

M: 26/16/12

Alphonzo Lee House

203 (and 207) Martin's Lane, Rockville

Private

Built: 1924-25

This portion of Samuel Martin's original farm served as a summer home until purchased by Alphonzo Lee in 1924. A postal worker who was a major force in Montgomery County's civil rights movement for forty years, Mr. Lee made his home on Martin's Lane until his death in 1974. Local black builder Raymond LeRoy Baker constructed this 2 story Dutch Colonial frame house for the Lee family in 1924; it has full-width dormers front and rear, is similar to the Sears & Roebuck Catalog model "Chatham", and is the most sophisticated house in style and plan up to its time in the community.

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

 NR eligible:  yes  no  
 Contrib. element in H.D. 

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

 historic Alphonzo Lee House

and/or common

### 2. Location

 street & number 203 (and 207) Martin's Lane  not for publication

 city, town Rockville  vicinity of 8th congressional district

 state 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" 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 Adele E. White

 street & number 203 Martin's Lane telephone no.: 340-6255

 city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

### 5. Location of Legal Description

 courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse 4720 liber 848

 street & number Rockville folio Maryland

 city, town Rockville state Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

 title Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

 date Historic Sites Inventory 1976  federal  state  county  local

 repository for survey records Park Historian's Office

 city, town Derwood state Maryland

# 7. Description

Survey No. M.26/16/12

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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 house is a well preserved two-story Dutch Colonial with full-width shed-roofed dormers front and rear and a one-story sun-room on the west facade. It is remarkably similar to the Sears & Roebuck Catalog model "Chatham" offered from 1934 to 1937 with one window substitution. Other than recent replacement roof cladding and modern windows in the enclosed side sun room, it is in near-original condition and the most sophisticated in style and plan up to its time in the community.

The subject house faces south on Martin's Lane in a row of houses ranging from a 19th century vernacular farmhouse to brick ranch houses of recent construction with similar moderate setbacks. The lot is a rectangular portion carved out of the adjacent lot numbered 205, now under different ownership, to the west. Lot 207 is to the west of 205. To the rear is part of a private burying grounds, Haiti cemetery. The house is elevated from street level, accessed by three concrete steps to the central concrete walkway to the house. The front yard has an open lawn with evergreen foundation shrubs. Mature trees shade the rear yard.

This rectangular frame two-story, three-bay by three-bay Dutch Colonial has a moderately-pitched gambrel roof clad with composition shingles and is sheathed with wide wood siding. The high foundation is beveled concrete block, and there is one exterior brick chimney on the west facade. Window and door surrounds are plain mitered stock. Windows are typically 6/6 with shutters on the front facade only.

The house appears to have been constructed in 1924-5 by tax and family history, but it is remarkably similar to a 1930s Sears & Roebuck Catalog house called the "Chatham". <sup>1</sup>/ The only change is the substitution of a single window on the second story, east facade, for the illustrated two windows. Other than the ca. 1860s Victorian farmhouse at 22 Martin's Lane, this is the most sophisticated house built in this community up to its time. There is a one bay garage off the northeast corner of the house; it is of cinder block construction with a composition roof.

<sup>1</sup> Katherine Cole Stevenson and H. Ward Jandl, Houses by Mail. National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1986. page 355.

Continued on Attachment 7.1

The three-bay south (front) second story facade has a full double-sash window in the east and west bays and a four light central casement window. The first story has windows in the north and south bays and a central porticoed entryway with four sidelights over a wood panel flanking a solid wood door. The portico has a shed roof supported by two square wooden posts at the front corners. The sides are screened with lattice. The door is reached by a three step cement stoop.

The two-bay east facade has a fanlight window attic story, one window in the second story, and one window in the south bay, first story, and a four-light casement window in the north bay. There are two basement windows in the foundation.

The three-bay north (rear) facade has a full-width dormer with three evenly-spaced smaller windows. The first story has a window in the west bay and a central exterior door which opens to a modern deck.

The two-bay west facade has two quarter-round fanlight windows flanking the central brick exterior chimney. One window is in the north and south bays, second story. The first story is occupied by a sun room on beveled block foundation which has been enclosed by a combination of plate glass picture windows and aluminum double sash l/l windows and aluminum siding.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. m: 26/16/12

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) black history

**Specific dates** ca.1924-5      **Builder/Architect** Raymond L. Baker, Builder

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.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This portion of Samuel Martin's original farm served as a summer home until purchased by Alphonzo Lee in 1924. Lee employed black builder Raymond LeRoy Baker to construct this Dutch Colonial house, perhaps the first of its design in Rockville. Lee was honored for his many civic and humanitarian contributions to the County and City of Rockville before his death. The house remains in the family.

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA: Attachment 8.3  
ROCKVILLE HISTORIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN DATA: Attachment 8.3

### HISTORIC CONTEXT

Samuel Martin, Jr., was born a slave to the Nichols family near Rockville about 1800. When he died in 1873, he left considerable property and fortune, as well as the respect of those who knew him. His children divided up the farm north of Martin's Lane. Charlotte Penny received the westernmost 1-3/4 acre parcel in the division of her father's estate, identified in his will as Lot #1 on Plat #1; Charlotte Penny "of Washington City" took title to her portion in August 1883. 1/

Charlotte exchanged land with her brother Thomas and sold the parcel to her sister Agatha (Carroll), who married Dennis Smith. The Smiths constructed a home about 1887, then made the northernmost portion of their land available to local families for burials; the earliest readable stone (that of Charlotte Penny) is dated 1889. 2/

continued on attachment 8.1

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In 1893 and 1908 Abraham Jones, who lived in Washington, D.C., purchased parcels on either side of the Smiths' property. 3/ On the westernmost 1/2 acre (lot 207) he constructed a cottage before 1900, to which he brought his family every summer. Abraham's son, Dr. Ferman Jones, fondly recalled summers spent on Martin's Lane; there was baseball, a pavillion on Bickford's property, picnics, and evenings on the porch listening to tales of Civil War Veteran Carroll. The Jones family rented their D.C. dwelling, but owned their summer house here. 4/

The Jones cottage was valued at \$550 in 1910, the two parcels of land valued separately at \$100 each. Ferman Jones recalls sadly that the house burned down about 1914. 5/

Abraham Jones' heirs sold the two parcels at public auction in 1924, where they were purchased by Alphonzo Lee for \$917. The Lees immediately borrowed \$4,000 from the Hyattsville Building Association of Prince George's County and constructed a house on the small, easternmost parcel; the assessment increased the following year by \$3,500. 6

The design for the house built by the Alphonzo Lee family was chosen by daughter Evelyn from a magazine, according to the present owner.

Colonial styles, including Dutch Colonial, returned to popular favor in the 1920s, influenced by the revival of interest in early American life generated by the 150th anniversary of U.S. independence in 1926. This house is nearly identical to Sears and Roebuck's later "Chatham" model dating from 1934 to 1937. The selection of this design at such an early date shows the Lees' acceptance and commitment to significant new designs and ideas. The builder was Raymond LeRoy Baker, a local carpenter and house builder, who had apprenticed with S. L. Gray and constructed other homes on the street.

Alphonzo Lee (1883-1974) (Photograph, attachment 8.4) was born in Washington D.C.; he graduated from Dunbar High School and began studies at Howard University. He married Luella Jackson in 1905, and they had two daughters. The family moved to Scotland, Maryland, then to Rockville where they lived on the Agatha Smith property while building their home on Martin's Lane. Mr. Lee worked for the Post Office Department as a District of Columbia mail carrier for 30 years, retiring in 1946. He then worked as a chemical assistant in a Cleveland, Ohio, metal plating laboratory before retiring again in 1963 and returning to live in Rockville for the rest of his life.

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Alphonzo Lee was a handsome man with a rich commanding voice that made one listen when he spoke. He was a trained cabinet maker, loved music, and was an excellent photographer. He loved to hunt, garden, and cook. He was active with several fraternal organizations, including the Masons, and Sunday School Superintendent at Jerusalem Church for many years.

But it was in the area of Civil Rights that Alphonzo Lee left his major legacy. He had been associated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People since 1910, helping to organize the Montgomery County Chapter in Rockville in 1937. He became president of the Montgomery County Chapter and became a tireless worker for equal school terms for black and white public school children, equal pay for black and white teachers (he committed to mortgaging his home on Martin's Lane in a test case in 1936), desegregation of restaurants (Big Boy Restaurant in Rockville), theatres (Milo Theater in Rockville), public bathrooms, hospitals (Montgomery General and Suburban), and courthouse facilities in Rockville. He established the Civic Unity Committee in 1953, organized the Montgomery County Committee for Democratic Practices in 1960, and worked with the Progressive Citizens Association on housing in Lincoln Park.

Mr. Lee was honored several times by the NAACP and by persons interested in the progress of civil rights in Montgomery County. A few months before his death he received the Humanitarian Award from the City of Rockville. 7/

After Mr. Lee's death in 1974, his daughter Evelyn I. Williams received the westernmost 1/2 acre, and his other daughter Adele E. White received the house and .237 acre parcel.

Footnotes:

1. Montgomery County Will Records, Inventory RWC7/122 (1873); obituaries; Montgomery County Judgment Records, EB14/120 (1873-1883); Montgomery County Land Records, EBP29/252 (1883).
2. See MHT Inventory Form M:26/16/5, Haiti Cemetery.
3. Montgomery County Land Records JA36/473 and 198/238.
4. Interview with Dr. Ferman Jones- Sharyn Duffin, 1982; According to Mrs. Rosalie Campbell, many blacks lived in D.C. so their children could attend school there.
5. Ibid - Jones interview; Assessment Records 1910, 1916.
6. Montgomery County Land Records 352/10 (1924); Equity #4188; 396/242 (mortgage).
7. Undated and unpublished paper by Nina Clarke.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Montgomery County Land, Judgment, Will and Tax records. Undated and unpublished paper "Alphonzo Lee" by Nina Clarke; Interview with Adele Lee White; Taped interview with Dr. Ferman Jones by Sharyn Duffin. Summer 1982.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_  
Quadrangle name #203 - .21 acre. #207 - <sup>.5 acre</sup> ~~Quadrangle~~ scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## Verbal boundary description and justification

Part of lot 1 of Samuel Martin's Estate

## List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Eileen McGuckian / Judy Christensen	
organization	Peerless Rockville	date May, 1988
street & number	P.O. Box 4262	telephone 762-0096
city or town	Rockville	state Maryland, 20850

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870  
Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Settlement/Political  
Architecture/Landscape Architecture/Community Planning  
Social/Educational/Cultural

Resource Type:

Category: Building  
Setting: Urban  
Historic Function(s) or Use(s): Domestic/Single Family/Residence  
Known Design Source: None

ROCKVILLE HISTORIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN DATA:

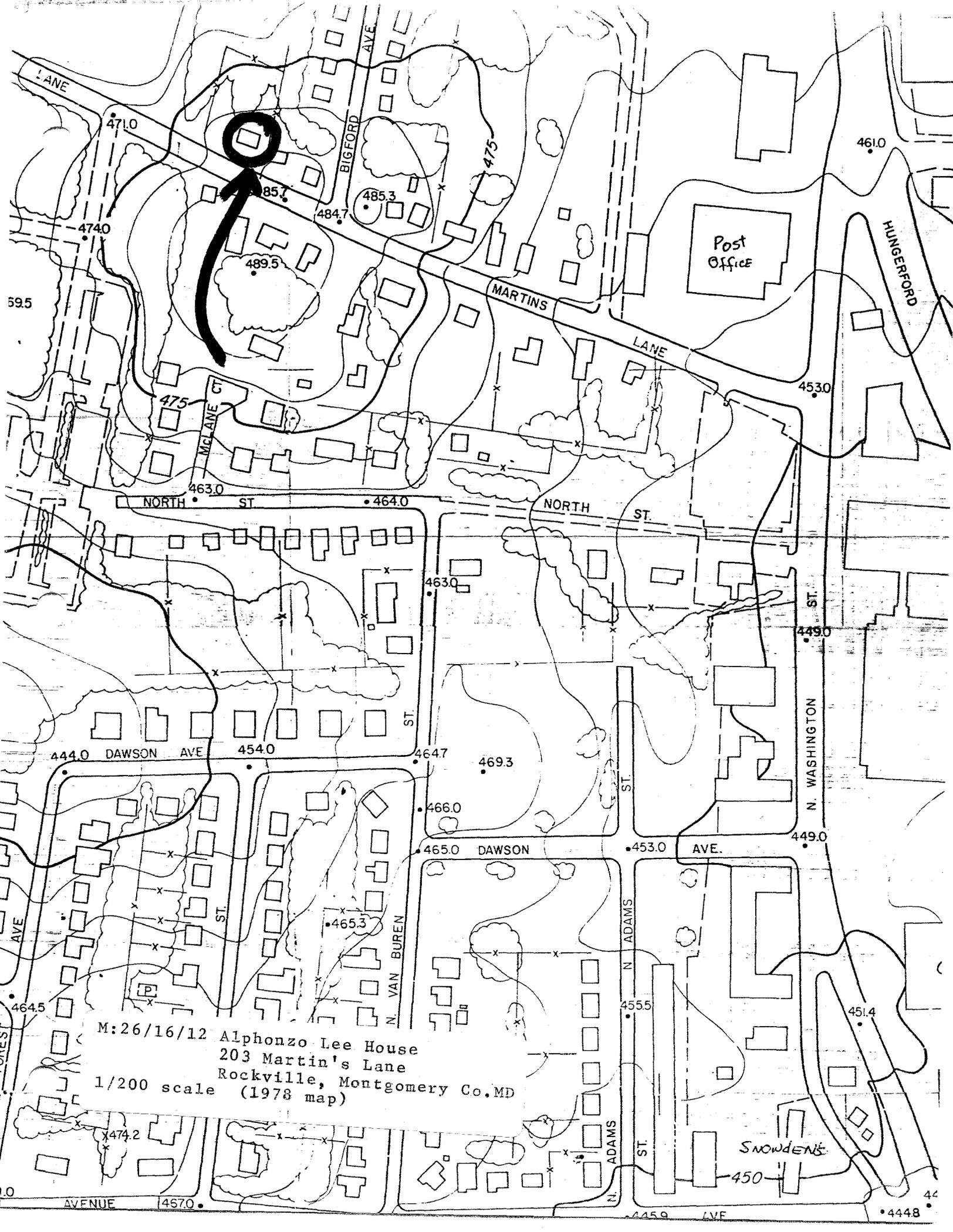
1. Geographic Organization: Piedmont, Montgomery County, Rockville
2. Chronological Period(s):  
Development as Montgomery County Seat A.D. 1825-1873  
Maturation and Expansion of the County Seat A.D.1873-1931
3. Historic Context Theme(s): Architecture, Landscape Architecture,  
Community Planning (Black History); Social/Educational/Cultural
4. Resource Type:  
Category : Building  
Setting: Urban  
Historic Function(s) or Use: Domestic/Single Dwelling/Residence  
Known Design Source: None

Statement of Significance/ History (continued):  
203 Martin's Lane, Alphonzo Lee House

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ALPHONZO LEE  
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY NINA CLARKE





M:26/16/12 Alphonzo Lee House  
 203 Martin's Lane  
 Rockville, Montgomery Co. MD  
 1/200 scale (1978 map)

SNOWDENS

Post Office

HUNGERFORD

LANE

AVE

ST

AVENUE

MCCLANE CT

BIGFORD AVE

N. VAN BUREN

N. ADAMS

ST

ST

ST

LANE

LANE

MARTINS

NORTH ST

NORTH ST

471.0

474.0

485.7

484.7

485.3

489.5

475

463.0

464.0

463.0

444.0

454.0

464.7

469.3

466.0

465.0

DAWSON

453.0

AVE.

449.0

N. WASHINGTON

ST

ST

453.0

461.0

451.4

450

474.2

467.0

445.9

AVE

444.8

59.5

0.0

44



Alphonzo Lee House

M: 26/16-12

203 Martins Lane

Rockville Md. 20850

South (front) and east elevation

J Christensen

5/88