

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

M: 35-48

1 NAME

Somerset Elementary School

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

5811 Warwick Place

CITY, TOWN

Chevy Chase VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

8th

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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL | <input type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME **Montgomery County Public Schools**

Board of Education
Telephone #: **279-3617**

STREET & NUMBER

850 Hungerford Drive

CITY, TOWN

Rockville VICINITY OF

MD

20850

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Department of Assessments and Taxation

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

51 Monroe Street, 3rd Floor

CITY, TOWN

Rockville, MD 20850

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | <i>interior</i> | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Somerset Elementary School has grown since its first major building was completed in 1928 (now destroyed). Its north building was erected next to the 1928 building in 1948-9 to enlarge the school. With an east-west orientation, its south side abutted the 1928 building (which has been replaced by a modern building).

The 1948-9 school structure (a 77' including modern arcade in front X 39' rectangle) is a small two-story red brick academic building with basement. It has a strikingly modern look for an academic building of the late 1940s in Montgomery County. This is largely due to its large block glass windows and the lack of any traditional element. It bespeaks of the more severe residual "Deco" design of the 1940s and the minimalism of the International Style. This edifice has a boxy, appearance with flat brick walls, flat roofline, and no projections. The textural and coloristic qualities of brick, especially the use of different hues of brick (including dark brown-black contrasts) and moulded header patterns near the cornice line provide simple and natural ornamentation.

Visual evidence indicates that a main entrance (now covered with stucco and galvanized metal lath according to renderings from the 1970) was situated in the center of the front or west (short) facade, which faces the street entry. Two smaller rooms, perhaps cloak rooms, probably flanked the entry on the inside. The edifice contained four classrooms. Its interior appearance has been altered.

NOTE: Original plans for this building have not been found. Later renderings provide some information.

REPOSITORIES AND SOURCES FOR ENTIRE TEXT

- Construction Division, Montgomery County Public Schools;
- Central Records, Montgomery County Public Schools;
- Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.;

Also see: Karin M.E. Alexis's manuscript (1988) on the architectural history of educational institutions in Montgomery County (Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission & Maryland Historic Trust).

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

| 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | | | |

SPECIFIC DATES 1948-9

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Somerset Elementary School was first established in 1928 with an eight classroom building. This was during a period in which the population of Montgomery County was growing, especially in those areas nearest Washington, D.C. During the 1940s --- the World War II and post-war period --- the county experienced expansion. To meet the demands of a growing enrollment, a north building with four classrooms was added.

This building reveals both a concern for respecting the original character of the 1928 building and a desire to create a "modern" school building. Recalling other schools built in Montgomery County during this period, this structure reveals the new direction of American architecture, which was turning toward the factory or engineering aesthetic inspired by Bauhaus-inspired modernism and faith in technology.

In style, the school represents a departure from the traditional architectural image of 1930s Montgomery County schools. During the 1930s, Montgomery County's public schools were usually designed along classical lines, frequently in the Georgian style. This paralleled the persistence of classicism in American architecture during the first half of the 20th century. During the 1920s and 1930s, traditionalism came head to head with modernism. World War II brought a complete end to residual aspects of the American Renaissance (late 19th and early 20th century), a period which had encouraged a respect for the past and the use of classical architecture.

This structure shows the influence of the severe "Deco" style of the 1940s, which was affected by the rising tide of the International Style and the Streamline Moderne (both of which were on the cutting edge of architectural design during the 1930s). Its flat roof, planar treatment of wall and glazed surfaces, lack of extraneous elements, and no reference to traditional rules of architecture reveal the influence of European Modernism.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

M:35-48

see attached

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

3.5 (school grounds)

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTIONWarwick Place, Beal Place, homes on Cumberland Avenue,
homes on Dorset Avenue

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

KARIN M.E. ALEXIS, PH.D., ARCHITECTURAL & ART HISTORY

ORGANIZATION

DATE

JUNE 1988

STREET & NUMBER

2449 Villanova Drive

TELEPHONE

280-1107

CITY OR TOWN

Vienna,

STATE

Virginia

22180

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
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438