

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Number: HO-695

Name: Old Columbia Rd over Middle Patuxent River

The bridge referenced herein was inventoried by the Maryland State Highway Administration as part of the Historic Bridge Inventory, and SHA provided the Trust with eligibility determinations in February 2001. The Trust accepted the Historic Bridge Inventory on April 3, 2001. The bridged received the following determination of eligibly.

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST</b>	
Eligibility Recommended <u>  X  </u>	Eligibility Not Recommended <u>      </u>
Criteria: <u>  A  </u> <u>  B  </u> <u>  C  </u> <u>  D  </u>	Considerations: <u>  A  </u> <u>  B  </u> <u>  C  </u> <u>  D  </u> <u>  E  </u> <u>  F  </u> <u>  G  </u> <u>None</u>
Comments: _____ _____ _____	
Reviewer, OPS: <u>  Anne E. Bruder  </u>	Date: <u>  3 April 2001  </u>
Reviewer, NR Program: <u>  Peter E. Kurtze  </u>	Date: <u>  3 April 2001  </u>

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties  
Historic Bridge Inventory  
Maryland State Highway Administration  
Maryland Historical Trust

MHT Number HO-695

**SHA Bridge No.** HO 64 **Name:** Old Columbia Road over Middle Patuxent River

**Location:**

**Street/Road Name and Number:** Old Columbia Road

**City/Town:** Columbia **Vicinity** \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_

**County:** Howard

**Ownership:**  State  County  Municipal  Other

**This bridge projects over:**  Road  Railway  Water  Land

**Is the bridge located within a designated district:**  yes  no

NR listed district  NR determined eligible district  
 locally designated  other  
Name of District \_\_\_\_\_

**Bridge Type:**

- Timber Bridge  
 Beam Bridge  Truss-Covered  Trestle  
 Timber-and-Concrete
- Stone Arch
- Metal Truss
- Movable Bridge  
 Swing  Bascule Single Leaf  Bascule Multiple Leaf  
 Vertical Lift  Retractable  Pontoon
- Metal Girder  
 Rolled Girder  Rolled Girder Concrete Encased  
 Plate Girder  Plate Girder Concrete Encased
- Metal Suspension
- Metal Arch
- Metal Cantilever
- Concrete  
 Concrete Arch  Concrete Slab  Concrete Beam  
 Rigid Frame
- Other Type Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe Setting:**

Bridge HO 64 carries Old Columbia Road over the Middle Patuxent River. Old Columbia Road runs north-south over the eastern flowing Middle Patuxent River. The bridge is in a rural section of Howard County. There is moderate residential development around the bridge.

**Describe Superstructure and Substructure:**

Bridge HO 64 is a single span filled concrete arch bridge. The length of the bridge is 49 feet with a clear span measuring 45 feet at the springline. The bridge has a rise of approximately 10 feet from springline to the crown. The rise to run ratio is 22 percent. The spandrel walls are approximately 12 feet by 12 feet. The wingwalls are approximately 10 feet by 8 feet. There is a clear roadway width of 15 feet 5 inches, with an overall bridge width of 17 feet 4 inches. The spandrel walls have moderate deterioration on the upstream and downstream walls. There are areas of moderate patching with pneumatically applied mortar on both spandrel walls. The arch ring has fine vertical cracking and some signs of efflorescence. According to a 1994 inspection report, the bridge is in satisfactory condition with a sufficiency rating of 83.0.

Bridge HO 64 has its original parapets. The builders used a closed parapet design that consists of vertical posts securely fastened by dowels to the structure, horizontal rails, and solid panels that fill the space between the posts and the railings. The panels may be precast, and the posts and rails were built in place. The precast panels are separated by solid paneled expansion joints. A 4-inch by 6-inch ledge extends the length of the parapets on the exterior of the bridge. The parapets are in a single section totaling 47 feet. Each section has 6 incised panels separated by a triangular shaped incision block. The parapets are in fair condition with moderate to light scaling.

**Discuss Major Alterations:**

There have been no major alterations to this structure.

**History:**

**When Built?** circa 1920

**Why Built?** Unknown

**Who Built?** Howard County Department of Public Works

**Who Designed?** Unknown

**Why Altered?** N/A

**Was this bridge built as part of an organized bridge building campaign?**

No, this bridge was not built as part of any state bridge building campaign.

**Surveyor Analysis:**

**This bridge may have NR significance for association with:**

A Events       Person  
 C Engineering/Architectural

This bridge was determined eligible by the Interagency Review Committee in March 1996.

**Was this bridge constructed in response to significant events in Maryland or local history?**

The improvement of Howard County roads and bridges resulted from several events that occurred during the first 3 decades of the twentieth century. The original Good Roads movement was aimed toward improving the primary routes throughout the state as well as the connector routes such as Old Columbia Road. A later impact of this crusade included the various geometric improvements, including roadway widening and the reconstruction of substandard and narrow bridges to withstand the new demands placed on them by heavier

motorized traffic. During the 1920s, bridges that were initially adequate when roadway reconstruction was begun became obsolete as motorized traffic became modernized.

**Is the bridge located in an area that may be eligible for historic designation and would the bridge add to or detract from historic and visual character of the possible district?**

No, this bridge is not located in an area that is eligible for historic designation.

**Is the bridge a significant example of its type?**

Yes this bridge is a significant example of Maryland's efforts from 1910 until 1945 to eliminate dangerous geometric alignments. The development of standardized plans helped to facilitate this process. However, this bridge also represents the Howard County's efforts to maintain and construct their own bridges. It has the unusual feature of a central inscribed diamond. The bridge was located in an area where a standardized bridge could not be implemented because of the length requirement, so the engineers chose to implement a graceful arched design with the newly formulated reinforced concrete technology.

**Does the bridge retain integrity of the important elements described in the Context Addendum?**

Yes this bridge retains integrity of its character defining elements. The abutments, the barrel, the spandrel walls, and the parapets are original.

**Is this bridge a significant example of the work of the manufacturer, designer and/or engineer?**

Yes, this bridge is a significant example of the work of Howard County in the 1920s.

**Should this bridge be given further study before significance analysis is made and why?**

No, further research should not be done on this bridge.

**Bibliography:**

County inspection/bridge files                   X                   SHA inspection/bridge files                   

Other (list):

Johnson, Arthur Newhall

1899 The Present Condition of Maryland Highways. In *Report on the Highways of Maryland*. Maryland Geological Survey, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

P.A.C. Spero & Company and Louis Berger & Associates

1995 Historic Highway Bridges in Maryland: 1631-1960: Historic Context Report. Maryland State Highway Administration, Maryland State Department of Transportation, Baltimore, Maryland.

Tyrrell, H. Grattan

1909 *Concrete Bridges and Culverts for Both Railroads and Highways*. The Myron C. Clark Publishing Company, Chicago and New York.

**SURVEYOR:**

Date bridge recorded December 1997

Name of surveyor Wallace, Montgomery & Associates / P.A.C. Spero & Company

Organization/Address P.A.C. Spero & Co., 40 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21204

Phone number (410) 296-1635 FAX number (410) 296-1670





Inventory # H0-695

Name H004 - Old COLUMBIA PIKE OVER <sup>MIDDLE</sup> PATUMENT RIVER

County/State HOWARD / MD

Name of Photographer DAVID DIEHL

Date 2/95

Location of Negative SNA

Description SOUTH APPROACH LOOKING  
NORTHEAST

Number 1 of 4  
~~8~~ ~~32~~



Inventory # H0-695

Name H064-MIDDLE PATUXENT RIVER  
OLD COLUMBIA PIKE OVER

County/State HOWARD / MD

Name of Photographer DAVID DIEHL

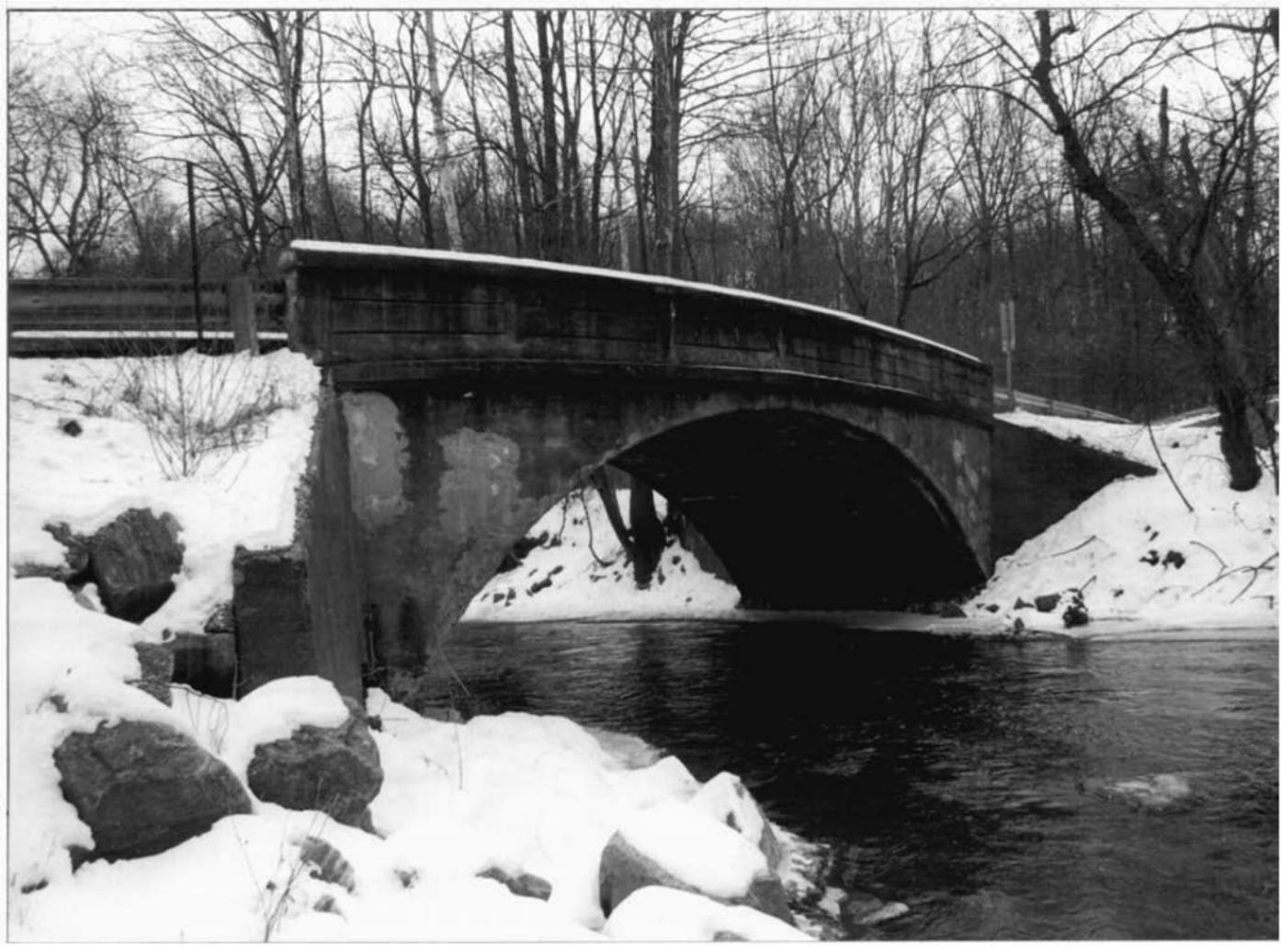
Date 2/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description NORTH APPROACH LOOKING  
SOUTH

Number 23 of 4  
32

RECEIVED BY: [Signature]



Inventory # HO-695

Name HO64- OLD COLUMBIA PIKE OVER  
MIDDLE PATULENT RIVER

County/State HOWARD / MD

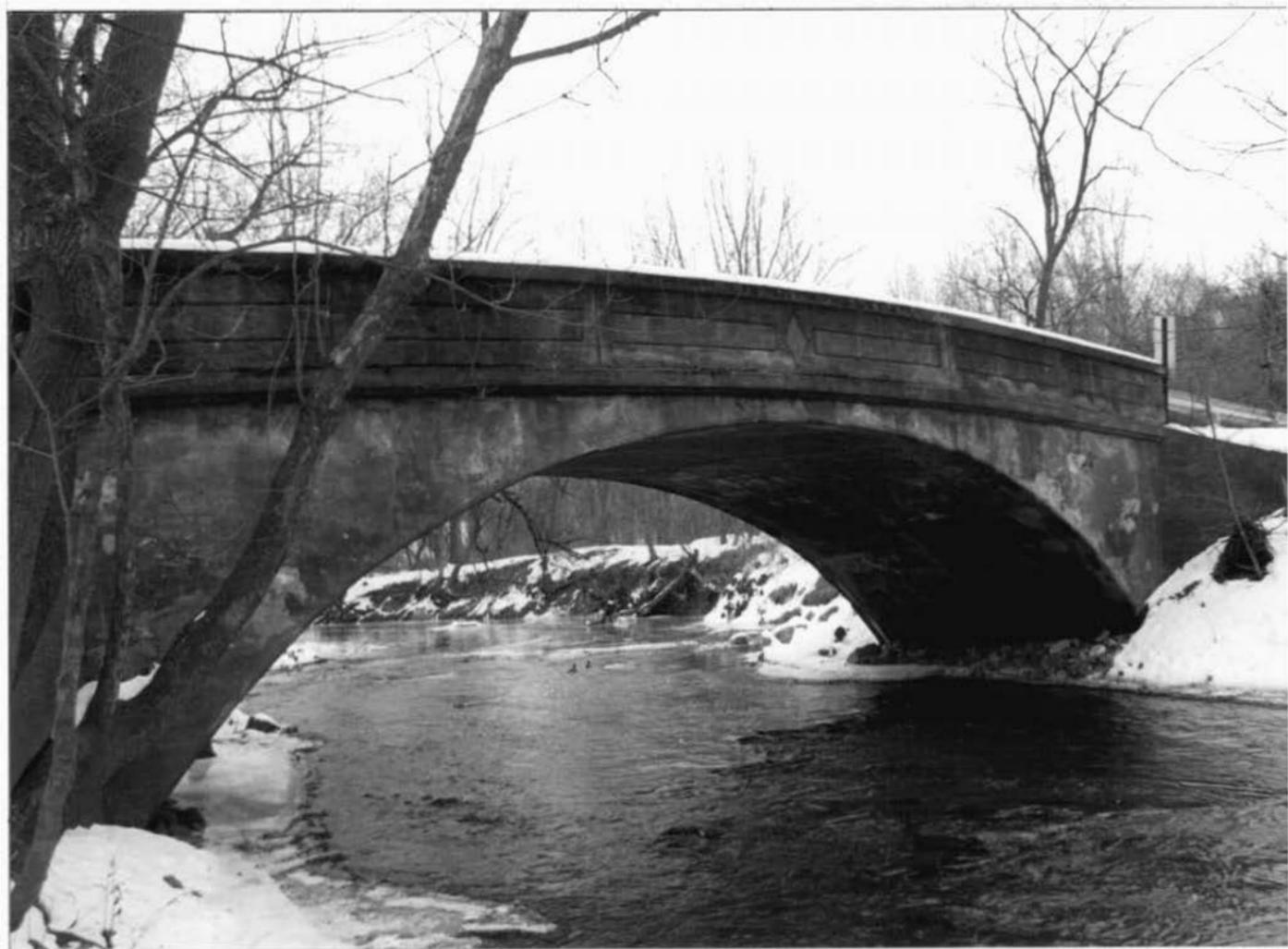
Name of Photographer DAVID DIEHL

Date 2/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description WEST ELEVATION LOOKING SOUTH  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number 3 of 4  
~~10~~ ~~32~~



Inventory # HO-695

Name HO04- MIDDLE PATUXENT RIVER  
OLD COLUMBIA PIKE OVER

County/State HOWARD / MD

Name of Photographer DAVID DIEHL

Date 2/95

Location of Negative SAA

Description EAST ELEVATION LOOKING

NORTHWEST

Number 4 of 4  
32

1995 MAR 15 10 21 AM

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT  
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: Old Columbia Road Bridge Survey Number: HO-695

Tax Parcel#: N/A

Project: Maryland 216/29 Project Planning Study Agency: MDOT-SHA

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

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)

The Old Columbia Road Bridge does not meet National Register Criteria A, B, or D. Preliminary research has not revealed any association between the bridge and events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history (Criterion A) or the lives of persons significant in our past (Criterion B).

There is no evidence that the bridge is likely to yield information important in history or prehistory (Criterion D).

However, based on Criterion C, the bridge, which embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction and possesses high artistic values, is National Register-eligible. The bridge strongly reflects two trends in bridge design: the renaissance of the concrete arch bridge and the development of standardized bridge design. In addition, the bridge bears evidence of the influence of the City Beautiful movement in its stylized cast concrete ornamentation. Thus, the bridge is National Register-eligible.

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form

and Maryland 29/216 Project Planning Report

Prepared by: Tracerics, 5420 Western Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815 November 1997

Concave - Offmoler 2/10/98  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

NR program concurrence:  yes  no  not applicable

B. Kuntz 3/31/99  
Reviewer, NR Program Date

*[Handwritten signature]*

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
MD INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Inventory No. HO-695

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name \_\_\_\_\_  
common/other name Old Columbia Road Bridge

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number Old Columbia Road not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Laurel vicinity \_\_\_\_\_ state Maryland code MD  
county Howard County code 27 zip code \_\_\_\_\_

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification N/A

=====

4. National Park Service Certification N/A

=====

5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_\_ private  
X public-local  
\_\_\_\_\_ public-State  
\_\_\_\_\_ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

\_\_\_\_\_ building(s)  
\_\_\_\_\_ district  
\_\_\_\_\_ site  
X structure  
\_\_\_\_\_ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing		Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>		buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>		sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>		structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>		Total

Is this property listed in the National Register?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Listing \_\_\_\_\_  
No X

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: TRANSPORTATION Sub: Bridge  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: TRANSPORTATION Sub: Bridge  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

=====  
7. Description  
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

No Style  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
roof N/A  
walls Concrete  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet No. 7-1

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties  
Old Columbia Road Bridge  
Howard County, Maryland

Inventory No. HO-695  
Page 4

=====  
Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation  
Engineering  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance 1915-present  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates 1915-1930  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation Undefined  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet No. 8-1

=====  
9. Major Bibliographical References  
=====

(Cite the books, articles, legal records, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

P.A.C. Spero & Company and Louis Berger & Associates, *Historic Highway Bridges in Maryland: 1631-1960, Historic Context Report*, July 1995 (Revised October 1995).

=====  
10. Geographical Data  
=====

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

**Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)**

The Old Columbia Road Bridge spans the Middle Patuxent River just northeast of where Old Columbia Road intersects Route 29 north of Johns Hopkins Road in Laurel, Maryland.

**Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)**

The bridge has been associated with this site since the time of its construction in the early twentieth century.

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

name/title Kathryn A. Gettings, Architectural Historian  
organization Traceries date Nov. 4, 1997  
street & number 5420 Western Avenue telephone 301/656-5283  
city or town Chevy Chase state MD zip code 20815

=====  
12. Property Owner  
=====

name Howard County, Maryland  
street & number 3430 Courthouse Drive telephone (410) 313-4401  
city or town Ellicott City state MD zip code 21043

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. HO-695

Section 7 Page 1

Old Columbia Road Bridge  
name of property  
Howard County, Maryland  
county and state

=====  
This concrete arch bridge is located on a stretch of historic Columbia Road (originally known as the Columbia Turnpike Road). The bridge spans the Middle Patuxent River with a single-span, one-lane closed concrete arch structure. Erected between 1915 and 1930, the bridge has a length of approximately forty feet and a fifteen- to twenty-foot-wide deck. A single barrel arch spans the watercourse and stands approximately fifteen feet above the water's surface at its highest point.

The superstructure of the bridge remains in excellent condition. The elements of primary importance in this bridge, the arch ring, barrel, spandrel walls, and parapet walls, remain intact. The interior and exterior faces of the 3-1/2-foot parapet walls are decorated with cast rectangular panels, and a single lozenge-shaped panel accentuates the center of the exterior face of each wall. Square-edged concrete coping finishes the top of each parapet wall. The substructure of the bridge also remains in place. The abutments consist of poured reinforced concrete as do the wing walls above.

The bridge is in generally good condition with the only signs of deterioration being spalling on the edges of the parapet walls and the disappearance of a commemorative plaque that was bolted to the inner face of the southeast wall. The only major alteration made to the structure was the addition of metal guard rails at either end extending the length of the knee walls.

The bridge is located on a portion of Old Columbia Road which, although superseded by US 29, still carries local traffic. The bridge itself remains intact, as does the setting of the bridge. Despite the proximity of the bridge to the new US 29, the Old Columbia Road bridge's original picturesque appearance is maintained by the woodland that stands to either side of the bridge.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. HO-695

Section 8 Page 1

Old Columbia Road Bridge  
name of property  
Howard County, Maryland  
county and state

=====  
The Old Columbia Road Bridge (HO-64) spanning the Middle Patuxent River is one of many concrete bridges built throughout Maryland during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The bridge originally served a main north-south route, Columbia Turnpike. For residents of the Scaggsville and Oakland Mills area, Columbia Turnpike was the major route north to Columbia, although this area of the road was not well-developed in this area at that time. When US 29 was relocated, the road and bridge became limited to local traffic.

The bridge strongly reflects two trends in bridge design: the development of reinforced concrete and the development of standardized bridge design. In addition, the popularity of the City Beautiful movement influenced the appearance of this bridge.

In the early twentieth century, the development of reinforced concrete construction initiated a renaissance in arched bridge construction. The use of reinforced concrete allowed the arch bridge, a form that lends itself to load-bearing functions, to be constructed more easily. In addition, the use of concrete allowed more decorative features to be introduced within the bridge. Many bridges, like the bridge at Old Columbia Road, incorporated stylized designs in the cast concrete.

With the rise of road planning, standardized bridge designs were developed in Maryland. While these standardized plans were dominantly of the beam and slab type of construction, the arched bridge, like the bridge at South Entrance Road, was often utilized when aesthetic issues or site conditions required a less utilitarian structure. There exist nearly seventy extant concrete arch bridges on Maryland's state highways built between 1900 and 1940.

The form, decoration, and siting of the bridge reflect a desire of the designers to devise an aesthetically pleasing bridge. During this period, the City Beautiful movement was sweeping the nation. Designers encouraged the construction of public buildings and structures that were attractive, not merely functional.

The Old Columbia Road Bridge over the Middle Patuxent River is a good example of a concrete arch bridge complete with its minimalist architectural decoration. Similar in plan and design to the South Entrance Road Bridge (MHT-724), the Old Columbia Road span was likely funded by Howard County and constructed by a private contractor.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. HO-695

Old Columbia Road Bridge  
name of property  
Howard County, Maryland  
county and state

=====

**Chain of Title:**

Current Owners: Howard County, Maryland

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. HO-695

Old Columbia Road Bridge

name of property

Howard County, Maryland

county and state

=====

**HISTORIC CONTEXT:**

**Geographic Organization:** Piedmont

**Chronological/Development Period (s):**

Industrial/Urban Dominance (1870-1930)

Modern Period (1930-present)

**Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme (s):**

Transportation

**RESOURCE TYPE(S)**

**Category:** Structure

**Historic Environment:** Rural

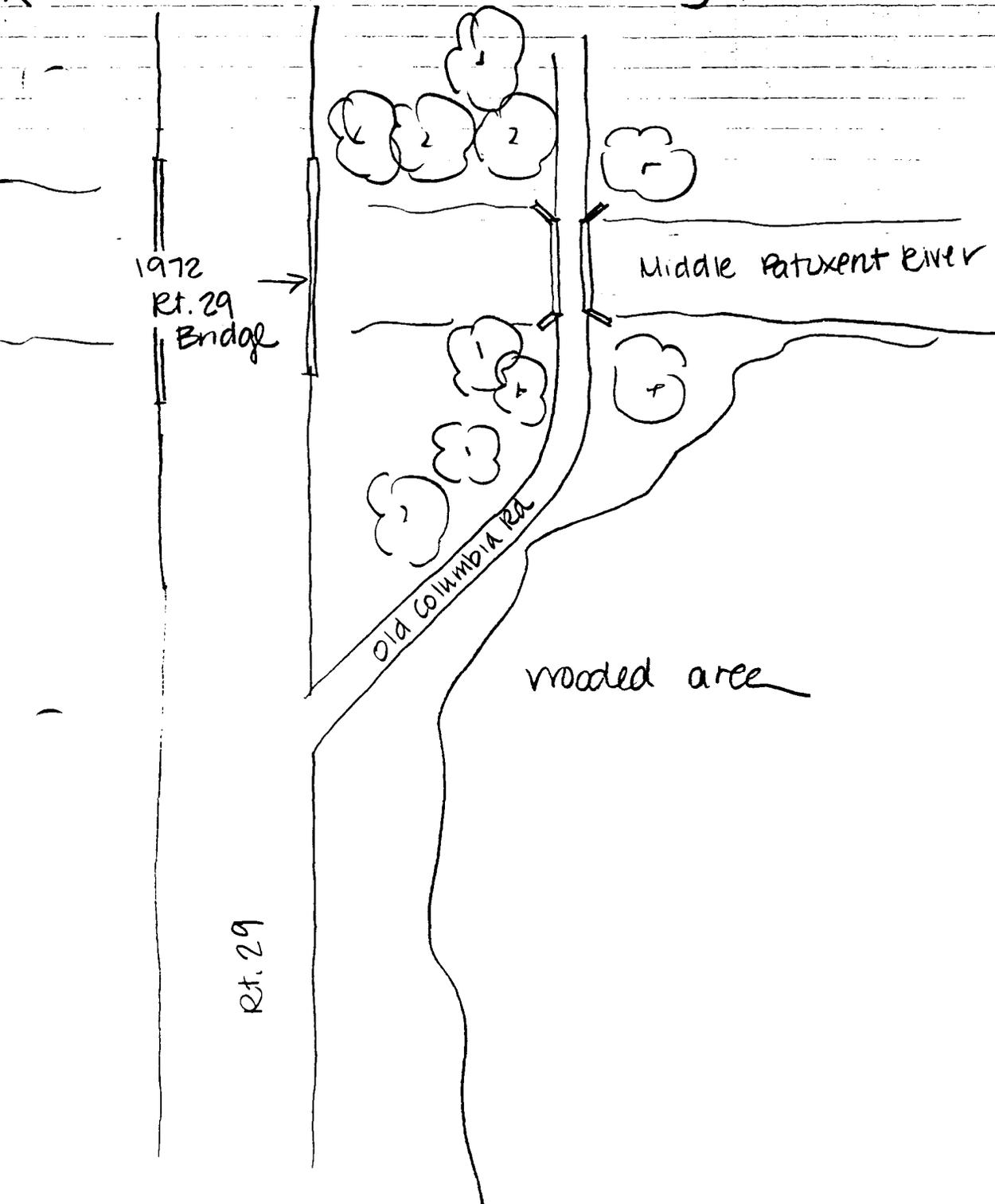
**Historic Function (s):** TRANSPORTATION/Bridge

**Known Design Source:** Unknown

Old Columbia Rd Bridge  
Laurel, Howard County, MD

RESOURCE  
SKETCH MAP

HO-695



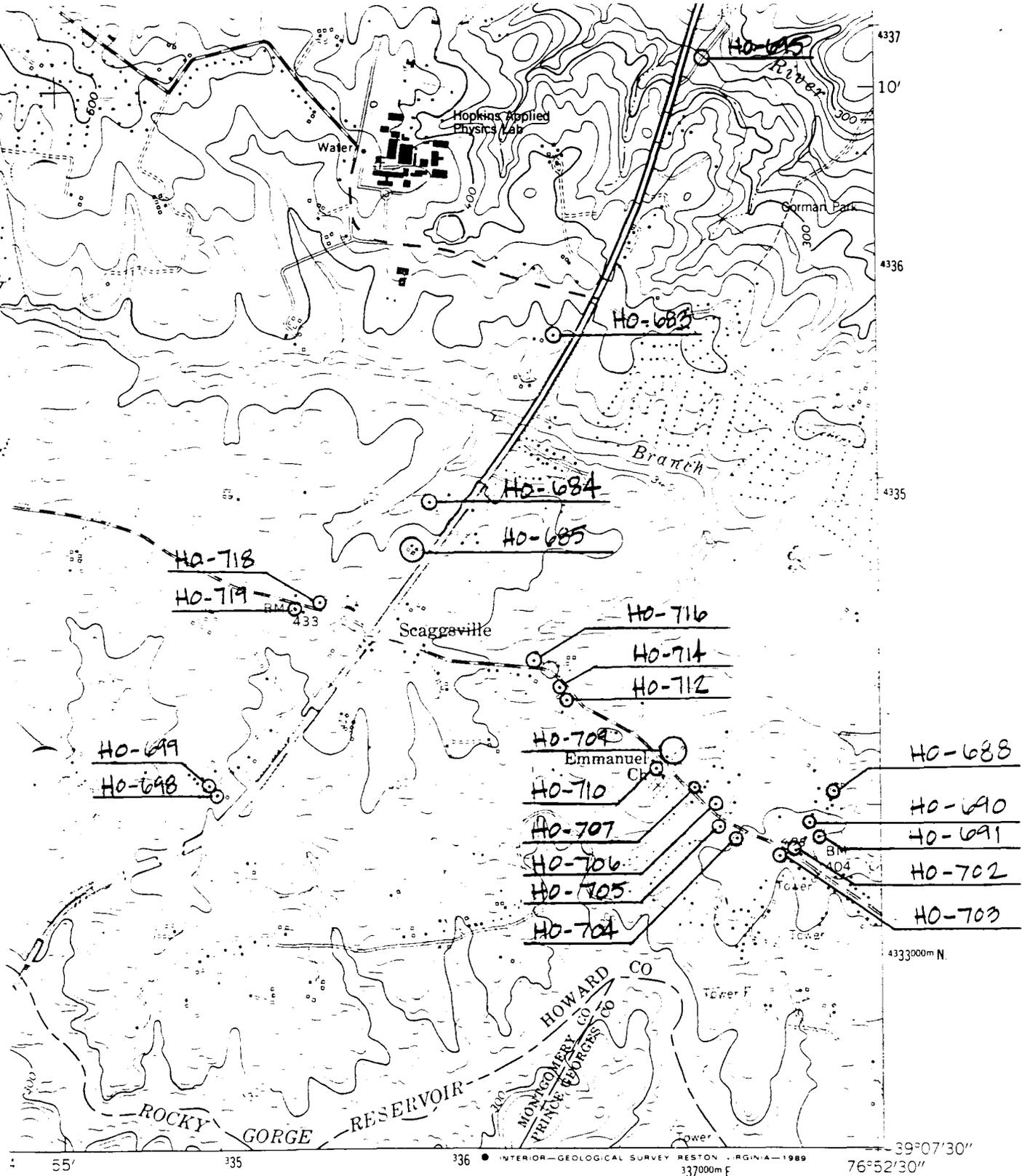
1972  
Rt. 29  
Bridge

Middle Patuxent River

Old Columbia Rd

wooded area

Rt. 29

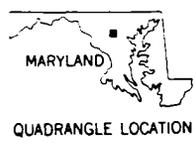


1/4 MILE

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty Light-duty
- Medium-duty Unimproved dirt

U. S. Route State Route



**CLARKSVILLE, MD.**  
 NW/4 LAUREL 15' QUADRANGLE  
 39076-B8-TF-024

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983  
 move the projection lines 8 meters south and  
 26 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

1957  
 PHOTOREVISED 1979  
 DMA 5662 III NW-SERIES V833

(LAUREL)  
 5662 III SE



HO-695

OLD COLUMBIA ROAD BRIDGE

HOWARD COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

OCTOBER 1997

MD SHPO

GENERAL VIEW OF ROADWAY - LOOKING NE

1 OF 4



HD-695

OLD COLUMBIA ROAD BRIDGE

HOWARD COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

OCTOBER 1997

MD. SHPO

BRIDGE SPAN LOOKING SE

2 OF 4



HO-695

OLD COLUMBIA ROAD BRIDGE  
HOWARD COUNTY, MD

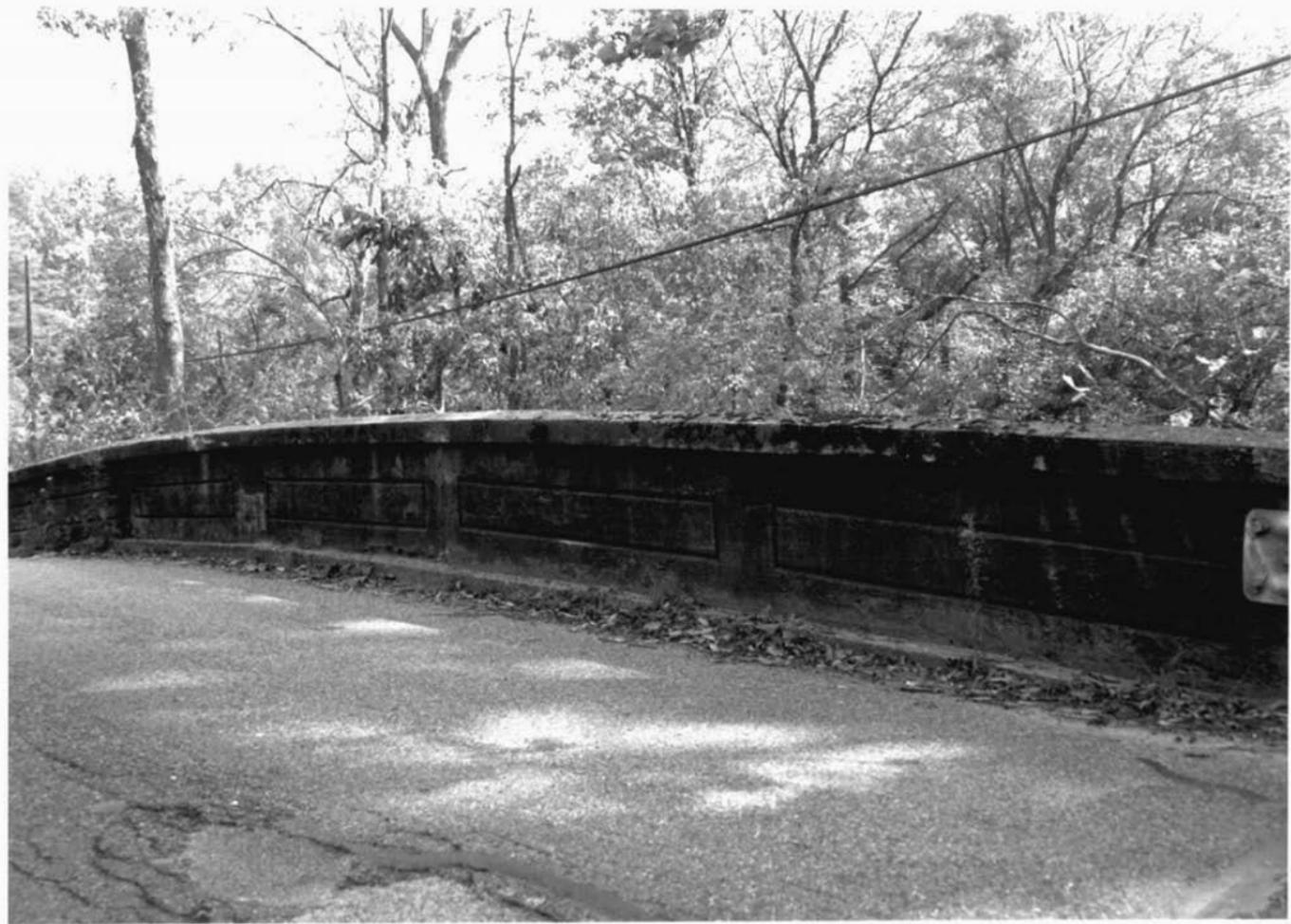
TRACERIES

OCTOBER 1997

MD SHPO

BRIDGE SPAN - LOOKING NORTH

3 OF 4



HO-695

OLD COLUMBIA ROAD BRIDGE

HOWARD COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

OCTOBER 1997

MD SHPO

KNEE WALL - INTERIOR LOOKING EAST

4 OF 4