

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

Property Name: Montgomery Arms Apartments Inventory Number: M: 36-7-2  
 Address: 8627 Fenton Street 8700 Colesville Road Historic district: yes  no  
 City: Silver Spring Zip Code: 20910 County: Montgomery  
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Washington West  
 Property Owner: Montgomery Arms Development Corp. Tax Account ID Number: 161300978257  
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): N156 Tax Map Number: JN33  
 Project: Rehabilitation Agency: FHA  
 Agency Prepared By: MNCPPC  
 Preparer's Name: Carol Kennedy Date Prepared: 9/1/1990  
 Documentation is presented in: MIHP Form  
 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: Tania Tully Date: 5/28/2003

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

Completed in 1941, the Montgomery Arms Apartments provide a fine example of small scale Art Deco style apartments which reflect the intense development of the Washington area in multi-family housing during the years prior to World War II. Design elements characteristic of the Art Deco style that are found in the Montgomery Arms Apartments include horizontal string courses and shallow wall setbacks, use of glass block, flat roofs, as well as entries and decorative panels which emphasize geometric and stylized designs. In addition the Montgomery Arms complex represents the growth of Silver Spring during this period as a major 20th century community in Montgomery County.

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended <input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G
MHT Comments:	
<u>Tania Georgiou Tully</u> ✓ Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	Tuesday, June 03, 2003 Date
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, National Register Program	<u>11/3/03</u> Date

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Survey No. M-36-7-2

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Montgomery Arms Apartmentsand/or common same

## 2. Location

street & number 8700-8722 Colesville Rd., 8615, 8627 Penton St.  not for publicationcity, town Silver Spring  vicinity of congressional district 13state 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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Percontee -Inc.street & number 11900 Tech Road telephone no.:city, town Silver Spring state and zip code Maryland 20904

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Land Records of Montgomery County liber 3221street & number 50 Courthouse Square folio 418city, town Rockville state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sitesdate 1976  federal  state  county  locdepository for survey records Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning CommissionHistorian's Office, 18400 Muncaster Roadcity, town Rockville state Maryland

## 7. Description

Survey No. N: 36-7-2

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input 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.

### DESCRIPTION

The Montgomery Arms Apartments include three late Art Deco style apartment structures arranged around a landscaped courtyard, located at the northern corner of the intersection of Colesville Road (MD Rt. 29) and Fenton Street in Silver Spring, Maryland. Two three-story (plus basement) buildings flank a long courtyard and are set with their narrow ends facing Colesville Road, while a five-story (plus basement) elevator building faces and forms an enclosure to the northwestern end of the courtyard. In addition to the courtyard, landscaped areas are located between the buildings and sidewalks along both Fenton Street and Colesville Road. A surface parking lot takes up the remainder of the parcel north to Cameron Street.

The addresses of the three-story apartment buildings are 8700, 8704, 8708 Colesville Road, and 8716, 8720, 8722 Colesville Road; the elevator building is 8712 Colesville Road. There are 6 efficiency units, 101 one-bedroom units, and 23 two-bedroom units. Besides the apartments, commercial uses are found at 8615 Fenton Street (a beauty shop) and at 8627 Fenton Street (an antique shop and rental office for the complex).

The three buildings are similar in massing: rectangular blocks with short wings extending into the courtyard. The Montgomery Arms Apartments are faced on the exterior with brick, predominantly red in color, having some grayish and greenish color bricks interspersed throughout.

Symmetry, an important element of the Art Deco period, is created by the design of the three buildings as an entire composition -- an A-B-A scheme is formed by their massing. Specific characteristics of the three buildings carry out Art Deco styling further through their entrance and window detailing as well as both horizontal and vertical design elements: flat roofs, projecting brick string courses at window head and sill levels, and a soldier brick course above the top story windows and beneath the first story windows.

Throughout the three buildings, entrance bays are emphasized at the upper stories by vertical piers separating the window bays and recessed decorative spandrels formed by diagonally projecting bricks which form a zig-zag pattern of surface

interest, while the parapet line is broken up by a tripartite decorative brick crown. A similar treatment is found on the ends of the elevator building towards Colesville Road and on the Fenton Street facade of the southern three story building.

There is uniformity of window height except for a few small units. Fenestration patterns are identical from floor to floor, though irregularly spaced on the three-story buildings. The window sash are metal casement units varying in width from one to four panes; individual panes are slightly horizontal in proportion.

Particularly indicative of the Art Deco period -- which emphasized a "modern" design vocabulary -- are the corner windows. Recessed slightly from the wall plane, all corner bays contain metal casement sash which "wrap around" the corners. As they eliminate masonry providing traditional visual support for the building corners, these windows reflect a design emphasis of streamlined horizontality characteristic of Art Deco design.

A brick retaining wall separates the edge of the property from the Colesville Road sidewalk. Short brick posts containing lighting fixtures are located in pairs at the sidewalk entrances from Colesville Road and Fenton Street and at locations in the center of the courtyard. Landscape features of the courtyard are grass, shrubs, small trees, and annuals.

8700 - 8708 Colesville Road  
8716 - 8722 Colesville Road

The two three-story buildings "mirror" each other through their designs. Three identical residential entrances are found on each -- one on Colesville Road and two facing the courtyard; each is enframed by Art Deco style limestone surrounds which feature a stepped design enframement with projecting rounded marquee, crowned by a bas relief panel in a stylized plant motif. The doors are single flush doors with circular lights and metal half-round handles and horizontal bars. Above the entry between the first and second stories are located similar decorative panels with stylized geometric circular and diagonal motifs. Forming additional verticality above the entries are vertical panels of glass block, interrupted by small casement windows at two levels.

Receding and projecting planes of wall surface add interest to the long elevations facing the courtyard on the two low-rise buildings.

8712 Colesville Road (elevator building)

The elevator building is five stories from the entry level, but the ground slope is such that in some parts of the building there are basement level windows (identical to those on the upper stories) fully above grade.

While identical to the other two buildings in exterior materials and window types, the elevator building differs from the others in its central entrance, containing double metal and glass doors flanked by broad plate glass windows. Surrounding the doors and windows is a simply carved limestone enframement which includes planter boxes and rounded marquee.

Above the entrance is the same composition of vertical piers and decorative spandrels found on the other buildings; however, here it encompasses four bays and the decorative brickwork at the parapet is above the two outer bays rather than centered.

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**8. Significance**

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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 type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) residential

Specific dates 1941 Builder/Architect George T. Santmyers

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.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Constructed in 1941, the Montgomery Arms Apartments provide a fine example of small scale Art Deco style apartments which reflect the intense development of the Washington area in multi-family housing during the years prior to World War II. Design elements characteristic of the Art Deco style that are found in the Montgomery Arms Apartments include horizontal string courses and shallow wall setbacks, use of glass block, flat roofs, as well as entries and decorative panels which emphasize geometric and stylized designs. In addition, the Montgomery Arms complex represents the growth of Silver Spring during this period as a major 20th century community in Montgomery County.

In Montgomery County, Takoma Park retains the earliest residential buildings which diverged from the standard single-family house norm -- double houses such as 7137-7139 Maple Avenue, dating from 1885. These were followed in the same community during the early 20th Century by multi-family buildings typically designed to resemble single or double houses, such as 7102-04 and 7106-7108 Maple Avenue (1907) and 50-54 Elm Avenue (1915-1930).

While there may have been earlier examples that do not survive, at least by 1937 the urban apartment format of a multi-story building with single entry, long hallways, stairway, or elevator, had been used with the Blair Park Apartments (7712-7723 Eastern Avenue).

Garden apartments became a common multifamily housing type in the United States during the 1930s. They maintained lower scale,

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better ventilation and more sunlight than their urban counterparts and joined the economic return of increased density with landscaping characteristics more in keeping with their suburban environments. Several entrances throughout the buildings commonly serve four or six apartments, helping to create a sense of community.

Demand for housing accelerated considerably in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, and consequently in southern Montgomery County, during the 1930s as the Federal workforce expanded with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs. This housing demand, combined with new commuting distances made possible by the automobile, served to expand residential and commercial development outward from Washington into Montgomery County along and adjacent to major roadways such as Georgia Avenue. In addition to residential developments before the war, Silver Spring featured a major new shopping center at Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road which opened in late 1938.

An article which appeared in Architectural Forum in May, 1940 advocated in favor of more moderate rent garden apartments, commenting that "The late Thirties ... have wrought a fundamental change in new multi-family housing. Thus, in the past five years the garden apartment has come of age." This article gave statistics of about 200 garden apartment projects constructed with mortgages insured by the Federal Housing Administration since the agency had been created in 1934, "and their success has fostered the construction of at least 100 more which have been financed without benefit of FHA insurance .... Here then lies a big, under-supplied stable market for private enterprise rental housing.... Well planned low rent projects, economically constructed and operated, offer unlimited opportunities for investors seeking a steady, long term net income." (pages 309-310 "Garden Apartments ... , Architectural Forum, May, 1940).

Development of true garden apartments in Montgomery County began in 1936 with construction of the Falkland Apartments complex on East-West Highway at 16th Street in Silver Spring. Like most others of its period, it was detailed in Colonial Revival motifs. The cupola building of that complex is now designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Spring Gardens Apartments (8001-8031 Eastern Avenue, 1941) was the first to be "modernistic" in spirit. The Montgomery Arms complex was built almost simultaneously with the Spring Gardens development and shares numerous design characteristics such as its corner windows, decorative entrances, wall setbacks, and ornamental panels. Spring Gardens has been recommended for Master Plan designation by both the HPC and Planning Board as part an ongoing effort to identify and protect 20th century historic resources.

The Montgomery Arms Apartments are attributed to Washington architect George T. Santmyers, well-known for his designs of multi-family housing in the Washington area during the 1930s and 1940s.

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Author James M. Goode, in his book Best Addresses, describes Santmyers as:

"The most prolific architect of Washington apartment buildings in the history of the city ... who designed more than four hundred between 1916 and his death in 1960 .... Although he designed all types of buildings, including houses and commercial structures, he became a specialist in apartment houses. During the late 1920s he designed a number of large eclectic apartment houses, often incorporating the then-popular Tudor, Gothic, or Moorish details in the facades and lobbies." (p. 378).

Goode continues,

"He is best remembered for his many Art Deco apartment houses -- mostly garden apartments -- from the 1930s and 1940s, but he also designed some elaborate apartment houses during this period, including the Delano, the Normandie, Macomb Gardens, 2800 Woodley Road, N.W., and the Yorkshire on upper 16th Street, N.W." (p. 378).

The Montgomery Arms Apartments have significance in the context of multi-family housing in Montgomery County as a representative example of pre-World War II apartment design which typify the spirit of the Art Deco style as portrayed by architect George Santmyers, whose practice specialized in apartment buildings. The Montgomery Arms Apartments have a sophisticated level of design and site planning for their building type and period in the County. They were built during a period of intense growth of the Washington, D. C. metropolitan area and have historical and cultural significance as they reflect both that growth and the corresponding development of the Montgomery County community of Silver Spring into a major suburban center.

# 9. Major Bibliographical Reference

Survey No. M: 36.7.2

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 76,555 sq. ft.

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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## Verbal boundary description and justification

entire parcel

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

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carol Kennedy, Historic Preservation Planner

organization M-NCPPC

date 9/90

street & number 8787 Georgia Ave.

telephone (301) 495-4570

city or town Silver Spring

state Maryland 20910

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

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES**

"Garden Apartments," Architectural Forum, May, 1940.

Goode, James. Best Addresses: a century of Washington's distinguished Apartment Houses.  
Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press,  
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Montgomery County Historic Site Forms:  
Spring Garden Apartments  
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Reebeck, Andrea. "Early Twentieth Century Multi-family  
Dwellings in Montgomery County."

Walston, Mark. "Falkland Apartments in Relation to the Pre-World  
War II Suburban Apartment Movement in Montgomery  
County." October, 1983: Montgomery County  
Department of Parks, The Maryland-National  
Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Walston, Mark. "The 20th Century Development of Silver Spring."  
November, 1984: The Maryland-National Capital  
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Wirz, Hanz and Richard Striner. Washington Deco.  
Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press,  
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## Montgomery Arms



- 132 units - Built around 1941
- Downtown Silver Spring
- Acquired by HOC in 1992
- Efficiencies, 1 and 2 Bedroom units
- 2 walk-up, 3-story buildings
- 1 four-story, midrise building with elevator
- Courtyard garden
- Parquet hardwood floors
- 3 Laundries
- Scheduled for substantial rehab

Managed by H.G. Smithy Co.

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Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
Real Property Data Search

[Go Back](#)  
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[New Search](#)

Account Identifier: District - 13 Account Number - 00978257

**Owner Information**

Owner Name: MONTGOMERY ARMS DEVELOPMENT CORP      Use: APARTMENTS  
Principal Residence: NO  
Mailing Address: 10400 DETRICK AVE      Deed Reference: 1)  
KENSINGTON MD 20895-2440      2)

**Location & Structure Information**

Premises Address      Zoning      Legal Description  
8700 COLESVILLE RD      CBD2      PT PAR A MONTGOMERY  
SILVER SPRING 20910           ARMS

Map	Grid	Parcel	Sub District	Subdivision	Section	Block	Lot	Group	Plat No:
JN33		N156		1				80	Plat Ref:
Special Tax Areas			Town	Ad Valorem					
			Tax Class	48					
Primary Structure Built		Enclosed Area		Property Land Area		County Use			
0000				76,555.00 SF		113			
Stories	Basement		Type		Exterior				

**Value Information**

	Base Value	Value As Of	Phase-in Assessments	
			As Of	As Of
Land:	1,531,100	01/01/2001	07/01/2003	07/01/2004
Improvements:	3,250,300	1,531,100		
Total:	4,781,400	3,250,300	4,781,400	NOT AVAIL
Preferential Land:	0	4,781,400	0	NOT AVAIL

**Transfer Information**

Seller: HOUSING OPP COMM OF MONTG CO      Date: 07/01/2003      Price: \$0  
Type: NOT ARMS-LENGTH      Deed1:  
Seller:      Date: 10/01/1992      Price: \$3,500,000  
Type: IMPROVED ARMS-LENGTH      Deed1: /10699/ 696      Deed2:  
Seller:      Date:      Price:  
Type:      Deed1:      Deed2:

**Exemption Information**

Partial Exempt Assessments	Class	07/01/2003	07/01/2004
County	000	0	0
State	000	0	0
Municipal	000	0	0

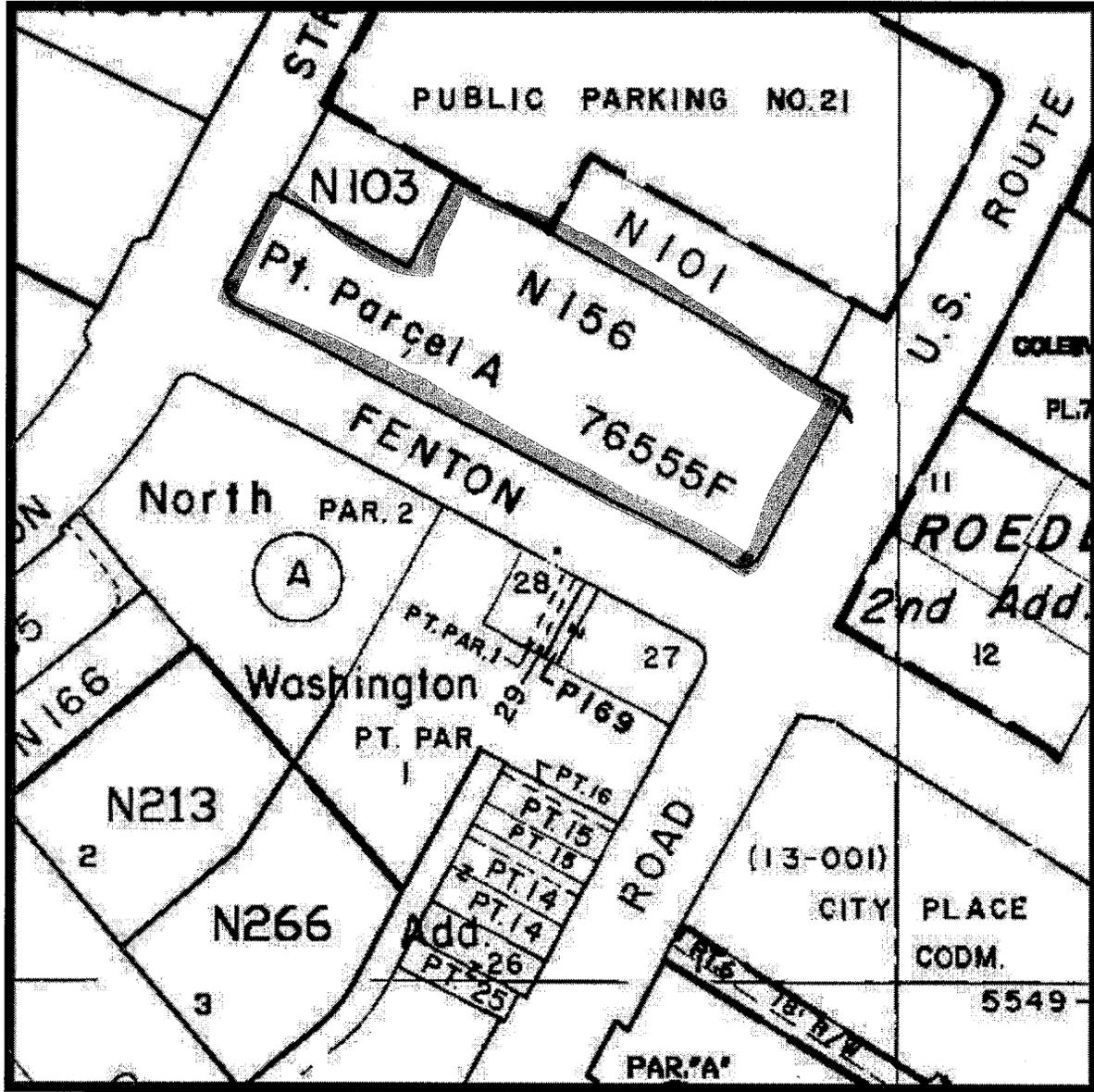
Tax Exempt: NO  
Exempt Class:

Special Tax Recapture:

\* NONE \*

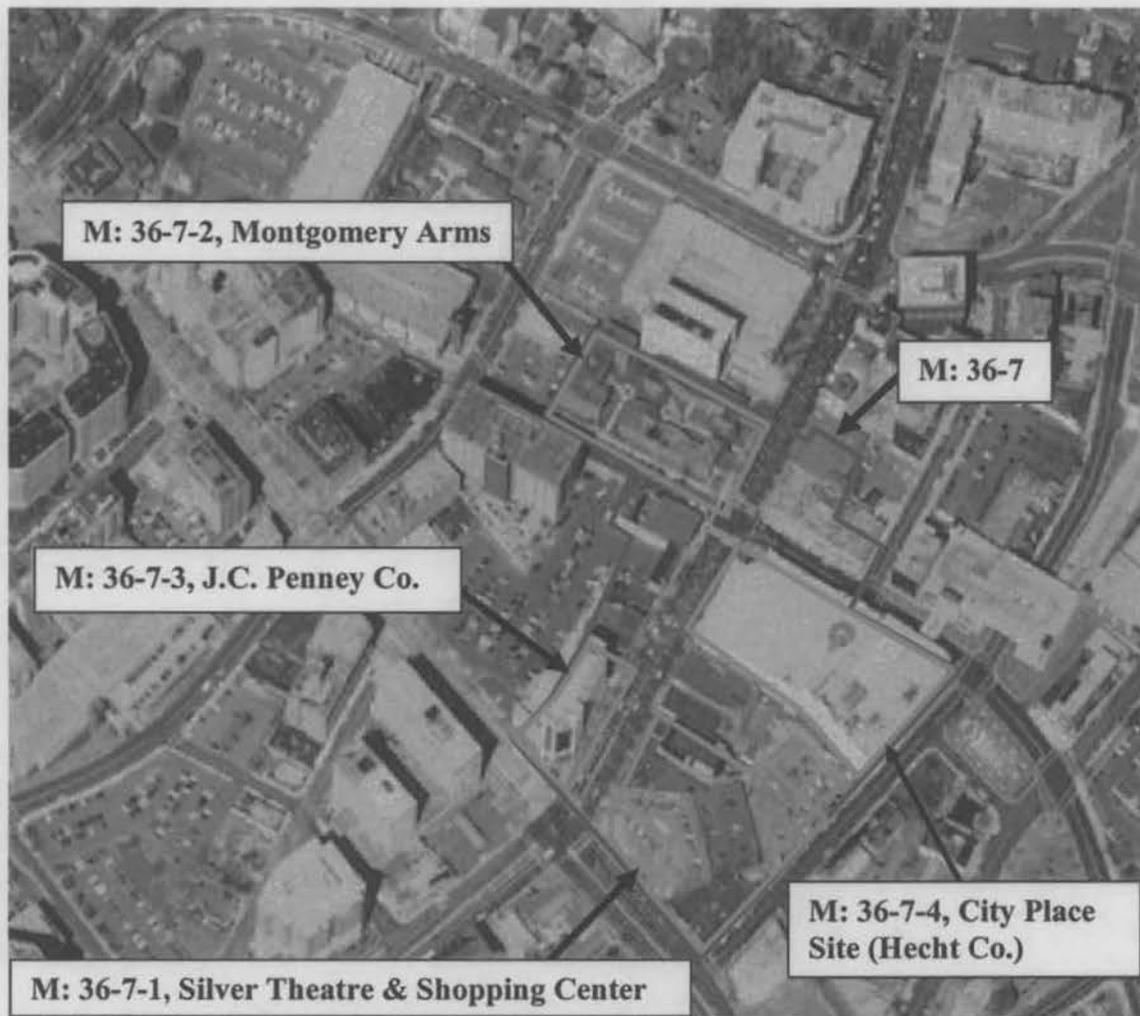
	<p>Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation  <b>MONTGOMERY COUNTY</b>          Real Property Data Search</p>	<p><a href="#">Go Back</a>  <a href="#">View Map</a>  <a href="#">New Search</a></p>
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District - 13 Account Number - 00978257



Property maps provided courtesy of the Maryland Department of Planning ©2001 - 2002.  
 For more information on electronic mapping applications, visit the Maryland Department of Planning  
 web site at [www.mdp.state.md.us/webcom/index.html](http://www.mdp.state.md.us/webcom/index.html)

M: 36-7  
Old Silver Spring Commercial District  
(Silver Spring Survey District)  
1993-95 Aerial Photo



M: 36-7  
Old Silver Spring Commercial Area  
(Silver Spring Survey District)  
Washington West Quadrangle



M: 36-7-2  
Montgomery Arms  
8627 Fenton Street (8700 Colesville Avenue)  
Silver Spring, MD  
Washington West Quad

