

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 Gobbler Hill

other names K-401; Stephens Farm

2. Location

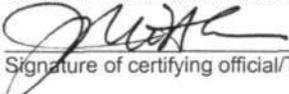
street & number 10121 Fairlee Road n/a not for publication

city or town Chestertown X vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Kent code 029 zip code 21620

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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/Title

11-9-09
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying 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

Gobbler Hill; K-401

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	3	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

Agriculture/Subsistence: Agricultural Outbuilding

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

Agriculture/Subsistence: Agricultural Outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century/Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	Brick
walls	Wood: Weatherboard
roof	Metal
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)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- B Property 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)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or 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.

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 files (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 # _____

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1858 - 1890

Significant Dates

1858

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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Gobbler Hill; K-401

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Description Summary:

The house known as Gobbler Hill is located at the crossroads of Maryland Route 298 and Route 514 on one of the highest points in Kent County, Maryland. It faces west with a commanding view of the village of Melitota and the surrounding landscape. The house is sited in a landscaped yard with large shade trees within a larger setting of agricultural fields. Built in 1858, the central-hall-plan frame house is constructed on a foundation of local fieldstone and brick. It is five bays wide, two bays deep and two stories tall. It has a shallow hip roof that is surmounted by a tall cupola [belvedere]. On the front of the house is a full width porch, a recent [1988] reconstruction whose design was prepared utilizing historic photographs and archeological evidence. Behind the main block is a recent [1989] two story frame service wing that creates a T plan.

General Description:

The cornice is enriched with large curved eave brackets and turned acorn pendants at the corners. There is a robust cyma reversa molding at the roof edge as well as a built-in gutter system. Full-height pilasters with Doric capitals are present on all four corners of the main house. Pilasters rest on copper-capped brick piers that are integrated into the foundation.

The same cornice detailing, but at a smaller scale, appears on the hipped roof of the porch and cupola. The cupola roof is supported by eight square columns in the simple vernacular Doric style. The cupola has no exterior walls, windows or cresting but does have a balustrade that matches that of the front porch.

The full-width, five bay front porch has six Doric columns with large cyma recta capitals and two pilasters located at each porch-main house junction. The classic entablature is represented at the column/pilaster and architrave junctions. The porch has cyma reversa molding and built-in gutters as well as eave brackets and turned acorns along the cornice. There is a sawn open-fret balustrade between columns at bays 1, 2, 4, and 5 as well as between end columns and pilasters. The porch was reconstructed in 1988; its design is an exact copy of an original porch shown in 19th-century photographs, and its size and location were confirmed by archeological evidence.

The main entry is a Classical-style enframement displaying two-panel double doors, a four-pane transom light with molded transom bar, and sidelight assemblies with bolection molded lower panels.

The centrality of the building's organization is reinforced by the location of a tripartite window in the central bay on the second floor, with three-over-three sash sidelights flanking a six-over-six window. Elsewhere, the windows are quite large and have six-over-six sash with slender, Gothic-bead-shaped muntins. The exterior

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window trim consists of a complex combination of large bold cyma recta moldings alternating with smaller ovolo moldings. Windows are located in each exposed bay of the main house.

The perimeter of the house has a twelve inch skirt topped with a copper clad drip edge that starts at the top of the foundation. Pine weatherboard siding runs from the skirt to the lower edge of the frieze board, where it is enriched with the same bold cyma recta molding that makes up part of the window enframingent.

The house has interior end chimneys with short stepped brick stacks. The building rests on a brick and stone foundation. Three-light basement windows are symmetrically located below facade windows and are protected by three horizontal wooden bars.

The main block of the house retains an exceptionally high degree of integrity, and has recently benefited from a comprehensive and well-researched campaign of rehabilitation and restoration. Changes to the building include the removal of a previously altered small L-plan service wing and the addition of a new larger T wing [see attached sketches of floor plan pre/post alteration]. This wing, designed in 1989 by local historic preservation architect Marsha Fritz, was guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards which call for new additions to be compatible with, yet differentiated from, the historic construction. To achieve consistency with these Standards, details inspired by the original architecture were simplified and scaled-down in the addition. Examples include cornices with slightly smaller cyma recta moldings, eaves without brackets and smaller frieze board. The skirt continues from the main house to the addition, but the weatherboard siding terminates into simple corner boards rather than pilasters. Six-paned, wood, true-divided light windows with plain enframements symmetrically placed around the addition clearly show the similarity to the main house windows but at the same time reveal the contrast of new vs. original.

Inside, Gobbler Hill has spacious rooms which retain fine mid-19th century woodwork. Window and door trim is a complex combination of contrasting moldings including cyma recta, ovolo and cove. The baseboards in the main house are 8.5" in height including the bold Grecian ovolo and bevel cap. Four-panel doors with original hardware are found throughout the house.

The major stair is large in scale. The walnut newel has a carved octagonal shaft and is similar to a newel advertised by George O. Stevens, a millwork company in Baltimore. The balusters are turned oak, also with an octagonal shaft. There are also foliated step end brackets.

The mantel in the north room, first floor is a marbleized slate in a Greek Revival style. The south room also has a marbleized slate mantel, simpler in design. On the second floor, the decorative detailing is simpler and includes a wooden mantel is wooden with curved shelf and chamfered pilasters with lamb's tongue stops. Behind the three-part central window is a small room that has a stair to the belvedere.

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The interior of the addition includes a modern kitchen, family room, bathrooms and bedrooms. All plumbing and mechanical improvements were situated within the 1989 addition, for the express purpose of preserving the historic fabric of the main block.

Along with the house, three outbuildings are located on the property, none of which contributes to the significance of the resource. These include a small square frame structure constructed in the late 20th century to house electrical and mechanical equipment, an extensively reconstructed hip-roofed pump house of stone and frame construction, and a mid-20th century cinderblock equipment shed.

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Summary Statement of Significance:

The house known as Gobbler Hill, located in Kent County, Maryland at the crossroads of Maryland Route 298 and Route 514 in Melitota, formerly known as Willis' Crossroads, is architecturally significant under Criterion C. Constructed in 1858 for William W. Stephens, this rural building represents an excellent example of the transition in architecture from the late Greek Revival to early Italianate style. The Greek Revival is represented in the two-story, five bay wide, two bay deep, center-passage-plan building with its symmetrical façade and shallow hipped roof. Additional Classical patterns include square Doric columns and pilasters, rich entablatures, large cyma reversa roof edge moldings as well as symmetrical windows with six over six sash. Early Italianate influences include deep soffits with large curved brackets and turned acorn pendants, rectangular belvedere with hipped roof, bracketed soffits, acorn pendants and fret sawn balustrade and a one story, full width, hipped-roof porch with bracketed soffits, acorn pendants and sawn fret balustrade. In Kent County, several examples of mid to late Italianate houses can be seen, such as Captain James Taylor's House on Water Street in Chestertown and Morton Hall in Sassafras. However, only Brampton [NR, near Fairlee] and Gobbler Hill represent this rare transitional type. William W. Stephens, a prominent local farmer, was considered one of Kent County's most important citizens. His wife Maggie and their four children lived on the property from the time of its construction in 1858 until the house was sold in 1890. Mr. Stephens, founder and president of the Kent County Agricultural Association, held the first County Fair on the grounds of his farm which was originally about 300 acres. Over the years, subdivision has reduced the property associated with the house to the current 65 acres.

The period of significance, 1858-1890, begins with the construction date of the house and ends with William Stephens' retirement from farming. The property was sold out of the Stephens family shortly thereafter.

Resource History and Historic Context:

William W. Stephens was born in 1819 to Thomas and Mary Stephens of Fairlee, Maryland, one of three children. In 1846, at the age of 27, he married Jane C.S. Gamble of Worton, Maryland, granddaughter of Robert S. Gamble. Robert S. Gamble had inherited a 300 acre farm from his father Darius Gamble, who acquired his holdings between 1808 and 1811. This farm included all of the land between Worton Creek [also known as Coney Warren] and Corey Farm [today this would include Gobbler Hill, the village of Melitota and all of the land west of Route 298 between Gobbler Hill and Corey Farm]. Upon his death in 1851, Robert S. Gamble willed the entire farm to his granddaughter Jane. In the 1852 tax assessment of Kent County, William W. Stephens is listed as owner of 278 acres of "Coney Warren" with "Frame House in good repair formerly Jane Gamble."

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Unfortunately, in 1853, at 21 years of age, Jane C.S. Gamble died of tuberculosis. In addition to her husband William, she left behind two small children, Marion, aged 5, and Lydia, 3. Jane bequeathed the farm, in trust, to her two children; however, in 1858 William married Margaret A. Beck, and they together purchased the trust in 1860. The house was most likely built by William and Margaret in 1858 as an improvement to the one listed on the 1852 tax assessment. The girls, Marion and Lydia, moved into the new house and soon William and Margaret had their own children; William B. who was born in 1860 and Estella who was born in 1867. Margaret and Estella inscribed their names in Gobbler Hill's entryway sidelight glass.

William W. Stephens is listed on the 1850 – 1880 censuses as a farmer. His leadership talents were clearly demonstrated through his love of farming. Mr. Stephens was a founder and president of the Kent County Agricultural Association, one of Maryland's first farmer advocacy groups and most likely a precursor to the many modern agricultural producer groups. He was also an avid horseman. His horses were well known throughout the county and state. The sale of one of his horses, "White Mountain," to a Baltimorean for \$1800 was noted in the Kent County News in 1871. His love for horses impelled Mr. Stephens to organize Kent's annual "Fair," where horse racing was the main event. The Kent Fair was widely viewed as the most prominent in the State and for many years these annual races were held in Worton Station, but the first one, in the 1870s, was held on the Stephens' farm in Melitota.

William Stephens was one of the most popular men Kent County has ever known. He was considered big-hearted, generous, neighborly, kind and warm. Most of these characteristics were on display whenever he and his wife Maggie were entertaining guests in their home. Tradition holds that the name "Gobbler Hill" was used to describe the Stephens' home because their genuine and generous hospitality was always on display.

In 1890, at the age of 70, William Stephens retired from farming and moved with his wife Maggie to Chestertown and subsequently to Baltimore where he died in 1895. He is interred with his first wife in Saint Paul's Cemetery in Chestertown. Following his death, his wife was forced to sell the farm at public auction. At the sale, the farm was purchased by Jennie B. Rivers of Baltimore. She lived on the farm until 1922 when she died intestate with the estate then descending to her husband and siblings.

Jennie Rivers' widower died in 1936, and he willed his half of the estate [about 200 acres] to the Freemasons, who sold the farm to Carroll Dulin in 1941. Upon purchasing the farm, the Dulins "modernized" the house by removing part of the rear service wing and replacing the full width front porch with a one bay structure. Carroll Dulin and his family lived in the house and farmed the property until his death in 1969, when the property descended to his children. His son Charles and his wife Miriam inherited the house and about 100 acres. In 1987, the Dulins sold the property, now about 65 acres, to its current owners Paul and Sandra Terpeluk.

The Terpeluks replaced the previously altered L wing with a new T wing. The wing was designed by local historic preservation architect Marsha Fritz, and although it is large in scale, it successfully subordinates its design features to the main main block. Additionally, all utilities were placed in the new service wing in order

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to limit the disruption of historic fabric. The original front porch was also reconstructed utilizing photographic and archeological evidence.

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Major Bibliographical References:

Primary Sources

Kent County Land Records, Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland, Liber JKH 2, folio 21.

Kent County Land Records, Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland, Liber JFG 2, folio 262.

Kent County Land Records, Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland, Liber SB 2, folio 202.

Kent County Land Records, Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland, Liber JTD 5, folio 234.

Kent County Land Records, Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland, Liber RAS 28, folio 32.

Kent County Tax Records, Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland, 1852

Kent News, "Death of William W. Stephens," Chestertown, Maryland: 21 December 1895.

Martenet, S.J. *Martenet's Map of Kent County*, Maryland, Baltimore: 1860.

1850, 1860, 1870 Census Index, Kent County Maryland, Kent County Court House, Chestertown, Maryland.

Secondary Sources

Bourne, Michael. 1998. *Historic Houses of Kent County*. Chestertown: The Historical Society of Kent County.

Maryland Historical Trust, *Inventory Form For State Historic Sites Survey*, K-401 1980, Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland.

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Geographical Data

UTM References:

Hanesville, MD USGS quad

A: 18-401104-4345838

B: 18-401525-4345770

C: 18-401442-4345285

D: 18-401150-4345187

E: 18-400944-4345217

Verbal Boundary Description:

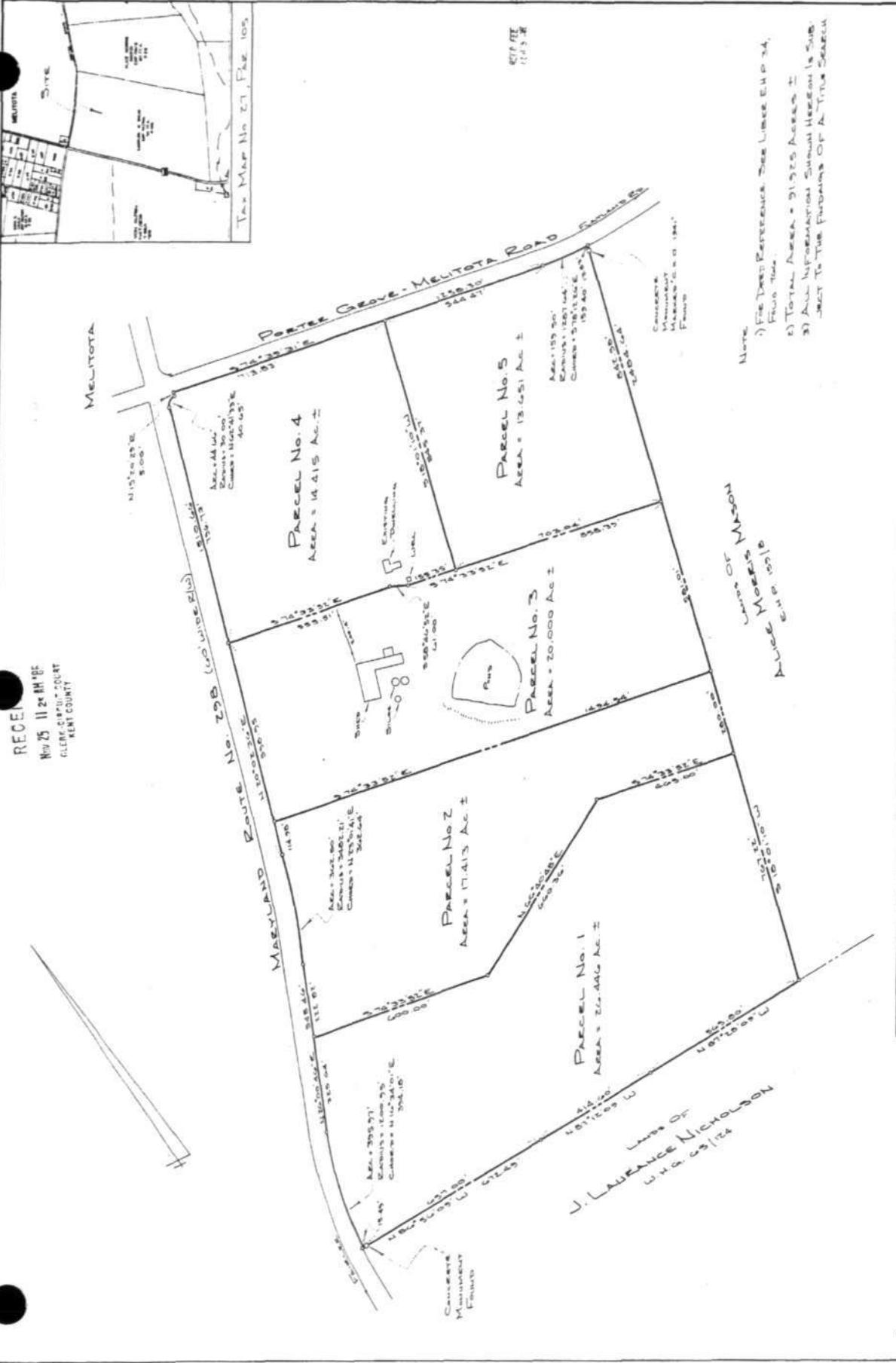
The nominated property is shown as Parcel 915, Lots 2, 3, 4, and 5 on Kent County Assessment Map 27. It also corresponds to Parcels 2, 3, 4, and 5 on a plat entitled "Minor Subdivision of the Lands of Charles W. Dulin," filed among the Land Records of Kent County in Liber EHP 2, folio 198 on November 25, 1986.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property, 65 acres, comprises the remnant of the acreage historically associated with the resource. The boundary includes the main house, fields, meadows, and forests that have historically been part of Gobbler Hill and that retain integrity.

Gobbler Hill, Kent County, Maryland
 Nominated property comprises Parcels 2, 3, 4, and 5

K-401



MINOR SUBDIVISION
 OF THE LANDS OF
CHARLES W. DULIN
 6TH ELECTION DISTRICT, KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND

MCRONE
 ENGINEERS ■ PLANNERS ■ SURVEYORS
 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

APPROVED
 Date: 11-24-86
 Date: 11-24-86

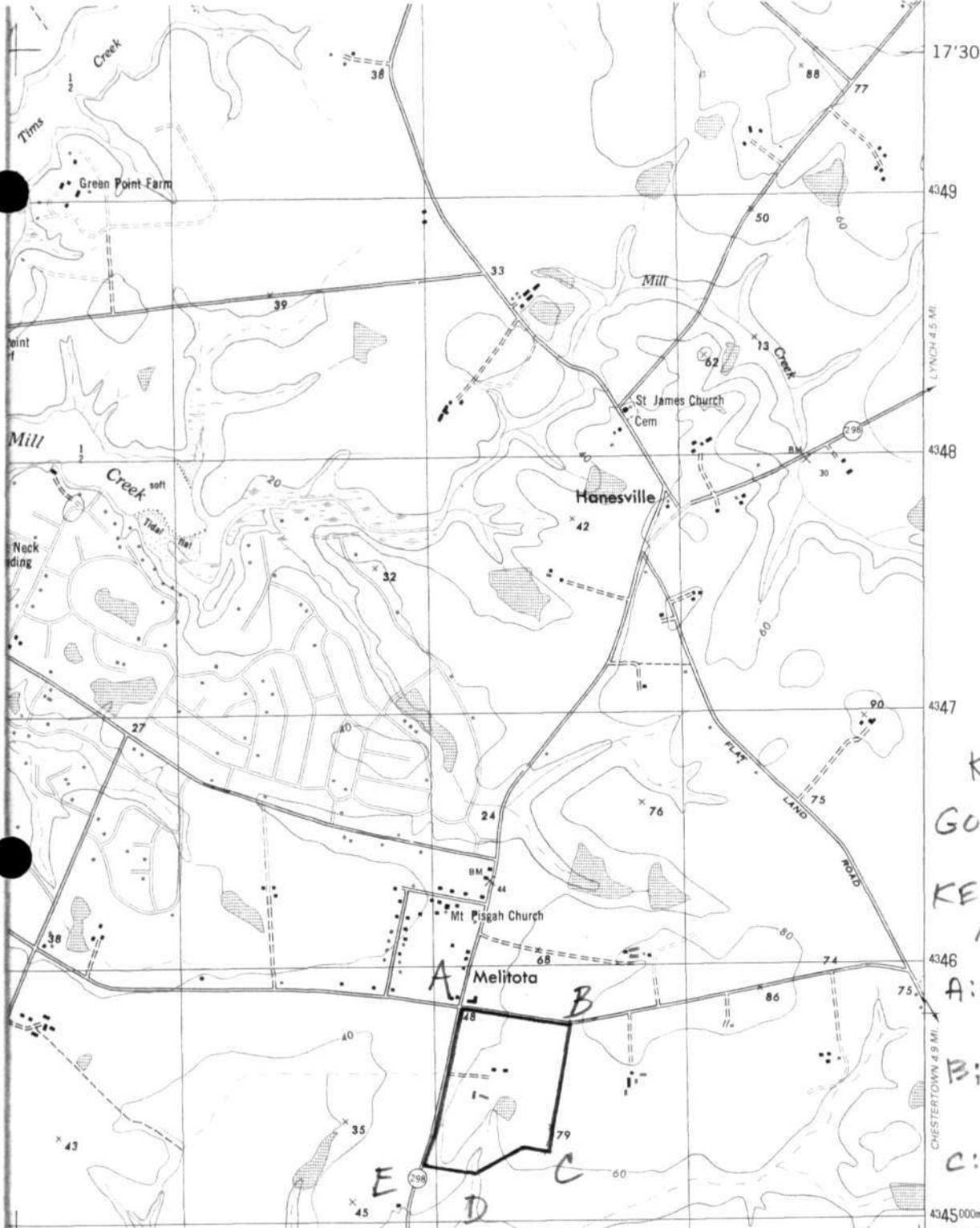
DATE: 11-24-86
 JOB NO: 11-24-86
 PREPARED BY: J. Lawrence Nicholson
 CHECKED BY: J. Lawrence Nicholson
 DATE: 11-24-86
 REVISION:

FILED 11/25/86 in Plot Book EHP 24 108

STAMP: KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND
 PROFESSIONAL SURVEYOR
 J. Lawrence Nicholson
 11-24-86

SHEET NO.
 FILE NO.





K-401
 GOBBLER HILL
 KENT COUNTY
 MARYLAND

A: 18-401104-4345838
 B: 18-401525-4345770
 C: 18-401442-4345285
 D: 18-401150-4345187
 E: 18-400944-4345217

(CHESTERTOWN)
 5762 II NE

10' 400 FAIRLEE 2.4 MI. 401 INTERIOR-GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA-1991 76°07'30" 39°15'00" 4345000N

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Primary highway, hard surface
- Secondary highway, hard surface
- Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
- Unimproved road
- Interstate Route
- U. S. Route
- State Route



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

HANESVILLE, MD.
 39076-C2-TF-024

1948
 PHOTOREVISED 1985
 DMA 5762 I SW -SERIES V833