Easement PG:71B-2-9

NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018
(Rev. 10-90)
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bowie Railroad Buildings
other names/site number PG-71-B-2-9; Bowie RR Station & Huntington Museum

2. Location

street 8614 Chestnut Avenue
not for publication n/a city or town Bowie vicinity n/a
state Maryland code MD county Prince George's code 033 zip code 20715

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide x locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official 9-15-98 Date

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

____ entered in the National Register _____
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined eligible for the _____
National Register
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined not eligible for the _____
National Register
____ removed from the National Register _____

____ other (explain): _____

_____ _____
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

___ private
_x_ public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

_x_ building(s)
___ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
3	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in National Register 0
Name of related multiple property listing n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
Cat: TRANSPORTATION Sub: rail-related

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
Cat: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)
LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
foundation CONCRETE
roof ASPHALT
walls WOOD
other WOOD

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

_x_ 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.
_x_ 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.
_x_ 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.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
TRANSPORTATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1872-1934

Significant Dates 1913; ca. 1930-33; 1934

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
n/a

Cultural Affiliation n/a

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
_x_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre
USGS quadrangle Laurel, MD
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	345920	4318890	D	__	_____	_____
B	__	_____	_____	E	__	_____	_____
C	__	_____	_____				

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated property is indicated as Block 18, Lots 1-4 on Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission Address Map No. 211 NE.

Boundary Justification: The nominated property, less than one acre, comprises the entirety of the property currently associated with the resource, and represents an appropriate landscape setting.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sally Cannon Hein, Department of Community Resources
organization City of Bowie date March 14, 1997
street & number 2614 Kenhill Drive telephone (301) 262-6200
city or town Bowie state MD zip code 20715

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets
Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.
Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)
name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state ____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Description Summary:

The Bowie Railroad Buildings comprise three small frame structures which served as the depot complex for the Pennsylvania Railroad at the junction of the Washington (Amtrak/MARC) and the Popes Creek branches. The complex includes a single-story freight depot, a two-story tower, and an open passenger shed located alongside the tracks in the Huntington, or Old Bowie section. The buildings have been restored to the Pennsylvania Railroad livery of gray with burgundy trim, and are maintained by the City of Bowie Museum Division, and supported by the Huntington Heritage Society as a community museum.

The three buildings were saved from destruction by Amtrak by being moved away from the railroad by about one hundred feet to property secured by the City of Bowie alongside the tracks' right of way. The three structures were re-aligned into a triangular formation analogous to the old arrangement of the buildings as they originally stood, though now oriented towards the small parking lot provided for visitors.

General Description

The combination freight shed and passenger ticket office, built ca. 1930, is one story tall with a hip roof, 32 by 17 feet, of four irregular bays by two bays width. The hipped roof forms deeply overhanging eaves; the soffits are trimmed with narrow band wainscoting. The architraves are plain board millwork. On each long facade a double sliding door hangs at one end to serve the freight room, and two windows and a door are featured on the north side; three windows on the south side. Two windows are on the narrow east side, while the west side has no openings.

The interior of this building features a waiting room with built-in benches and a ticket window and door opening into the office, behind which is the freight room with the two wooden sliding doors to allow for the easy handling of freight into boxcars.

West of the freight/ticket office building, closest to the tracks, stands the interlocking tower. This building was built circa 1913 as the interlocking tower at Severn, but was relocated to Bowie on July 31, 1934, and placed into service on October 29, switch and signal controlling equipment.[1] The tower is 15 feet square; two bays by two; and is covered in a hipped, asbestos shingle roof with deeply overhanging eaves with soffits of narrow banded wainscoting. Entrance to the tower from the rear, or east, is through a door to the first floor, and by an exterior metal staircase to the second floor. The lower door has five horizontal panels; the second-story door has two panels below glazing. A brick flue rises on the east exterior wall.

The lower floor is lighted by one window on the north and two on the south, while the upstairs has a similar pattern with the addition of a projecting rectangular bay on the west, cantilevered some two feet from the main wall. The 9-over-1 windows are set over a paneled base to the bay, which fits under its own hip roof. The interior of the tower maintains on the second floor some of the original switch and signal equipment, while the lower floor is empty, and now serves as a photographic exhibit area showing the history of Bowie and its railroad origins.

Alongside the tower stands the waiting shed, built probably about 1910 following the station fire, featuring a built-in bench for passengers. The eastern side of the shed is open and the sloping gable roof is supported by a turned, bracketed post, centered in the opening of the waiting area. Similar brackets support the roof at the corners, and the eaves are ornamented with projecting rafters. A square, unglazed opening forms a viewing window at the north end.

The site is on a grassy plot with a small amount of landscaping fronting on the Amtrak rail line, next to the Chestnut Avenue bridge crossing the tracks. The complex was restored in 1993 by the City of Bowie, and is now operated as a museum about the history of Old Bowie and the railroad. The three structures were relocated some fifty feet from the railroad right of way to avoid destruction by Amtrak, but are located in the closest

proximity to the rails to maintain the natural connection of the structures to the site.

==========

HISTORIC CONTEXT

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):
Industrial-Urban Dominance: A.D. 1870-1930

Historic Period Theme(s):
Transportation

Resource Type:
Category: Building(s)
Historic Environment: Suburban
Historic Function(s)and Use(s):
TRANSPORTATION: Rail-related

Known Design Source:
none

Significance Summary

The complex of Bowie Railroad Buildings are significant under National Register Criterion A, for their contribution to the development of rail transportation in the region, and under Criterion C, as examples of the types of buildings commonly associated with small-scale rail junctions in the early 20th century. The railroad depot structures in Old Bowie are rare survivors recalling the once prominent number of railway stations in the Washington metropolitan area. These small buildings are testament to the significance that a railroad junction had in the commerce and intercourse of the nation at the time of the heyday of the railroads.

History and Support

The Bowie area was marked as a rural and highly agrarian region which lacked a direct transportation route to the lucrative markets of Baltimore and Washington. By the early 1850s a movement had begun to establish a rail line into southern Maryland. In 1853 a state charter was granted for the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Company, with Oden Bowie as its president. Plans to build the line between Baltimore and the southern counties of Maryland halted at the outset of the Civil War. Following the war, Oden Bowie approached the directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which dominated the railroad system north of Baltimore. Since the charter for the Baltimore and Potomac allowed for branch lines of up to twenty miles in length, the Pennsylvania, longing for a chance to compete seriously with the Baltimore and Ohio's monopoly in the traffic between Washington, D.C. and the North, leapt at the opportunity. The Pennsylvania contracted with the B. & P. to construct the line from Baltimore to Popes Creek, Charles County, and to extend a branch line from Bowie into Washington, in effect giving the Pennsylvania a through line between Baltimore and Washington. Construction began in 1868 into Southern Maryland, and the following year work began on the spur to the capital city.[2]

Railroad junctions traditionally were busy hubs and often the locus of town developments. Land speculator Ben M. Plumb seized the opportunity and

purchased some 300 acres, and had it surveyed into town lots surrounding the junction of the lines to Popes Creek and Washington. The town, which Plumb named Huntington City, was approximately a mile square with numbered streets running east and west, and tree-named streets running north and south. In 1870 Plumb published a prospectus for Huntington City which extolled the wide streets and future church, school and parks. The lots were 2,500 square feet, and would sell for $25 each; the railroad buildings would be "arranged and constructed as to be an ornament and honor to the town." In August 1870, Plumb sold to the Baltimore and Potomac two small parcels of land at the junction with the condition that the company must erect by January 1, 1875 "a railroad Depot, and engine house and machine or repair shops for Railroad purposes."[3]

By 1870, work was well under way on both of the rail lines. Purchase of the newly-surveyed lots began almost immediately, and houses began to rise, with some of the earlier ones being erected by the railroad company. On July 2, 1872, the first train ran through Huntington between Baltimore and Washington, and over the years this branch line became the main line between Washington and points north. The Popes Creek line was finished in July 1873, changing the face of rural southern Maryland with the introduction of a line of access to commerce, education, business and leisure. A handsome building erected at Huntington stood in the crook formed by the departure of the Popes Creek line from that for Washington. The station gained the name of Bowie from the very outset, honoring the company's president, and after 1869, the Governor of Maryland. Within a decade, the town had been rechartered as Bowie as well.[4]

The population of the new little town grew also, and by 1880 there were some sixty families living there. The railroad was the biggest employer; there were 2 conductors, 2 engineers, a baggage master and brakeman, as well as all the professionals essential to a small town, including a postmaster, four merchants, four carpenters, a school teacher, telegraph operator, hotel keeper, two shoemakers, a butcher, hostler, barber and clockmaker.[5]

In 1902, the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad consolidated with the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad (also operated by the Pennsylvania Railroad) to form the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington Railroad Company (PB&W). The Pennsylvania controlled the PB&W through ownership of its entire capital stock, and thus, in combination with its northeastern lines, had a monopoly on railroad transportation between New York and Washington.[6]

The controls exerted over such a large and complex system saw the development in the 1880s of the interlocking signal system, using electric currents through the rails to indicate track "blocks" that were clear or occupied. An "interlocking" tower was erected at each junction to control the signals and switches in its vicinity, whose control levers could be operated by a single man in three shifts a day, seven days a week. A tower was erected at Bowie before 1890, operating until it was destroyed by a disastrous fire in 1910.[7]

It was replaced immediately, as it served a critical function on the Pennsylvania Railroad. The new tower was used for some twenty years until work to widen and straighten the right-of-way required its replacement. In 1934 the signal tower that had been erected at Severn about 1913 was moved to Bowie and reassembled, to accompany the depot and passenger shed which had been erected at about the same time (circa 1930-33).[8] These three surviving structures have served the functions of freight management, ticket sales, passenger shelter, and, most importantly, the controlling of train movements at this important junction for more than sixty years. In 1986, the signal system was computerized, and the interlocking system at Bowie was disconnected. The buildings were boarded up, and languished.

The City of Bowie stepped into the picture, purchasing the disused buildings in 1992, and moving the structures a few feet off Amtrak property onto track-side city-owned land, restored the buildings with the assistance of the Maryland Historical Trust. They are now open to the public as the Huntington Railroad Museum, and are supported by the City of Bowie with the help of the Huntington Heritage Society.

The rail buildings at Bowie are survivors from the period of greatest use on the line. They reflect the earlier period of establishment of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad in the 1870s, the installation of the interlocked switch and signal system, and the expansion of the great railroad companies early in this century. Only one other signal tower survives in Prince George's County: the Pennsylvania's 1906 Landover tower (PG#72a-1). The Bowie railroad buildings represent the only surviving stop on the Popes Creek line other than the modest and ruinous Croom freight station. With the exception of the B&O's 1884 Laurel Station, all the other fine Victorian and early twentieth-century depot buildings throughout this populous and historically suburban commuting county have been lost (e. g. Hyattsville, Berwyn, Riverdale, Lanham). The three railroad structures at Bowie, which repeatedly won Pennsylvania Railroad awards as best maintained buildings and grounds, were the center of the town of Bowie, literally and figuratively.[9] They are rare survivors of a lost and important period of history.

Notes

[1] Memorandum, Susan G. Pearl, Research/Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, to Stephen E. Patrick, Curator, City of Bowie Museums, 10 December 1997.

[2] Burgess, George H., and Kennedy, Miles C. *Centennial History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, 1846-1946*, Philadelphia, 1949, pp. 272-281; Prince George's County Historical Society, *Baltimore and Potomac, Popes Creek Line*, 1973; Interstate Commerce Commission Valuation Reports, Vol. 23, pp. 247, 262-69, 352-53. See also Maryland Historical Trust Inventory forms PG #71B-2 and PG #71B-2-9.

[3] Prospectus of *Huntington*, Ben. M. Plumb & Co., 1870; Prince George's County Deed HB#2:861.

[4] *Washington Star*, July 2, 1872; Burgess and Kennedy, op. cit.

[5] Census for Prince George's County, Enumeration District #14, 1880.

[6] ICC Valuation Reports, Vol. 23, pp. 262-267, 353; Burgess and Kennedy, op. cit.

[7] Burgess and Kennedy, op. cit.; MHT Inventory form PG #71B-2-9, note #5.

[8] Conversation with Robert Williams, reported by Susan G. Pearl in Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form (PG#71B-2-9) Section 8, page 4.

[9] Fannie and Mary Basim, *Town of Bowie, Maryland 1870-1960*, Huntington Heritage Society, 1992, p. 13.

==========

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See notes to Section 8

Easement

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY MOVED, 1992

HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey # PG#71B-2-9 Building Date early 20th century

Building Name Bowie Railroad Buildings

Location Junction of Amtrak and Conrail Lines, Bowie, Maryland

Private/Transporation/Unoccupied/Fair/Accessible

Description

There are three frame buildings at the junction of the Washington Branch (Amtrak) and the Popes Creek railroad lines. The northmost is the railroad signal tower. It is two stories high, two bays by two, with pyramidal roof; its original German siding is covered with beige asbestos shingle. Entrance into the tower is from the south(east); there is a door in the second bay at ground level, and a door above it at second level, accessible by an exterior flight of metal stairs. The principal north(west) facade fronts on the Amtrak tracks; its second story is lighted by a rectangular bay, cantilevered and projecting two feet from the main wall surface, with 9/1 windows and molded panels, painted mauve as is all of the other trim. A short distance southwest of the tower stands the combination freight shed and ticket office. It is one story high with hip roof, an irregular four bays by two; siding and trim are the same as in the tower. There is a double sliding door in each of the north and south elevations; each is trimmed with applied chamfered cross-trim, painted mauve. On the other side of the tracks is a passenger waiting shed; it has gable roof, vertical board siding painted beige, turned post and brackets, and mauve trim.

Significance

The Bowie signal tower, freight shed/ticket office, and passenger waiting shed are significant reminders of the period of greatest use of the Washington Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad (now Amtrak). The tower was erected in 1920, to incorporate the interlocking signal system installed by the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington (PB&W), a company owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad. The present tower was dismantled from its original location at Severn, where it was no longer needed; it was reassembled, complete with interlocking system machinery, at the Bowie junction in 1920. The freight/ticket office and passenger waiting shed were constructed soon afterwards. These three structures have served freight management, ticket sales, passenger shelter and, most importantly, the controlling of train movements at this junction, for more than sixty years. Few other early twentieth-century railroad structures survive in Prince George's County; the railroad buildings at Bowie are therefore significant and rare survivors of an important period of railroad history.

Acreage: .6887 acre

Easement

Survey No. PG#71B-2-9

Magi No.

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Bowie Signal Tower, Freight Shed/Ticket Office & Passenger Waiting Shed

and/or common Bowie Railroad Buildings

2. Location

street & number Junction of Amtrak and Conrail lines on Railroad Avenue ___ not for publication

city, town Bowie ___ vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	_X_ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
___ building(s)	_X_ private	_X_ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
_X_ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	_X_ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	_X_ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	_X_ transportation
	___ not applicable	___ no	___ military	_X_ other:

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

name National Railroad Passenger Corporation

street & number 400 North Capitol Street, N.W. telephone no.:

city, town Washington D.C. state and zip code 20001

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber #5258

street & number 14735 Main Street folio 62

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ loca

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. PG#71B-2-9

Condition		Check one	Check one		
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	___ original site		
___ good	___ ruins	X altered	X moved	date of move	1920, 1992
X fair	___ unexposed				

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

There are three small frame buildings at the junction of the Pennsylvania Railroad (Amtrak) line and the Popes Creek line of Conrail: a two-story railroad control tower, a lower building which served as freight shed and ticket office, and a passenger waiting shed.

The northmost of the three buildings is the railroad control tower. It stands just southeast of the main Amtrak line into Washington, and fronts directly onto the tracks. It is two stories high, and 15 feet square, two bays by two; its original German siding is covered with beige asbestos shingle, and its pyramidal roof is covered with reddish-gray asbestos shingle. The four planes of its roof slope to cover deeply overhanging eaves, and the soffits are trimmed with narrow banded wainscoting.

Entrance into the tower is from the rear, or south(east). There is a door in the second bay of this south elevation at ground level, and another door above it at second-story level, accessible by an exterior flight of metal stairs which rises from the west corner. The first-story door has five horizontal panels; the second-story door is a plain wooden modern replacement. Surrounds are of plain board, painted a dark mauve to contrast with the beige shingle.

The west side elevation is lighted by two windows on each story, all recently boarded up with plywood. Surrounds, as on the other elevations, are of plain board painted a dark mauve. The opposite (east) side is lighted by only two windows, in the second (northmost) bay of first and second stories. South of these windows is an exterior brick stove chimney; it is tall and slim, and breaks through the eaves to rise from the easterly plane of the pyramidal roof.

The principal, north(west), facade faces the tracks of the Amtrak line. There is no fenestration in the first story, but the second story is lighted by a handsome rectangular bay, cantilevered and projecting approximately two feet from the main wall surface. Two 9/1 double hung sash windows (now boarded up) light the main north side of the bay; beneath these windows, the projecting bay is trimmed with molded horizontal panels, two on the north surface, and shorter panels wrapping around to decorate the short east and west sides. The panelled trim is highlighted with the same mauve paint found on all of the other trim. The projecting bay has a hip-roof, which reflects and projects slightly from the north plane of the tower roof.

The control tower rests on a concrete foundation; there is no basement. The interior consists of two spaces: the first story is devoted to storage and the mechanical plant, while the second-story space, accessible by the exterior stairway, houses the control equipment.

Immediately southwest of the tower stands another small frame structure: a combination freight shed and ticket office. It is one story high with hip roof, 32 by 17 feet, an irregular four bays by two. Its original German siding is now sheathed with beige asbestos shingle, and its hip roof with reddish-gray asbestos shingle. The hip roof slopes to cover deeply overhanging eaves; the soffits are trimmed with narrow band wainscoting. The openings are defined by plain board surrounds, painted a dark mauve to contrast with the beige siding.

There are principal openings on each of the north(west) and south(east) elevations, allowing access from both the Pennsylvania (Amtrak) and the Popes Creek (Conrail) lines. In the westmost bay of each of the north and south elevations is a wide loading door. A double sliding door hangs in each of these openings; the lower half of each door is trimmed with applied chamfered cross-trim, painted dark mauve as is the other trim. These wide loading doors open into the freight section of the building.

There are three other windows (now boarded up) on the south elevation, fronting on the Popes Creek line. Between the third and fourth bay is an exterior concrete-block stove chimney which breaks through the eaves and rises from the south plane of the hip roof.

On the north elevation, which fronts directly on the Pennsylvania Railroad line, there are three more openings east of the freight-loading bay: two windows, and, in the eastmost bay, a door into the ticket-office space. There are no openings in the west elevation, and two windows in the east elevation. All openings have plain board surrounds painted dark mauve to contrast with the beige shingle; all openings have been boarded up. The building rests on a concrete block foundation; there is no basement.

These two buildings stand in the approximate location of the original Bowie Railroad Depot. On the other side of the Amtrak line, to the northwest, stands a passenger waiting shed. The southeast side of the shed is open, fronting on the tracks, and the front plane of the gable roof is supported by a turned, bracketed post, centered in the opening. Similar brackets support the roof at the corners, and the eaves are punctuated with exposed rafter ends. There is a square window opening in the north gable end. Siding is of vertical board painted beige, and trim is painted a darker mauve.

8. Significance

Survey No. PG#71B-2-9

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	_X_ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion	
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science	
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture	
___ 1600–1699	___ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian	
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music		
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater	
_X_ 1900–	_X_ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	_X_ transportatio	
		___ invention		___ other (specif	

Specific dates early 20th century **Builder/Architect**

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 an support.

The railroad signal tower, the small building which served as a freight shed and ticket office at Bowie, and the passenger waiting shed, are rare survivors from the early period of the Washington branch of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad. Although the tower and freight building are altered by coverings of asbestos shingle, and the fact that they no longer fulfill their original functions, all three structures are important reminders of the heyday of railroad travel early in this century.

Early in the nineteenth century, the area which later came to be known as Bowie was an agricultural area like much of the rest of Prince George's County. In the summer of 1835, the Baltimore and Ohio railroad was completed between Baltimore and Washington, bringing substantial change to the northwest section of the County. Small settlements like Beltsville grew into major towns, and the railroad began to replace the turnpike stage coach as the major means of public land transportation. This new railroad, however, did not help the planters of the eastern and southern sections of the County, who still needed a way of trnasporting their produce to market in volume. By the early 1850's a movement had begun to establish another railroad line through southern Maryland. Members of the Bowie family of Prince George's County were especially active in this effort. In 1853 they succeeded in getting a State charter to form the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad Company, with Oden Bowie of Fairview as the company's president. Plans to build a line which would connect Baltimore and the counties of Southern Maryland were brought to a halt with the beginning of the Civil War. After cessation of hostilities, Bowie approached the Pennsylvania Railroad, which controlled the railroad system north of Baltimore; the Baltimore and Potomac charter allowed for branch lines of up to 20 miles in length, and the directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad jumped at the chance to enter into serious competition with the B & O for the Washington market. The Pennsylvania

Railroad entered into a contract to finance and construct the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad and to extend from it a lateral branch into the District of Columbia. In 1868 they began construction of a 73-mile line from Baltimore to Popes Creek on the Potomac in Charles County; the next year, at a point 18 miles northeast of Washington, a branch line was begun, extending from the main line into the Federal City.[1]

Seeing the opportunity for development at the junction of the main and branch lines, Ben M. Plumb, a land speculator and developer, purchased approximately 300 acres of farmland in the area, and hired a surveyor to plat a residential community centered around the junction. The town, which Plumb would call Huntington City, was to be approximately one mile square, with numbered streets running east and west, and tree-named avenues running north and south, forming a grid over the diagonal railroad line. In 1870 Plumb published and circulated a Prospectus for Huntington City; it promised wide streets with reservations for church, school and parks. The lots were 2500 square feet, and would sell for $25 each; the railroad buildings would be "arranged and constructed as to be an ornament and honor to the town". In August 1870, Plumb sold to the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad two small parcels of land at the junction of the two rail lines, with the condition that the company must erect before 1 January 1875 "a railroad Depot, an engine house and machine or repair shops for Railroad purposes".[2]

By 1870, work was well underway on both the main line to Popes Creek, and the branch line to Washington. Purchase of the newly-surveyed lots began immediately, and houses began to go up, some of the early ones built by the railroad company. On the second of July, 1872, the first train ran through Huntington between Baltimore and Washington, and over the years this branch line became the main line between Washington and points north. The Popes Creek line was finished in July 1873; it changed the face of rural Prince George's County, becoming for the outlying farms the principal artery of commerce, education, business and leisure. A handsome station building was erected at Huntington in the neck of land formed by the junction of the two rail lines. The station itself was called Bowie from the beginning, after the railroad company's president (who was elected Governor of Maryland in 1869); within a decade the town of Huntington also took the name of the family to which it owed its existence.[3]

The population of the new railroad town grew, and by 1880 there were approximately 60 families living there. The railroad was the biggest employer; there were 2 conductors, 2 engineers, a baggage master and a brakeman, as well as all the other professionals essential to a small town: postmaster, four merchants, four carpenters, a school teacher, telegraph operator, hotel keeper, two shoemakers, butcher, hostler, barber and clockmaker.[4]

During the early years of the railroad line, the manual semaphore system was used for controlling train movements. The lines of rails were divided into space intervals known as "blocks", with signals at the ends of each block. Once a train had cleared a block, this information was transmitted back by telegraph, thus signalling an "all clear" for the next train to enter that block. During these years, the telegraph operator was an integral part of each railroad station. In the 1880's, the interlocking system of signals was developed, using the passage of electrical current through the rails to indicate that the tracks were clear. A control or signal tower was constructed at each of the railroad junctions. Each tower had an interlocking system with switches and levers which could be operated by one man, three shifts per day, seven days a week. By the early twentieth century, the main lines of the railroad were protected by this automatic signal system, with numerous interlocking plants.[5]

By this time, the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad had consolidated (in 1902) with the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad (owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company) to form the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington Railroad Company (PB&W). The Pennsylvania controlled the PB&W through ownership of its entire capital stock, and thus, in combination with its northeastern lines, had a monopoly on railroad transportation between New York and Washington.[6]

An interlocking signal tower was built at Bowie before 1890; it operated until it was destroyed by fire in 1910. An article in the local newspaper recounts the disaster:

"A disastrous fire, fanned by a northeast wind, burned out the business district of Bowie on Wednesday night, causing a loss of "$50,000, and threatening every home in the little town. The signal tower and telegraph wires of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the wires of the telegraph companies were burned to the ground and for three hours Bowie was cut off from the state. No lives were lost, but a number of employees of the Pennsylvania Railroad - the men who practically saved the town from total destruction - sustained burns on the hands and blistered faces."[7]

The signal tower had to be replaced immediately, for this was a period of maximum use of the railroad system (the peak of railroad traffic on the Pennsylvania Railroad was in 1916). The new tower was used for only approximately twenty years, for, between 1920 and 1930, the railroad company began the widening and straightening of the railroad right-of-way. The company bought up adjoining property, and increased the width of the roadbed from two to four tracks. In the area just north and south of the Bowie junction, the widening and straightening of the right-of-way required the replacement of the 1910 signal tower. Soon after 1930, the signal tower which now stands at the Bowie junction was

dismantled from its original location at Severn, where it was no longer needed; it was reassembled, complete with interlocking system machinery, at the Bowie junction, and the older tower was demolished.[8] The small freight shed/ticket office was constructed soon thereafter, as was the passenger waiting shed. After the Victorian-style depot at Bowie was destroyed (because of decreased ridership) in the 1930's, the freight building served also as a ticket office, and the three buildings were the only structures surviving here from the heyday of railroad transportation. They have served the function freight management, ticket sales, passenger shelter, and, most importantly, the controlling of train movements at this important junction for more than sixty years. In 1986, when the signal system was computerized, the interlocking system was disconnected at the Bowie tower. The tower itself and the freight shed were left intact and boarded up; the City of Bowie is currently negotiating to purchase them for possible future museum use.

The railroad buildings at Bowie are rare survivors from the period of greatest use of this important railroad line. They reflect the period of establishment of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad in the 1860's and 70's, the installation of the automatic system of train-movement control at the end of the last century, and the consolidation of the railroad companies at the peak of rail traffic in the early twentieth century. They are representative of the type of functional buildings which were being erected by the railroad companies early in this century. Only two other signal towers survive in Prince George's County. The Landover signal tower (PG#72A-1) stands on the same (Pennsylvania Railroad) Washington Branch line; it was constructed in 1906 when the new Magruder Branch line was built from Landover to the (then under construc tion) Union Station in Washington. The Alexandria Junction signal tower (PG#68-8) stands on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Hyattsville, and dates from the end of the nineteenth century. Only one station building survives on the Popes Creek line of the Baltimore and Potomac - the modest (and nearly ruinous) rural waiting station at Croom Station (PG#82A-30). Only one major depot building survives - the B&O station building in Laurel (L-6), designed by E. Francis Baldwin in 1884; all of the other fine Victorian depot buildings designed and constructed late in the nineteenth century (e.g., at Hyattsville, Berwyn, Riverdale Park, Bowie etc.) were destroyed as ridership decreased. The three railroad buildings at Bowie are therefore significant and rare survivors of an important period of railroad history.

Notes

1. Burgess, George H., and Kennedy, Miles C., Centennial History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, 1846-1946, Philadelphia, 1949, pp. 272-281; Prince George's County Historical Society, Baltimore and Potomac, Popes Creek Line, 1973; Interstate Commerce Commission Valuation Reports, Vol. 23, pp. 247, 262-69, 352-53. See also MHT Inventory form PG#71B-2.

2. Prospectus of Huntington, Ben M. Plumb & Co., 1870; Prince George's County Deed HB#2:861.

3. Washington Star, 2 July 1872; Burgess and Kennedy, op. cit.

4. Census for Prince George's County, Enumeration District #14, 1880

5. Burgess and Kennedy, op. cit.; conversation February 1990 with Robert Williams (Amtrak) and John Hankey (B&O Railroad Museum).

6. ICC Valuation Reports, Vol. 23, pp. 262-67, 353; Burgess and Kennedy, op. cit.

7. Prince George's Enquirer and Southern Maryland Advertiser, 14 October 1910.

8. Conversation with Robert Williams, February 1990. See also photographs of 1910-1920 tower.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG#71B-2-9

See Notes, Item #8

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .6887 acre & 14.6 acres Tax Map #29, parcels 129 & 98

Quadrangle name Laurel **Quadrangle scale** 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research/Architectural Historian

organization P.G. Historic Preservation Commission **date** February 1990

street & number c/o MNCPPC , Co. Admin. Bldg. **telephone** 301-952-3521

city or town Upper Marlboro **state** Maryland

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

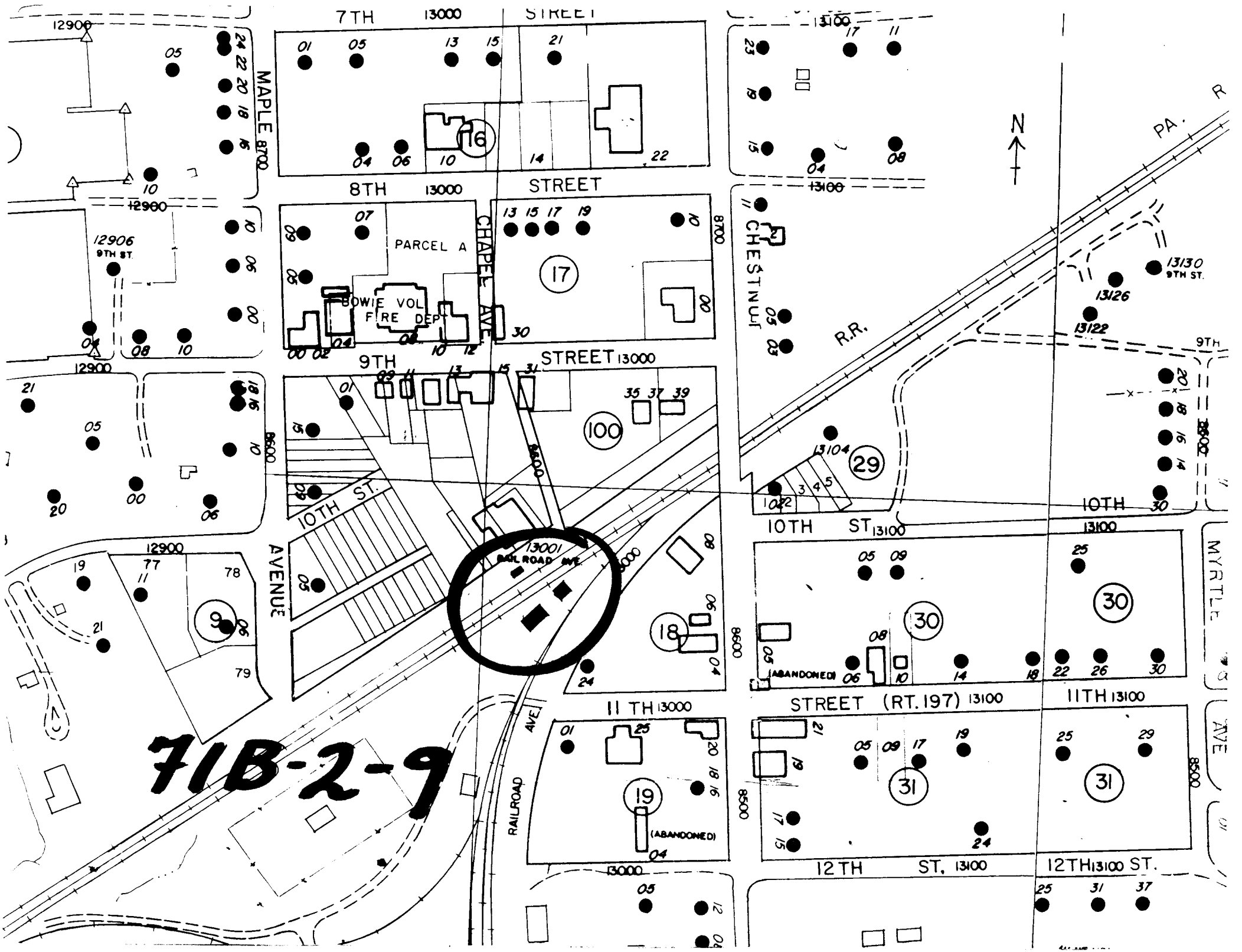
CHAIN OF TITLE

BOWIE RAILROAD BUILDINGS

PG#71B-2-9

#5258:62 11 Oct 1978 Deed	Consolidated Rail Corporation, grantor, to National Railroad Passenger Corporation, grantee, all of the grantor's rights to property in Prince George's County, Maryland, pursuant to agreement of purchase 31 March 1976, and pursuant to Regional Rail Reorganization of 1973; including rights to use any lines, appliances, structures, existing on the property, as a part of any railroad communication, signal or interlocker system. Being the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington Railroad line known as Penn Central Philadelphia-Washington Main Line, and all real property in Prince George's County . . . [which] enters the County near Arundel, passes through Bowie, Seabrook and Landover, and leaves the County near Kenilworth Avenue at the D. C. line. Same described in deed of agreement recorded immediately prior.
#5258:4 29 Mar 1976 Deed	John C. Kohl, trustee of Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington Railroad Company, Debtor, to Consolidated Rail Corporation; Grantor company has filed for bankruptcy, and conveys to grantee all of the railroad property described in Appendix A attached, including Line #1201 (the Washington Branch) and Line #1225 (Popes Creek Branch, which connects with the Philadelphia-Washington Main Line, and passes through Collington, Hall, Upper Marlboro, Brandywine and leaves Prince George's County near Mattawoman Creek)
. . . . .	
1 Nov 1902	Baltimore and Potomac Company consolidates with the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Company to form Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington Railroad Company, owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company
. . . . .	
HB#4:159 12 Aug 1870 Deed	Ben M. Plumb et ux, and Samuel Kendig et ux, to the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Company, two parcels of land (2 1/5 acres and 10 1/10 acres) as shown in plan of Huntington City, on condition that the Railroad Company erects before 1 January 1875 a railroad depot, an engine house and machine or repair shops for railroad purposes . . .

PG: 71B-2-9
Bowie Railroad Buildings
Huntington (Bowie) District I
Prince George's County, MD
1" = 200 '
Susan G. Pearl
October 1986
(15) = Building Inventory Number



7TH STREET
8TH STREET
9TH STREET
10TH ST.
11TH STREET (RT. 197)
12TH ST.
MAPLE
CHAPEL AVE.
CHESTNUT
AVENUE
RAILROAD AVE.
MYRTLE AVE
PA. R.R.
PARCEL A
BOWIE VOL FIRE DEPT
13001 RAILROAD AVE.
(ABANDONED)
N
71B-2-9

1 MILE

5000 6000 7000 FEET

1 KILOMETER

EET
OF 1929

ON, VIRGINIA 22092
LS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

MARYLAND

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Boundary lines shown in purple compiled from latest information available from the controlling authority

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———

Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -

U. S. Route State Route

Interstate Route

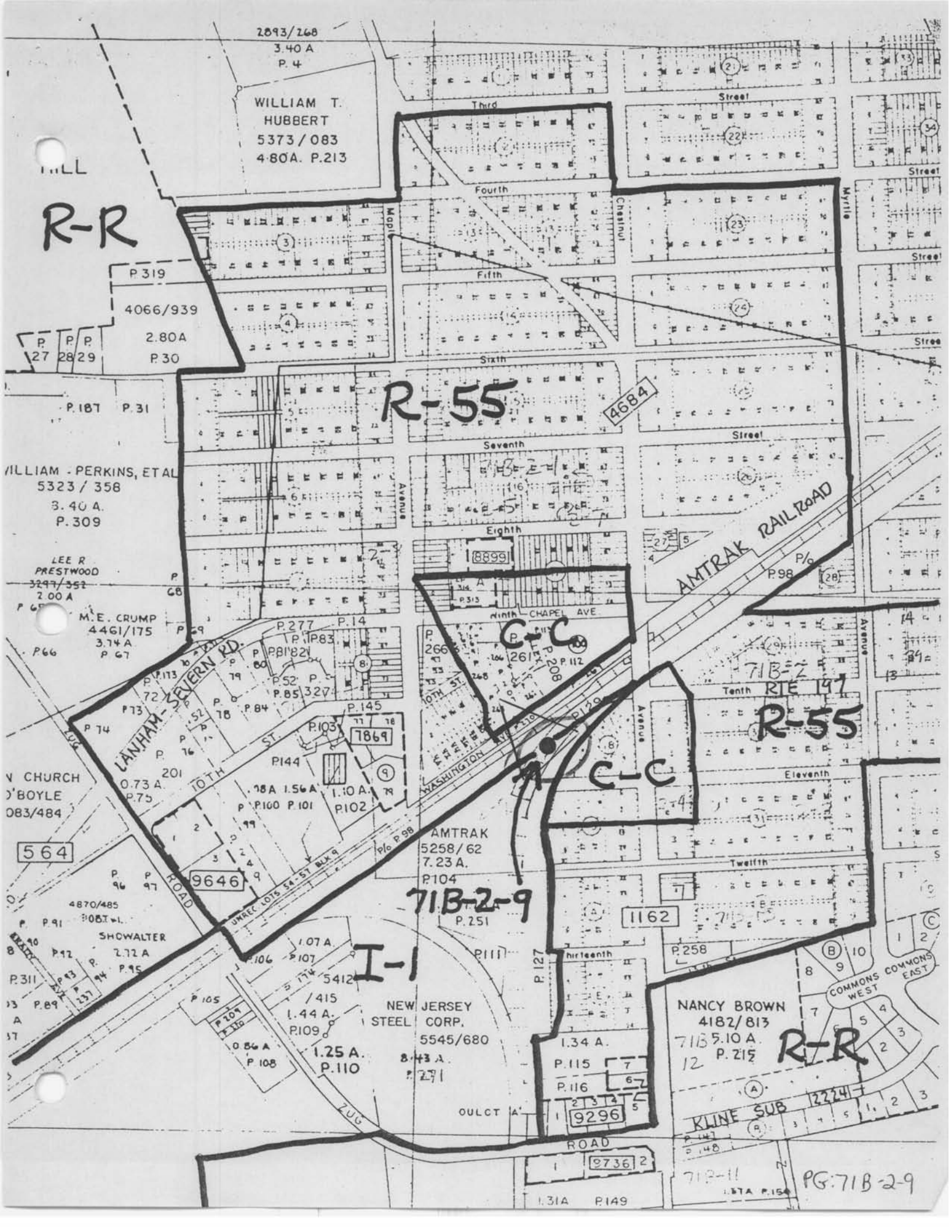
LAUREL, MD.

N3900—W7645/7.5

1965

PHOTOREVISED 1979

AMS 5662 III SE—SERIES V833



2893/268
3.40 A
P. 4
WILLIAM T.
HUBBERT
5373/083
4.80A. P.213
R-R
P.319
4066/939
2.80A
P.30
P. 27
P. 28
P. 29
P.187
P.31
WILLIAM - PERKINS, ET AL
5323/358
3.40 A.
P.309
LEE R
PRESTWOOD
3297/352
2.00 A
M.E. CRUMP
4461/175
3.74 A
P.67
P.66
LANHAM-SEVERN RD.
10TH ST.
CHURCH
O'BOYLE
083/484
564
9646
ROAD
4870/485
SHOWALTER
2.72 A
P.311
P.89
Third
Fourth
Fifth
Sixth
Seventh
Eighth
Ninth
Tenth
Eleventh
Twelfth
Thirteenth
Street
Maple
Chestnut
Myrtle
Avenue
R-55
4684
8899
CHAPEL AVE
C-C
AMTRAK RAILROAD
P.98
71B-2
RTE 197
R-55
C-C
WASHINGTON
AMTRAK
5258/62
7.23 A.
P.104
71B-2-9
P.251
P.111
P.127
1162
P.258
I-1
5412
/415
1.44 A.
P.109
1.25 A.
P.110
NEW JERSEY
STEEL CORP.
5545/680
8.43 A.
P.271
1.34 A.
P.115
P.116
9296
OULCT 'A'
ZUG
ROAD
9736
1.31A
P.149
NANCY BROWN
4182/813
5.10 A.
P.215
R-R
COMMONS WEST
COMMONS EAST
KLINE SUB
2224
71B-11
PG:71B-2-9

PG71-B-2-9

BOWIE RAILROAD BUILDINGS

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD.

18-345920
4318890

(BOWIE) 5662 I NW

1 MILE

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———

Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - - -

U. S. Route State Route

Interstate Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Boundary lines shown in purple compiled from latest information available from the controlling authority

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979

LAUREL, MD.

N3900—W7645/7.5

1965
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 5662 III SE—SERIES V833

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1979

RAILROAD CROSSING
STOP
LOOK AND LISTEN

71-B-2-9

Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Klein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

N Elevation of switching tower

ROWIE

71-B-2-9
Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Allen
2/97
Maryland SHPO

Passenger ticket office
in depot

71-B-29

Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Hein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

Looking E+S while inside
Depot building

71-B-29

Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Klein
2/97
Maryland SHPO
N.E. Elvation of the freight depot

71-B-2-9

Bowie Station

Prince George's County

Maryland

Sally Hein

2/97

Maryland SHPO

looking N + W while inside depot building

5 of 17

71-B-29

Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Hein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

S. Elevation of switching tower

71-B-2-9
Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Klein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

Interior view of depot
passenger room

7 of 17

71-B-29

Baden Station

Prince George's County

Maryland

Sally Klein

2/97

Maryland SHPO

w. Elevation of switching tower

8 of 17

71-B-2-9

Baisie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Klein
2/97
Maryland SHPO
S.W. Elevation of the
freight depot

71-B-2-9

Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Klein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

Passenger ticket window
in depot

71-B-29

Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Hein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

2nd floor switching tower -- windows overlooking tracks

71-B-2-9

Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Klein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

SE Elevation of the waiting shed

12 of 17

EXIT

71-B-2-9

Bowie Station
Prince Georges County
Maryland
Sally Hein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

EXTERIOR DOOR ON THE 2nd FLOOR OF THE SWITCHING TOWER

13 of 17

71-B-2-9

Bowie Station
Prince Georges County
Maryland
Sally Hein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

close up view FROM window in switching tower looking w/sw at original foundations of buildings

71-B-2-9

Bowie Station
P.G. County
Maryland
Sally Hein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

SW view of 3 buildings comprising Bowie Station Complex from Chestnut Ave

15 of 17

71-B-29

Bowie Station
Prince George's County
Maryland
Sally Heir
2/97
Maryland SHPO

view East from R.R.
tracks

71-B-2-9

Bowie Station
P.G. County
Maryland
Sally Hein
2/97
Maryland SHPO

View south from inside
waiting shed towards
signal tower

PGHT13-2-9

Bowie Railroad Buildings
Prince George's Co, MD
Susan G. Pearl
November 1989
View from East: freight shed, tower, and waiting shed
Neg: MHT, Annapolis

1 of 7

Pg # 71B-2-9

Bowie Railroad Buildings
PG County MD
Susan G. Pearl

November 1989

Waiting Shed, west from southeast

Neg: MHT, Annapolis

2 of 7

DO NOT
CROSS
TRACKS

PG #71B-2-9

Bowie Railroad Buildings
PG County MD
Susan G. Pearl
November 1989

Freight shed / ticket office, view from north
Neg: MHT, Annapolis

377

PG #71B-2-9

Bowie Railroad Buildings
PG County MD
Susan G. Pearl
November 1989

freight shed/ticket office and tower, view from south

Neg: MHT, Annapolis

4 of 7

PG #71B-2-9

Bowie Railroad Buildings
PG County MD
Susan G. Pearl
November 1989

Freight shed / ticket office, view from northwest
Neg: MHT, Annapolis

5 of 7

Pg # 71B-2-9

Bowie Railroad Buildings
PG County MD
Susan G. Pearl
November 1989
Tower, view from northeast
Neg: MHT, Annapolis

6 of 7

Ph. # 71B-2-9

Bowie Railroad Buildings
PG County MD
Susan G. Pearl
November 1989

Tower and freight shed/ticket office, view from southwest

Neg: MHT, Annapolis

7 of 7

Pg: 71B-2-9

Bowie Railroad Bldg.
Being moved

now part of Huntington
Railroad museum