

EASEMENT

Site M:26/11/2

Old Post Office

Washington Street and Montgomery Avenue

Built: 1938

Public Access

This limestone and brick building has a unique two-story hexagonal corner entry tower. It was built in 1938 under the auspices of the Depression-era Works Projects Administration, using W.P.A. architects and craftsmen. Although mail service began at "Montgomery Courthouse" in 1794, it was Rockville's first permanent post office building. It is adorned with terazzo floors, bronze grillwork and a 1940 Judson Wood mural picturing the rolling country side near Sugar Loaf Mountain. It has had only minor alteration and is still in use as one of Rockville's branch post offices.

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

EASEMENT

Survey No. M: 26/11/2

Magi No. 1651113801

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Old Post Office

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Washington and Montgomery Avenue not for publication

city, town Rockville vicinity of congressional district 8

state Maryland county Montgomery

3. Classification

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

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

name United States Government

street & number telephone no.: 424-2600

city, town Washington state and zip code D.C.

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Land Records liber 723

street & number Montgomery County Courthouse folio 163

city, town Rockville state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title M-NCPPC - 1976

date federal state county local

pository for survey records City of Rockville
city, town Rockville state Maryland 20850

7. Description

Survey No. M: 26/11/2

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" 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 1938 English Georgian style Post Office sits on the corner of Washington and Montgomery Streets. It is five bays along South Washington Street by six bays deep, one story high with corner tower, of brick and limestone material, with full basement.

The most distinguishing architectural feature is a two story hexagonal entrance tower. The tower makes a strong image both visually and functionally. Visually, the tower marks the intersection of these important streets. Functionally, one gains entrance to the Post Office through the tower.

The two-tiered tower, with its arched openings and arched windows, and the two major wings are faced with limestone. The clay tiled roof tower is pitched and capped by a small carved stone finial. The two identical wings radiate from the tower at 90°, parallel to either street and end with an apsidal niche. Each wing is divided by limestone pilasters, and a limestone entablature unifies the entire facade hiding the flat roof. In addition to the niche, each wing has three large rectangular 12-over-12 double hung windows.

The wing along Washington Street forms the public Postal lobby, while the wing along Montgomery Avenue is comprised of administrative offices. The remaining interior block of the building supports the Post Office functions, giving an overall square footprint. Loading docks are located at the rear of the building.

The spacious postal lobby has 15-foot ceilings, the original bulletin boards and brass and glass postal boxes, and a handsome painted mural depicting a view across Montgomery County to Sugarloaf Mountain on the end wall. A mezzanine overlooks the lobby as well as the main work area. The remaining interior has been divided into smaller offices. The building now houses the post office ("Courthouse Station") and recruiting offices for the U. S. military.

8. Significance

Survey No. M: 26/11/2

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Superv. Arch: Louis A. Simon

Specific dates 1938-9 Builder/Architect Architect; R. Stanley-Brown
 Superv. Engineer: Neal A. Mellick

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.

The Old Post Office is significant for its architecture, unique in Rockville, and as a symbol of the maturation of Rockville as a mercantile center -- the City's first permanent post office.

Federal service began at "Montgomery Courthouse" in 1794, with Thomas Perry Willson as postmaster. The road from Fredericktown (Frederick) to Georgetown was a "post road", and stages were used to haul the mail. Rockville's post office was located in a variety of buildings for the next 144 years. Space was leased from different store owners until the need was recognized for a permanent post office building; Rockville's growth during "building boom" of 1890 to 1905 and again during the New Deal era had increased its residential and business population.

On this site from the mid-19th century through 1938 stood the frame buildings which housed the Montgomery County Sentinel, its presses, newspaper office with wood stove, and the Matthew and Rebecca Fields family which issued the weekly publication for so many years. The old Sentinel buildings were razed in November 1938 and construction was begun on the Post Office during that month.

The Post Office was a Works Progress Administration project, designed by Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon and Architect R. Stanley-Brown. Its appearance was at that time and now unique for Montgomery County, as contrasted with other, more classically styled post offices being constructed in Silver Spring and Bethesda during the same period. The cost of the Post Office was approximately \$77,000, \$35,000 of which was for the lot itself. The project was dedicated on July 22, 1939 with a parade, and the building officially opened for business on September 5 of that year.

A local newspaper covering the dedication noted the building's plywood paneling with marble base and wainscoting, terrazzo floors, and bronze grills on the windows. One particularly interesting feature, standard equipment in all new post offices for the use of the inspectors, was the "Lookout Gallery", a room above the sorting room which commanded a view of every section of the building without the supervisor being seen.

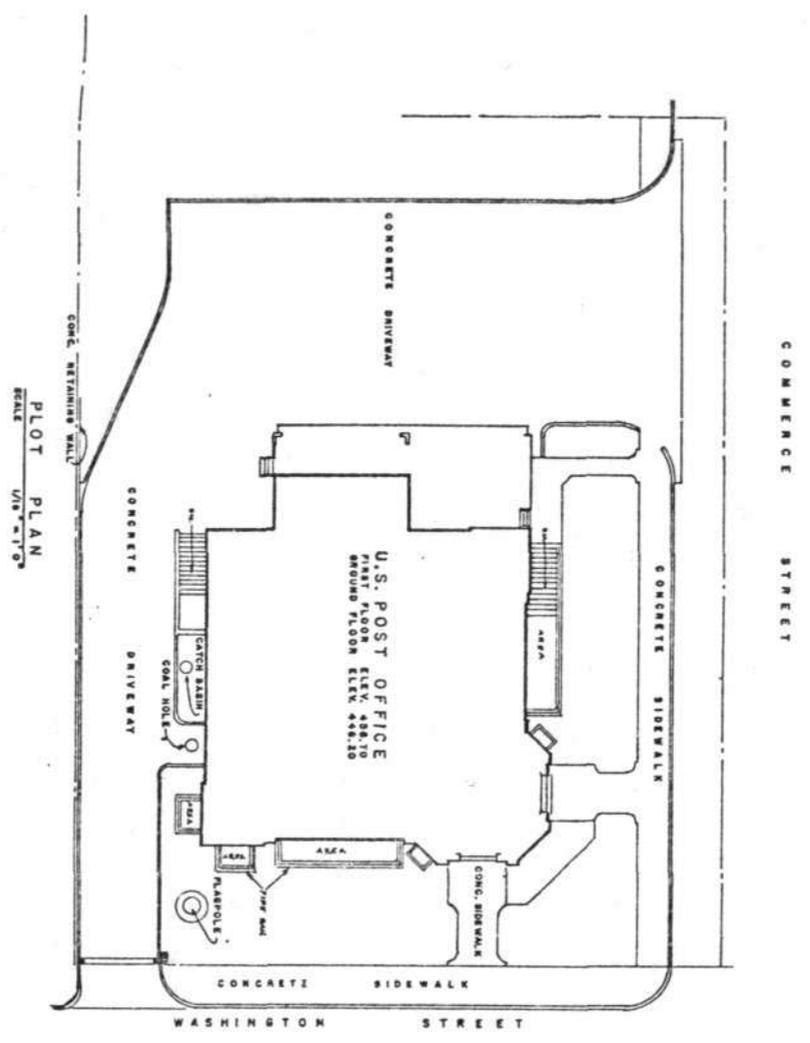
In the Fall of 1940, the Treasury Department's Fine Arts Section presented a mural of Sugarloaf Mountain, with rolling Montgomery County countryside in the foreground, to the Post Office. There was somewhat of a protest over the mural, as Sugarloaf Mountain is not

(continued)

Statement of Significance - Old Post Office, Rockville MD
(continued)

located in Montgomery County. The mural was painted by Judson Smith of New York.

Although Postal officials have considered closing this operation since the North Washington Street main office opened in 1965, a fiercely protective clientele maintains its post office boxes and does its business there. Midmorning scenes of lawyers, businessmen, retirees, secretaries and courthouse officials conversing in the lobby are much the same as they were 45 years ago.

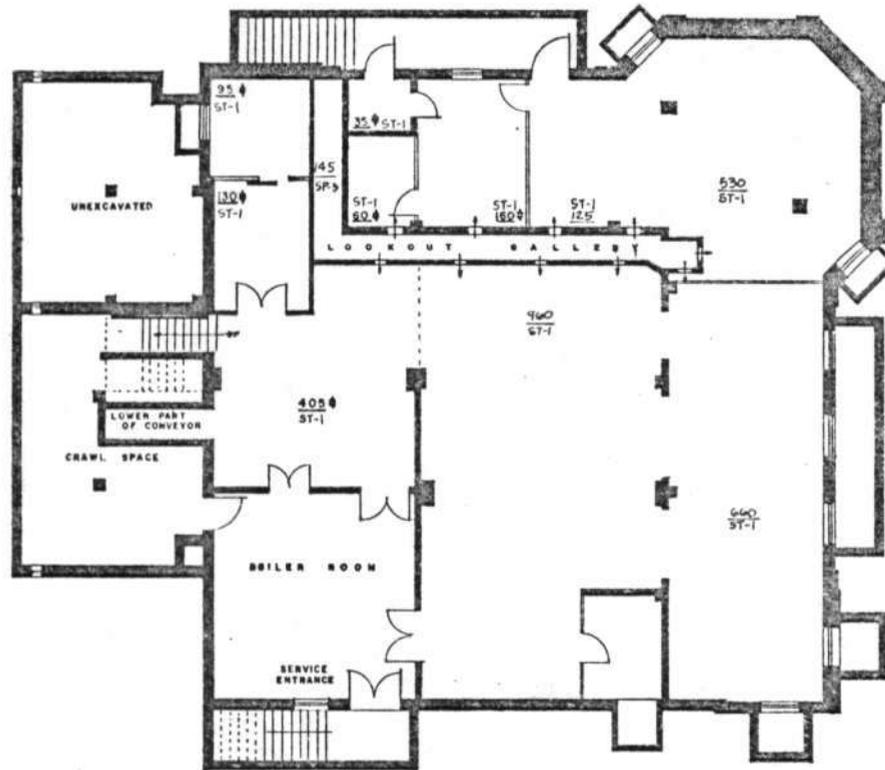


U.S. POST OFFICE
FIRST FLOOR ELEV. 488.10
SECOND FLOOR ELEV. 488.20

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION PUBLIC BUILDINGS SERVICE - WASHINGTON, D.C.	
PROJECT	FED. BLDG. B POST OFFICE
LOCATION	ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
STREET	WASHINGTON & COMMERCE STS.
NO. NO.	112
SECTION NO.	6-30-64 (REVISED 6/67)
DATE	6/67
DESIGNED BY	
DRAWN BY	
CHECKED BY	
TITLE	U.S. POST OFFICE
NO.	1 OF 4



M: 26/11/2
Old Post Office



GROUND FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

OCCUPIABLE AREA = 3,305 SQ. FT.

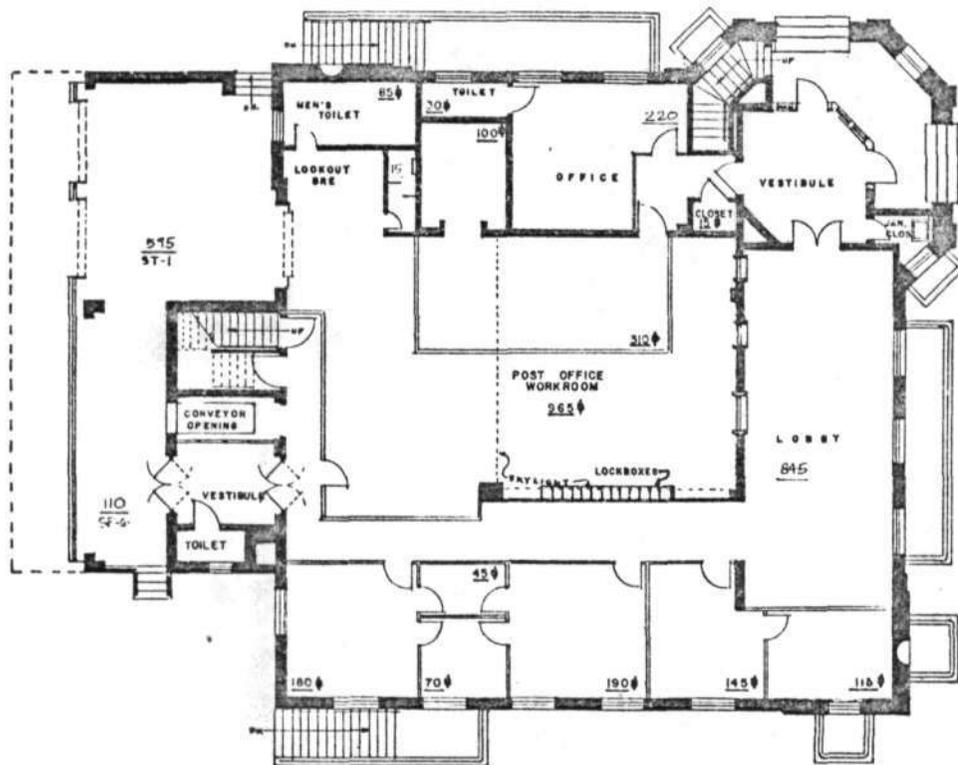
OCCUPIABLE AREAS

GROUND FLOOR	3,305 #
FIRST FLOOR	3,048 #
SECOND FLOOR	433 #
MEZZANINE (NOT ASSIGNABLE AREA)	340 #
BUILDING TOTAL	7,325 #
INSIDE GROSS OF BUILDING	9,782 #



OCCUPIABLE AREA	3,305	GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION PUBLIC BUILDINGS SERVICE - WASHINGTON, D.C.	
BUILDING SUPPORT AREA	1,457	PROJECT	FEDERAL BLDG. & POST OFFICE
MECHANICAL	-	LOCATION	ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
TOILETS	-	STREET	WASHINGTON & COMMERCE STS.
CUSTOMER	632	PROJECT NO.	
CIRCULATION	275	FILE NO.	
HORIZONTAL	-	DRAWN BY	W.C. 6-30-66 (CHECKED BY)
VERTICAL	275	DRAWING TITLE	GROUND FLOOR PLAN
CONSTRUCTION	552	ASSIGNMENT PLAN	
GROSS AREA	4,762	DRAWING NO.	2 OF 4

M: 26/11/2
Old Post Office



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

OCCUPIABLE AREA = 3,045 SQ. FT.

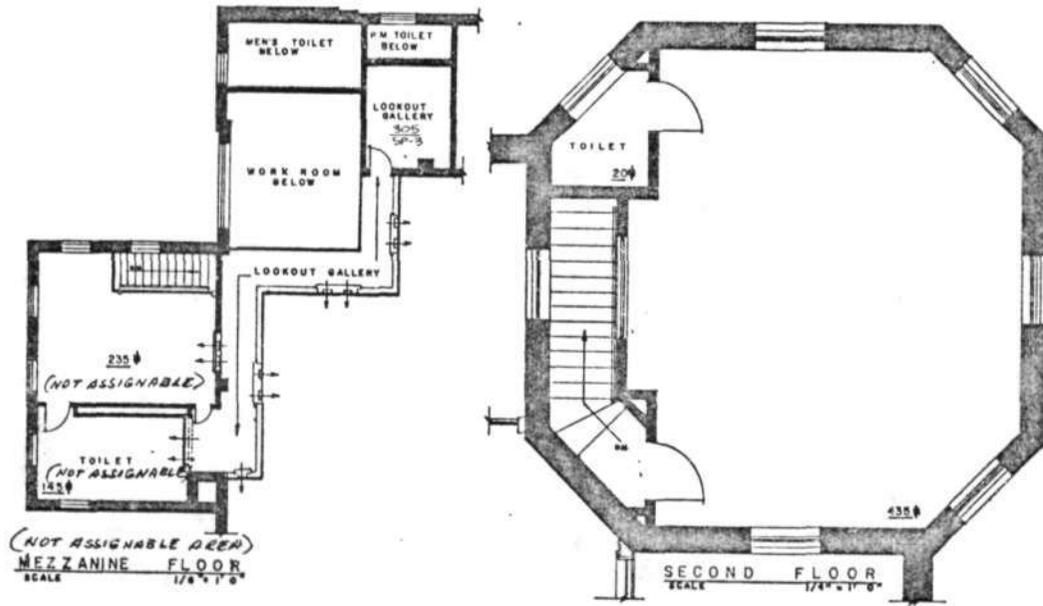
OCCUPIABLE AREAS

FIRST FLOOR 3,045



OCCUPIABLE AREA	3,045	GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION PUBLIC BUILDINGS SERVICE - WASHINGTON, D.C.	
BUILDING SUPPORT AREA	2,591	PROJECT	FEDERAL BLD. & POST OFFICE
MECHANICAL	10	LOCATION	ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
TOILETS	141	SHEET	WASHINGTON & COMMERCE STS.
CUSTOMER	95.6	PROJ. NO.	FILE NO.
CIRCULATION	614	DRAWN BY	W 6-30-66 CHECKED BY
HORIZONTAL	365	DRAWING TITLE	FIRST FLOOR PLAN
VERTICAL	249	ASSIGNMENT PLAN	
CONSTRUCTION	66.5	DRAWING NO.	3 OF 4
GROSS AREA	5,436		

M: 26/11/2
Old Post Office



OCCUPIABLE AREAS

SECOND FLOOR	435
MEZZANINE	540
TOTAL	975

OCCUPIABLE AREA = 975 SQ.FT.



OCCUPIABLE AREA		975	GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION PUBLIC BUILDINGS SERVICE - WASHINGTON, D.C.	
BUILDING SUPPORT AREA		573	PROJECT FEDERAL BLDG. & POST OFFICE	
MECHANICAL		4	LOCATION ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND	
TOILETS			STREET WASHINGTON & COMMERCE STS.	
CIRCULAR		242	PROJ. NO.	752 NO.
CIRCULATION		105	DRAWN BY	W.F. 532-66 CHECKED BY
HORIZONTAL	201		DRAWING TITLE SECOND FL. & MEZZANINE	
VERTICAL	-0-		ASSIGNMENT PLAN	
CONSTRUCTION		142	DRAWING NO.	4 OF 4
GROSS AREA		1548		

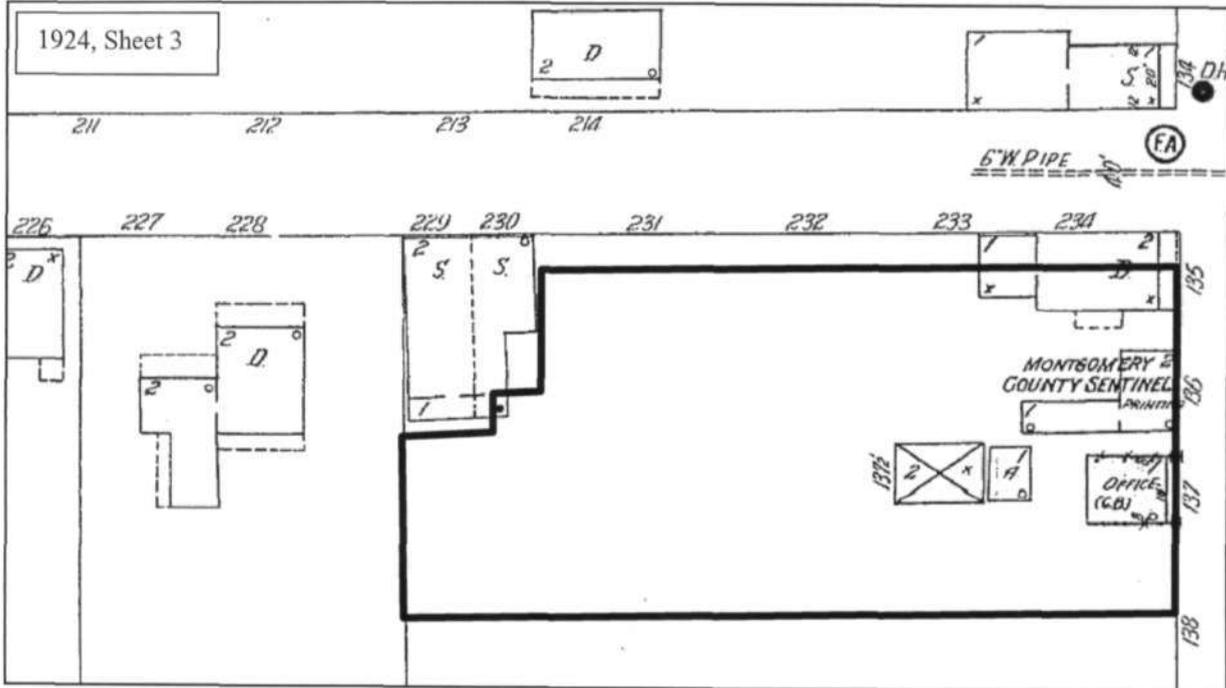
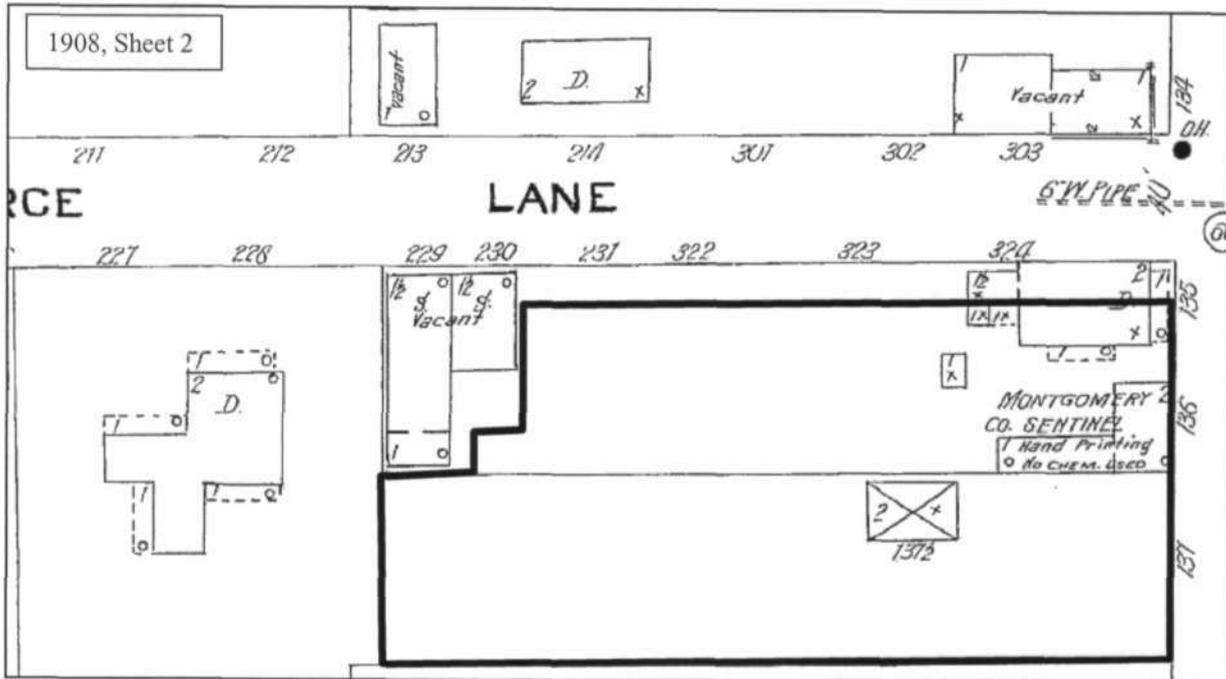
PEERLESS ROCKVILLE

M: 26/11/2
Old Post Office
From Peerless Rockville
calendar, 1981

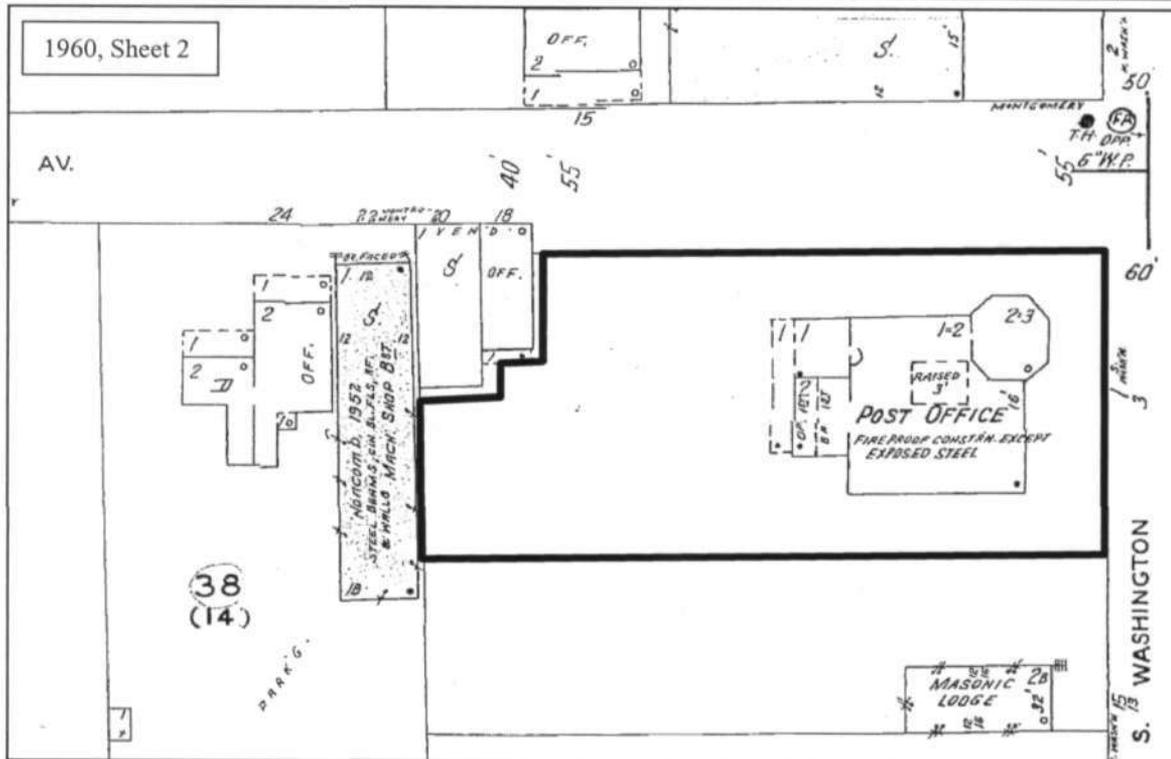
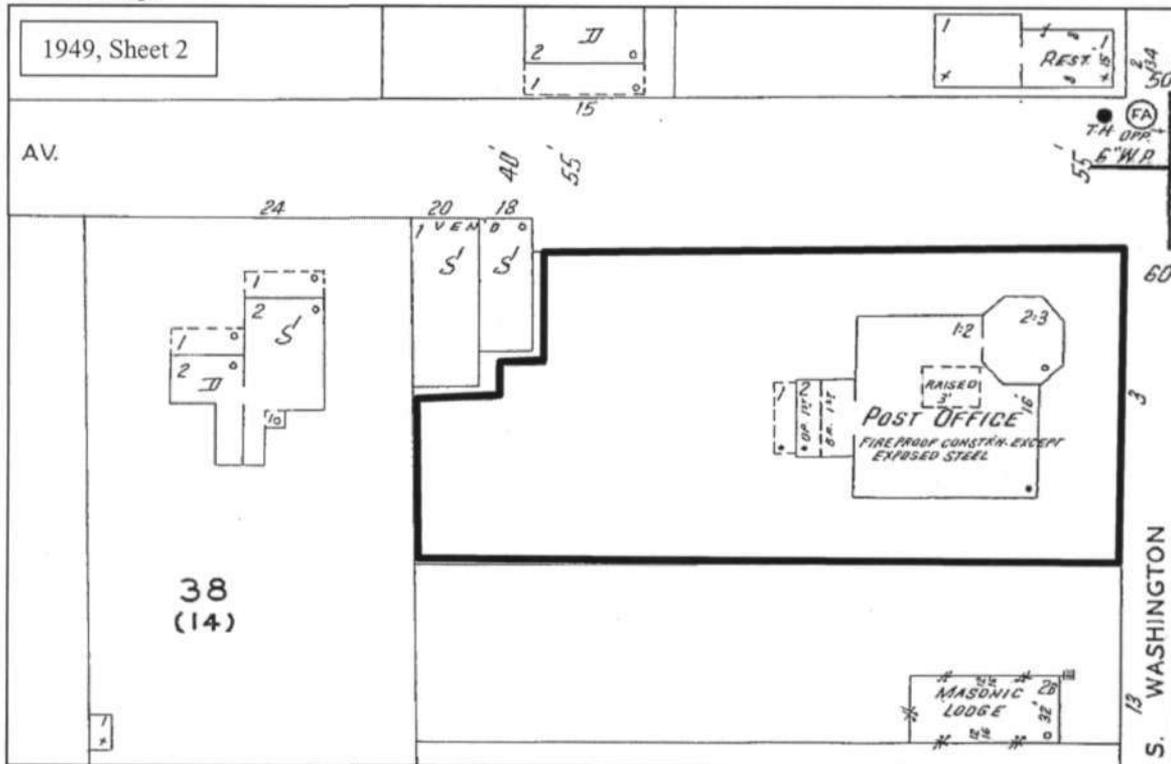


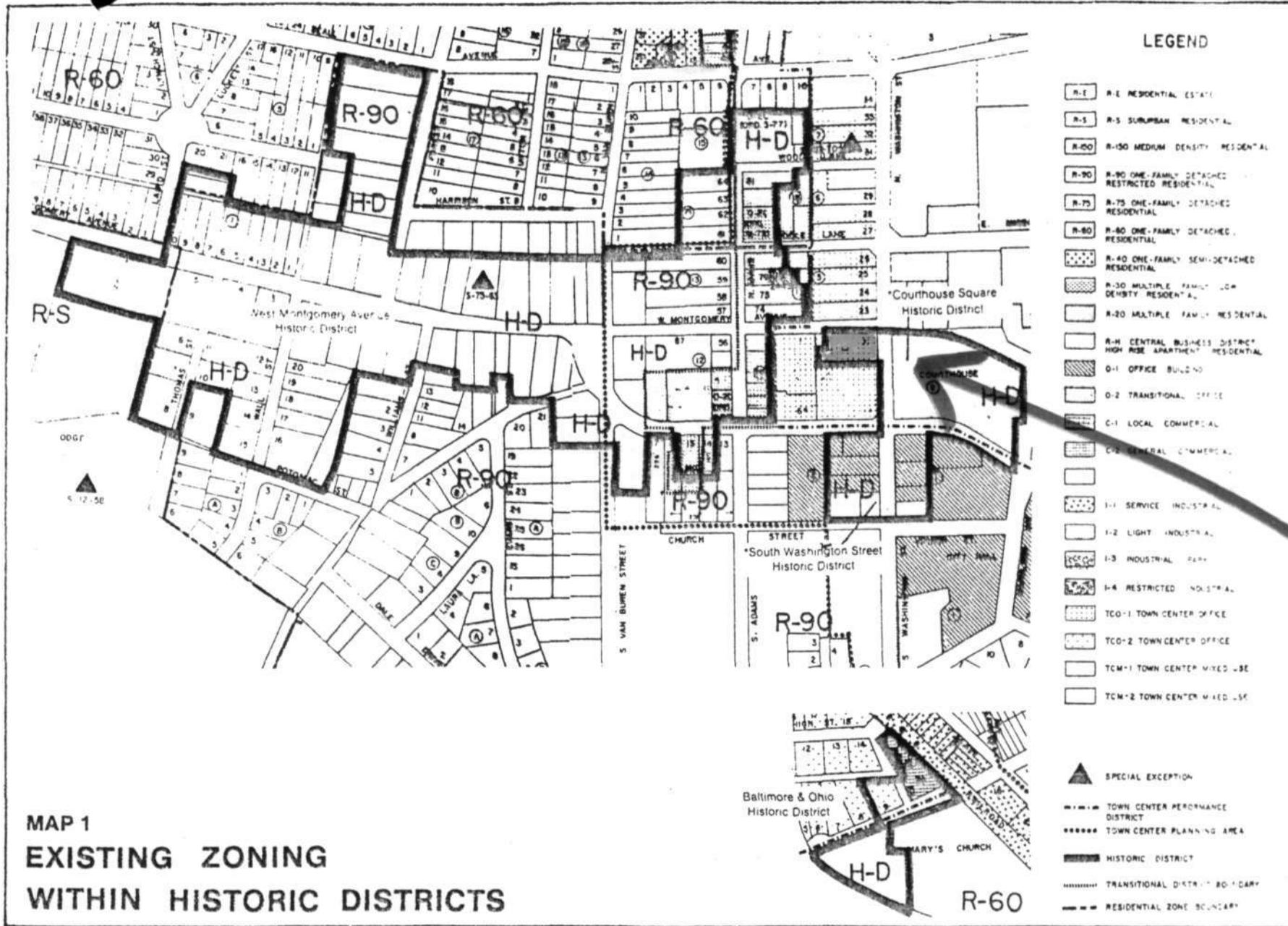
The Old Post Office

M: 26-11-2
 Old Post Office (future location)
 2 W. Montgomery Avenue, Rockville
 Sanborn Maps



M: 26-11-2
 Old Post Office
 2 W. Montgomery Avenue, Rockville
 Sanborn Maps





**MAP 1
EXISTING ZONING
WITHIN HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

*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.

p11
 M: 26/11/2
 Old Post Office
 Washington St. & Montgomery Ave.
 Rockville



RICHARD H. ANDREWS
1608 Farragut Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20851

1009-5

M: 26/11/2

Old Post Office
NORTH ELEVATION
MONTGOMERY AVENUE
AUGUST, 1984



RICHARD H. ANDREWS
1608 Farragut Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20851

M: 26/11/2

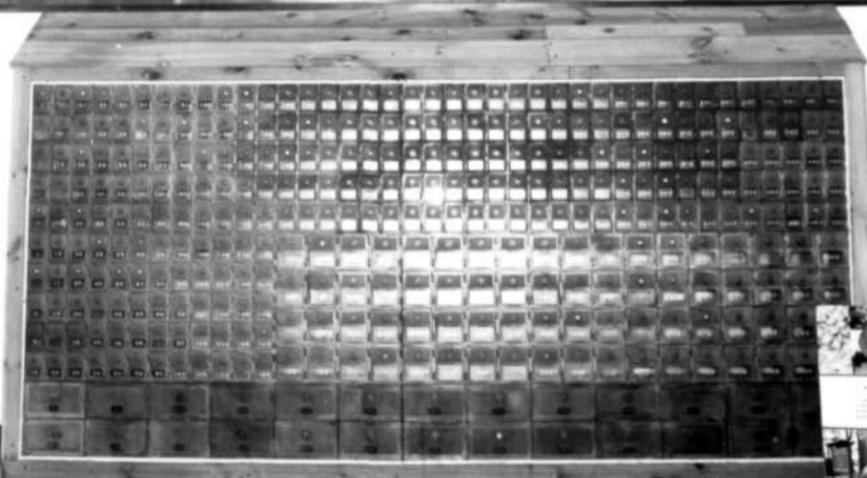
Old Post Office

East ~~NORTH~~ ELEVATION - WASHINGTON ST

AUGUST, 1984

1007-2

1007-2



Support
the Home
Team.



RICHARD H. ANDREWS
1608 Farragut Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20851

M: 26/11/2

Old Post Office
(interior)

SOUTH WALL

AUGUST, 1984

1009-3