

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey P.G. #68-30 Building Date: ca. 1885

Building Name: Wing Rest

Location: 4200 Decatur Street, Hyattsville, Maryland

Private/Residential/Occupied/Excellent/Inaccessible

Description:

Wing Rest is a two-and-one-half story, frame, front-gabled Victorian dwelling house with Queen Anne decorative features. It stands on a large wooded lot in a residential neighborhood. The main block is two bays by three, with shingle and horizontal board siding. The principal south entrance is in the westmost bay; it is sheltered by a recessed corner porch which is supported by square posts. The gable front of the house has horizontal board siding on the first level and shingle siding above. The main central window has a single-pane lower sash and a leaded Queen Anne patterned pane above. The smaller windows to either side mimic this window with a slightly less decorative patterned pane in the upper sash. The second level contains two symmetrical 8/1 double hung sash windows with shutters and a molded lintel. In between the two lights is a decorative diamond-shaped section of diagonally placed saw-tooth shingles. The third level has a three part window in the center. Directly above this, in the apex of the gable end is a diamond-shaped window containing eight lights. Wing Rest stands on a steep lot planted with hollies, magnolias and flowering shrubs.

Significance:

Wing Rest, the Jackson Ralston House, is an outstanding example of late Victorian domestic architecture with Queen Anne decorative detail. It was built in the 1880's on one of the original lots in the town of Hyattsville, by and for one of the town's most influential early civic leaders. In 1882, Harriet Ralston, purchased Lot #26 of Hyatts Addition to Hyattsville. The subject house was built in this lot by 1886, and became the home of her son, Jackson H. Ralston. Ralston called the new house "Wing Rest", and his mother deeded it to him in 1892. Jackson Ralston was involved in the incorporation of the town of Hyattsville, and was also a leading proponent of the single-tax system. He served as a Town Commissioner in Hyattsville, and as president of the Town Commissioners in 1890 and 1892. Wing Rest is a fine example of a large suburban cottage with Queen Anne style decorative details. With its decorative shingle siding, and in particular its handsome window treatment, it is a landmark in the Town of Hyattsville.

Acreage: 29,340 square feet

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Wing Rest

and/or common Jackson H. Ralston House

## 2. Location

street & number 4200 Decatur Street  not for publicationcity, town Hyattsville  vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Richard Klank

street &amp; number 4200 Decatur Street telephone no.: 699-9742

city, town Hyattsville state and zip code Maryland

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 4334

street &amp; number Main Street folio 507

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD 20772

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. P.G. #68-30

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

Wing Rest is a two-and-one-half story, frame, front-gabled Victorian dwelling house with Queen Anne decorative features. It stands on a large wooded lot in a residential neighborhood. The main block is two bays by three, with shingle and horizontal board siding.

The principal south entrance is in the westmost bay and has a one-panel doorway; it is sheltered by a recessed corner porch which is supported by square posts. The porch is approached by an off-center flight of steps; it extends one bay to the west and wraps around two bays on the west facade. The porch rests on a high stone foundation.

The gable front of the house has horizontal board siding on the first level and shingle siding above. The first level contains the asymmetrical doorway; just to the east of this is a 2/2 window, then a one bay, one-story section with three windows. The main central window is the largest, with a single-pane lower sash and a leaded Queen Anne patterned pane above. The smaller windows to either side mimic this window with a slightly less decorative patterned pane in the upper sash. The second level contains two symmetrical 8/1 double hung sash windows with shutters and a molded lintel. In between the two lights is a decorative diamond-shaped section of diagonally placed saw-tooth shingles. The third level has a three part window in the center. Directly above this, in the apex of the gable end is a diamond-shaped window containing eight lights.

To the east side of this gable end is a closed-in porch wing with a flat-roof and balustrade for a second story porch above. It contains a set of sliding doors with Tuscan columns and dentilled cornice above a stone foundation.

Wing Rest stands on a steep lot which slopes south to Decatur Street (formerly Wingrest Avenue); the grounds are planted with large hollies, magnolias and flowering shrubs.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. P.G. #68-30

<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Local History

<b>Specific dates</b>	ca. 1885	<b>Builder/Architect</b>
check: Applicable Criteria:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	
	and/or	
Applicable Exception:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G	
Level of Significance:	<input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input type="checkbox"/> local	

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Wing Rest, the Jackson Ralston House, is an outstanding example of late Victorian domestic architecture with Queen Anne decorative detail. It was built in the 1880's on one of the original lots in the town of Hyattsville, by and for one of the town's most influential early civic leaders.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Christopher C. Hyatt had purchased property north of Bladensburg, at the intersection of the old Washington-Baltimore Turnpike and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. He built his brick mansion (no longer standing) on the west side of the railroad, and opened a store directly across the tracks. In 1859, Hyatt was appointed postmaster of the new crossroads community which thenceforth was to bear his name.<sup>1</sup>

In 1873, Hyatt had a section of his property surveyed and platted into building lots roughly 60 by 280 feet. This roughly 20-acre area was known as Hyatts Addition to Hyattsville. By 1878, the town was developing into a desirable place of residence for commuters to the Capital City. An 1878 account describes the new town as follows: "Hyattsville, on the Washington Branch of the Baltimore Ohio Railroad, is a beautiful village, tasteful houses in the modern style of architecture, ornamented with gardens and lawns, is largely indebted, for its prosperity, to Christopher C. Hyatt, ...it has gradually increased in beauty and prosperity until it stands as one of the foremost villages between Baltimore and Washington."<sup>2</sup>

In 1882, Harriet Ralston, widow of Judge James H. Ralston, purchased Lot #26 of Hyatts Addition to Hyattsville, and a few months later purchased the adjoining lots 27 and part of 28 which adjoined it to the east.<sup>3</sup> At the same time the parts of Lots 27 and 28 which she purchased were resurveyed and platted into three new building lots, now numbered Lots #1 to 3. It is probable that the handsome front-gabled retreat cottage on Lot #3 was constructed first, just after Mrs. Ralston's purchase. By 1886, the subject house, another fine Queen Anne style dwelling, was built on Lot #26 to the west, and it became the residence of her son, Jackson H. Ralston.<sup>4</sup>

Jackson Ralston was born in California in circa 1856, and received his law degree from Georgetown University in 1876. He came to Hyattsville circa 1882, and probably lived in an older house on Lot #25 before his house on Lot #26 was completed. (Local tradition indicates that this older house was subsequently moved east onto Wine Avenue, now 42nd Avenue.) By 1886, Ralston was living in his new house, which he called "Wing Rest." His mother deeded the property to him in 1892.<sup>5</sup>

Jackson Ralston was involved in the incorporation of the town of Hyattsville. Early in 1885, together with James C. Rogers and William Lewin, Ralston wrote the charter for incorporation, which was passed by the General Assembly in April 1886.<sup>6</sup> Ralston was also a leading proponent of the single-tax system, and in 1892, while he was serving as president of the Town Commissioners, Hyattsville became the first town in the United States to adopt this controversial system of revenue collection. The system was later ruled unconstitutional and repealed.<sup>7</sup>

Ralston came to be well known in the field of international law. He served as a Town Commissioner in Hyattsville in 1886, 1889 and 1891 and as president of the Town Commissioners in 1890 and 1892. He also served on the first school board for the Town. Ralston returned to California early in the twentieth century, and died there in 1945.<sup>8</sup>

Wing Rest is a fine example of a large suburban cottage with Queen Anne style decorative details. With its decorative shingle siding, and in particular its handsome window treatment, it is a landmark in the Town of Hyattsville.

#### Notes

1 Prince George's County Deeds JBB #1:280; JBB #2:481; JBB #4:113,337; CSM #3:476,477.

2 G. M. Hopkins Atlas of Prince George's County, 1878, "Historical Sketch"; Prince George's County Plat HB #8:176.

3 Prince George's County Deed, WAJ #3:702, JWB #1:120.

4 Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1888-1900; The Evening Star, November 3, 1887.

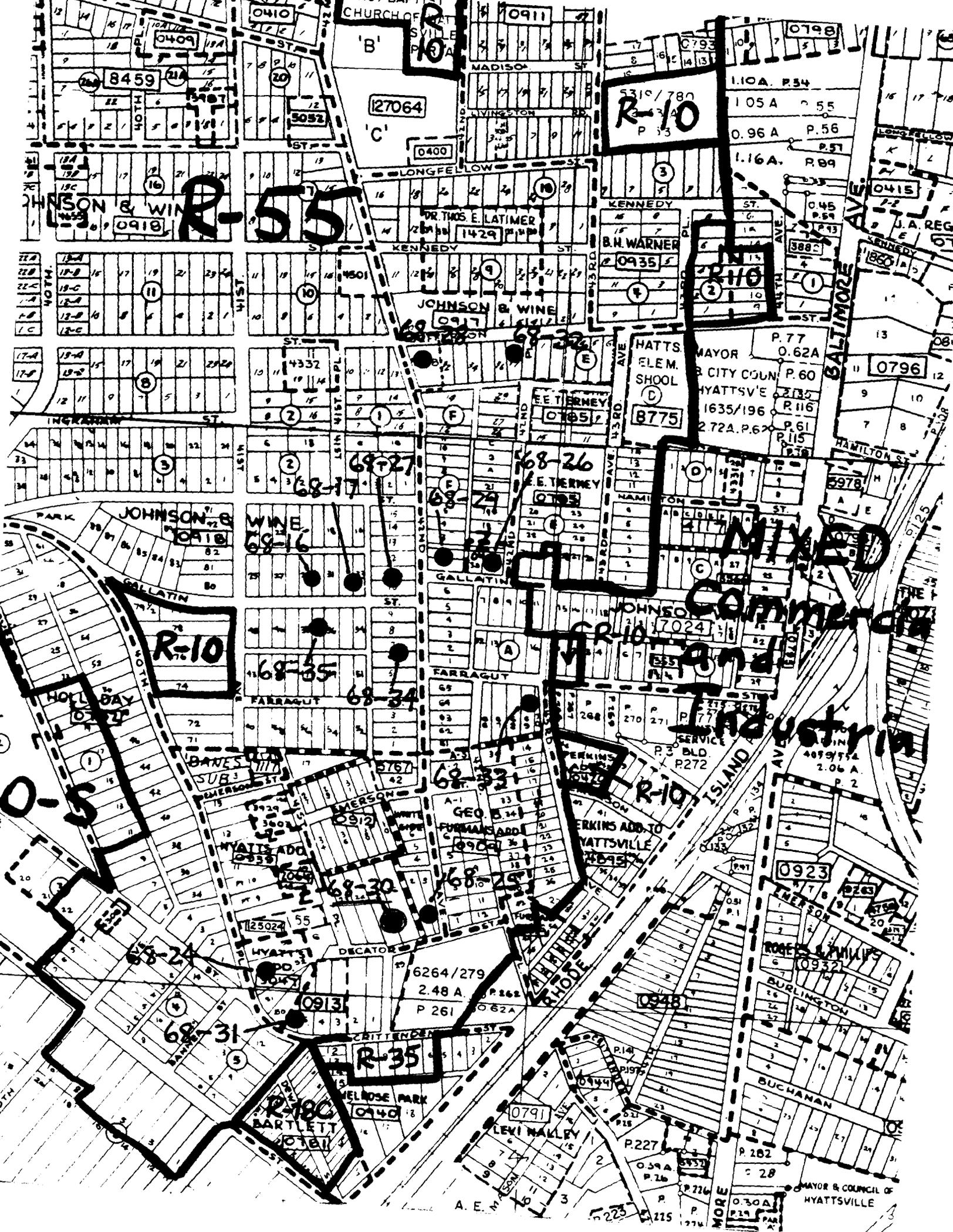
5 Notes on Jackson H. Ralston by Francis X. Geary; Prince George's County Deed JWB #23:193.

6 Act of Assembly 1886, Chapter 424.

7 The Evening Star, November 3, 1887.

8 City of Hyattsville Bicentennial Booklet, 1976; notes on Jackson H. Ralston by Francis X. Geary.





R-55

R-10

R-10

R-10

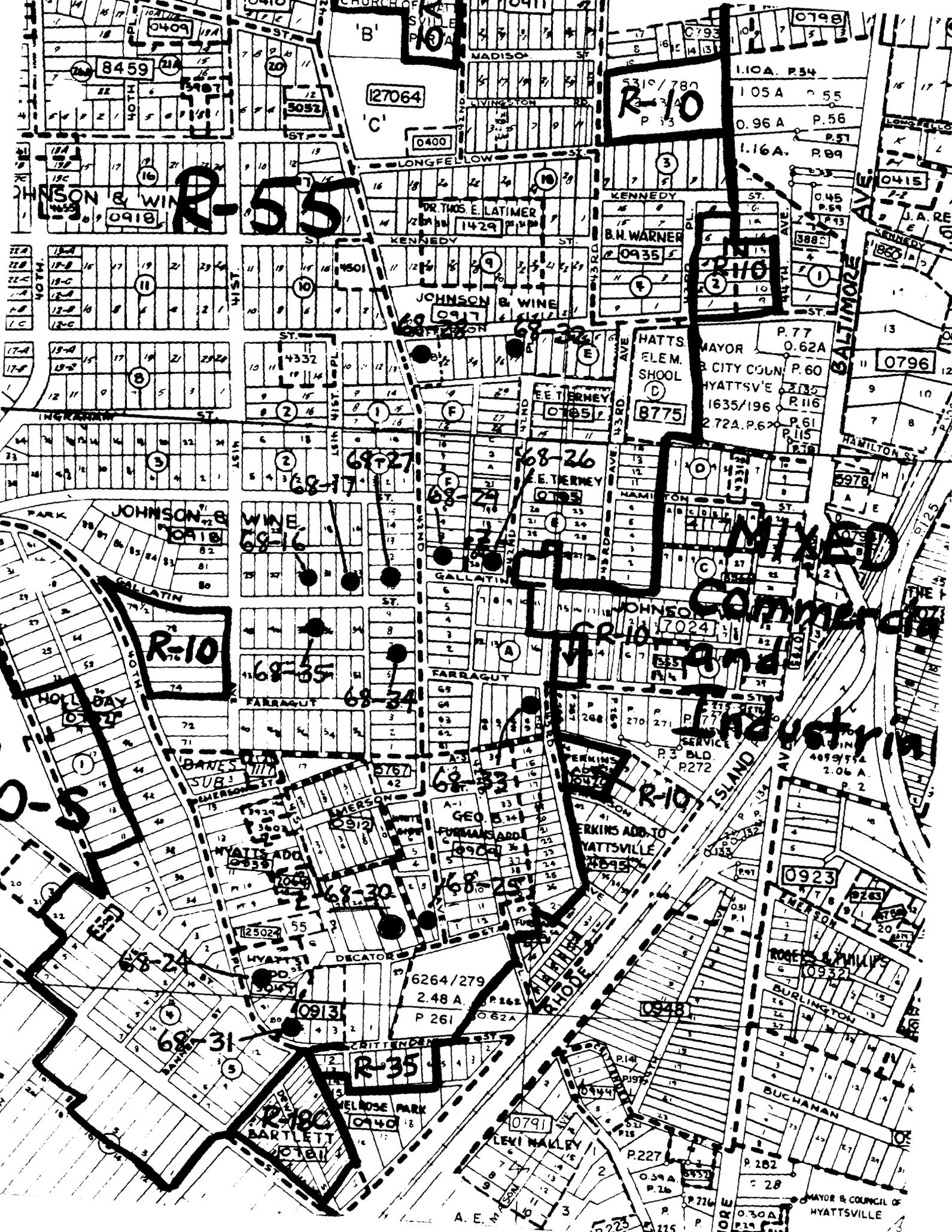
Mixed Commercial and Industry

R-10

R-35

R-180

O-5



# WASHINGTON EAST





P.G. #68-30

Wing Rest  
Prince George's County, Maryland  
Susan G. Pearl  
May 1987  
West elevation  
Neg: Maryland Historical Trust  
Annapolis, MD