

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes  no

(M:35-14-2)  
M: 35-14-02

Property Name: Madonna of the Trails statue

Inventory Number: M: 35-14-02

Address: 7400 Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)

Historic district: yes  no

City: Bethesda

Zip Code: 20814

County: Montgomery

USGS Quadrangle(s): Washington West

Property Owner: Maryland State Society of the Daughters of the American Re Tax Account ID Number: 00490661

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): N458

Tax Map Number: Hn22

Project: Purple Line Transit Study

Agency: Maryland Transit Administration

Agency Prepared By: John Milner Associates, Inc.

Preparer's Name: Courtney Clark and Sarah Traum

Date Prepared: 2/8/2012

Documentation is presented in: Maryland Historical Trust website, General informational summary (anonymous, n.d.), MNCPPC correspondence, dated 1985-1986.

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: Old Bethesda Commercial District

Inventory Number: M: 35-14

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)*

The Madonna of the Trails monument stands at the northeast corner of the Bethesda Post Office, 7400 Wisconsin Avenue, in downtown Bethesda. The monument consists of a statue representing a pioneer woman with two children on a high, square base. The statue faces east toward Wisconsin Avenue. The monument is sited within a small, paved public plaza.

The statue and base are both made of concrete.

The east face of the base reads:

MADONNA OF THE TRAIL  
N S D A R MEMORIAL  
TO THE  
PIONEER MOTHERS  
OF  
THE COVERED WAGON DAYS

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

MHT Comments:

[Signature]  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

8/24/12  
Date

[Signature]  
Reviewer, National Register Program

8/24/12  
Date

Engraved on the south face of the base is:  
 THIS, THE FIRST MILITARY ROAD  
 IN AMERICA  
 BEGINNING AT ROCK CREEK AND  
 POTOMAC RIVER  
 GEORGETOWN, MARYLAND  
 LEADING OUR PIONEERS  
 ACROSS THIS CONTINENT  
 TO THE PACIFIC.

On the west face of the base is carved:  
 THE NATIONAL  
 OLD TRAILS ROAD

The north face of the base reads:  
 OVER THIS HIGHWAY  
 MARCHED THE ARMY OF  
 MAJOR GENERAL  
 EDWARD BRADDOCK  
 APRIL 14 – 1755  
 ON ITS WAY TO FORT DUQUESNE

Sculptor August Leimbach was commissioned by the Daughters of the American Revolution in the early twentieth century to memorialize the pioneer mothers of covered wagon days. Twelve copies of this statue were cast in concrete and placed throughout the United States. These monuments were placed along the National Old Trails Road, also known as the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway. The Bethesda monument was the last of the twelve to be dedicated, in 1929. The monument was originally located at the southeast corner of the Bethesda Post Office. When the Bethesda Metro Station was built nearby in the early 1980s, this monument was placed into storage. It was moved to its current location after the construction was completed.

The Madonna of the Trails monument is listed on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation. There is no previous determination of eligibility for this resource on file at MHT. It is recommended that the Madonna of the Trails monument as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: design. The Madonna of the Trails monument reflects the early twentieth century idealization of the nobility, spirit, and courage of pioneer women of the nineteenth century. Criteria Consideration F applies to this property because it is commemorative in purpose. This monument meets Criteria Consideration F because it has achieved its own significance as an example of the early twentieth-century perception of pioneer women's sacrifice and spirit. This resource maintains its integrity of materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association. The monument has been moved slightly from its original location and the setting has changed from one of a small town to a busy urban center, but these changes do not detract from the resource's overall integrity.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW	
Eligibility recommended _____	Eligibility not recommended _____
Criteria: <u>  </u> A <u>  </u> B <u>  </u> C <u>  </u> D	Considerations: <u>  </u> A <u>  </u> B <u>  </u> C <u>  </u> D <u>  </u> E <u>  </u> F <u>  </u> G
MHT Comments:	
_____	_____
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	Date
_____	_____
Reviewer, National Register Program	Date

References cited:

1986 Maryland Historical Trust, Madonna of the Trails documentation. On file at the Maryland Historical Trust Library, Crownsville, Maryland.

Barr, Cameron W.

2004 "Listing Madonna Rescued in Bethesda." Washington Post. 11 December 2004: B01.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria:    A    B    C    D Considerations:    A    B    C    D    E    F    G

MHT Comments:

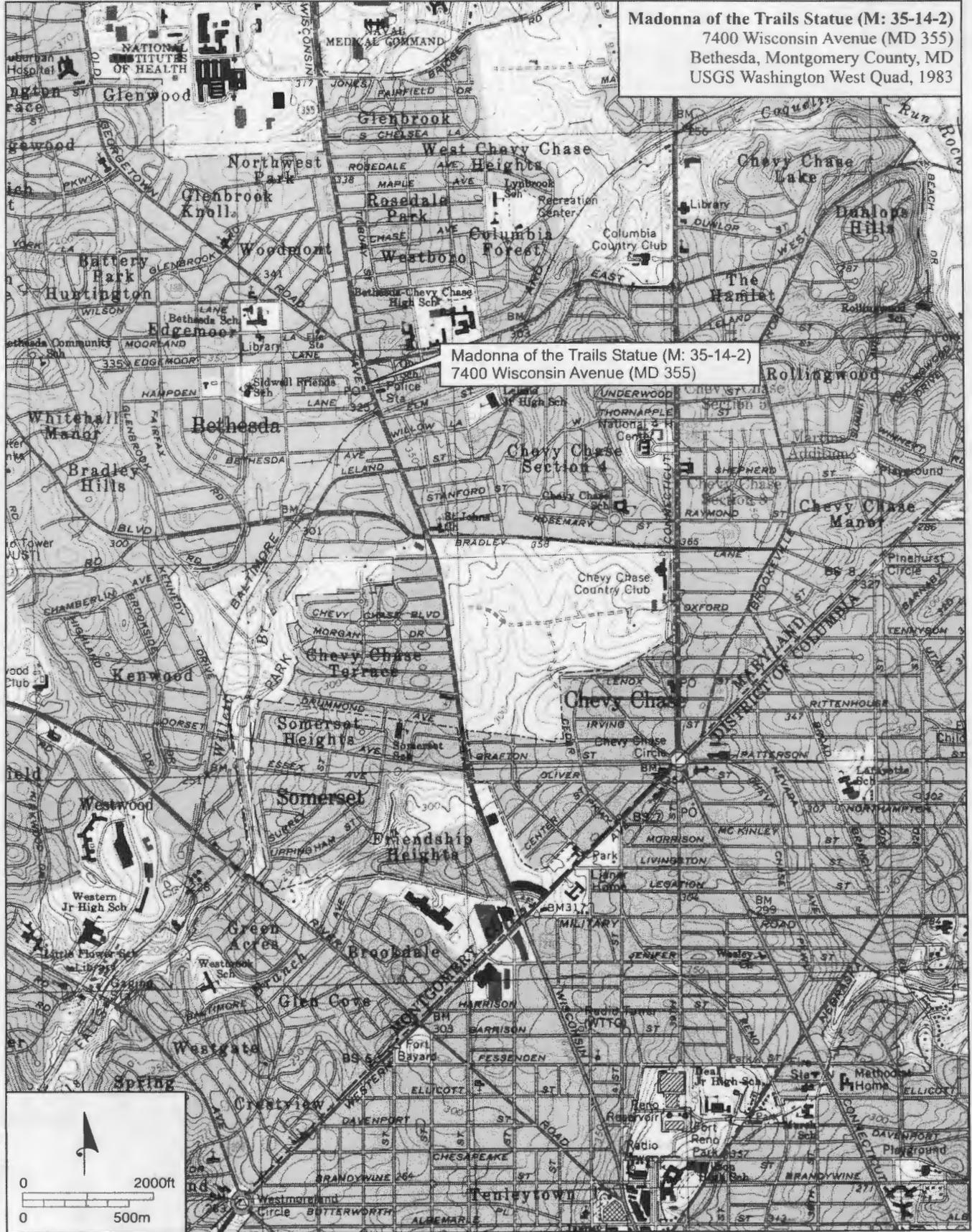
\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program

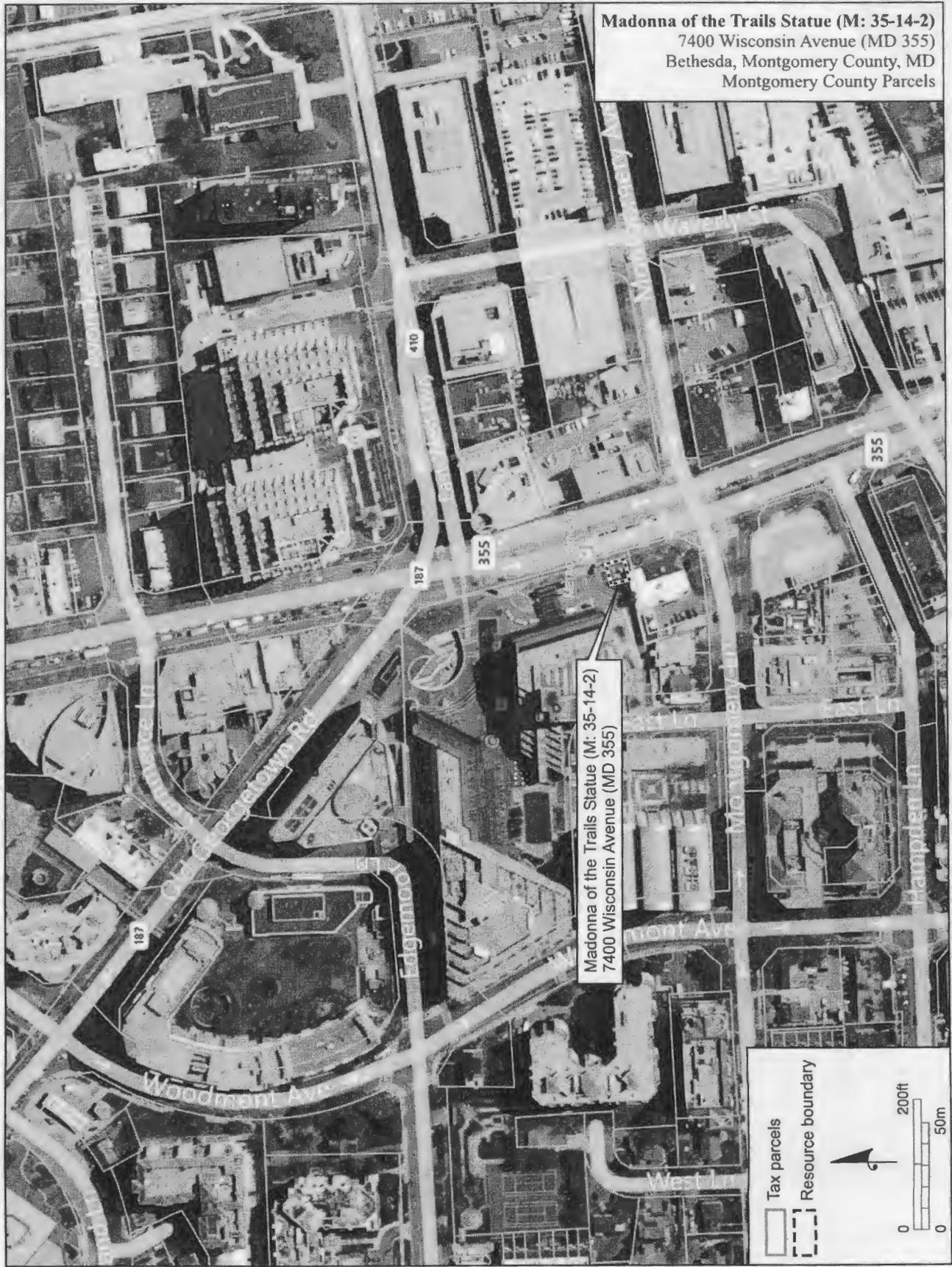
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Madonna of the Trails Statue (M: 35-14-2)  
7400 Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)  
Bethesda, Montgomery County, MD  
USGS Washington West Quad, 1983



Madonna of the Trails Statue (M: 35-14-2)  
7400 Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)

Madonna of the Trails Statue (M: 35-14-2)  
7400 Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)  
Bethesda, Montgomery County, MD  
Montgomery County Parcels



Madonna of the Trails Statue (M: 35-14-2)  
7400 Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)

Legend:

- Tax parcels (solid line)
- Resource boundary (dashed line)

Scale: 0, 50m, 200ft

North Arrow



MADONNA OF THE TRAIL

N.S.D.A.R. MEMORIAL  
TO THE  
PIONEER MOTHERS  
OF THE  
COVERED WAGON DAYS

MORTON'S THE STEAKHOUSE

CLEAN

M: 35-14-2

Madonna of the Trails Statue, 7400 Wisconsin Ave.  
Montgomery County, MD

C. Clark

13 October 2011

MD SITPO

View toward northwest.

Photo 1/1

M; 35-14-2\_2011-10-13\_01

(M: 35-14-2)

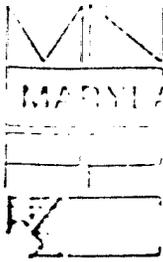
M: 35-14-12

1929

Madonna of the Trails  
7400 Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)  
Bethesda

Erected on Wisconsin Avenue in 1929, the Bethesda Madonna is one of twelve statues commissioned by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to commemorate this country's westward pioneer movement. The statues were placed along the westward trail from Bethesda, Maryland to Upland, California and are dedicated to the spirit and courage of American pioneer women.

The original statue was commissioned in 1911 and sculpted by Jo Davidson. Twelve copies were cast in concrete and placed along the pioneer road to the west. In March, 1982, this statue was moved and carefully stored to prevent harm during the construction of the Bethesda Metro station. The statue should be set down in the public plaza on top of the station.



M:35-14-2

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See correspondence dated October 1986

ACTION TAKEN

The purpose of this amendment is to designate the following sites, located within the Bethesda Central Business District, on the Master Plan.

- M: 35/14-1                      Montgomery County Farm Women's Cooperative
- M: 35/14-2                      Madonna of the Trails
- M: 35/14-4                      Bethesda Theater Complex
- M: 35/14-5                      Bethesda Post Office
- M: 35/14-6                      Wilson's Store & Post Office

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See correspondence dated December 9, 1985

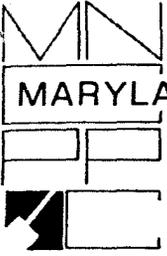
ACTION TAKEN

Final Draft Amendment.....to designate the following sites,  
located within the Bethesda Central Business District, on the  
Master Plan

M: 35/14-1  
M: 35/14-2  
M: 35/14-4  
M: 35/14-5  
M: 35/14-7

Montgomery County Farm Women's Cooperative  
Madonna of the Trails  
Bethesda Theater Complex  
Bethesda Post Office  
Wilson's Store & Post Office  
(Community Paint and Hardware)

M: 35-14/2



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

RECEIVED

July 19, 1985

JUL 29 1985

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties  
FROM: Staff of the Montgomery County Planning Board

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The enclosed notice of public hearing gives the date, time, and location of a Planning Board public hearing on historic resources which may be of interest to you or be located within your area.

If you should wish to testify concerning these resources, please contact the Community Relations Office at 495-4600 or send written testimony to Norman L. Christeller, Chairman, Montgomery County Planning Board at the above address.

Attachment

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code, entitled "Preservation of Historic Resources" adopted July 24, 1979, Ordinance No. 9-4, Section 24A-10 (Moratorium on Alteration and Demolition), the Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission hereby gives notice that it will hold a public hearing as follows:

Thursday  
August 8, 1985  
at  
1:30 P.M.  
in the  
Montgomery Regional Office  
The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

to make a finding as to the significance of the following site listed on the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County (M-NCPPC, 1976):

Community Paint & Hardware #35/14-2  
7152 Wisconsin Avenue  
Bethesda, Maryland

pursuant to application for partial demolition and relocation by the owner.

The Planning Board, after due consideration of the recommendations of the Historic Preservation Commission and other testimony, will make a finding as to whether the above resource will be included in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. If not included, a demolition permit to substantially alter could be issued. Where the Planning Board determines the resource will, in all likelihood, be included in the master plan, a permit can be withheld for a maximum period of six months or until the resource is designated, at which time the application will be governed by the procedures established in Section 24A-7. Or the permit can be issued subject to conditions which the Planning Board, on advice from the Preservation Commission, finds will further the purposes of the Ordinance in preserving historical importance of the resource.

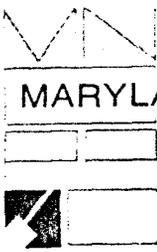
If not included in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, the resource may be removed from the Locational Atlas. If removed, the site will no longer be subject to the provision of Chapter 24A-10 (Moratorium on Alteration and Demolition). The site will remain on the Maryland Historical Trust's Inventory.

The purpose of the public hearing is to allow all interested persons to express their views concerning this action. Persons wishing to testify should call 495-4600. If you are unable to attend, write your concerns to the Montgomery County Planning Board at 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20907 and they will be made part of the public hearing record.

  
Mable Granke  
Vice Chair, MCPB

M: 35-14/2

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760



RECEIVED

MEMORANDUM

December 9, 1985

DEC 28 1985

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

TO: Richard Ferrara, Director  
 Department of Housing and Community Development  
 John L. Menke, Director  
 Department of Environmental Protection  
 ✓ J. Rodney Little, Director  
 State Historic Preservation Office  
 Priscilla Schwab, Chairperson  
 Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Melissa C. Banach, Coordinator *MCB*  
 Community Planning North

SUBJECT: Final Draft Amendment to the Master Plan for  
 Historic Preservation: Bethesda CBD Historic Sites

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 I am pleased to transmit to you this Final Draft Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

This document contains the recommendation of the Montgomery County Planning Board on the designation of individual sites in the Bethesda CBD.

Should you have any questions concerning this amendment, please do not hesitate to contact Marty Reinhart at 495-4565.

MCB:MR:dws  
 Attachment

Site

Name

35/14-2 Madonna of the Trails

- Erected on Wisconsin Avenue in 1929, the Bethesda Madonna is one of twelve statues commissioned by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to commemorate this Country's westward pioneer movement. The statues were placed along the westward trail from Bethesda, Maryland to Upland, California and are dedicated to the spirit and courage of American pioneer women.
- Designated on the Master Plan without an environmental setting as part of an amendment adopted in 1981, the Bethesda Madonna was subsequently removed from its original location during the construction of the Metro system. The Madonna will be returned to a site on the north side of the Bethesda Post Office in the winter of 1985-86. The statue and its immediate surroundings will be maintained in perpetuity under the Bethesda Metro Center's Site Plan Enforcement Agreement #8-81075.

Site

Name

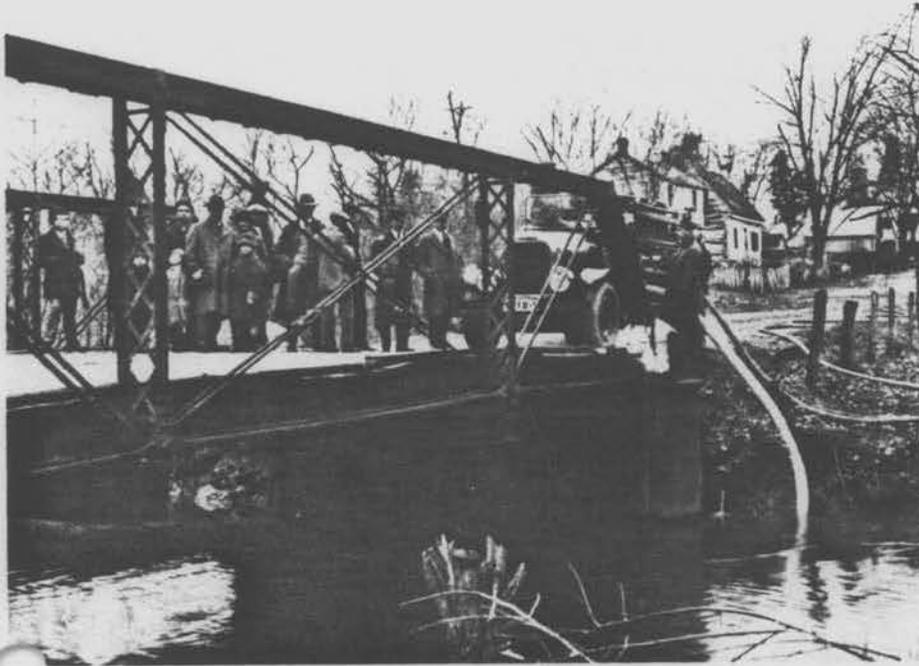
Location

Associated Acreage

35/14-4	Bethesda Theater Complex (Cinema 'n Draft House)	7715-7723 Wisconsin Avenue	17,497 sq.ft.
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- 1938--Art Deco movie theater complex featuring symmetrical single bay store facades of blond brick banded at the upper level in courses of black. The store fronts flank a marquee topped by a distinctive tower reminiscent of a stylized New York City skyscraper.
- One of two theaters in the County designed by the firm of noted theater architect, John Eberson, the complex is a good, representative example of Eberson's work in neighborhood theater design.
- This site is designated with the entire 17,497 sq. ft. parcel as the environmental setting. If redeveloped, the intention of designation is to seek the preservation and integration of the theater's significant exterior architectural features including the marquee, distinctive marquee tower and the complex's banded brick facades as well as preserve primary views of the marquee and tower from the street.
- The amendment further recognizes a public interest in retaining the theater's use and in preserving original/historic, interior features. If redeveloped under an

Coleman, Margaret Marshall and Anne Dennis Lewis  
1984 Montgomery County: A Pictorial History. Norfolk: Donning Co.



With no hydrants available, Montgomery firefighters filled their tanks from a stream near a narrow dirt road lined with log houses. Courtesy of Malcolm Walters



In 1911 the Daughters of the American Revolution renamed the National Road the National Memorial Highway and commissioned a statue, the *Madonna of the Trails*, by sculptor Jo Davidson. Twelve copies were cast in concrete and placed along the pioneer road to the west. This madonna stood near the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Old Georgetown Road in Bethesda.

Copies were also placed in Washington, Pennsylvania; Wheeling, West Virginia; Springfield, Ohio; Richmond, Indiana; Vandalia, Illinois; Lexington, Missouri; Council Grove, Kansas; Lamar, Colorado; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Springerville, Arizona; and Upland, California.

In March 1982 the Montgomery statue was moved and carefully stored to prevent harm during the construction of the Bethesda subway station. The monument will be restored to Bethesda following the completion of the Metro station and set down in the public plaza planned for the area on top of the station. Courtesy of Malcolm Walters