

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties
USDA, Bureau of Animal Industry Station
Montgomery County, Maryland

Inventory No. M-35-119

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6. Function or Use
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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION Sub: Research Facil: Laboratory
GOVERNMENT Other: Administration Office

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RECREATION/CULTURE Sub: Outdoor Recreation: Park

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne: Free Classic Subtype

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof SLATE
walls BRICK
other CORNICE: Copper
WATERTABLE: Stone

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

See Continuation Sheet No. 7-1

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8. Statement of Significance
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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.

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

SCIENCE
INDUSTRY
AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance 1906-1936

Significant Dates 1906
1909
1936

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation _____

Architect/Builder _____

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

See Continuation Sheet No. 8-1

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

Offutt, William. *Bethesda: A Social History*. P.255-257.

Webb, Margaret. *Recreation Center used to be animal experimentation station.*

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Klinge, F.H.M. *Property Atlas of Montgomery County, MD*. Vol. 1
1931. P.6.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Washington Suburban, Vol. 1. P 23.

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property _____

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

The administration and Laboratory building occupies parcel # on Montgomery County Tax Map .

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This parcel is part of a larger parcel of land that was associated with the property since the late 19th century.

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Michele Naru, Architectural Historian
organization M-NCPPC date August 25, 1999
street & number 8787 Georgia Avenue telephone 301/563-3400
city or town Silver Spring state MD zip code 20910
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12. Property Owner
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name M-NCPPC Parks Division
street & number 8787 Georgia Avenue telephone 301-563-3400
City or town Silver Spring state MD zip code 20910
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MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Inventory No. M-35-119
USDA, Bureau of Animal
Industry, Administration
and Laboratory Building
name of property
Montgomery County, MD
county and state

The property known as Norwood Park is located on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue, at the end of Norwood road, in urban, southern Montgomery County, Maryland. The property includes at its center, the present day Norwood Recreation Center, two, post-WWII, one-story frame non-contributing buildings and three, non-contributing structures including a tennis court, a play-ground and a baseball diamond. The Norwood Recreation Center was originally built as the Administration and Laboratory building for the USDA, Bureau of Animal Industry Station that once occupied the grounds of the park.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

At the center of Norwood Park and facing east to Wisconsin Avenue, is the large, 2-story, Queen Anne style brick building with Free Classic decorative detailing. The building is set upon a poured, sand-dashed and scored concrete foundation and is covered with a hipped roof. The stretcher bond masonry walls are ornamented with stone belt courses and patterned brick masonry on the first story and a round, brick belt course on the second story. A copper cornice with a denticulated frieze board, rises to an egg-and-dart detail and a prominent bracketed eave. The roof is clad with slate and features a single, central chimney and two, metal ridge ventilators. The Queen Anne Style is visible in the a-symmetrical plan and the use of belt courses, decorative patterned brickwork, and towers. The Free Classic subtype is visible in the entablature and columns of the entry porches, in the brackets and dentils in the cornice details, and in the jack arches used in the window and door details.

Exterior Description

The east elevation is divided into five bays, with the northeast corner occupied by a two-story, round tower. The basement level contains three, three-light awning windows, two on the south side of the entry and one on the north side. The first story contains an entry and two sets of flanking windows. The entry, ornamented with a flared, jack arch and reached from the raised porch, has a pair of three-paneled glazed doors with an egg-and-dart detailed surround and surmounted by a single-light transom. The two sets of 1/1 sash windows to either side of the entry have a prominent stone sill. Each window is capped with a brick, flared, jack arch. The second story includes five, symmetrically placed, 1/1 sash windows. These windows also feature a prominent stone sill and are capped by a simple, jack arch.

The one-bay porch with square brick columns support a beveled, metal porch roof. It is set upon a raised, poured concrete foundation.

The south elevation is divided into four bays. The basement contains a single, three-light awning window in the west bay. The first story consists of two, three-paneled glazed doors, located on center with flanking 1/1 sash windows with stone sills and flared, jack arches. The second story contains three, a-symmetrically placed windows. Two, full-size, 1/1 sash windows are placed above the first story window and door in the west bay. A single, half-width 1/1 sash window is located in the east bay above the first story window.

The west elevation is divided into five bays. The basement level features a central entry with a single, three-light awning window in the southern bay and two, three-light awning windows in the northern bay. The central entry, located below ground level and in a protruding entry, contains a flush, metal door surmounted by a single-light transom. The first story is reached by stairs leading to a raised porch with a flush metal door, crowned by a flared, jack arch. The two sets of windows to either side of the entry contain 1/1 sash, with prominent stone sills and are also crowned with flared, jack arches. Above the porch, located on the second story, is an a-symmetrically placed 1/1 sash window. Flanking and located above this central window, in the north bay, is a third entry. This entry is accessed through a metal stairway from ground level. The entry features a flush, metal door and is surmounted by a single-light transom and capped with a simple, jack arch. A single, 1/1 sash window is located to the north of the door. This window is decorated with a stone sill and a simple, jack arch. The south bay contains two, 1/1 sash windows with stone sills and simple, jack arches.

The one-bay porch with square brick columns support a beveled metal porch roof. The porch is set upon a raised, poured concrete foundation.

The north elevation is divided into five bays. The basement level contains an entry door with a single, three-light awning window in the west bay and a 6/6 sash window and flanking awning window in the east bay. The entry features a flush, metal door surmounted by a single, light transom. The first story contains four, 1/1 sash windows with stone sills and capped with flared, jack arches. The second story also contains four, 1/1 sash windows with stone sills but, are capped with simple, jack arches.

The tower is located at the northeast corner of the building. The basement level is fashioned with one, three-light awning window. The first story consists of three, 1/1 sash windows. Each window is ornamented with a stone sill and capped with a flared, jack arch. The second story contains three, symmetrically placed, 1/1 sash windows. Each of these windows are also ornamented with stone sills, but capped with a simple, jack arch. The tower is completed with a slate roof crowned by a copper final.

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Non-Contributing Structures:

Day-Care Center: Located north of the building, this frame structure dates to post-WWII.

Senior Citizens Center: Located north of the building, this frame structure dates to post-WWII.

Tennis Courts: Located NW of the building.

Baseball Diamond: Located West of the building.

Playground: Located NE of the building.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

CONTINUATION SHEET

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From *Bethesda: A Social History*, by William Offutt:

The first major government installation in Bethesda, other than the Civil War forts and the post office that moved from one general store to another, was the Department of Agriculture's Animal Disease Research Station operated by the bureau of Animal Industry. It moved its operations to eighteen acres leased from Bradley Davidson in July 1897. The experiment station, as it was usually called had been established in 1883 on a seven-acre tract near 18th and Benning Road in Northeast Washington, a site it quickly outgrew.

D.F. Salmon, Chief of the bureau of Animal Industry, was anxious to expand the work into the broader field of animal husbandry and wanted space to permit such an additional workload. The Bethesda area was well-known to a number of high ranking USDA scientists making homes in Somerset including Dr. Salmon, one of that town's founders and the holder of a number of vacant building lots.

Dr. Ernest C. Schroeder was the superintendent of the experiment station when it moved to Bethesda. He established his wife, Florence, and young son, Robert, in a home on Rockville Pike and turned the small house on the eighteen acres rented from Davidson into a temporary headquarters. Carpenters soon completed a frame laboratory, a breeding house for small animals used in experiments, four stables with thirty box and twenty open stalls, and a carriage and tool house, and the research work began. In 1899 the Government purchased the eighteen acres plus two more for \$20,000, and three years later added an additional thirty acres for \$10,000.

The operations outgrew the original, frame lab building and moved into the basement and first story of a fireproof, brick laboratory in 1906. (This is the present day Norwood Recreation Center.) Three years later, when further funding was available, they added the second floor and a permanent roof. The total cost of the red-brick building was about \$25,000. In 1910 a larger and better breeding house, which the USDA claimed paid for itself annually by producing cheaper and better lab animals, went into service. Over the years the government built several more large stables and about two dozen smaller ones to hold three or four horses or cows for a particular study. A number of other USDA scientists pursued their own experiments, including work with silk worms, in various corners of the sprawling station.

When King Menelik of Abyssinia gave President Theodore Roosevelt a male zebra, TR sent it to Bethesda and encouraged a project to develop a superior, cross bred farm animal. The zebra was mated to a local mare and the result christened a "zebhorse." One of Bill Clipper's boasts was that he broke in a couple of zebras and drove them up Wisconsin Avenue in triumph." The project continued for about five years before being abandoned by the Animal Husbandry Division.

Because the experiment station was becoming crowded and to separate the work on animal husbandry and dairying from the work on diseases, the government leased a nearby sixty-acre farm beginning in 1907. This farm was likely in the Kenwood area although there is also some evidence that USDA pastured horses and perhaps cattle on farms between Bradley Lane and the Columbia Country Club for some time before this. Another government farm was located about two miles north of Bethesda near Rock Creek.

In 1909 the \$25,000 allocated to buy the 60-acre farm in Bethesda proved insufficient because of inflation of land prices generated by the filing of subdivision plats. The government purchased a 475-acre farm in Beltsville, and moved the dairy herds and other animal husbandry work out there.

In its 1910 annual report the USDA described the Bethesda facility: *It is equipped for and conducts investigations regarding animal diseases with a view to their control and eradication and their bearing on the public health, and investigations in animal breeding, with special reference to the laws of heredity and the development of increased resistance to disease. A small farm is maintained in such a manner as to provide the other divisions of the bureau with facilities for making observations for which large domestic animals are needed.*

The first work at the experiment station was on the contagiousness of pleuropneumonia in cattle, a serious problem since ante-bellum days. Work on swine plague and hog cholera continued at Bethesda, and Drs. Theobald Smith and F.L. Kilborne completed their investigation of Texas or southern cattle fever. This epochal work showed why a truly infectious disease may in no respect be contagious. Their study demonstrated how ticks transmitted the disease and how infected immune cattle could carry it.

Other experiment station work included the study of gladders, anthrax, blackleg, sheep scab and poultry diseases and a major investigation of tuberculous, its spread, diagnosis and treatment in cattle, hogs, and humans. This work also involved the standardization of tuberculin and the supervision of commercially prepared tuberculin. At Bethesda, USDA scientists tested "alleged cures" of many infectious diseases and numerous sheep and cattle dips and other preparations. They also studied unusual outbreaks of animal diseases, examined infectious abortion disease in cattle and produced valuable tests for hoof and mouth disease...

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As the scope of the work at the experiment station increased and the development of the land in West Chevy Chase and along Bradley Boulevard also accelerated, the two uses came in conflict. Early in the 1920's residents of nearby homes began pressing for the removal of the farm with its flies and its smells. In 1923 the Department of Agriculture bought thirty more acres of land back near Willett Creek and the complaints increased. The station was no longer welcomed in Bethesda. In 1930 thirteen civic groups met and asked the Federal government to stop work on the site and turn it over the land for park use.

Mrs. John Werner, president of the Bethesda Elementary School PTA, where her husband ran a boys' club program, was one of the moving forces behind this drive. Stella Werner admitted that in the 1930s "recreation was my hobby." Emory Bogley badgered the politicians and drafted the bill, which Senator Tydings introduced, to give the land to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The bill failed three times but was finally passed and signed in 1936, and by September most of the supplies and animals had been moved and only a few men were left to salvage equipment and care for the few remaining animals. USDA vacated the experiment station by early '37 leaving behind fences, sheds and pens and not much else. The heating plant, electrical wiring, and plumbing had all been removed. Civilian Conservation Camp boys from Garrett Park helped to clear the land along with workmen for the new M-NCPPC.

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HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Development Period (s):

Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Modern Period A.D. 1930-Present

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme (s):

RESOURCE TYPE(S)

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Function (s): Laboratory and Administration Offices

Known Design Source: US Government



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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

MICHELE NARU

10-8-99

MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

VIEW OF NORWOOD PARK, LOOKING WEST

FROM ENTRY DRIVE

1 OF 14



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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO, MD

MICHELE NARU

10-8-99

MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

EAST ELEVATION

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONT. CO., MD

MICHELE NARU

10-8-99

MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERV. SECTION

NE OBLIQUE

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

MICHELE NARU

10-8-99

MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

NORTH ELEVATION

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

MICHELE NARU

10-8-99

MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

NORTHWEST OBLIQUE

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONT. CO., MD

MICHELE NARU

10-8-99

MNCPPC - HIST. PRESERV. SECTION

SOUTH ELEVATION

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO, MD

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MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

DETAIL OF MAIN ENTRANCE, LOCATED ON
EAST ELEVATION

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

MICHELE NARU

10-8-09

MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

DETAIL OF FRONT ENTRY, LOCATED ON
EAST ELEVATION

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

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10-8-99

MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION
VIEW OF FRONT ENTRY'S EGG AND DART
DETAIL

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO, MD

MICHELE NARU

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MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

DETAIL OF 3 paneled glazed doors
ON NORTH ELEVATION

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99 8 10

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

MICHELE NARU

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MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

DETAIL OF FIRST STORY ARCHES

FLARED JACK ARCH

11 OF 14



'99 8 10

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

MICHELE NARU

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MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

DETAIL OF SECOND STORY ARCHES

ROUGH JACK ARCH OR FLAT ARCH

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

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10-8-99

MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

DETAIL OF CORNICE

13 OF 14



'99 8 10

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BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY STATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

MICHELE NARU

10-8-09

MNCPPC - HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

VIEW OF 4700 + 4711 NORWOOD DR.,

LOCATED ON PARK PROPERTY

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