NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. Aug. 2002)

OMB No. 1024-0018
(Expires Jan. 2005)

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 Hilltop Manor

other names/site number PG-69-036

2. Location

street & number 4100-4112, 4200-4214 53rd Ave, 4100-4210 53rd Place, and 5300-5304 Annapolis Road not for publication

city or town Bladensburg vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Prince George's code 033

zip code 20710

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ___ 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 meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally statewide ___ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official — Date 11-8-07

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

Signature of commenting official/Title — 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 the Keeper | Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply):

X private
___ 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	
8	___	buildings
___	___	sites
___	___	structures
___	___	objects
8	___	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions):

Cat: DOMESTIC — Sub: Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions):

Cat: DOMESTIC — Sub: Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions):

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS, Colonial Revival
MODERN MOVEMENT, Moderne

Materials (Enter categories from instructions):

foundation: CONCRETE

roof: STONE, Slate, ASPHALT

walls: BRICK

other:

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.

_ 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)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNITY PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1942-1943

Significant Dates

1942, 1943

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Ross & Walton, architects

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(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:

__ State Historic Preservation Office
__ Other State agency
__ Federal agency
X Local government
__ University
__ Other

Name of repository:_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 5.619 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet): **Washington East, DC-MD quad**

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1)	18	332785	4311969	3)			
2)				4)			

__ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laura V. Trieschmann and Patti Kuhn, Architectural Historians
organization EHT Traceries, Inc. date May 6, 2006
street & number 1121 5th Street, NW telephone 202-393-1199
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20037

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 Hilltop Manor Limited Partnership/Manor Management Corp.

street & number 5302 Annapolis Road telephone (301) 864-3200

city or town Bladensburg state MD zip code 20710-1414

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.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

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 Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, DC 20240.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Hilltop Manor is located on the north side of Annapolis Road in Bladensburg, Prince George's County, Maryland. The grassy site slopes downward along its northern boundary. Bladensburg Elementary School is located to the west of Hilltop Manor and the neighborhood of Decatur Heights surrounds the property to the north and east. Hilltop Manor is comprised of three parcels: Parcels A, B, and C. The street layout, which includes 53rd Avenue and 53rd Place, creates an oval configuration with a small extension of 53rd Avenue leading to Annapolis Road. The main entrance to Hilltop Manor is located on 53rd Avenue. Parcel A, the smallest of the three sections, is located on the east side of the entrance with frontage along Annapolis Road and has one garden-apartment building. Parcel B is a C-shaped section on the western boundary of Hilltop Manor with frontage along Annapolis Road. Parcel C is located in the center and has three garden-apartment buildings with a central courtyard. It contains four garden-apartment buildings. The majority of the original landscaping, designed by J.H. Small & Sons of Washington, D.C., remains intact. Grassy areas front the buildings and are interspersed with winding paths. A courtyard with a rectangular concrete path is located in the center of the units of Parcel C. Concrete paths lead to the structures, which are enhanced by landscaped courtyards with large, mature trees and bushes. The sloping terrain creates berms that front the garden-apartment buildings that face east on 53rd Place. Concrete stairs lead up to these apartments. Parking areas are located in front of the structures around 53rd Avenue.

GENERAL ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Hilltop Manor consists of eight garden-apartment buildings, each of which is divided into two to six units or sections. The structures exhibit characteristics of both the Colonial Revival style and the Moderne style, reflecting an architectural transition between the traditional elements of the Colonial Revival style and the streamlined features of the Moderne style. Set on solid concrete foundations, the buildings are faced with six-course American-bond brick. The units range from two to three stories over slightly raised basements, with either a side-gabled or a flat roof. Side-gabled roofs feature flat metal frieze boards and the flat roofs have metal coping. The majority of the gabled roofs feature their original slate shingles, however, the roof of the units 4100 and 4101 53rd Avenue has been re-clad in asphalt shingles. The flat roofs are covered in a composition material. The original metal casement windows have been replaced with single and paired 1/1 vinyl-sash windows with vinyl surrounds. The basement windows have 2-light vinyl-slider windows. The windows have narrow header-brick sills. Several of the units have flush wood doors with three-light fixed windows, while a number have newer doors with one-light fixed windows. The strong influences of the Colonial Revival style are clearly evident on the detailing that surrounds the main entrances to the units. Illustrating the influence of the Moderne style, five horizontal stringcourses of projecting stretcher brick span the exterior walls between the windows and return on the corners of the building. The flat roofs are also indicative of the Moderne style.

The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) characterized six different building forms or unit types that were recommended for garden-apartment structures: Strip, Tee, Cross, Ell, Zee, and Offset Cross. Combinations and variations of the unit types provided site planning benefits such as view, light, ventilation, and dictated the size and location of courtyards. For example, the insertion of paired Strip units in between other unit types offered a widened courtyard, while angles formed by Ell units provided a beneficial orientation for view and light.[1] Hilltop Manor employs only Strip units with a basic rectangular plan, and Ell units with an L-shaped plan.

The combination of Strip units at Hilltop Manor vary with three-bay, five-bay, and paired five-bay examples. Entrances to the three- and five-bay Strip units are centered with a Colonial Revival-style door surround that include fluted pilasters and an ogee cornice. A wood panel of diamond-patterned lattice is located above the doors. The entrances to the paired, ten-bay Strip units have entrances featuring wood surrounds with ogee profiles. The entrances are sheltered by half-hipped hoods that are covered in asphalt shingles and have ogee cornices. The 1/1 vinyl-sash stairwell windows, located above the entrances, have fluted surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks and wood spandrels with diamond-patterned lattice panels. In addition to the Strip units, four of the buildings have between one and three Ell units. The entrances to these units are marked by one-story Colonial Revival-style porticos. The porticos, located in the corner of the unit, have half-hipped roofs of asphalt shingles and lattice wood posts. Small 1/1 vinyl windows, located above the entrances, mark the location of the interior stair. There are three basement-level entrances that are located on the south elevations of the units facing Annapolis Road. These entrances have gabled hoods covered in asphalt shingles.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Parcel A

The rectangular-plan building in Parcel A contains two Strip units. The primary entrances to the units are located on the north elevation fronting 53rd Place. The units also have secondary entrances originally created for commercial spaces. These entrances are located on the north elevations facing Annapolis Road and on the east elevation facing 53rd Place. The western unit includes 5300 Annapolis Road and 4101 53rd Place, and the eastern unit contains 5304 Annapolis Road and 4103 53rd Place. The three-bay wide western unit is slightly narrower than the eastern unit and has a flat roof. The entrance to 4101 53rd Place, located on the north elevation of the unit, has a first-story entrance that accessible by a concrete stair with a metal railing. The entrance to 5300 Annapolis Road is located on the south elevation of the unit and provides access to the rental office for the complex, located in the basement. Concrete stairs

[1] Miles L. Colean, "Multiple Housing Under FHA," *Architectural Record* vol. 84, no. 5. (September 1938): 105.

lead down to this entrance, which is sheltered by a gabled hood with asphalt shingles. The eastern unit is five bays wide and has a side-gabled roof. An exterior-end brick chimney is located on the east elevation. Unlike the majority of the five-bay Strip units, the on-grade entrance to this unit has a wood surround with an ogee profile and a half-hipped hood with an ogee cornice. The 1/1 vinyl-sash stairwell window, located above the entrance, has fluted surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks and wood spandrels with diamond-patterned lattice panels. The south elevation of the unit contains the entrance to 5304 Annapolis Road. This basement entrance is accessible by concrete stairs and is sheltered by a gabled hood covered with asphalt shingles. An additional entrance is located at the first story of the east elevation, to the south of the chimney. It is accessible by a concrete stair with a metal railing. A basement entrance, accessible by a concrete ramp, is also located on the east elevation, north of the chimney.

Parcel B

Parcel B of Hilltop Manor consists of four buildings that combine both Strip and Ell units. The southernmost building, located along Annapolis Road, consists of four units: 4100, 4102, 4101, and 4106 53rd Avenue. The largest building in Parcel B lines the western boundary and consists of six units: 4108, 4110, 4112, 4200, 4202 and 4202 53rd Avenue. A three-unit building sits on the northwest corner of Parcel B and contains 4206, 4208, and 4210 53rd Avenue. The smallest building in Parcel B is sited on the northeast corner and includes units 4212 and 4214 53rd Avenue and 4210 53rd Place.

Overall, the three-unit building containing 4100, 4102, 4104, and 4106 53rd Avenue is L-shaped in plan. The easternmost section of the building contains paired Strip units and is ten bays wide. Facing north, the units contain 4100 and 4102 53rd Avenue and share a side-gabled roof with slate shingles. The unit containing 4104 53rd Avenue, an Ell unit, is three stories high and has a flat roof. Its entrance is located on the north elevation. An exterior brick chimney is located on the west elevation of the unit. The northern unit, containing 4106 53rd Avenue, is two stories high and five bays wide. This Strip unit faces east and has a side-gabled roof.

The building containing units 4108, 4110, 4112, 4200, 4202 and 4202 53rd Avenue has an undulating form created by three Ell units and one set of paired Strip units. The southernmost unit, an Ell, includes 4108 53rd Avenue and is two stories high with a flat roof. The entrance is located on the north elevation. A five- bay Strip unit, 4110 53rd Avenue faces east and its south elevation is attached to unit 4108 53rd Avenue. Two stories high, the unit has a side-gabled roof. Unit 4112 53rd Avenue is an Ell unit and is attached to north elevation of unit 4110 53rd Avenue. It is two stories high and has a flat roof. The entrance is located on the east elevation. The paired Strip unit containing 4200 and 4202 53rd Avenue faces east and is attached to the northeast corner of unit 4112 53rd Avenue. The units are three stories high and ten bays wide with a flat roof. The Ell unit 4204 is attached to the northwest corner of unit 4202 53rd Avenue. It is two stories and has a flat roof. The entrance is located on the north elevation.

The building containing units 4206, 4208, and 4210 53rd Avenue consists of two Strip units and one Ell unit. Units 4206, an Ell unit, and 4208, a Strip unit, create an L-shaped configuration. The Strip unit at 4210 53rd Avenue is sited slightly south of unit 4208 53rd Avenue and is attached to its northeast corner. The Ell unit containing 4206 53rd Avenue comprises the west portion of the building. The unit is three stories high and has a flat roof. The entrance to unit 4206 53rd Avenue is located on the south elevation. A rear entrance is located on the west elevation of the unit. Strip units 4208 and 4210 53rd Avenue are identical in configuration. Facing south, the units are two stories high and five bays wide with side-gabled roofs.

The building containing the three Strip units at 4212, 4214 53rd Avenue and 4210 53rd Place has an L-shaped configuration with a cutaway southeastern corner. Units 4212 and 4214 53rd Avenue, paired Strip units, have a rectangular plan and face south. The units share a side-gabled roof. An exterior brick chimney is located on the north elevation. Unit 4210 53rd Place is attached to the northeast corner of unit 4214 53rd Avenue and faces east. It is three stories high, three bays wide, and has a flat roof. Due to the slope of the lot, the first-story entrance is accessible by a long, concrete stair with metal railings. An additional entrance is located on the on-grade basement level.

Parcel C

Parcel C contains three buildings sited around a central courtyard. The building located on the southern end of Section C contains four units. Located on the east end of Parcel C and primarily facing 53rd Place is a four-unit building with units 4104, 4106, and 4200 53rd Place and 4205 53rd Avenue. Facing 53rd Avenue, the building on the west side of Parcel C contains three units at 4105, 4107, 4201, and 4203 53rd Avenue.

The building containing Strip units 4101 and 4103 53rd Avenue and 4100 and 4102 53rd Place, has a U-shaped configuration. It is the most prominent building in the Hilltop Manor and is located directly in front of the main entrance to the complex. The center section of the building contains paired Strip units 4100 53rd Avenue and 4101 53rd Place. Rectangular in plan, the paired-unit building is three stories high and ten bays wide. The units share a clipped side-gabled roof of asphalt shingles. An exterior brick chimney is located on the north elevation. Unit 4103 53rd Avenue is attached to the northwest corner of unit 4101 53rd Place. Facing west, it is two stories high and three bays wide with a flat roof. The wood panel located above the door is missing its original diamond latticework. Unit 4102 53rd Place is attached to the northeast corner of unit 4100 53rd Avenue. It is five bays wide and two stories high with a flat roof.

Slightly U-shaped in configuration, the building including Strip units 4105, 4107, 4201, and 4203 53rd Avenue faces east. The center section of the building contains paired Strip units 4017 and 4201 53rd Avenue. It is three stories

high and ten bays wide. Unit 4105 53rd Avenue is attached to the southeast corner of unit 4107 53rd Avenue. The unit is two stories high and three bays wide. The decorative wood panel located above the centered entrance is missing its diamond-pattern lattice. A basement entrance contains an original three-paneled wood door with a six-light window. Unit 4203 53rd Avenue is attached to the northeast corner of unit 4201 53rd Avenue. It is two stories high and three bays wide.

The building containing units 4104, 4106, and 4200 53rd Place and 4205 53rd Avenue is slightly Z-shaped in plan. The building contains three Strip units and one Ell unit. Units 4104, an Ell unit, and 4106 53rd Place, a Strip unit, have an L-shaped configuration and comprise the south half of the building. Unit 4104 53rd Place has a flat roof and its entrance is located on the east elevation. Five bays wide, unit 4106 53rd Place is attached to the north elevation of unit 4104 53rd Place and has a side-gabled roof. The three-story unit 4200 53rd Place is attached to the northeast corner of the building with unit 4106 53rd Place. Five bays wide, the building faces east and has a flat roof. The building with unit 4205 is attached to the northwest corner of the building containing unit 4200 and is identical in configuration. The main elevation faces north.

INTERIOR CONFIGURATION

Hilltop Manor consists of 150 apartments interspersed among eight buildings with thirty-two units. Each unit contains between four and eight apartments, with the exception of one unit, 5210 53rd Place, that consists of only three apartments. In all, there are five apartment layouts with varying numbers of bedrooms. The majority of the apartments (122) have one bedroom. The remaining apartments consist of two-bedroom apartments; there is one three-bedroom basement apartment. The five basic apartment types, excluding the one three-bedroom apartment, consist of one-bedroom apartments with eat-in kitchens; one-bedroom apartments with separate dining rooms; L-shaped one-bedroom apartments; two-bedroom apartments; and duplex apartments. Despite minor renovations, the interior configurations of the apartments have remained intact.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Hilltop Manor is a representative example of a garden-apartment complex built in Prince George's County during the mid-twentieth century. Constructed in 1942, Hilltop Manor was one of the first garden-apartment complexes constructed in the county as result of the population increase of the Washington metropolitan area during World War II. Hilltop Manor was financed under Section 608 Title VI of the National Housing Act, the primary vehicle for World War II Defense Housing and Federal Housing Administration (FHA) financing. Thus, Hilltop Manor, intended as permanent housing, illustrates the size, scale, and design of garden-apartment complexes constructed during World War II, which was often characterized by temporary housing developments. Hilltop Manor, surrounded by the established streetcar suburb of Decatur Heights and adjacent to the new Bladensburg Elementary School, was an alternative to the single-family dwellings in the area and was ideal for young middle-class families. Its location along Defense Highway, which opened in 1927, heightened convenience to Washington, D.C. One of the first garden-apartment complexes designed by accomplished local architects Ross & Walton, Hilltop Manor strayed slightly from the Colonial Revival-style garden-apartment buildings that were favored early-on by the FHA. By combining traditional Colonial Revival-style elements, such as gabled roofs and decorative porticoes, with the then-fashionable Moderne style, exemplified by the use of flat roofs and horizontal stringcourses, Hilltop Manor illustrates the evolution of garden-apartment design in Prince George's County, Maryland. The design and location of Hilltop Manor exemplify the formula established and later augmented by the Federal Housing Administration for successful, mortgage-insured garden-apartment complexes.

Hilltop Manor is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Hilltop Manor meets Criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the garden-apartment movement that greatly impacted community planning and development in the United States from the 1930s until the 1950s and more specifically in Prince George's County, Maryland from 1934 to 1955. The size, scale, and form of Hilltop Manor, in particular the use of FHA-recommended Strip and Ell unit types, reflect the influence of the FHA's guidelines for garden-apartment buildings. Additionally, the implementation of landscaping within the design of Hilltop Manor further emphasizes its adherence to FHA's principles. Hilltop Manor meets Criterion C as a garden-apartment complex that reflects the design influence of the FHA. The distinct combination of both Colonial Revival-style and Moderne-style elements at Hilltop Manor are indicative of the FHA's preference for the Colonial Revival style as well as the increasing desire for a modern, yet appealing design. The complex has eight garden-apartment structures, all of which are identified as contributing resources.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Bladensburg and Annapolis Road/Defense Highway

Hilltop Manor is located in Bladensburg, Maryland, outside of the original town limits that were platted in 1742. As one of the oldest towns in Prince George's County, Bladensburg was an important tobacco port during the Colonial era.[1] What was originally platted as the town's West, Market, and East Streets is currently Annapolis Road (Defense Highway), the location of Hilltop Manor.[2]

In 1868, Prince George's County experienced its first glimpse of the impending suburbanization of Washington, D.C., with the establishment of Spa City, near Spa Spring that adjoined the Town of Bladensburg. Although Spa City was not successful, it sparked a trend in residential suburban development in Prince George's County. As the population of Washington, D.C., grew during the late nineteenth century, affordable housing was increasingly in demand. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, built through Prince George's County in 1835, provided transportation to many of the preexisting towns, including Bladensburg. After the Civil War (1861-1865), new suburban developments were established around these railroad stops.

By 1915, a subdivision known as Decatur Heights was platted near Bladensburg. A *Washington Post* advertisement from that year promoted the new neighborhood as "15 Minutes From Heart of City, 25 Minutes by Car Line."[3] Located east of Bladensburg and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, Section 1 of Decatur Heights was platted on the south side of Market Street (Annapolis Road). The much larger "Addition to Decatur Heights" was later platted on the north side of Market Street. By 1918, residents of the neighborhood created a Civic Association and Decatur Heights was listed in the suburban section of the *Washington Post*, an indication of its importance as a suburb of Washington, D.C.[4]

In 1918, construction of the "Defense Highway" began. The highway, running from Bladensburg to Annapolis, was originally a narrow, unpaved road that had been established in the eighteenth century.[5] The road provided a direct route from the Naval Academy to the Capitol. The paving and widening of the road was a response to tactics learned during World War I (1914-1918) and the importance of strategically located highways intended for defense facilitation.[6] Market Street in Bladensburg became the western starting point of Defense Highway, also known as Annapolis Road. Even before the highway officially opened on July 16, 1927, development along Annapolis Road increased. As the *Washington Post* reported, "[the opening of the highway] means much to all sections of Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties, in Maryland as this highway links the Nation's Capital and the capital of the state, and is also opening up vast stretches of county in between."[7] Newly developed suburbs in Prince George's

County, such as Cheverly, located southeast of Bladensburg, thrived because of their convenience to the Defense Highway.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, Prince George's County was experiencing a tremendous increase in population, particularly along the western boundary near Washington, D.C. In 1900, the county's population was 29,898 and by 1930, the population had doubled to 60,095. By the mid-twentieth century, increases in population, a direct result of the expansion of the federal government and the return of World War II (1941-1945) veterans, greatly impacted the housing industry in Prince George's County. Both the federal government and developers began looking for ways to construct affordable housing to meet growing needs.

In the 1940s, Prince George's County's first garden-apartment complexes were constructed, a result of incentives offered by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Although garden-apartment complex construction began in nearby Arlington County, Virginia, with Colonial Village in 1936, similar construction did not start in Prince George's County until 1941 with the construction of Kaywood Gardens in Mount Rainier. Despite its slow start, a large number of garden-apartment complexes were constructed in Prince George's County through the 1950s. In Prince George's County, FHA-insured garden-apartment buildings were typically constructed in the suburbs closest to Washington, D.C., along convenient transportation routes such as Defense Highway.

A substantial impetus for this construction was Section 608 of Title VI under the NHA, which was established for Defense Housing during World War II. Section 608, under Title VI of the National Housing Act, became effective in 1942 and related "solely to rental housing." This wartime measure was passed to "assist private enterprise in meeting the emergency."[8] In order for a private project to qualify as defense housing and be eligible for assistance under Section 608, it must be "(1) located within reasonable commuting distance of places of defense employment in any one of the 270 Defense Housing Critical Areas; (2) suitable for and intended primarily for defense workers within those areas; and (3) offered at a sales price or rental within reach of the defense workers for whom the housing is intended."[9] In contrast to the Federal Public Housing Authority, which initially concentrated on building fast, temporary housing for defense workers, Section 608 provided financing to private investors for permanent housing under these conditions.[10] Consequently, most apartment building complexes constructed during World War II in Prince George's County were constructed by private investors under Section 608.

Hilltop Manor

In 1941, Eugene A. Smith, Ralph S. Morrison, and Sherman H. Hollingsworth purchased approximately seven acres from Lidia M. Volland along Defense Highway, adjacent to the new Bladensburg Elementary School.[11] A plat map was recorded in April 1942 by Dyers and Price, registered civil engineers and land surveyors from Hyattsville,

Maryland. The plat consisted of three sections, Parcels A, B, and C. At the time Hilltop Manor was platted, an addition to the single-family residential neighborhood of Decatur Heights bounded the site on the north and east, and Section 1 of Decatur Heights was located directly south of Hilltop Manor, across Annapolis Road. Also along Annapolis Road were the Bladensburg High School, constructed during the 1930s, and a few remaining country estates.[12]

Construction of the eight-building complex was begun in 1942 and completed in 1943. As recommended by the FHA, the complex incorporated combinations of Strip and Ell unit types, creating large courtyards and ample light and views for each unit. With its convenient location along Defense Highway and only a short distance from Washington, D.C., Hilltop Manor was one of the earliest garden-apartment complexes constructed in Prince George's County under the auspices of the FHA. Under Section 608 of Title VI under the National Housing Act, exclusively for large-scale rental housing projects, Hilltop Manor received a $565,000 insured mortgage from the FHA.[13] Hilltop Manor was first advertised in the *Washington Post* in May of 1943. The article, entitled "Prince George's County Becomes Important Part of Washington Suburban Map," promoted Hilltop Manor's convenient location near Bladensburg schools.[14]

Architects and Landscape Architects

The owners of Hilltop Manor hired the local architectural firm of Ross & Walton to design the garden-apartment complex. The architectural firm of Ross & Walton was located in nearby Hyattsville, Maryland. Principal architects R. Webster Ross and John M. Walton worked on numerous projects in Prince George's County during their careers. As a firm, Ross & Walton designed the garden-apartment complex of Queens Manor Apartments in Mount Rainier (1943) and Addison Chapel in Capitol Heights (1951). In addition to garden apartments, Ross & Walton also designed houses for large developments. In 1946, the *Washington Post* reported that Ross & Walton was currently working on plans for a large housing development in Oxon Hill, two apartment complexes near Bladensburg, and an additional apartment complex on New Hampshire Avenue in Chillum.[15] Hilltop Manor was one of the first garden-apartment complexes constructed in Prince George's County by Ross & Walton.

J.H. Small & Sons served as the landscape architects for Hilltop Manor. The Washington, D.C., and New York City firm had been established as early as 1880.[16] The company quickly became one of the leading florists in Washington, D.C., and was located on the corner of 14th and G Streets, N.W.[17] By 1942, their business had relocated to 1501 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. and contained a landscape department. J.H. Small & Sons landscaped several communities in the Washington, D.C. area including Foxhall Village in Washington, D.C., and Forest Hills, Country Club View, and Greenwich Forest in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Hilltop Manor and the Moderne Style

Although the FHA did not specify a particular architectural style for garden-apartment complexes, from the outset the Colonial Revival style was preferred, especially after the success of the first FHA-financed project, Colonial Village (1936) in Arlington, Virginia. However, a large number of the garden-apartment complexes in Prince George's County funded by the FHA departed slightly from the Colonial Revival style and employed streamlined designs influenced by both the Art Deco style and the Moderne style. Although the massing, symmetry, form, and ornamentation of many of the garden-apartment complexes are distinctly Colonial Revival in style, the detailing and some fenestration elements are visibly influenced by the fashionable Art Deco and Moderne styles. As a result, buildings are often a combination of flat and gable-roofed structures with brick quoins, horizontal panels of concrete or brick stringcourses, and modern casement windows. These buildings followed the FHA guidelines for two- and three-story buildings, staggered rooflines, and unifying designs, but visibly contrasted from more traditional garden-apartment complexes such as Colonial Village (1936) in Arlington and Suitland Manor (1942) in Prince George's County. Hilltop Manor reflects this style and form with its intermixing of gabled and flat roofs, Colonial Revival-style door surrounds, original metal casement windows, and horizontal brick stringcourses.

A unique feature of Hilltop Manor is Ross & Walton's use of diamond-patterned lattice posts, spandrels, and panels that are illustrated on the original blueprints for the complex. These elements, combined with the more traditional Colonial Revival-style surrounds, illustrate the attention to detail and ornament that was often lacking in later garden-apartment buildings and complexes in Prince George's County. Although Moderne-style horizontal stringcourses that span the length between the windows and the use of flat-roofed buildings are visible on several garden-apartment complexes in Prince George's County, Hilltop Manor is one of the earliest examples of this Moderne vocabulary. The stringcourses and flat roofs appear be an influence from the garden-apartments of Greenbelt, Maryland, constructed in Prince George's County in 1937. The later examples of this technique do not combine Colonial Revival-style elements with Moderne elements to the same degree as at Hilltop Manor. By 1955, approximately sixty-five garden-apartment complexes were constructed in Prince George's County, twenty-two of which were designed in the Moderne style, compared to the thirty-nine illustrating the Colonial Revival style.

Hilltop Manor Today

In 1965, Hilltop Manor was sold to George Basiliko, who was listed on the deed as the President of Hilltop Manor Incorporated. Basiliko sold the complex to George Hesse in 1968.[18] Hesse continues to own the property today and maintains that the structures and the landscape have undergone few changes since Hilltop Manor opened in 1942. The landscaping is remarkably intact with new plantings that complement the original design. The buildings have undergone few changes and maintain their integrity, despite the replacement of a majority of the original doors and all of the original casement windows.

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[1] *Landmarks of Prince George's County* (Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 16.
[2] Alan Vitra, *Prince George's County: A Pictorial History* (Virginia Beach, Virginia: The Donning Company, 1984), 54.
[3] Display Ad 9, *Washington Post*, March 14, 1915.
[4] "Suburban," *Washington Post*, November 21, 1920.
[5] "A History of the Town of Landover Hills," http://www.lhills.sailorsite.net/History/historyforward.htm.
[6] "For Defense Highway," *Washington Post*, February 21, 1916.
[7] Defense Highway Links Cheverly to Capital," *Washington Post*, July 10, 1927.
[8] Clyde Powell, "The FHA Rental Housing Program," *Insured Mortgage Portfolio* 16, no. 4 (Second Quarter 1952): 14.
[9] "Priorities for Defense Housing," *Insured Mortgage Portfolio* 6, no. 1 (Third Quarter 1941): 5.
[10] Kristin M. Szylvian, "The Federal Housing Program During World War II," in *From Tenements to the Taylor Homes: In Search of Urban Housing Policy in Twentieth Century America*, ed. John F. Bauman an, Roger Biles, and Kristin M. Szylvan (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press), 130.
[11] Land Records of Prince George's County, September 26, 1941, Liber 627, Folio 193-4.
[12] Franklin Survey Company, *Atlas of Prince George's County Volume 1* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 1940).
[13] "Decrease in Construction for Administration Also Factor, *Washington Post*, January 9, 1944.
[14] "Prince George's County Becomes Important Part of Washington Suburban Map," *Washington Post*, May 9, 1943.
[15] "Builder Holds Mixed View on Prospects," *Washington Post*, June 1, 1946.
[16] 1882 article from the *Washington Post* mentions the J.H. Small & Sons, florists. "Linked By Love, *Washington Post*, October 12, 1882.
[17] "The Chrysanthemum Show," *Washington Post*, November 8, 1891.
[18] Land Records of Prince George's County, Liber 3221, Folio 5, October 1, 1965. According to Mr. Hesse, he purchased Hilltop Manor from George Basiliko in 1968 through a land contract. Land Records of Prince George's County, Liber 3638, Folio 132, September 26, 1968. The deed was finalized in 1990. Land Records of Prince George's County, Liber 7536, Folio 538, January 1, 1990.

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Priorities for Defense Housing." *Insured Mortgage Portfolio* 6, no. 1 (Third Quarter 1941).

Maps

Franklin Survey Company, *Atlas of Prince George's County, Volume 1*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 1940.

Deeds

Land Records of Prince George's County, Liber 627, Folio 193-4, September 26, 1941.

Land Records of Prince George's County, Liber 3221, Folio 5, October 1, 1965.

Land Records of Prince George's County, Liber 3638, Folio 132, September 26, 1968.

Land Records of Prince George's County, Liber 7536, Folio 538, January 1, 1990.

Electronic Resources

"A History of the Town of Landover Hills," http://www.lhills.sailorsite.net/History/historyforward.htm.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Hilltop Manor is located in Bladensburg, Maryland, in the western section of Prince George's County. Hilltop Manor is bounded by Annapolis Road on the south, Bladensburg Elementary School on the west, Addition "A" to Decatur Heights on the north, and 53rd Place on the west. The eight-building complex contains units 4100, 4102, 4103, 4104, 4105, 4106, 4107, 4108, 4110, 4112, 4200, 4201, 4202, 4203, 4204, 4205, 4206, 4208, 4210, 4212, 4214 53rd Avenue, 4100, 4101, 4103, 4102, 4204, 4206, 4210 53rd Place, and 5300 and 5304 Annapolis Road.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of Hilltop Manor consist of the original property purchased by Eugene A. Smith, Ralph S. Morrison, and Sherman H. Hollingsworth in 1941. Including Parcels A, B, and C, the property is recorded on a plat dated April , 1942 and recorded in the Land Records of Prince George's County, Liber 627, Folio 193. These boundaries represent all of the property historically and currently known as Hilltop Manor. No non-historic resources have been constructed on the property since it was originally constructed in 1942-1943.

All photographs are of:
Hilltop Manor
Prince George's County, Maryland
E.H.T. Traceries, Inc., photographer
Maryland SHPO

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Hilltop Manor Entrance, Looking Northwest
PHOTO: 1 of 11

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Units 4100 and 4102 53rd Avenue, Rear Elevation, Looking West
PHOTO: 2 of 11

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Units 4104 and 4106 53rd Avenue, Looking Southwest
PHOTO: 3 of 11

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Units 4108 and 4110 53rd Avenue, Looking Southwest
PHOTO: 4 of 11

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Units 4200 and 4202 53rd Avenue, Looking West
PHOTO: 5 of 11

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Units 4206 and 4208 53rd Avenue, Looking Northwest
PHOTO: 6 of 11

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Detail of Portico, Unit 4206 53rd Avenue, Looking Northwest
PHOTO: 7 of 11

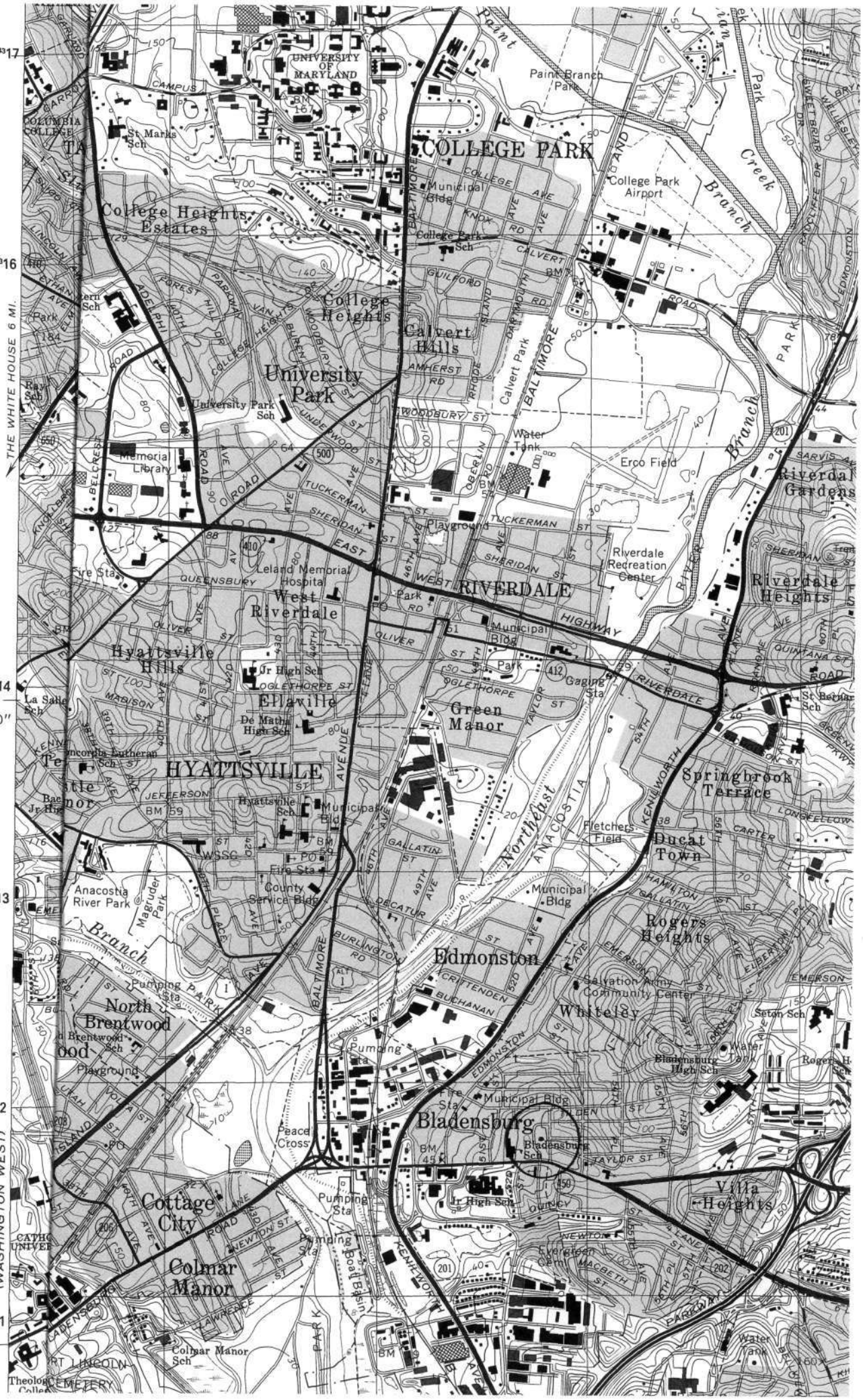
DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Units 4101 and 4100 53rd Avenue, Looking Northeast
PHOTO: 8 of 11

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Courtyard in Parcel C, Looking North
PHOTO: 9 of 11

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Units 4200 and 4210 53rd Place, Looking North
PHOTO: 10 of 11

DATE: January 2006
VIEW OF: Parcel B and Parcel C, Looking South
PHOTO: 11 of 11

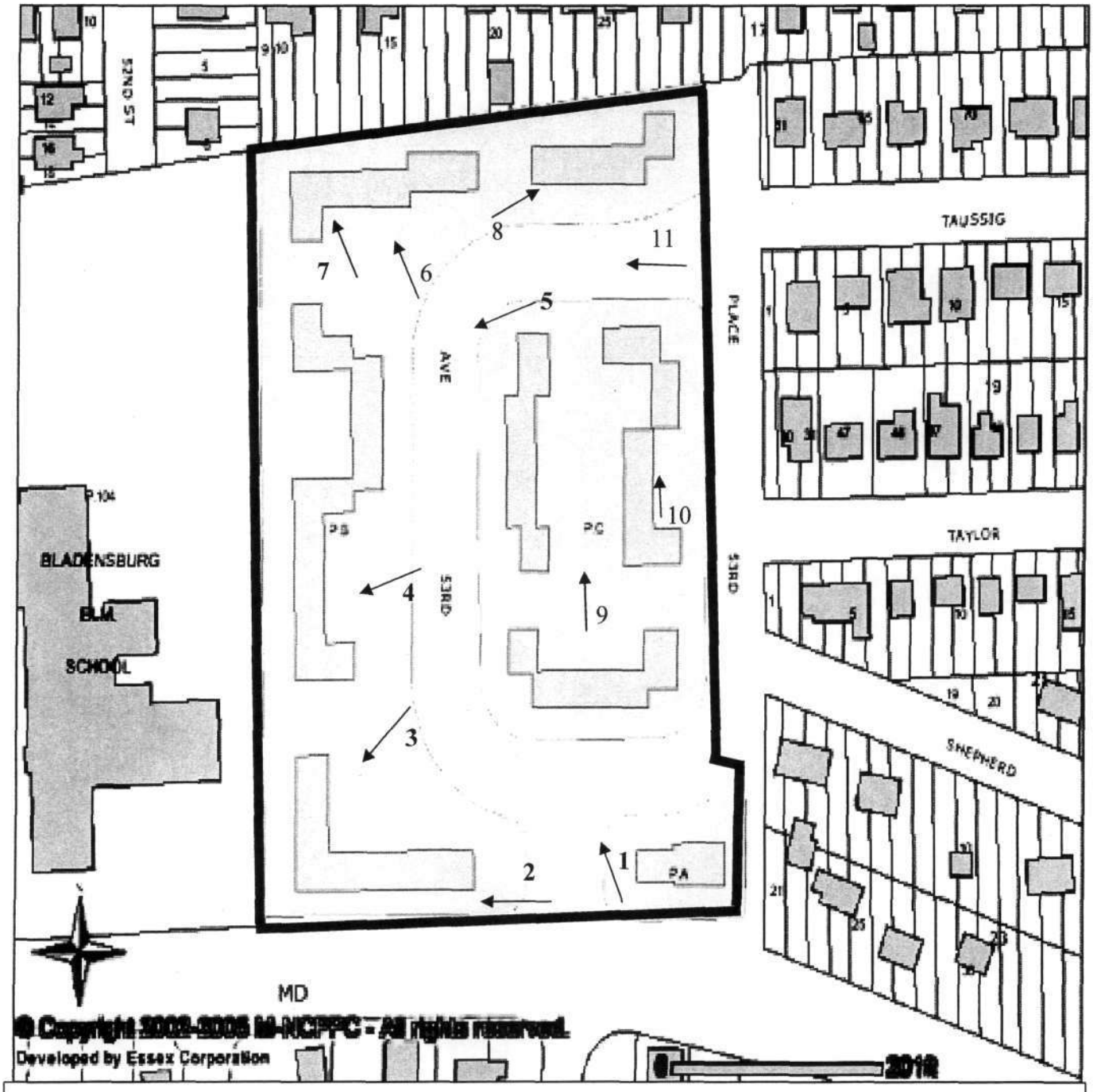
Washington East Quad



PG-69-036

HILLTOP MANOR

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND



HILLTOP MANOR (PG-69-036)
BLADENSBURG,
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD

PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEW MAP

BOUNDARY

PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEW