

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes   
no

Property Name: Indian Spring Country Club Inventory Number: M:31-39  
 Address: 13501 Layhill Road (MD 182) Historic district:  yes  no  
 City: Silver Spring Zip Code: 20916 County: Montgomery  
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Kensington  
 Property Owner: Indian Spring Country Club LLC (Winchester Homes) Tax Account ID Number: 00965277 etc.  
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 180 etc. Tax Map Number: JR12  
 Project: Intercounty Connector, Environmental Mitigation Site NW-160 Agency: SHA  
 Agency Prepared By: ICC Team  
 Preparer's Name: Elizabeth Roman Date Prepared: 7/21/2009

Documentation is presented in: \_\_\_\_\_

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation:  Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended  
 Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*

Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible:  yes  no Listed:  yes  no

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

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

**Description**

\* Please note that access to the Indian Spring Country Club was restricted by its current owner. Not all the buildings and structures were accessed during two field views for photographing. Descriptions of the accessory buildings and structures on the property have been augmented by research and review of online aerial and bird-eye views.

Indian Spring Country Club is located on four adjoining tax parcels at 13501 Layhill Road, in Colesville, Montgomery County. The irregularly-shaped property is bordered by the Northwest Branch to its east, Bel Pre Creek to its south, and residential developments to its east and north. Lacking road frontage, it is accessed via an entrance road leading east off Layhill Road. The property includes a club house, a pool building, accessory buildings, two golf courses, two swimming pools, and various other recreational facilities. The buildings are clustered at the end of the entrance road with the two golf courses extending to the west and south. The natural topography of the property is undulating and slopes down into the creek valleys. The entire property is landscaped for its golfing and recreational use, with natural forest vegetation only found along the creeks that border and flow through the property.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

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**MHT Comments:**

Jim Tuller ✓ 9/23/09  
 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date  
Blunt 9/24/09  
 Reviewer, National Register Program Date

The club house forms the center of the building complex. Situated at the east end of the entrance road, it is the first building viewed when entering the country club. Two large parking lots are located to the north and south of the club house connected by a driveway. The club house faces west towards this driveway. The pool building is located north of the club house, facing west towards the north parking lot. To its rear (east) are the club's two swimming pools and other recreational features. Along the east and south edges of the south parking lot are 17 hard-surface tennis courts enclosed by chain link fencing. Concrete sidewalks lead around the club house and to the pool house, pool complex, and both parking lots.

The club house (Photos 1-4) is a two-story Modern building built in 1957. It is of masonry construction with flat roofs and a concrete foundation. The roughly rectangular building is built into the natural slope of the ground with its main entrance on the west elevation into the upper level. It is composed of four connected blocks running north-to-south. These are of varying sizes with the two center blocks having two stories each and the two end blocks having one story each. The north block houses the kitchen, the north-central block the ballroom, and the two south blocks housing the main entrance, meeting rooms, and offices. The ballroom block has curved end walls, concave on the west elevation and convex on the east elevation. The club house is constructed of concrete block with veneer of brick, stacked sandstone, and stucco. It has steel-framed large ribbon windows on its west and south elevations to provide a view of the golf courses from the building. Other elevations are relatively solid with few openings excepting a service entrance on the north elevation. The entrance foyer, with steel-framed glass doors set into stacked stone walls, extends east off the south-central block. It is marked by a porte-cochere constructed of two connected steel flattened semi-circular arches. A terrace is located on the roof of the southern block, extending around the west elevation of the south-central block, and having a curved stair down to a patio at ground level.

The pool building (Photo 5) is a two-story masonry building also built in 1957. It is comprised of two separate buildings connected by a covered walkway, with the three parts arranged in a semi-circle around a circular driveway to its west. The building has brick and stucco veneer, concrete foundation, and flat roofs. Like the club house, it is built into the natural ground surface, with its main entrances in the upper floor. The interior of the building is lighted by steel framed awning or jalousie windows set mostly in pairs. The south block is trapezoidal in shape and accessed via a set of concrete steps off the driveway. It houses the pool office (upper level) and snack bar (lower level). The roof extends over the east elevation to cover the snack bar, forming a porch supported by tubular steel columns. The north block is in turn composed of two parallel rectangular sections and houses the locker/changing rooms and lifeguard office. The clerestory levels of both building sections have two rows of a checkerboard pattern of cream and red concrete panels and occasional horizontal sash windows. The covered walkway is curved to match the curve of the driveway. It has a pierced brick knee walls capped with a decorative brushed steel railing. Its flat roof is supported by tubular steel posts. A set of concrete and brick stairs lead down to the pools from its north end. The facility's two pools (Photo 6) are located on terrace a level below the lower floor of the building. The two rectangular tile-lined in-ground pools (one for adults and one for children) are placed at a 90 degree angle to each other, now each enclosed by chain link fencing. Located nearby are a circular fountain (Photo 7), shuffleboard courts, basketball court, and a circa 1970s playground.

The majority of the Indian Spring Country Club property west and south of the building complex is encompassed by the two 18-hole golf courses completed in 1956 and 1957: the Chief Course at the center of the property, and the Valley Course which wraps around the Chief Course on the eastern and southern edges of the property. Both are regulation Par 70 courses, with the championship-level Chief Course measuring 6,915 yards in playing length (Photos 8 & 9) and the amateur-level Valley Course measuring 6,116 yards (Photo 10). The golf holes have designed hazards such as irregularly-shaped sand traps, man-made ponds, and thick groves of planted trees. A putting green is located near the 1st tee and 18th green of the Valley Course, off the back entrance to the club house. A network of macadam paved cart paths lead between the holes starting at the club house, and a macadam paved maintenance road leads through the middle of the property. At each tee is a water fountain of stone construction that dates from original construction in 1957 (Photo 11). Remaining small scale landscape elements on the two golf courses date

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from the 1970s including wooden cart path bridges, wood and steel benches, wood and steel trash bins, and wooden path markers (no photos).

Accessory buildings scattered around the property include the cart storage building, pump house, three restrooms, a picnic shelter with toilets, and two maintenance buildings. The cart storage building (no photo) is located south of the club house between the south parking lot and the golf courses. The circa 1960s one-story long, narrow building is of brick construction with a shallowly pitched asphalt-shingled gable roof. The circa 1957 pump house (no photo), located at the west edge of the pool complex, is a small one-story L-shaped building of concrete block construction with an asphalt-shingled gable roof. Three restroom buildings are scattered across the property for use by golfers during play. All three are circa 1957 double-pen single story buildings on slab foundations, with a bathroom on each side. One is located across the driveway from the club house entrance; it is a brick building with a projecting flat roof and steel framed doors and windows (Photo 12). The second is a side-gable roofed brick building with inset porch located at the south end of the golf courses (no photo). The third is a concrete block and stacked stone building with an asphalt shingled hip roof, located at the north end of the golf courses (no photo). In the center of the golf course is a circa 1980s wooden picnic shelter with two concrete block toilets (Photo 13). All have slab foundations and asphalt-shingled gable roofs. There are to circa 1980s maintenance buildings, one located east of the club house (Photo 14) and the other north of the picnic shelter (no photo). These concrete block buildings with slab foundations have asphalt-shingled gable roofs and steel overhead and entrance doors.

Indian Spring County Club is in very poor condition from decades of deferred maintenance followed by several years of abandonment. Grasses and weeds are engulfing its many patios, terraces, walkways and cart paths. The nets have been removed from the tennis and basketball courts, with only vestiges of the painted lines remaining. The golf courses are so severely overgrown that it is difficult to follow the fairway from tee to green at many of the holes. Numerous native meadow plants are growing on the fairways and greens, and the sand traps are almost entirely engulfed by vegetation. The rough between the holes is now a wild meadow with a mix of tall grasses, meadow plants and small trees. The property is now under redevelopment. The pool house and surrounding small buildings have been demolished, and the club house interior has been gutted. Silt fencing has been placed along the streams and ponds of the golf course in preparation for future site grading.

Historical Narrative:

Founded in 1921, Indian Spring County Club moved to this site in the mid-1950s following the State Highway Administration's decision to construct the Washington Beltway across part of its existing site at Four Corners in Silver Spring. Club owners Abraham S. Kay, George Wasserman, Louis Grossberg and Jack Kay bought this property in 1956 (Deeds) with a plan to construct the largest country club facility in metropolitan Washington and the only private club with two championship golf courses at that time (Fitzgerald 1955a). The post-war period from the mid-1940s through the 1960s was one of rapid suburban growth in Washington D. C., including new public and private facilities for recreation (KCI 2000). Numerous new golf courses were built in the outer suburban areas during the period, as golf became one of the areas most popular leisure activities. Washington D. C. had the greatest number of golf courses of cities its size during the 1950s, with 35 open in 1955 and at least five more planned that year. (Fitzgerald 1955b). The trend was not unique to the area, as golf clubs and public courses were being constructed across the country to provide easily accessible courses to a growing number of players that lived in the new suburbs.

Abraham S. Kay led the planning of the new club site, hiring golf course architect William F. Gordon from Philadelphia to design the courses (Fitzgerald 1955b & 1956). His direction to Gordon was to create courses that could be played by both inexperienced players and champions (Fitzgerald 1955a). William F. Gordon began his career at the Philadelphia firm of Toomey and Flynn at which he trained under leading golf course architect Dick Wilson. He established his own firm in 1941 to build courses for other

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designers, expanding into principally design by the 1950s. During the 1950s and 1960s, William F. Gordon designed or remodeled over 70 golf courses, mostly in the Mid-Atlantic and principally in the Philadelphia area. His experience with construction made him a designer with the ability to use the natural landscape in the most expedient manner (Cornish & Whitten 1981; ASGCA 2008). Like his mentor and other golf course designers of the post-war period, Gordon followed the Heroic School of course design, in which a combination of man-made obstacles and undulating and turning fairways forced a player to make strategic shots in order to make par (Shackelford 2003).

The Indian Spring club house and pool building were designed by local architects John S. Samperton and Clark T. Harmon (Washington Post 1956). They used a Modern streamlined style for the complex, more commonly seen in public buildings (schools, municipal offices, libraries) in metropolitan Washington during the period (KCI 2000). The complex was quite large with its two buildings, two pools, and tennis courts covering 35 acres. When the club house and golf courses were completed in 1957, the final cost was over \$2,000,000 (Washington Post 1956). On July 4, 1957, the club hosted opening ceremonies including a festival and fireworks, which established a pattern they continued on July 3rd every year (Washington Post 1957; Sabia 2007). Although it contained a professional course (the Chief Course), Indian Spring County Club never hosted a renowned professional tournament that would have attracted the top players in the county.

Indian Spring Country Club remained a fixture in the community until the late 1990s, when dwindling membership led its owners, who were descendants of the original men that established the club in the 1920s, to reorganize and incorporate. This effort was only a stop gap as they were forced to consider redevelopment of the property into a residential golf course community. The owners hoped this would attract a new generation of golfers not interested in private club membership due to its cost compared to public golf facilities (Shin 2005). When this plan failed to gain approval from Montgomery County, the owners were forced to close Indian Spring Country Club and sell the property late in 2006 (Sabia 2007). A new residential development is planned for the former country club site, with approvals received in the fall of 2008 by the developer, who is now demolishing the buildings and starting site work on the property.

**National Register Evaluation:**

Indian Spring Country Club was evaluated according to criteria set forth in National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (Andrus & Shrimpton 2002). This recreation resource is recommended as not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places due to a combination of loss of association with recreation, lack of association with a locally architect prominent architect, and loss of integrity of design, materials and workmanship. First, it is not eligible under Criterion A for recreation. As one of over twenty courses dating from the mid-twentieth century, it is a common resource type for the period in the Washington D.C. region. Although historically associated with the development of private golf clubs in suburban Washington D.C. during the early-to-mid 20th century to provide recreation and leisure activities, it no longer retains the intact golf course, club house, and pools to convey that association. Second, Indian Spring Country Club is not eligible under Criterion B as it has no association with significant persons, as Indian Spring County Club's founders collectively are not locally significant. Abraham Kay is locally important for his charitable foundations, but not this private club. Third, Indian Spring Country Club is not eligible under Criterion C for design due to loss of its character-defining features including intact golf course landscape, club house and other sporting facilities. Also, Indian Spring Country Club is not eligible under Criterion C for architecture or design as neither its golf courses nor its principal buildings are examples of master designers nor do they embody intact distinctive characteristics of a period. Course designer William Gordon was far more prolific in other parts of the Mid-Atlantic, with his best courses elsewhere (Cornish & Whitten 1981). Architects Samperton and Harmon do not appear to be regionally recognized, as web-based search on ProQuest did not identify other buildings designed by either architect. Additionally, the club never had a residential-styled club house, considered a principal character-defining element for early-to-mid twentieth century country clubs

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(KCI 2002). Fourth, please note that Criterion D (information potential) was not investigated as part of this project.

Bibliography

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<b>Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services</b>	<b>Date</b>
_____	_____
<b>Reviewer, National Register Program</b>	<b>Date</b>

Shackelford, Geoff. Grounds for Golf: The History and Fundamentals of Golf Course Design. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2003.

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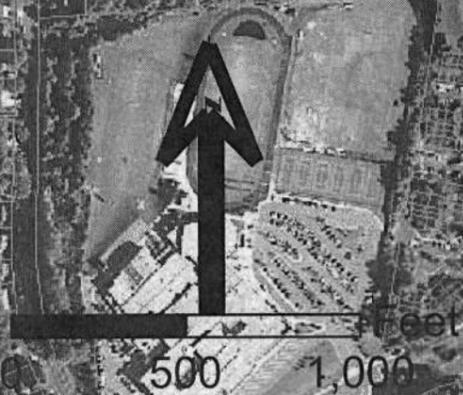
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Reviewer, National Register Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Indian Spring Country Club  
M: 31-39  
Montgomery County, MD  
SKETCH MAP**



- LEGEND**
- 1) Club House
  - 2) Pool Building
  - 3) Pool
  - 4) Tennis Courts
  - 5) Fountain
  - 6) Shuffleboard Courts
  - 7) Basketball Court
  - 8) Cart Storage Building
  - 9) Pump House
  - 10) Restroom Building
  - 11) Picnic Shelter
  - 12) Maintenance Building



# Location Map



## Indian Spring Country Club (M: 31-39)

Montgomery County, MD



0 1,000 2,000 Feet  
1 inch = 2000 feet

Source: USGS Kensington, MD (1979)



MHP # M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club

Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

neg. MD SHPO (Roll 1, Frame 4)

Clubhouse, W elevation (Facade)

Photo 1

21 00 M0 Y0 D0 08/29/08



MIHP # M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club  
Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

neg. MD SHPO (Roll 1, Frame 2)

clubhouse, detail view of Entrance facing NE

# 3  
Photo 2 23

23 00 10 40 00 08/29/08



MHP# M: 31-39

Indian Spring Country Club

Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

neg. MD SHPO (roll 1, Frame 7)

Clubhouse, N and W Elevators, view facing SSE  
from Pool Building

photo 3

18 00 M0 Y0 D0 08/29/08



MIHP# M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club

Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

neg. MD SHPO (Roll 1, Frame 9)

Clubhouse, NE Elevation (Rear)

351668 17/26 <5R25 11>

Photo 4

16 00 M0 Y0 D0 08/29/08



MIHP# M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club  
Montgomery County, MD

R. Crew, 8/9/2008

neg. MD SHPO (Roll 1, Frame 19)

Pool Building, East Elevation, view facing SW  
Photo 5 across the pools

6 00 MO Y0 00 08/29/08



MHP # M: 31-39

Indian Spring Country Club  
Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

neg. MD SHPD (Roll 1, Frame 6)

Pools, facing E from Pool Building

Photo 6

19 00 M0 Y0 D0 08/29/08



MIHP # M: 31-39

Indian Spring Country Club  
Montgomery County, MD

R. Crew 8/9/2008

Neg. MD SHPO (Roll, Frame 8)

Fountain, view facing NW from Pool House

Photo 7

17 00 M0 Y0 D0 08/29/08



MHP # M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club  
Montgomery County, MD

R. Crew, 8/9/2008

Meg. MD SHPO (Roll 1, Frame 10)

Chief Course, view facing ENE from 1<sup>st</sup> Green towards  
holes 10 and 14

Photo 8

15 00 10 00 00 08/29/08



MHP# M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club

Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

Neg. MD SHPD (Roll 1, Frame 17)

Chief Course, view facing W from near 17th Green  
across 18th Tee

Photo 9

8 00 M0 Y0 00 08/29/08



MHP# M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club  
Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

Neg. MD SHPO (Roll 1, Frame 15)

351668 11/26 <SR25 11>

Valley Course, view facing N up 12<sup>th</sup> Fairway

Photo 10

10 00 M0 Y0 D-1 08/29/08



MHP # M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club

Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

Neg. MD SHPO (Roll 1, Frame 12)

Water Fountain, view facing E (SR25 11)

Photo 11

13 00 M0 Y0 D0 08/29/08



MIHP# M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club

Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

Aug. 9, 2008

neg.: MD SHPO (Roll 1, Frame 1)

Restroom Building near clubhouse, S + E Elevations

Photo 12

24 00 M0 Y0 00 08/29/08



MIHP # M:31-39

Indian Spring Country Club

Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

neg. MD S APO (Roll 1, Frame 11)

Picnic Shelter & Toilets, view facing SE

#  
Photo 13

14 CO MO Y0 D0 08/29/08



MHP # M: 31-39

Indian Spring Country Club

Montgomery County, MD

Rebecca Crew, photographer

August 9, 2008

Neg. MD SHPO (Roll 1, Frame 20)

View facing W across Parking Lot towards  
#1702 Maintenance Building

Photo 14

5 00 MO Y0 00 08/29/08