

Site M:26/10/30

The Morrow House

227 West Montgomery Avenue

Built: 1886-1890, remodeled 1925 Private ownership

The newly built house at this site was enlarged and embellished when purchased by the wealthy Bradley family in 1890. A billiard room, two-story bay and back wing were added. Finely carved interior woodwork of cherry and cypress mixes Eastlake-inspired design with Oriental dragon motifs on the parlor over-mantle. The carved stairway is a focal point, running across the width of the house and dividing first floor rooms. A 1925 remodeling removed some of the Queen Anne irregularity and picturesque elements on the exterior. The house was given a Colonial Revival look and the narrow cypress siding was stuccoed. The interior woodwork remains in original condition.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Morrow house

2. Location

street & number 227 West Montgomery Avenue not for publicationcity, town Rockville vicinity of congressional district 8state Maryland county Montgomery

3. Classification

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

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

name Andrew G. and Phyllis Morrowstreet & number 227 West MONTgomery Avenue telephone no.: 762-6897city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse liber 2339street & number Rockville folio 397city, town Rockville state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title National Register (West Montgomery Ave. Historic District) - 1974
Locally designated historic district - 1974date M-NCPPC - 1976 federal state county localdepository for survey records City of Rockvillecity, town Rockville state Maryland 20850

7. Description

Survey No. 70:26/10/30

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved | date of move _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | | |

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

This 2 1/2 story, three bay by six bay L-shaped frame house faces south on West Montgomery Avenue. When it was originally constructed in 1886 on lot #11 of Beall's subdivision, it probably was a small cottage. In 1890 Thomas C. Groomes enlarged it to approximately its present configuration and embellished it with Queen Anne style features on the exterior and Eastlake-inspired details on the interior. Front porches, three-sided east bay, and tower were added at this time; an 1890 description of the house includes references to large porches, two-story bay window, tower, billiard room and back building. In 1925, the facade was remodeled to present a more symmetrical look, and the frame house was covered with stucco,

The roof is of standing seam tin, Running north-south along the ridge of the short cross gable is a course of cresting made of thick pierced wood in a series of scallops. The foundation is of fieldstone, parged with cement. There are four chimneys. Most windows are two-over-two double-hung sash, with louvred shutters. The house has seven gables,

The front (south) facade has a pedimented front (cross) gable, projecting entry pavilion and reeded pilasters with full entablature framing the entrance. At the apex of the front gable is a half-moon tin grill. The first floor windows on this facade have been shortened and filled in with paneled wood spandrels. At the southeast corner, the first story of the three-sided bay has been enlarged into a screened porch. Some of the original diamond-shaped cypress siding remains in the east side gable, along with a quarter-lunette window and exterior brick chimney at the juncture of gable and bay.

On the west side, the central bay is a rectangular, many-paned "fancy" window which is located at the interior stair landing. This facade has a round carved ventilator, small attic dormer, interior chimney at the gable, and exterior door to the cellar.

The north facade of the building on the east side has no windows; from this facade were removed the back building, kitchen and stairs. There are assorted other windows to the west on this facade.

The interior woodwork is unusual and reflects the affluence and interests of its first occupants. Admiral Stevens, Commander of the Pacific Fleet of the U.S. Navy, was the father of Mary Bradley (who purchased the tiny cottage in 1888) and made his home with the Bradleys. When the house was enlarged in 1890 to reflect the Bradleys' styles and taste, a fine carved parlor overmantel of cherrywood bearing Oriental dragon motifs was included in the interior embellishment, presumably inspired by the Stevens' sojourns in the Far East. The overmantel also includes raised leaf designs which are continued in the dining room overmantel (although this mantel omits the dragons). Encaustic tiles frame the parlor fireplace and hearth.

The builder preferred to work with Alabama cypress using a hard oil finish. In this house he has framed the doorways with moulding

8. Significance

Survey No. M: 26/10/30

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

Specific dates 1888 Builder/Architect 1890-T.C. Groomes; 1924-Wm.Pate

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or

Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

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

Margaret Beall, the largest individual landowner in the City of Rockville in the 3rd quarter of the 19th century, was the first to subdivide her acres into building lots after the coming of the railroad. Between 1879 and 1888 the first twelve lots fronting on Commerce Lane were purchased by professional, middle-class families to construct either fashionable summer houses away from the city or full-time residences. 227 West Montgomery's fine interior woodwork incorporated the best of the vernacular work of the Rockville contractor with materials and styles reflecting its owners' tastes.

A house built for Rufus King of Kings Valley appears on the Assessment Records in 1886; he probably had the small house built on speculation. Robert Bradley and his wife Mary Stevens Bradley purchased the house for \$3000 in 1888.¹ Mrs. Bradley was the daughter of Admiral Stevens, U.S.N., Commander of the Pacific Fleet who made his home with them.² In 1890 they employed local contractor T.C. Groomes to add a tower, bay, billiard room, reception room and other features to their "Victorian Cottage". The lavish and unusual interior woodwork of cherry and cypress was added at this time and remains in its original condition.

By 1904 the West End of Rockville had become a fashionable address; the new construction extended two blocks beyond #227. Another Bradley, no relation to Robert, purchased the house. Henry Bradley, age 57, married Jane Cromwell, the widowed daughter of Rebecca Veirs, who herself was an active developer in the West End. A pre-nuptial agreement between the bride and groom deeded the house to Jane.³ After Henry's death in 1911 the extent of the entire bequests to Jane caused the other Bradley heirs to attempt to set aside the Will, and the case remained in litigation for three years before Jane was declared the legal heir. Jane Bradley owned this lot, the one behind it fronting on Harrison Street, and also #203 West Montgomery which had been built by her mother.⁴ #227 was sold in 1919.

M: 26/10/30

227 West Montgomery Ave.

Continuation Page 7.1/8.1

#7, Continued

of reeded pilasters topped by bulls-eye head blocks. The stairway, which runs the width of the parlor, evokes the earlier, original Queen Anne period. It is an integral part of the organization of the room (comparable to the use of the stairway in the 17th century "great hall"). The underside of the stairway is in full view and is also decorated with wood carving, ending in turned pendants. The balusters are cane-shaped, the stair brackets a repetition of the leaf design.

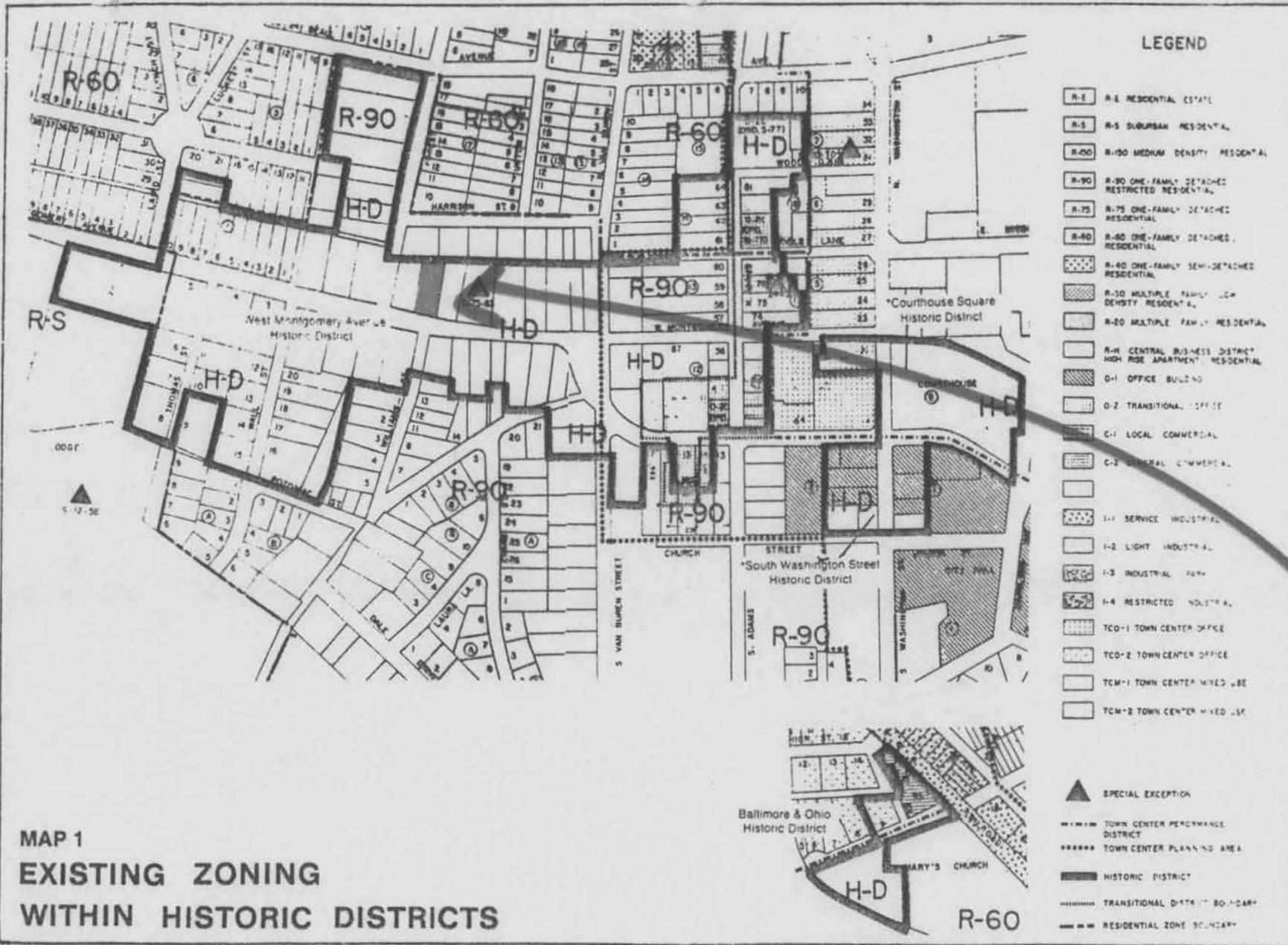
The 1925 alteration of the house removed some interior details of room arrangement, and included installation of archways between the two front rooms in place of the original sliding doors. But in many rooms the encised metal artwork on the brass door fitting remains part of the original Eastlake decoration.

The well manicured lot features several mature trees on the east side. There is a two foot stone wall at the sidewalk.

#8 continued

In 1925 William and Fannie S. Pate paid \$11,000 for #227.⁵ The Pates modernized the house into the Colonial look. The large porches, tower and back buildings were removed. Mr. Pate was unable to match the cedar siding so covered it with stucco, except for the attic level. The house remained in the Pate family until 1952, and Dr. Andrew G. and Phyllis Morrow purchased the house in 1957.

1. Montgomery County Sentinel, August, 1888 and May 16, 1890
2. Obituary of Admiral Stevens, Evening Star, May 15, 1896
3. Montgomery County Land Records, Liber 180, folio 433
4. Montgomery County Assessment Records, 1898-1908, 1910; Real Estate Atlas (1917)
5. Montgomery County Land Records, Liber 1369, folio 490



P11

M: 26/10/30
Morrow House
227 West Montgomery Ave.
Roc Kville

*Note: For discussion and planning purposes South Washington Street and the Courthouse Square district are considered independent Historic Districts even though they are shown on the existing zoning map as one district.

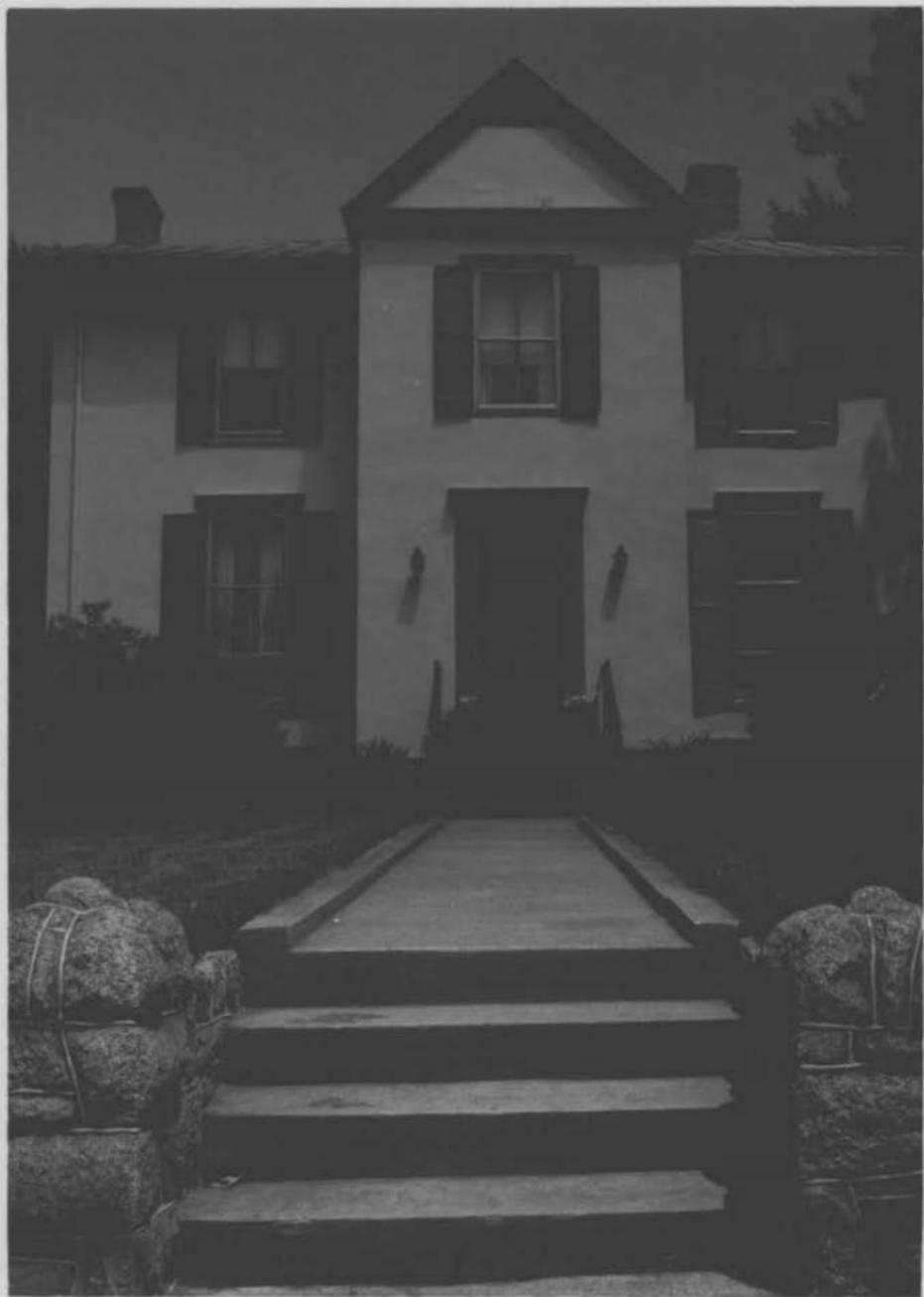


1015-12

M: 26/10/30
THE MORGAN HOUSE
227 W. Montgomery Ave.
EAST/SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

RICHARD H. ANDREWS
1606 Fairgut Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20851

AUGUST, 1984



M: 26/10/30
THE MORNOW HOUSE
227 W. Montgomery Ave.
SOUTH ELEVATION

RICHARD H. ANDREWS
1608 Faragut Avenue
Rockville, Maryland

1015-11

AUGUST, 1984