buildings which once stood upon the hilly terrain around the water tower, above the west bank of the Susquehanna River, and within close proximity of the hydroelectric plant at the Conowingo Dam. The second largest hydroelectric plant, when it was completed in 1928, after that in Niagara Falls, NY, the Conowingo hydroelectric plant was a significant supplier of electricity to the Philadelphia- Baltimore area and to parts of New Jersey. It still generates about 1,800,000 kilowatt hours / year, with 11 generating units, enough to power approximately 275,000 homes. ("Conowingo-Then and Now" undated by Don Baldwin Senior Engineer, Exelon Power)

Narrative:

The Conowingo Village property was one of approximately 26 properties (approximately 1,000 acres) conveyed from George P. Roux and wife Amelia in 1926 to the Susquehanna Power Co. (Deed, Liber DGW 198, Folio 290). Efforts to acquire land to begin construction of a dam on the Susquehanna River had begun much earlier.

While the power of the river had been successfully harnessed for grist and lumber mills, the river had serious flooding problems. It was hoped that the construction of a dam would not only provide power but control these flooding problems. Each spring the floods would leave stacks of ice 20' in height in towns such as Lapidum, Port Deposit, and damaging property on an annual basis. (Years were spent in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century studying river flow records, conducting geological surveys, and identifying locations for the construction project. The lowest recorded river flow was 2200 feet per second and the highest, during Hurricane Agnes, was almost a million feet per second, per "Conowingo-Light and Power for Harford" Aegis 16 August 1973.) In 1884 the Susquehanna Water Power and Paper Company was granted a charter by the Maryland Legislature "the right to acquire any property needed for the development and extension of a dam to be used for water power, including any property liable to be injured by backwater from the dam and to utilize and dispose of power generated at the dam." (R. G. Rincliffe, "Conowingo! The History of a Great Development on the Susquehanna," Princeton: Newcomen Society in North America, 1953, p. 12.) Partially successful, a wing dam was constructed, but the company abandoned the project. Several other companies tried and failed to dam the river, but in 1919 the Susquehanna Power Company, which became a subsidiary of Philadelphia Electric, successfully won the development rights. (Per Rincliffe, "Conowingo!" p. 13-14, early attempts to develop the lower portion of the river as a source of electric power failed primarily because there was not immediately available a market great enough to support a project of such magnitude. Philadelphia had that market and had an electric system with sufficient steam plant capacity to assure adequate power in low water flow periods.) Philadelphia Electric became interested in the development of the river in the early 1920s and successfully took over Susquehanna Power Company in 1922. Conowingo, which meant "at

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HA-2183

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Number 8 Page 1

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the rapids" in the language of the Susquehannock Indians, was the location determined for the dam. (Rincliffe, "Conowingo!" p. 9) Various bridges had crossed the Susquehanna River at Conowingo since about 1820. One was destroyed during the Civil War, one burnt, and the most recent dynamited for the dam. (see photocopy of historic post card of bridge at Conowingo) Approximately 5,000 acres of land were eventually acquired for the dam, in order to accommodate the upriver pool, the relocation of 16 miles of Pennsylvania RR tracks, the rerouting of 8 miles of Highway US 1 across the dam, and building 58 miles of electrical transmission lines to connect with the Philadelphia Electric system. To accomplish all the tasks necessary, a construction village, complete with water and sanitation systems, was erected to house 3800 men (see photocopy showing aerial view of water tower and housing along hillsides). Additionally, a railroad to carry supplies to the site was built on the old Tidewater Canal towpath.

The actual construction was labor intensive, largely by hand and steam shovel, dangerous, and complicated. To permit riverbed construction work, huge cofferdams, using nearly 8 million feet of timber, were built, and over 660,000 cubic yards of concrete were poured before the project was complete. ("Conowingo-Light and Power for Harford" Aegis 16 August 1973) It is interesting to note how much of this was done by hand. (see attached photo of men working by hand in the river- coffer dam construction) The town of Conowingo had to be evacuated and was flooded. Rock had to be excavated and again, much of it was by hand, with debris loaded into boxes delivered to dump cars by locomotive cranes, then the rock had to be hauled 4 miles away. See attached photocopies of construction photos. Eventually, 100,000 cubic yards of rock excavation was necessary to a depth of 30 feet. Seven generating units were installed and in 1962 four more units were added. At that time, enough electricity was produced to supply the need of 430,000 people. In 1997 the electrical output had increased to 1.5 million residents in MD, PA, DE and NJ. ("Harnessing a river, lighting a region" The Baltimore Sun 19 November 1997) Construction began in 1926 and was completed ahead of schedule, less than 2 years later. It was called the greatest development of its kind in the history of the power industry, steam or hydroelectric. ((Rincliffe, "Conowingo!" p. 23) In 1973 it was still considered one of the nation's largest hydroelectric installations. ("Conowingo-Light and Power for Harford" Aegis 16 August 1973) And when interconnected with neighboring utilities – Pennsylvania Power & Light and the Electric and Gas Company of NJ, each company was strengthened and could better be prepared to meet highest demand and peak periods. (See attached photo of the map of interconnection from "Conowingo Hydro-electric Development of the Philadelphia Electric Company System." No author, date or publication, p. 11-12.)

The reasons for the project included the following: the cost was \$21,000,000 less than the cost of a steam plant. There would be 750,000 tons of coal saved per year. There would be no coal strikes (a threat in the 1920-30s). (per "Conowingo-Then and Now" undated by Don Baldwin Senior Engineer, Exelon Power).

The resulting dam is nearly a mile long, stands 105 feet tall at the level of US 1, the highway which crosses it. It is about 85' in width at its base. The lake impounded by the dam is 14 miles long and covers 14 square miles. A recreational area, the lake has become popular with fishermen, boaters, bird watchers, hikers and picnickers. Today, the dam has an operating staff of approximately 65, provides approximately 2 million megawatt hours of electric power per year to more than 1.5 million customers. The dam turns the mechanical energy of falling water into electrical energy. Below water level, the propeller- like turbines, located in Turbine hall, are at the heart of the dam. The control room is located 50' above the turbines, from which river flow, temperature and turbines are monitored 24 hours/ day. At the lowest level is an inspection tunnel 7' tall and 5' wide running the length of the dam. During heavy rainfall, such as hurricanes, water and debris can back up in the tunnel. See attached photos- plan of power house, cross section of power house and Conowingo hydro electric plant, per "Harnessing a river, lighting a region" The Baltimore Sun 19 November 1997 and "Conowingo Hydro-electric Development of the Philadelphia Electric Company System." No author, date or publication, p. 11-12.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name

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In this turbine room worked men who lived, with their families, in the Conowingo Village, where the Conowingo Village house and water tower stands today. The 16 houses and detached garage buildings in the Conowingo Village were all constructed 1928-29 in the English Tudor Revival style and within a short distance of the dam. "In better days, (the homes) could have been transplanted to Roland Park or Mount Washington in Baltimore." ("Dark Village Awaits Fate," The Baltimore Sun newspaper, 13 January 2001) These men would be on call 24 hours/ day, in case needed in the hydroelectric plant. There was a home for the plant manager, assistant manager and other executives of the plant. Some would have night shift and sleep during the day. During the hot months of summer, sleep was frequently in the sunroom or porch (per interview 15 September 2011 with Catherine Langan Mateer, who said that outside play activities were often moved so that sleep would not be disturbed.) According to members of the Langan family, who had grown up in the close knit community of the Conowingo Village, childhood in the peaceful, quiet setting around the dam was magical and idyllic. Many of the families had moved to Conowingo from Philadelphia, where they had worked for a power company, and so had known each other before being transferred. Children of the Conowingo Village were given specific parameters that encouraged outside play in the beautiful rocky woodlands and to create teams to play on the ball fields. Company picnics in the Village were common, as were bridge groups and New Year's Eve parties. A large Christmas tree was placed on the Green, in front of the plant manager's house each December. Darlington would attract the children each summer for their annual carnival. This town was also the location of the nearest public schools, pharmacy, doctors and stores/ services. It was said that the Librarian in Darlington knew the children so well, that she would send boxes of books to the Village, each labeled for a different child with a selection of titles that were thought to be appealing to that child. Hurricane Agnes, June 22, 1972, brought the most serious flooding to the area and a time of great concern to the men who worked in the Conowingo plant, and their families. (While storms in 1996 and 2011 have been brutal, Hurricane Agnes is thought to have brought the most severe and dangerous conditions for the Conowingo Dam.) Lacking the computerized communications systems of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, managers of the plant organized town meetings and briefed residents as to the seriousness of the situation. During the worst days before and after the hurricane, there were grave looks on the faces of the men of the Village. The wives of the Village took dinner into the plant for their husbands, and fathers did not return home except to sleep. The volume and speed of the water on the river created fear that the water would continue to rise and sweep their homes downriver. (per September 2011 interviews with C. Mateer and Dan Langan) Rarely, were all 52 of the the flood gates opened due to high water levels, but this occurred in 1972. Concern always loomed that the dam would not hold, rushing water would lift the dam off the river bed, carry it downriver and create a disaster scenario. This never happened, but in 1974, following federal inspections, the dam was anchored into the bedrock to further stabilize it. ("Conowingo Dam Hard At Work After 65 Years" The Baltimore Sun 9 April 1993)

Initially, the house and utilities were included in the employee's salary, then utilities were excluded and finally housing was excluded. So by the mid 1970s, plant families were beginning to move outside the Village for cheaper housing. When the houses were vacated by plant families, they were rented to outsiders and their condition deteriorated. Exelon Power, which today oversees the dam through a subsidiary, Susquehanna Power, decided in 2000 that they did not wish to continue as landlord. ("Dark Village Awaits Fate," The Baltimore Sun newspaper, 13 January 2001) Concern was expressed by representatives of Exelon that the homes were no longer affordable to maintain. Residents recalled the houses were "one of a kind architecturally with cream colored stucco and brick and dark green shutters." ("Conowingo Demolition Displacing Old Community" Aegis newspaper 29 November 2000) Possible reuses that were discussed and given careful consideration for the excess property included a hiker's hostel or drug rehabilitation center. Amidst great public outcry, 15 of the homes were demolished, their building materials removed, and foundations filled. The remaining house, water tower and approximately 26 acres were conveyed in 2004 to the State's Department of Natural Resources for open space. (Deed, Liber JJR 5580, Folio 549) It had been the intention of the State Department of Natural Resources to begin a curatorship at the Conowingo Village House, but this attempt failed and vandalism ensued. Vacant

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Name  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 3

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since 2000, all exterior guttering has been removed, and windows broken and/ or missing, so that water, plants and animals have saturated/ entered the interior. Additionally, the house has been damaged by the unfortunate removal of metal from the interior, including wiring, bathroom fixtures, lighting and piping. It is only a matter of time before the tower is vandalized, since the usage of the water tower was discontinued in late 2010. Only a remnant exists today of the community that once existed at the Conowingo Village, Harford County.

In summary, while the house has suffered vandalism and infiltration of water, it was the complex of homes in the Conowingo Village, rather than the individual house and water tower, which was significant. The context for the remaining Conowingo Village house has been lost. The significant loss of historical context, as the result of demolition is also mentioned in the 2007 MIHP form.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. HA-2183

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Primary sources include:

Fred Smith, Shoreline Specialist, Conowingo Visitors Center, Darlington, MD (8/4/11 interview at site, telephone and email correspondence 8-10/11)

Kathy Resch, Receptionist, Conowingo Visitors Center, Darlington, MD (8/4/11 interview at site, telephone and email correspondence 8-10/11)

Catherine Langan Mateer, former resident of Conowingo Village (9/15/11 interview, Bel Air, MD)

Dan Langan, former resident of Conowingo Village (9/9/11 interview, Rising Sun, MD)

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 26.632 acres

Acreage of historical setting 26.632 acres

Quadrangle name Conowingo Dam

Quadrangle scale: 1:24000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the surveyed area consisted of the parcel of land on which the Conowingo Village was located. This parcel is bounded by US Rte 1 on the north, Shuresville Rd. on the east and south, and thence back to US Rte 1. The property is totally contained within the boundaries of the Susquehanna State Park.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Catherine Adams Masek		
organization	Historic Preservation Consultant	date	10-7-2011
street & number	124 St. Andrews Rd.	telephone	410-987-8519
city or town	Severna Park	state	MD

---

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  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

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# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HA-2183

Name  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 9 Page 1

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Collection of Exelon Power, Conowingo Visitors Center, Conowingo, MD:  
Rincliffe, R. G. "Conowingo! The History of a Great Development on the Susquehanna." A speech presented to the Phila meeting of the Newcomen Society in North America. Princeton: Newcomen Society in North America, 1953.  
"Conowingo Hydro-electric Development of the Philadelphia Electric Company System." No author, date nor publication.  
Baldwin, Dan "Conowingo- Then and Now." Undated, unpublished.  
Photographic collection related to the construction of the Conowingo Dam.

Historical Society of Harford County, Bel Air, MD:  
3-ring binder, unidentified, undated, containing color photocopies 8 x 10 in size of the exterior of Conowingo Village structures prior to demolition.  
The following articles:  
Aegis newspaper, 16 August 1973.  
Aegis newspaper, 9 April 1993.  
Aegis newspaper, 1 June 1994.  
Aegis newspaper, 7 October 1994.  
Aegis newspaper, 29 November 2000.  
Aegis newspaper, January 20001.  
Aegis newspaper, 20 July 2001.  
Baltimore Sun Magazine, 28 December 1975.  
Cecil Whig newspaper, 27 January 1995.  
Cecil Whig newspaper, 15 March 2005.  
Harford history by Michael P. Mauer, undated published article.  
Herald (Rising Sun), 30 December 1996.  
Sun (Baltimore), 16 December 1927.  
Sun (Baltimore), 19 November 1997.  
Sun (Baltimore), 16 June 2000.  
Sun (Baltimore), 13 January 2001.

Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, MD:  
Martenet, Simon J. Map of Harford County, MD 1866.

MIHP forms for the following:  
Conowingo Village House by John-Bruce C. Alexander, #HA-2183, 2007.  
Neff house by Catherine Adams Masek, #HA-2190, 2008.  
Susquehanna State Park by Goodwin & Assoc., #HA-2036/CE-1528, 2002.

Website <MdLandRec.Net>  
"Deed" between George P. Roux and Amelia, his wife, and The Susquehanna Power Company, 1926, Liber DGW 198, Folio 290.  
"Deed" between the Susquehanna Power Company and the State of Maryland t the use of the Department of Natural Resources, 2004, Liber JJR 5580, Folio 549.

Project CONDWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE

Project # HA-2183 Date 9/24/11 Page \_\_\_\_\_

RESOURCE SKETCH MAP

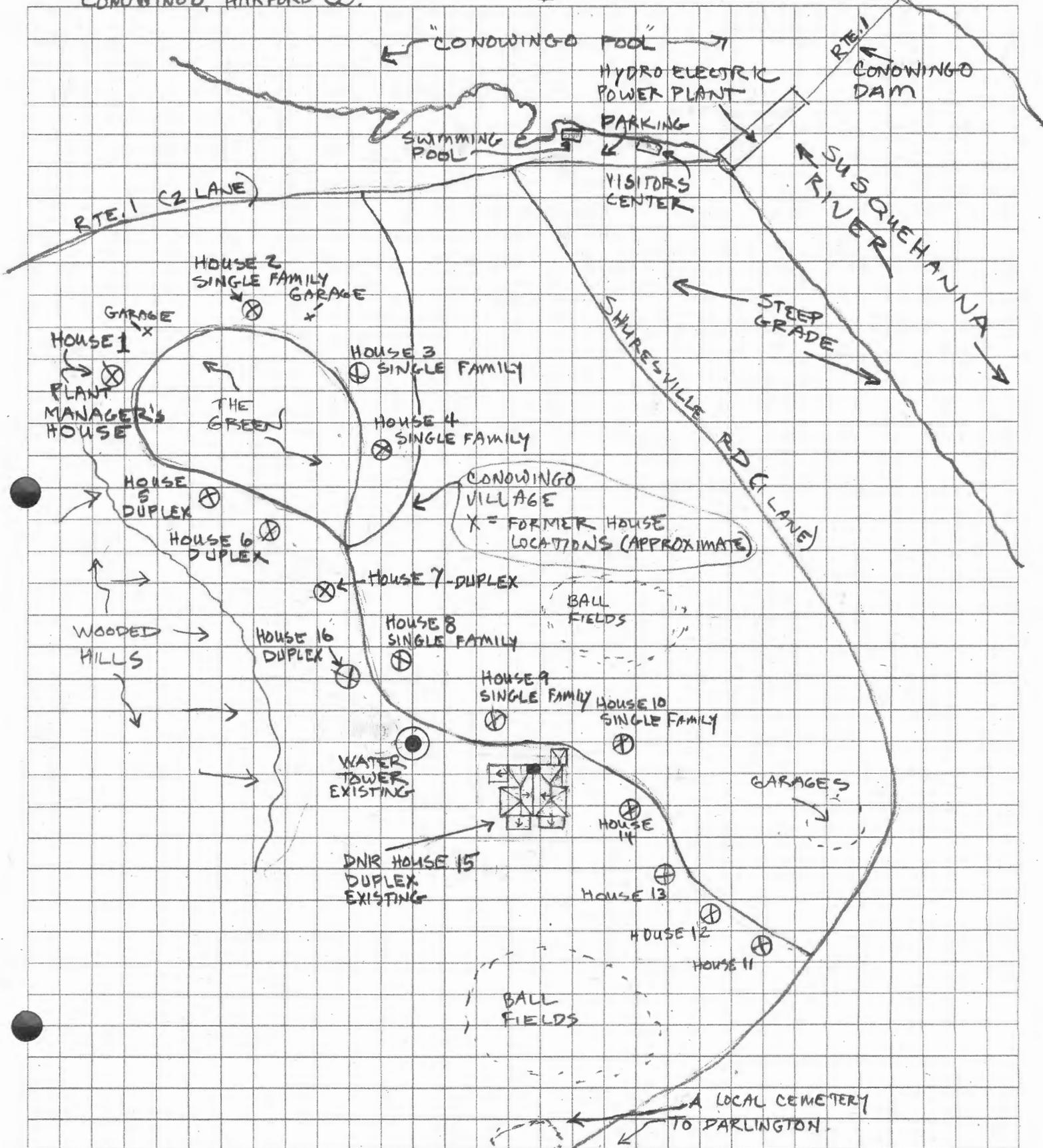
1/4" = 20'

CONDWINGO, HARFORD CO.



Wheeler Goodman Masek  
One Annapolis Street #100  
Annapolis Maryland 21401

V. 410.841.6787  
F. 410.841.5523  
www.wgm-arch.com



Project CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE

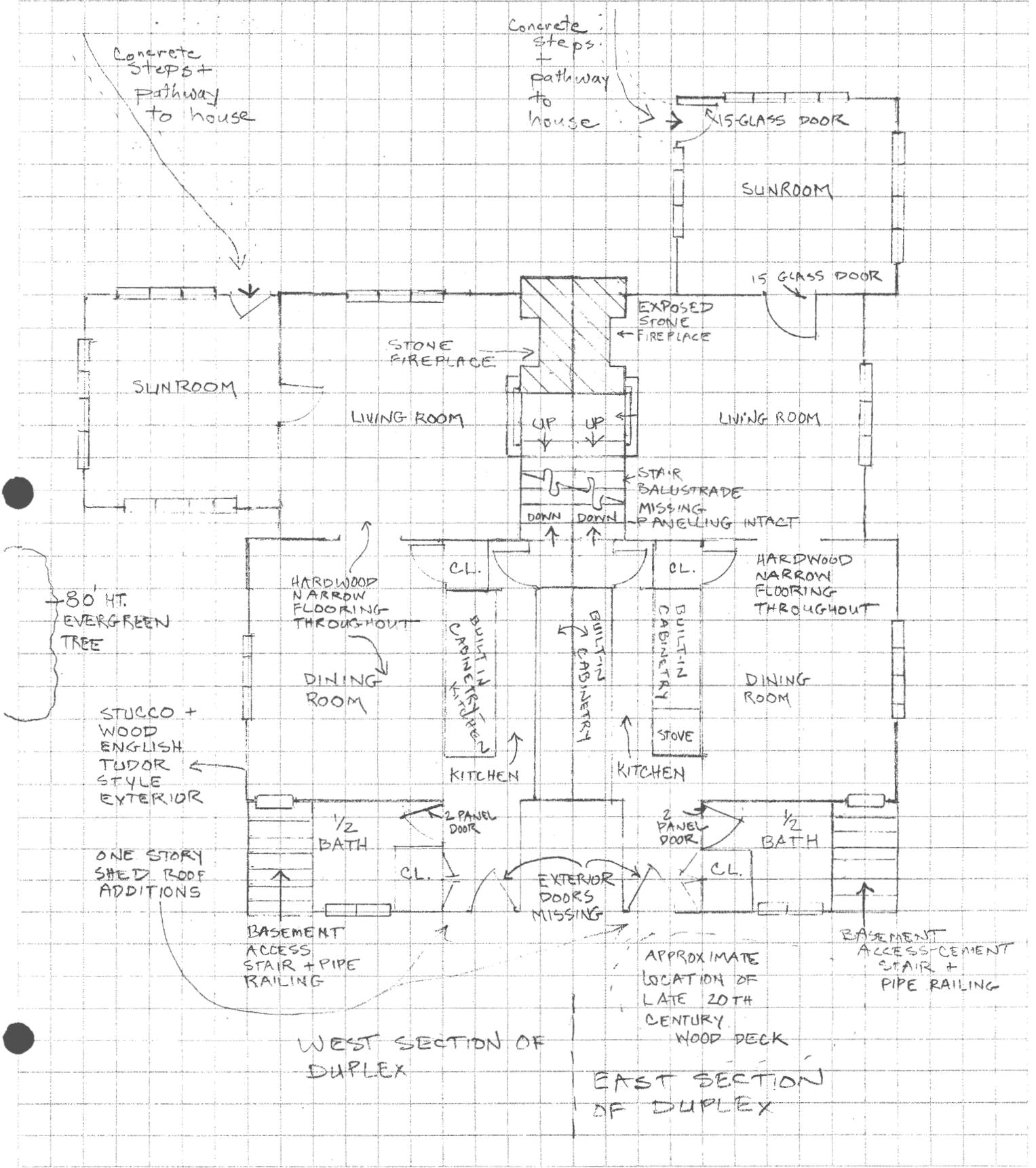
Project # HA-2183 Date 9/24/11 Page \_\_\_\_\_



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DUPLEX - (2 HOUSES) - FIRST FL. PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'  
CONOWINGO HARBOR CO.



Project CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE

Project # HA-2183 Date 9/24/11 Page \_\_\_\_\_

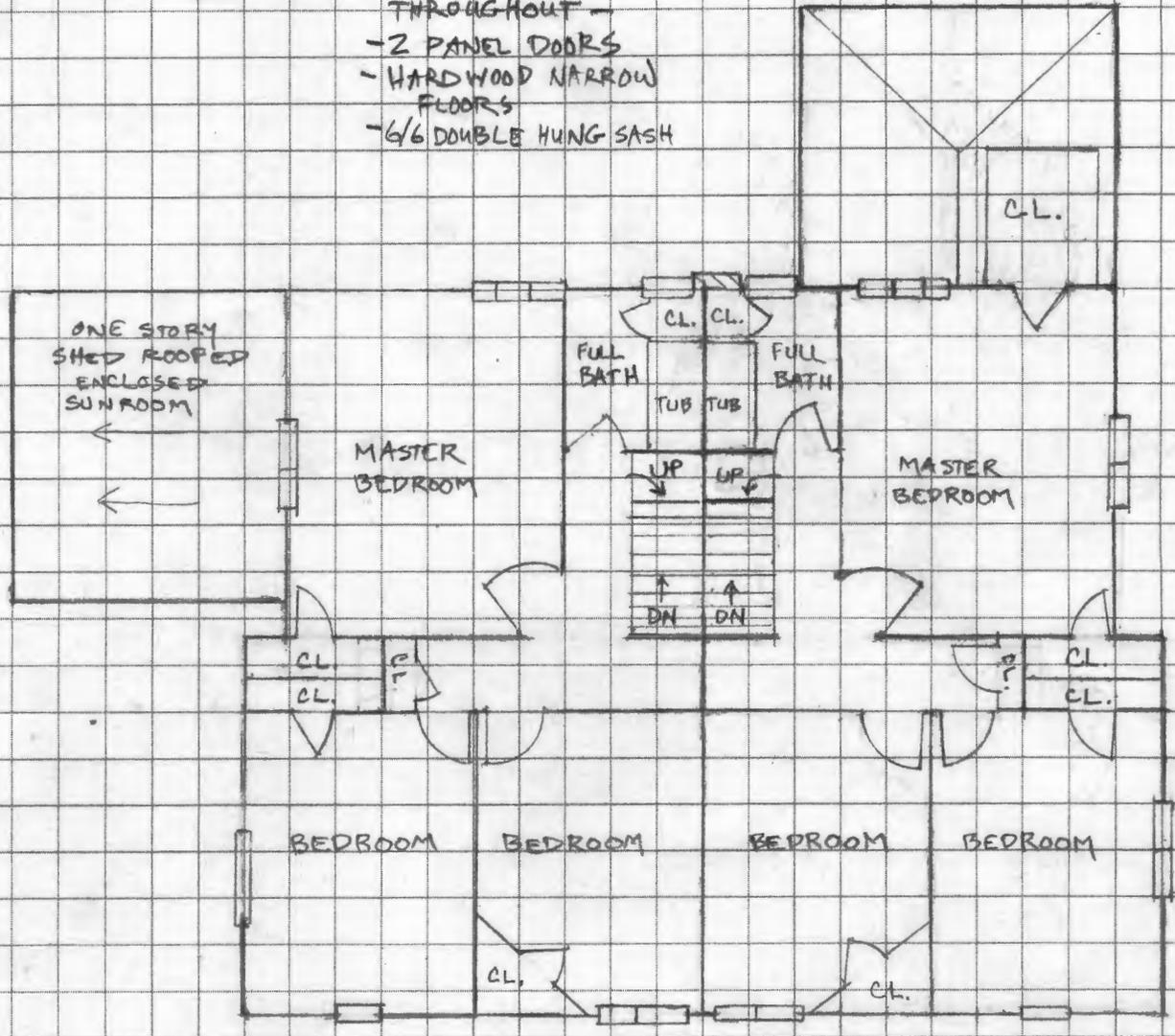
DUPLEX - (2 HOUSES) - SECOND FL. PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'  
CONOWINGO, HARFORD CO.



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Annapolis Maryland 21401

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- THROUGHOUT -
- 2 PANEL DOORS
  - HARDWOOD NARROW FLOORS
  - 6/6 DOUBLE HUNG SASH



WEST SECTION  
OF DUPLEX

EAST SECTION  
OF DUPLEX

Project CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE

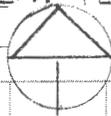
Project # HA-2183 Date 9/24/11 Page \_\_\_\_\_



Wheeler Goodman Masek  
One Annapolis Street #100  
Annapolis Maryland 21401

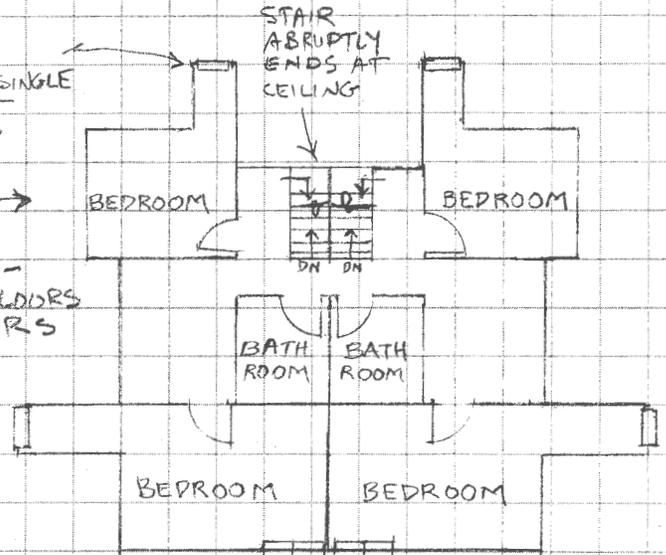
V. 410.841.6787  
F. 410.841.5523  
www.wgm-arch.com

DUPLEX - (2 HOUSES) - 3RD FL. + BASEMENT PLANS  
SCALE: 1"=12'  
CONOWINGO, HARFORD CO.



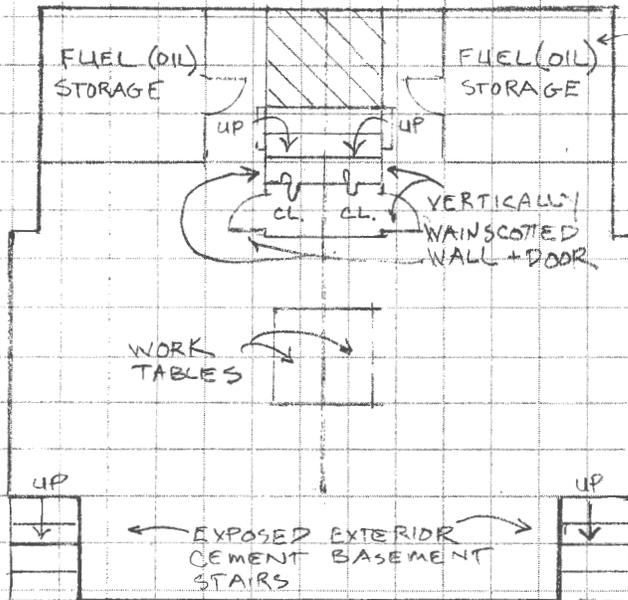
THIRD FLOOR PLAN →

THROUGHOUT -  
-HARDWOOD FLOORS  
-2-PANEL DOORS



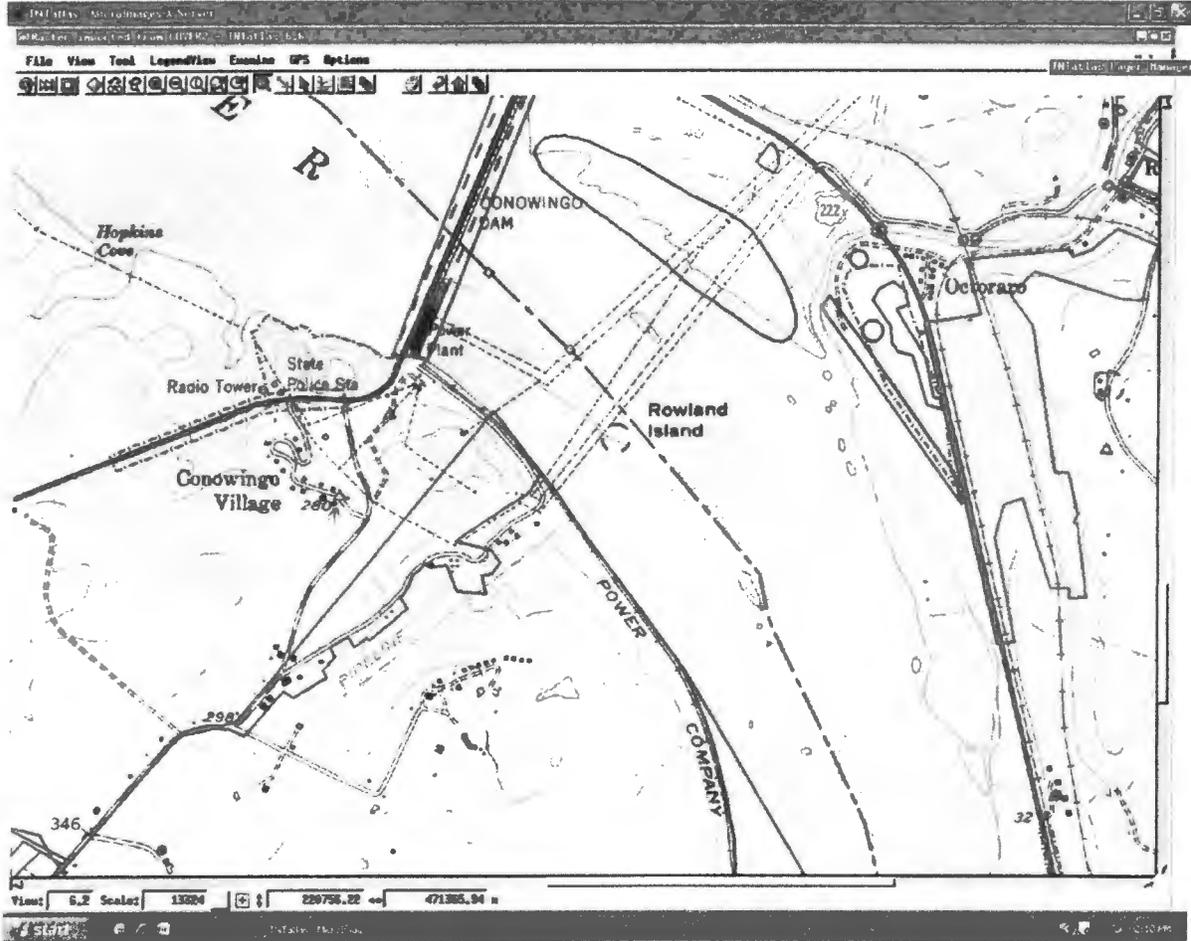
WEST SECTION OF DUPLEX | EAST SECTION OF DUPLEX

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN



WEST SECTION OF DUPLEX | EAST SECTION OF DUPLEX

USGS CONOWINGO QUAD MAP. MIHP#HA-2183 IS UNMARKED.  
ARROW POINTS TO LOCATION OF HOUSE WITHIN CONOWINGO VILLAGE.  
PHOTOCOPY COURTESY OF MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST.



CONOWINGO VILLAGE: ABOVE IS PHOTOCOPY OF IMAGE FROM C.2000 OF VILLAGE RD. PRIOR TO DEMOLITIONS OF 15 HOUSES. COURTESY OF HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HARFORD COUNTY. BELOW IS PHOTOCOPY OF BALTIMORE SUN NEWSPAPER ARTICLE IMAGE, DATED JANUARY 13, 2001.



Population, 0: Two Susquehanna Electric Co. employees walk through the vacant village in Harford County.

# *Dark village awaits fate*

**THIS PAGE AND NEXT 2 PAGES: CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE-2004. COURTESY OF CHARLES MAZUREK, MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.**



**BELOW- EAST FAÇADE.**

**LEFT- NORTH FACADE  
BOTTOM- NORTHWEST CORNER**



CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE-2004. COURTESY OF CHARLES MAZUREK,  
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.



ABOVE- EAST FACADE.

BELOW- SOUTH FACADE





ABOVE: LIVING ROOM, WEST WALL



ABOVE: KITCHEN, LOOKING NORTH



ABOVE: 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR BATHROOM



ABOVE: 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR MASTER BEDROOM

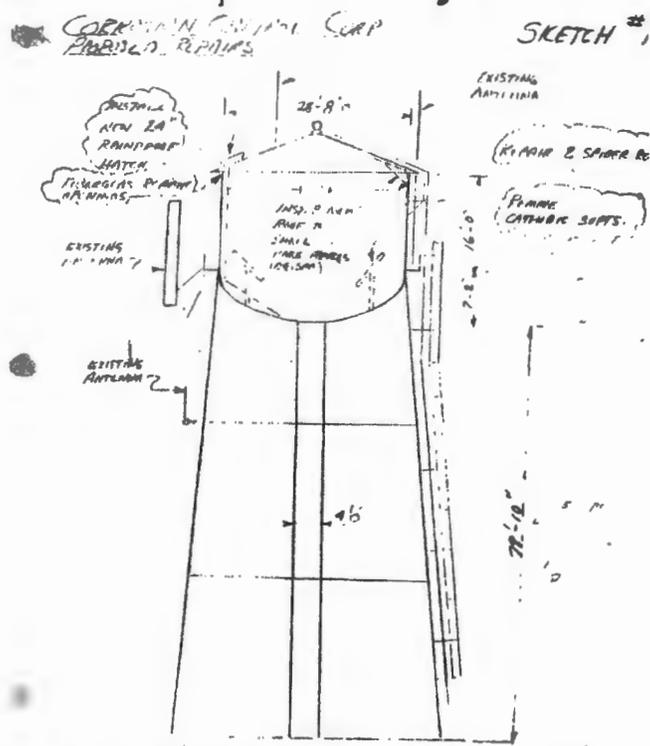


ABOVE: 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR BEDROOM



ABOVE: WATER TOWER N.W. OF HOUSE

CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE- 2004. COURTESY OF CHARLES MAZUREK,  
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



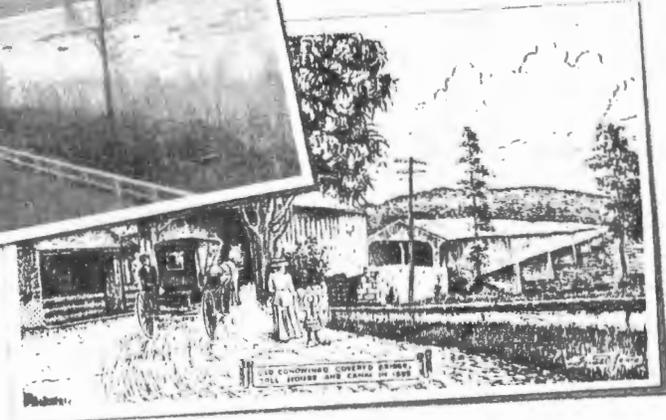
100 MG. ELEV. TANK  
PHILA. ELEC. CO. - (CONCRETE AND STEEL)

ABOVE: DRAWING OF WATER TOWER DATED SEPTEMBER 17, 1970. COURTESY OF FRED SMITH, EXELON POWER. BELOW: HISTORIC BRIDGES AT CONOWINGO, FROM DARLINGTON CALENDAR, COURTESY OF DAN LANGAN.



Steel Bridge at Conowingo  
circa 1925-28

Old Conowingo Covered Bridge,  
Toll House and Canal circa 1895



SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BRIDGES



ABOVE: MAP OF HARFORD COUNTY BY SIMON J. MARTENET 1866. DETAIL SHOWING SHURESVILLE AND NORTH OF THAT A BRIDGE CROSSING THE RIVER. BELOW: CONOWINGO DAM UNDER CONSTRUCTION, REPRINTED MARCH 15, 2005, COURTESY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CECIL CO. NOTE- CONSTRUCTION VILLAGE ON HILLSIDE ABOVE RIVER.



This photo was taken during the construction of the Conowingo Dam. The temporary village at left housed more than 3,000 workers. At the time of its completion in 1928, Conowingo Dam was the largest project in the history of the power industry.

COURTESY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CECIL COUNTY



**ABOVE: CONSTRUCTION OF CONOWINGO DAM, WATER TOWER IN BACKGROUND AT TOP OF HILL, 1926.  
BELOW: MEN BUILDING TEMPORARY COFFER DAMS IN THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER, 1926. BOTH COURTESY OF EXELON POWER.**





**ABOVE: ROCK CUTTING & EXCAVATION. BELOW: TURBINE CONSTRUCTION. CONSTRUCTION OF CONOWINGO DAM, 1922-26. BOTH COURTESY OF EXELON POWER.**





**ABOVE & BELOW: CONOWINGO DAM CONSTRUCTION, 1926.  
COURTESY OF EXELON POWER.**



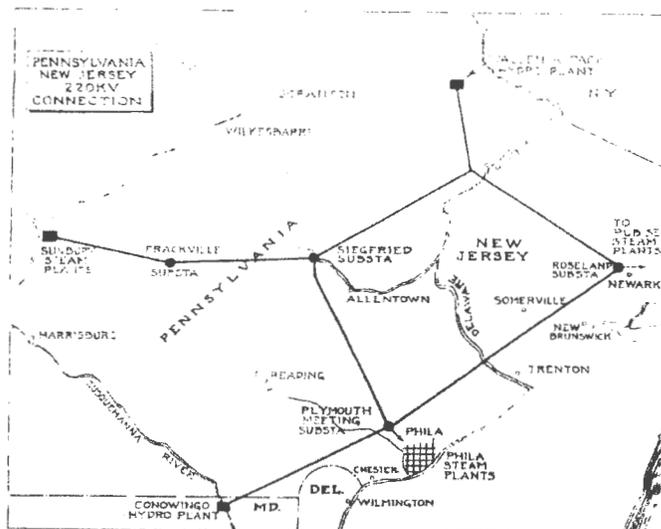


FIG. 7. Map of Interconnection

ABOVE: INTERCONNECTION OF POWER LINES- PA, NJ, MD. BELOW: CROSS SECTION DRAWINGS OF POWER HOUSE, CONOWINGO HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT. "CONOWINGO HYDRO-ELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHILADELPHIA ELECTRIC COMPANY SYSTEM," P. 11-12. COURTESY OF EXELON POWER.

Conowingo Hydro-Electric Development

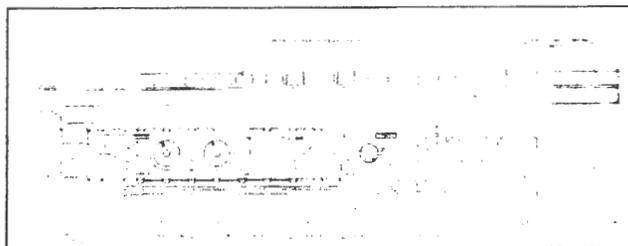


FIG. 8. Plan of Power House

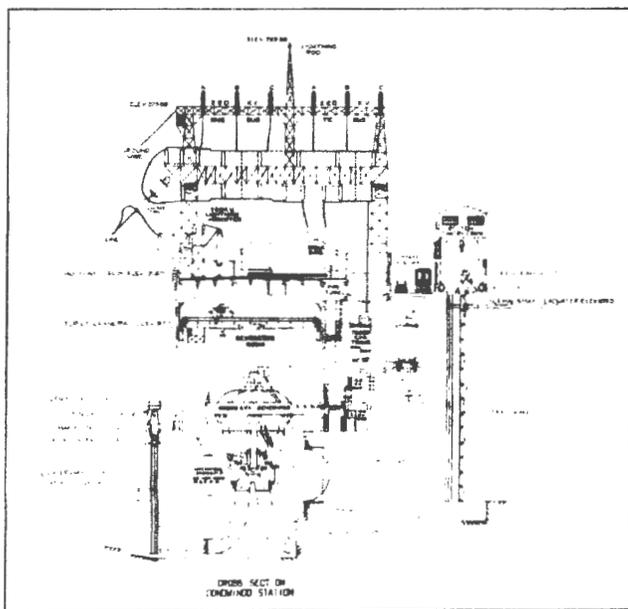


FIG. 9. Cross section of Power House

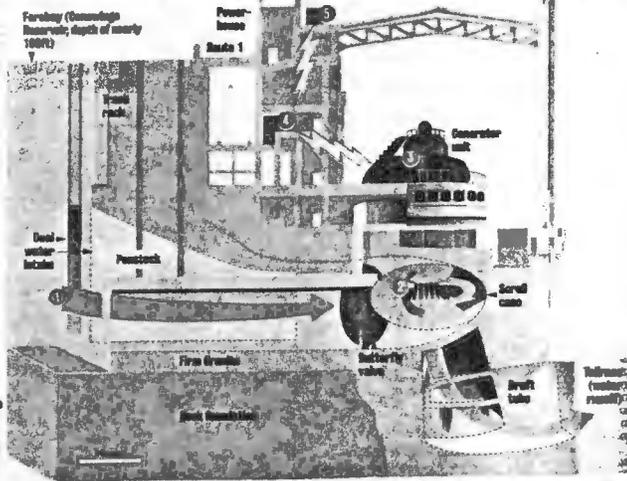
## Conowingo Hydroelectric Plant

With an operating staff of 65, it provides approximately 2 million megawatt hours of electrical power per year to more than 1.5 million people. The dam turns the mechanical energy of falling water into electrical energy. Its turbines can handle up to 80,000 cubic feet of water per second and generate as much as 512 megawatts of electricity per hour.

### From water to electricity

① Water enters the dam through an opening called the penstock below a 40-foot concrete wall designed to prevent ice and debris from entering the dam.

② Water passes through a butterfly valve, enters the scroll case and spins the turbine. Water then drains into the draft tube below.



③ A magnet-rimmed rotor that is attached to the turbine with a shaft spins inside a generator unit, producing an electrical field.



④ Electricity travels to one of six transformer banks at 13,800 volts and is stepped up to 220,000 volts for long distance travel.

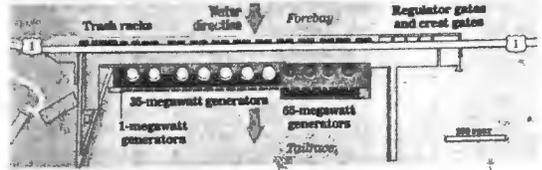


⑤ Electricity passes through one of 17 oil circuit breakers and leaves the power station through two high voltage lines for a powerhouse up river.



### Aerial view of the power station

Conowingo's powerhouse on the west bank of the river has seven main 35-megawatt generators, four 65-megawatt generators and two house generators of one megawatt each. The dam has, in addition, 50 crest gates and two regulator gates to release excess water.

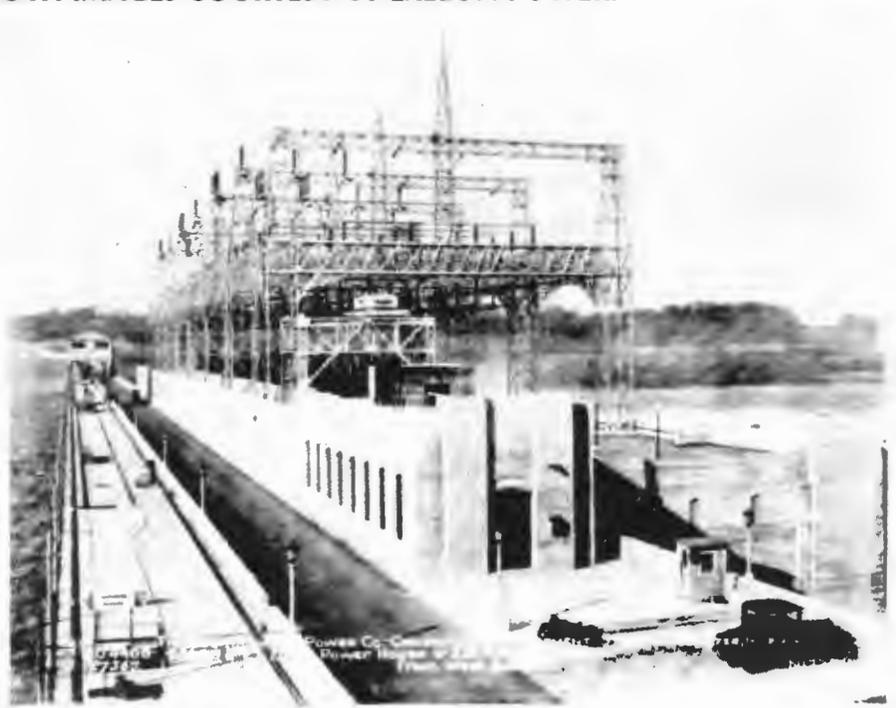


ABOVE: CREATING ELECTRIC POWER AT CONOWINGO, BALTIMORE SUN NOV. 19, 1997. BELOW: CONTROL ROOM AT PLANT. COURTESY OF EXELON POWER.





**ABOVE: TURBINE HALL AT PLANT. BELOW: COMPLETED PLANT 1928. BOTH IMAGES COURTESY OF EXELON POWER.**





ABOVE: DETAIL OF COMPLETED DAM 1928. COURTESY OF EXELON POWER. BELOW: PHILA. NEWSPAPER 1927 VIEW OF WATER TOWER & CONOWINGO VILLAGE AREA.

Philadelphia, Sunday, June 12, 1927



THE CONSTRUCTION CITY, WHICH HAS SPRUNG UP LIKE A MUSHROOM SINCE THE START OF THE WORK A LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR AGO, WILL RISE IN THE TRIANGLE AT THE WESTERN END OF THE DAM. THE CLEARED TRACK EXTENDING TO THE TOP OF THE DAM, SHORTENING THE AUTO ROUTE TO WASHINGTON BY FOUR AND A HALF MILES. THE WINDING WHITE ROAD IS THE BALTIMORE PIKE, WHICH WOULD SKIRT THE EAST BANK OF THE COLUMBIA AND PORT DEPOSIT RAILWAY, WHICH IS BEING MOVED BACK FOR A DISTANCE OF FOURTEEN MILES.

PHOTO OWNED BY ROGER TAYLOR • FIRST OPERATING ENGINEER



AERIAL VIEW OF CONOWINGO DAM AND VILLAGE CIRCA 1930

**ABOVE: AERIAL VIEW OF CONOWINGO DAM, VILLAGE & WATER TOWER C. 1930.  
FROM DARLINGTON CALENDAR, COURTESY OF DAN LANGAN.**



MHP # HA-2183  
CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE  
HARFORD CO., MD.  
C.A. MASEK 9/2011  
MD SHPO  
SOUTH FACADE  
1 OF 8



MIHP # HA-2183

CONDWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE

HARFORD CO., MD.

C.A. MASEK 9/2011

MD SHPO

EAST FACADE

Z OF 8



MIHP # HA-2183  
CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE  
HARFORD CO., MD.  
G.A. MASEK  
9/2011  
MD SHPO  
NORTH FACADE  
3 OF 8



MIHP # HA-2/83  
CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE  
HARFORD CO., MD.  
C. A. MASEK 9/20/11  
MD SHPO  
BASEMENT - VIEW OF  
STAIR ON WEST WALL  
4 OF 8



MIHP # HA-2183  
CONDWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE  
HARFORD CO., MD.  
C. A. MASEK 9/2011  
MD SHPO  
1ST FLOOR VIEW SOUTH FROM  
LIVING ROOM TO DINING ROOM  
5 OF 8



MIHP #HA-2183

CONDWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE

HARFORD CO., MD.

C.A. MASEK 9/2011

MD SHPO

1ST FLOOR LIVING ROOM

WEST FIREPLACE WALL

6 OF 8



MIHP # HA-2183  
CONOWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE

HARFORD CO., MD.

C.A. MASEK 9/2011

MD SHPO

2ND FLOOR STAIRHALL - VIEW EAST

7 OF 8



MIHP # HA-2183  
CONDWINGO VILLAGE HOUSE  
HARFORD CO., MD.  
C. A. MASEK 1/2011  
MD SHPO  
2ND FL. MASTER B.R.  
VIEW NORTH  
8 OF 8

Conowingo Village House

HA-2183

Vicinity of Darlington

Harford County, Maryland

1928

Public

Conowingo Village House is a simple Tudor Revival duplex built in 1928 as part of the twenty or so house Conowingo Village. The village was built by the Philadelphia Electric Company to house their employees who were working on the Conowingo Dam. The house is located 500 meters from the Susquehanna River on a overgrown parcel of 27 acres in the Susquehanna State Park. While much of the historical context of the site has been lost by the demolitions of the other buildings that made up Conowingo Village, the house is the last remaining structure from the village and as such, is important to the social history of the workers who built the Conowingo Dam.

John-Bruce C. Alexander

June 2007

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HA-2183

## 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Conowingo Village House

other \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street and number Village Road at Shuresville Road, (1/4 of a mile South of US 1)  not for publication

city, town Darlington  vicinity

county Harford County

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

name State of Maryland, Department of Natural Resources

street and number 580 Taylor Avenue telephone 410-260-8637

city, town Annapolis state MD zip code 21401

## 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Harford County Courthouse liber 5580 folio 549

city, town Bel Air, Maryland tax map 20 tax parcel 358 tax ID number 05 062632

## 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: Contributing Resource in the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<u>1</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<u>2</u> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<u>0</u> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			<u>0</u>

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## 7. Description

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Inventory No. HA-2183

### Condition

excellent     deteriorated  
 good         ruins  
 fair          altered

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

The Conowingo House is located on an overgrown bluff about 500 meters west of the Susquehanna River at the intersection of Village Road and Shuresville Road near Darlington, Maryland. Village Road is unmarked and primarily serves as the driveway to the house. Conowingo Village House is located on the grounds of Susquehanna State Park. About 50 meters to the north east of the house, is a large modern water tower. The house is located in what is referred to as Conowingo Village, (not to be confused with the original Conowingo Village that was flooded during the construction of the Conowingo Dam).<sup>1</sup>

A simple Tudor revival duplex, the Conowingo Village House consists of three stories and a basement. Both the north and south sides of the stucco and wood framed house have an entryway to the kitchen west side of the house. The north duplex has a one-story sun room built off of the northwest side of the house adjacent to the living room. The main entrance to the south duplex is through a sunroom facing the northeast. The duplex seems to share one brick chimney as the only fireplaces are situated on opposite walls. A majority of the windows in the structure are six over six wood-frame. The slate roof consists of steeply pitched overlapping gables. The foundation is concrete block with an ornamental stone façade below a simple one course of brick headers.

Both sides of the duplex have a basement extending about half the area of the house with an inside and outside entrance. The outside entrance is a concrete staircase with simple metal pole railings.

Each side of the duplex is a mirror image of the other, except for the location of the sunroom.. A simple small kitchen is located at the rear of each duplex, which adjoins what was likely the dining room.

A grey stone fireplace dominates the living room of both sides and is adjacent to the staircase to the second floor. One full bathroom is on the second floor serving the three bedrooms. The third floor of each duplex contains several small bedrooms, a small bathroom, and a simple stairway that inexplicably ends at the ceiling. Each room consists of simple molding of the period. The walls are plaster and lathe and the floors are small width hardwood.

Both sides of the duplex have suffered from significant vandalism. Most window panes are broken and much of the plaster walls have been damaged. Carpet on the first floor living room has been set on fire. Original bathroom and kitchen fixtures have been largely destroyed by vandals. The exterior stucco walls are beginning to suffer vandalism, especially on the first floor. Trees and shrubs are encroaching on the house. The slate roof appears untouched by the vandals.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. HA-2183

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 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 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 checked="" 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

Architect/Builder unknown

Construction dates 1928

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.)

The Conowingo Village House, located in the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, is situated on Village Road, now abandoned and was originally part of a community of twenty homes along the Village Road that made up "Conowingo Village." The Conowingo Village House and the adjacent water tower are the only structures left from the village which was built by the Philadelphia Electric Company in 1928 to serve as the company town for the "plants management and certain workers", of the Conowingo Dam.<sup>2</sup> Before the property was purchased by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, all other structures in the village were demolished, which resulted in significant loss to the discernible historical context of the property.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Inventory No. HA-2183

- 1 *The Washington Post*, AP, "Conowingo Village is Covered by Lake", January 19, 1928, www.proquest.com.
- 2 Susquehanna Electric, An Exelon Company, "Conowingo Land Donation, Background", facsimile from Jim Dunamyer to Mike Nelson, July 17, 2001, p.2, files of Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Annapolis, Maryland.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 2.7+- acres  
Acreage of historical setting 27.6+- acres  
Quadrangle name Conowingo Dam Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The house and adjacent area surveyed consists of about 2.7 acres of an overall parcel of about 27.6 acres. The 2.7 acres and the house is being considered for the DNR Resident-Curatorship Program. No other structures, except the water tower, are evident on the remaining area. (see attached maps).

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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name/title	John-Bruce C. Alexander, M.A., Manager of Curatorships & Cultural Resources		
organization	Maryland Department of Natural Resources	date	July 26, 2007
street & number	580 Taylor Ave., E4	telephone	410-260-8457
city or town	Annapolis	state	MD 21401

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  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

Conowingo Village House  
HA-2183  
Vicinity of Village Road at Shuresville Road  
(1/4 mile south of Route 1)  
Darlington  
Harford County, Maryland  
Conowingo Quad Map

