

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes   
no

Property Name: Silver Spring Park Inventory Number: M: 36-86  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Historic district: X yes  no   
 City: Silver Spring Zip Code: 20910 County: Montgomery  
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Washington West  
 Property Owner: Multiple Tax Account ID Number: Multiple  
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): Multiple Tax Map Number: JN 33, 43  
 Project: Purple Line Agency: Maryland Transit Authority  
 Agency Prepared By: Dovetail Cultural Resource Group  
 Preparer's Name: Heather Dollins Date Prepared: 6/20/2012

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

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility recommended  X 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  Listed:  yes

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

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

**Opening Summary**

The residential neighborhood known as Silver Spring Park is located just east of the commercial district in downtown Silver Spring, Maryland. This land was acquired by R. Holt Easley from local landowners through several transactions during 1902 (Montgomery County Deed Book [MCDB] 22:468, 22:486, 27:7). With this land Easley created two neighborhoods. The first was platted in 1904 and was called Easley's Silver Spring Subdivision; the second, Silver Spring Park, was platted in 1905. Division of large estates and farms in this manner began in this part of southern Montgomery County in the late-nineteenth century; the number of residential subdivisions greatly increased throughout the second quarter of the twentieth century. Although originally two separate subdivisions, today the two neighborhoods have a cohesive look and feel and together they make up present-day Silver Spring Park (Montgomery County Plat Book [MCPB] 1:54, 1:68). Silver Spring Park was predominately developed between the first few years of the 1900s and the early-1940s with popular architectural styles of the period.

Location/Setting

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended   
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MHT Comments:

[Signature] ✓ 11/5/12  
 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date  
[Signature] 11/5/12  
 Reviewer, National Register Program Date

R. Holt Easley's subdivision known as present-day Silver Spring Park is made up of 23 blocks (A-W) (MCPB 1:54, 1:68). The neighborhood is bounded by Bonifant Street on the northwest, Cedar Street on the northeast, Georgia Avenue on the west, Carroll Lane on the east, and Sligo Avenue on the south. The western boundary of Silver Spring Park is adjacent to the dense commercial district that is present-day downtown Silver Spring. The neighborhood is predominately composed of detached, single-family homes; however, the streets on the western edge of Silver Spring Park are lined with both historic and modern multi-family residences, retail stores, asphalt parking lots, and gas stations.

There are approximately 274 buildings located within Easley's Silver Spring Park (State Department of Assessments and Taxation [SDAT] 2012). This subdivision is representative of pre-World War I and inter-war architecture. A majority of the buildings--75 percent--were constructed before World War II. Over 15 percent of the infrastructure in Silver Spring Park was built after 1970 (SDAT 2012).

**Historic Context**

Despite its proximity to Washington, D.C., the area now known as Silver Spring was relatively undeveloped throughout most of the nineteenth century. In the mid-1800s a man named Francis Preston Blair found a spring just north of Washington, D.C. Local legends claim that the spring sparkled with mica flakes, which gave it a silver-like appearance. After this discovery, he purchased several hundred acres and built a house; the estate was called Silver Spring (McCoy and the Silver Spring Historical Society 2005:7; Oshel and Slatick 1998). In an effort to promote his newfound springs and house, Blair used his connections in Washington--he was an editor for the Washington Globe--and petitioned to have a post office established in Silver Spring in 1861. Two years later the post office was renamed "Sligo," the name of the area located near the intersection of present-day Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road (Oshel and Slatick 1998).

Early roads connected this area to Washington, D.C., but it was not until the installation of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) in 1873 that travel to and from the nation's capital became practical. Even though the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad had a passenger station at Silver Spring, the area remained predominately rural; it was composed of agricultural farmland and large country estates (Maryland Department of Transportation 2012; Oshel and Slatick 1998; The Washington Post 1908). According to the 1879 directory, the area of Sligo (including Silver Spring) had a population of 50 residents. Some of the earliest subdivisions of land in this area occurred in 1899 when Benjamin Leighton created the Woodside neighborhood. By the end of the nineteenth century, some of Washington's wealthiest inhabitants worked in the city and resided in country houses set on a large tract of land in or around Silver Spring (Oshel and Slatick 1998; The Washington Post 1907:7).

Robert Holt Easley was born on October 30, 1856 in Halifax County, Virginia to James and Elizabeth Holt Easley (United States Census [US Census] 1870). R. Holt Easley married Louisa Edmonia Gilmer in 1879; they continued to live in Halifax County and together had five children. Easley worked as a real estate broker in Virginia throughout the late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century (US Census 1910). Beginning in 1902 R. Holt Easley began to purchase tracts of land from Montgomery County landowners. Initially--between 1902 and 1906--he predominately bought land from the Thayer family in and around Silver Spring, Maryland (MCDB 22:468; 27:7). On January 23, 1904, he created a 67.29-acre subdivision situated just east of the B & O station and the businesses of Silver Spring. His neighborhood is known Easley's Silver Spring Subdivision and is composed of linear streets, ridged blocks, and rectangular lots of varying size. The neighborhood was, and still is, bounded by Thayer Avenue on the north, present-day Georgia Avenue on the west, Sligo Road (now Avenue) on the south, and Carroll Lane on the east (MCPB 1:54).

A year later Easley submitted yet another plat for a new neighborhood. It was a subdivision of a tract of land--a piece of an early

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_____	_____
<b>Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services</b>	<b>Date</b>
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Montgomery County Land Grand called "The Girl's Portion"-- he received from Julia M. Thayer on July 21, 1902 (MCDB 22:486; MCPB 1:68). He called the triangular-shaped subdivision Silver Spring Park. It was bounded by Bonifant Street, present-day Cedar Street, and Thayer Avenue. He devised a series of linear streets to cut through the neighborhood, such as Grove Street, Houston Street, Easley Street, and Hankins Streets. This created nine blocks (O-W) and long, rectangular lots.

Even with the local B & O stations, a series of roadways, and a trolley line with a stop at Silver Spring, residential development continued to be slow into the first decades of the twentieth century. The trolley line was considered an inconvenience to many passengers; it was a 40-minute ride into Washington, D.C., as opposed to the 20-minute train ride, and passengers had to transfer trolleys cars to get to downtown until 1919 (Maryland Department of Transportation 2012; Oshel and Slatick 1998). The roads were also poorly maintained until the 1920s, at which time the popularity of the automobile motivated local and state governments to improve the roadways. In 1924 the trolley system was replaced with buses in Silver Spring (McCoy and the Silver Spring Historical Society 2005; Oshel and Slatick 1998).

The variety of available modes of transportation to and from the Silver Spring area made this location increasingly appealing to the people who worked in Washington, D.C. In the second decade of the twentieth century, Silver Spring began to experience its first *population boom*. The first hotel in the area was built in 1911 and in 1917 the first chain grocery store was constructed. That same year the post offices in the area consolidated into one located near the Silver Spring depot, bringing even more attention to the area (Oshel and Slatick 1998; The Washington Post 1907:7). By the mid-1920s, Silver Spring had new national banks, hardware stores, retails stores, and restaurants. The area was quickly becoming a hot spot and land developers took notice of the new surge of people who wanted to live in Silver Spring. The large farms and county estates, such as the William Thayer and William Thompson properties located northeast of the commercial district, were sold off and eventually subdivided to meet the pressures of the housing demand (Dwyer 1975; Oshel and Slatick 1998).

Over time R. Holt Easley's two early neighborhoods unified and both fell under the name Silver Spring Park. Although it is considered an early subdivision in Silver Spring, Silver Spring Park remained only partially developed as of 1935 (Klinge 1935). Many of the eastern lots were bare throughout much of the first half of the twentieth century; however, houses and some commercial buildings were constructed in the western half of the neighborhood in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Some of the earlier houses suggest there was a construction pattern during the subdivision's early years. The block bounded by Fenton Street, Easley Street, Thayer Avenue, and Grove Street was nearly completely developed by 1935. Within this block, Thayer Avenue was almost entirely lined with one-story, frame dwellings, while Easley Street was lined with one-and-a-half story, brick buildings (Klinge 1935).

During the late-1920s, 1930s, and early-1940s, residential development drastically increased in Silver Spring. R. Holt Easley became one of many interested in creating housing for the booming Silver Spring population. Other people such as Eugene A. Smith, E. Brooke Lee, and Robert H. McNeill created their own subdivisions close to Silver Spring Park (SDAT 2012).

About a decade after Holt submitted his plat for Silver Spring Park, a large brick building was constructed just east of Houston Street near its intersection with Cedar Street. It was originally constructed as a hospital and resting area for veterans of World War I. When the need for a veteran's hospital ceased, the building was converted into a hotel for the general public. In the mid-1930s it became the new home for the Bullis School, a preparatory school for the U. S. Naval Academy. The school remained in this location until 1970, at which time it moved to a new location in Potomac, Maryland (Dickson 1999; Reinink 2012). The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) purchased the 4-acre area during the 1970s; the building is no longer extant and this location was converted into a city park known as Bullis Park (M-NCPPC 2012).

While residential construction soared in the decades leading up to World War II, commercial development in Silver Spring

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Date

dramatically increased throughout the remainder of the twentieth century (McCoy and the Silver Spring Historical Society 2005; Oshel and Slatick 1998). By the late-twentieth century buildings containing offices, shopping centers, and restaurants have taken over the original downtown Silver Spring area and expanded beyond its boundaries. Because of its proximity to the business district, Silver Spring Park felt the early effects of the development sprawl. As early as 1953, the western portion of Silver Spring Park was becoming increasingly commercialized. One- and two-story, brick stores, restaurants, garages, and gas stations lined the triangular block bounded by Georgia Ave, Bonifant Street, Fenton Street, and Thayer Avenue. Older buildings were torn down to make way for parking lots (Klinge 1948-1953). Today, the western half of Silver Spring Park is composed of several gas stations, a large apartment building, as well as modern and historic restaurant and commercial buildings. The eastern half of the neighborhood remains primarily residential, although there has been more infill and new development than in the surrounding subdivisions, likely caused by Silver Spring Park's adjacency to downtown Silver Spring.

Architectural Description

Silver Spring Park is composed of linear streets that form nearly 45- and 90-degree angles at their intersections. Because the neighborhood was laid out before the onset and popularity of the automobile, the streets--especially Fenton, Grove, and Houston Streets--are quite narrow. Despite the pre-automobile subdivision design, over time many residents in Silver Spring Park have incorporated garages and driveways on their lot. Although the streets that border Silver Spring Park, such as Thayer Avenue and Sligo Avenue, are lined with poured concrete sidewalks, the interior roads do not have sidewalks. Although they vary in architectural details, a vast majority of the houses in Silver Spring Park are one-, one-and-a-half, or two-story buildings. A number of the lots have a secondary resource--either a shed or a garage--associated with the primary house. In many cases these outbuildings are located on the rear half of the lot. The modern additions and modifications to the individual buildings, as well as the number of late-twentieth century infill has resulted in a decrease in the overall cohesive feeling in Silver Spring Park.

With the exception of the infill from the late-twentieth and early-twenty first centuries, the styles associated with Silver Spring Park directly reflect the primary construction period (1904-1942). Although there are clusters of houses of the same style in one area, overall the architectural forms and themes are scattered throughout the district. One of the most common architectural styles found in this subdivision is the Colonial Revival style, which was common in the United States from the end of the nineteenth century throughout the first half of the twentieth century (McAlester and McAlester 2003). These buildings are one-, one-and-a-half, and two-story tall dwellings, many of which are clad in a brick veneer. There are many subtypes and variations in this style, and several of those are exemplified in Silver Spring Park; however, it is common for the dwellings constructed in this form to have an accentuated door flanked by plain and fluted pilasters. The entrance often features a swan-necked, pediment (sometimes a broken pediment), or simple entablature above the door. Examples in this subdivision include, but are not limited to, the 712 and 714 Hankin Street and 730 Easley Street.

Another popular style found within this subdivision is the Craftsman Style. This architectural trend began in California at the turn of the twentieth century (McAlester and McAlester 2003:454). The houses built in the Craftsman Style are scattered throughout the neighborhood; however there is a cluster along the 800 block of Easley Street. Many of these buildings are one-and-a-half story dwellings with wide eaves, exposed rafters, and typical Craftsman-style roof supports: square, tapered columns that rest on a large, brick base. Silver Spring Park is composed of several variants of the Craftsman style including the hipped roof, side-gable roof, and front-gable roof forms.

Late-twentieth century and early-twenty first century commercial buildings lined the streets on the western side of the Silver Spring Park. These buildings vary in construction technique and details. One of the largest buildings in the neighborhood is a 15-story, U-shaped apartment building that towers over the one- and one-and-a-half story residential and commercial buildings that surround

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it. Other buildings in this part of the neighborhood include an Exxon gas station and a large, brick Safeway grocery store surrounded by parking lots.

Summary/Statement of Significance

Although the neighborhood retains many of its original houses and uniform feel, a high percentage of the dwellings have undergone some moderate and common changes since their construction. Over the years, it was common for owners to choose to replace the original windows--either wood frame or metal casement windows--with vinyl or aluminum fixtures. In some cases modern additions on the side or rear elevations affect the integrity of the building. Often times these additions are clad in vinyl or aluminum siding and the original detailing that was common on Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and other style dwellings of the early- to mid-twentieth century were removed and not replaced. As a result of the modifications found on a majority of the buildings in Silver Spring Park the overall district has lost much of its workmanship, design, and materials integrity. The feeling and setting of the neighborhood have also been compromised by the encroaching commercial development on the west side of Silver Spring Park.

Robert Holt Easley's Silver Spring Park was developed before some of the earliest population booms in Silver Spring. Easley was a real estate broker from Halifax County, Virginia who saw the potential for an economic profit and gathered up large tracts of land and subdivided it to create additional housing for the Silver Spring Community. Easley laid out two subdivisions between 1904 and 1905: Easley's Silver Spring Subdivision and Silver Spring Park. The neighborhood developed slowly over the decades. Improved roads and the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad made this location a prime interest for the upper middle-class people who worked in Washington, D.C. but were eager to live outside of the city. Over the decades Easley's two early subdivisions combined and became known Silver Spring Park as a whole.

Within the neighborhood a number of the individual houses have undergone some modifications, such as replaced windows, new siding, and modern additions. The individual houses and subdivision as a whole are not unique in Silver Spring, the State of Maryland, or the nation at large. This type of suburban development during the period between World War I and World War II was a common trend in Washington, D.C. and throughout the United States. In addition, Silver Spring Park does not have any known association with a significant person. Therefore, it is recommended that R. Holt Easley's Silver Spring Park be considered Not Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A-C. This property was not evaluated for Criterion D.

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW
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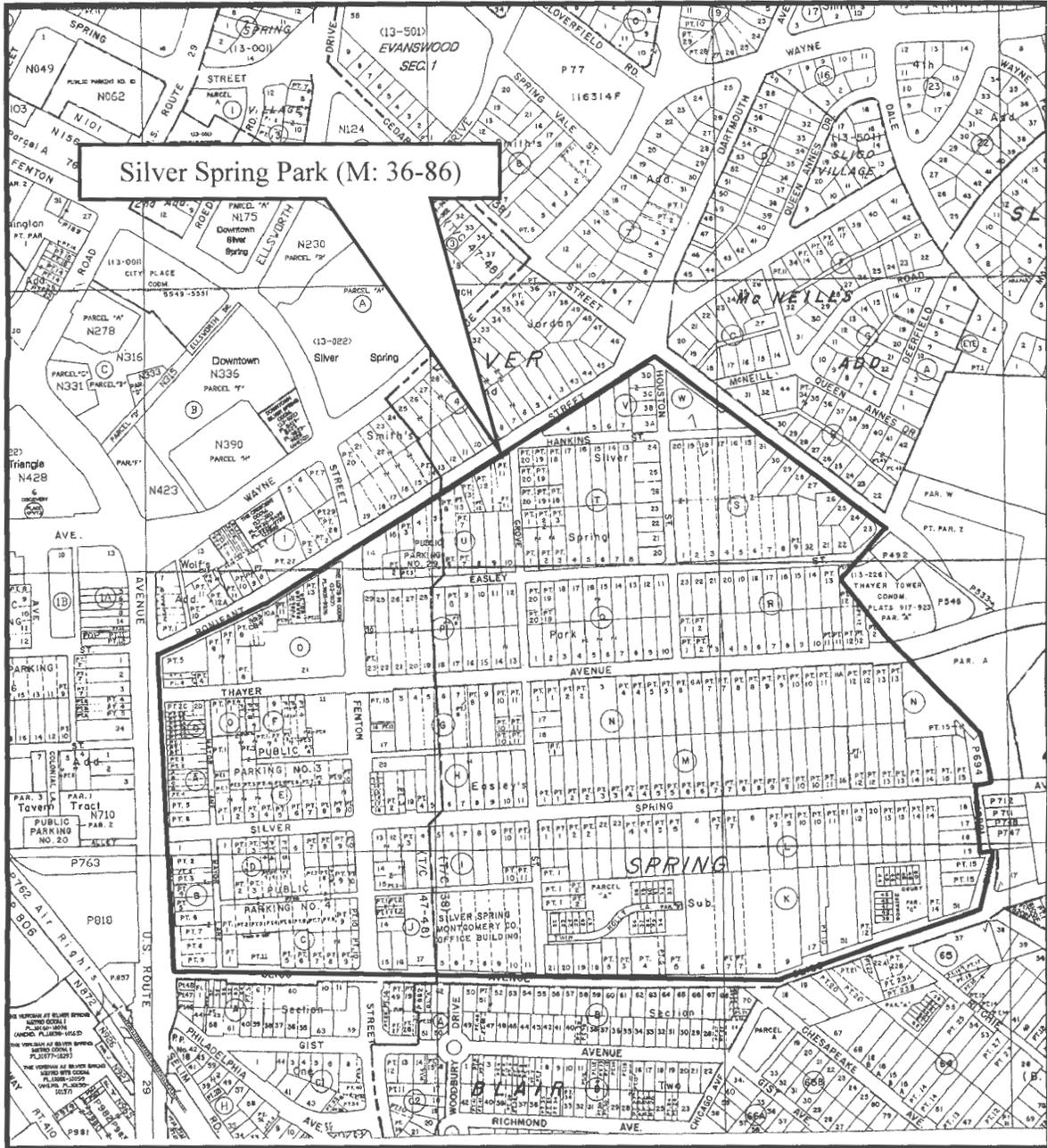
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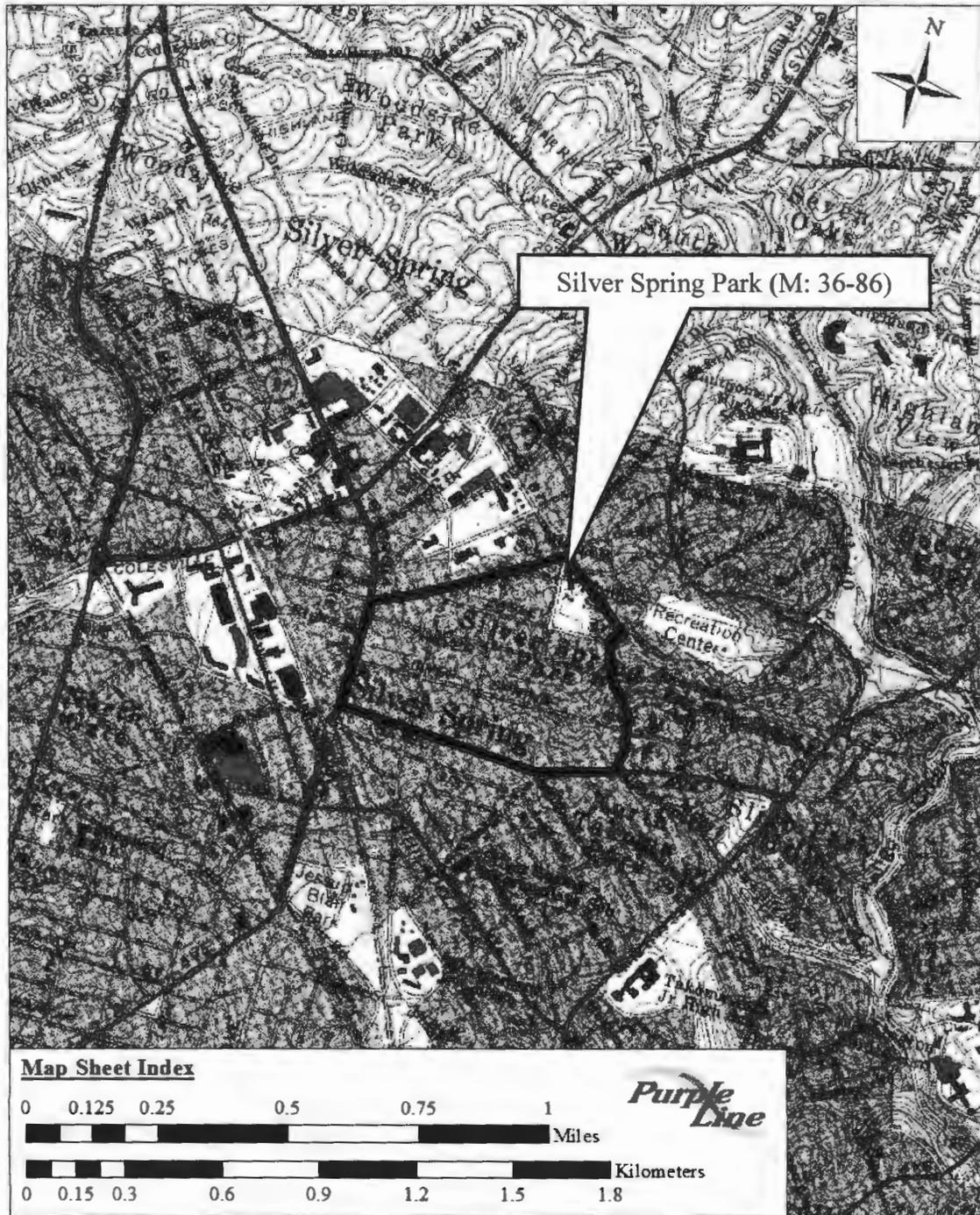
Silver Spring Park (M: 36-86)  
Silver Spring, Montgomery County, MD

Montgomery County Tax Map



**Silver Spring Park (M: 36-86)**  
Silver Spring, Montgomery County, MD

USGS Washington West Quad, Revised 1983



M: 36-86, Silver Spring Park, Purple Line, Bethesda to Silver Spring Segment

TIFF Image File Name	Description	Date Taken	Ink	Paper	Brand, Make & Dye Type of CD
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_01.tif	8504 Houston Street, Looking Northwest.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_02.tif	Bullis Park, 8501 Houston Street, Looking South.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_03.tif	8404 and 8406 Houston Street, Looking Southwest.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_04.tif	719 and 721 Thayer Avenue, Looking Northeast.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_05.tif	809 Easley Street, an Example of Alterations in Silver Spring Park.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_06.tif	Modern Apartment Building and Gas Station on Fenton Street.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_07.tif	83 and 805 Easley Street, Looking Northeast.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_08.tif	700 Block of Easley Street in Silver Spring Park.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_09.tif	705 Hankin Street, Looking North.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR
M: 36-86_2012-5-21_10.tif	712 and 714 Hankin Street, Looking Southwest.	5/21/2012	Dye-based HP Viverra Ink	HP Premium Photo Paper, Gloss	Memorex 80 min./700MB 52x Pro Gold Archival CDR



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8504 Houston street, Silver Spring Park

Montgomery County, Maryland

Heather Dollins, DoveTail Cultural Resource Group

May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust

8504 Houston street, Looking Northwest.

1/10



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Bullis Park, 8501 Houston Street, Silver Spring Park  
Montgomery County, Maryland

Heather Dollins, Dove-tail Cultural Resource Group

May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust

Bullis Park, 8501 Houston Street, Looking South

2/10



M; 36-86-2012-5-21-03.tif

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8404 and 8406 Houston street, Silver Spring Park

Montgomery County, Maryland

Heather Dollins, Dove-tail Cultural Resource Group

May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust

8404 and 8406 Houston street, Looking Southwest

3/10



M: 36-86\_2012-5-21-04.tif

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719 and 721 Thayer Avenue, Silver Spring Park  
Montgomery County, Maryland

Heather Dollins, Dove-tail Cultural Resource Group

May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust  
719 and 721 Thayer Avenues, Looking Northeast

4/10



809

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809 Easley Street, Silver Spring Park

Montgomery County, Maryland

Heather Dolins, DoveTail Cultural Resource Group

May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust

809 Easley Street, an Example of Alterations in Silver  
Spring Park

5/10



EXXON

ICE  
ICE

7-11

Post-It Note Dispenser

ATM

NO PARKING

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M:36-86

Fenton Street, Silver Spring Park  
Montgomery County, Maryland

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May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust

Modern Apartment Building and Gas Station on  
Fenton Street.

6/10



M:36-86-2012-5-21-07.tif

M:36-86

803 and 805 Easley Street, Silver Spring Park

Montgomery County, Maryland

Heather Dollins, Dove-tail Cultural Resource Group

May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust

803 and 805 Easley Street, Looking Northeast

7/10



M: 36-86-2012-5-21-08.tif

M: 36-86

700 Block of Easley Street, Silver Spring Park

Montgomery County, Maryland

Heather Dollins, Dovefall Cultural Resource Group

May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust

700 Block of Easley Street in Silver Spring Park

8/10



M:36-86.2012-5-21-09.tif

M:36-86

705 Hankin street, silver Spring Park

Montgomery County, Maryland

Heather Collins, Dove-tail Cultural Resource Group

May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust

705 Hankin street, Looking North

9/10



M:36-86

712 and 714 Hankin Street, Silver Spring Park  
Montgomery County, Maryland

Heather Dollins, Dove Tail Cultural Resource Group

May 21, 2012

Maryland Historical Trust

712 and 714 Hankin Street, Looking Southwest

10/10