

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey: PG # 68-4-93 Building Date: c.1904

Building Name: 5001 Riverdale Road

Location: 5001 Riverdale Road
Riverdale, Maryland

Private/Residences/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description Summary

5001 Riverdale Road (Block 49, Lot 1, Riverdale Park) is a two-story frame hip-roof Foursquare. The house is one of a group of four early 20th century frame Foursquares (built in pairs) within the original subdivision of Riverdale Park. All of the houses appear to have been similar or possibly identical when they were constructed and share the same scale, general fenestration patterns, steeply pitched hip roofs, attic dormers, off-center entries and projecting hexagonal bays at the first story. Both the interiors and exteriors of the four houses have been altered to varying degrees. Originally, all were sheathed with narrow horizontal board siding and had wraparound front porches with shed roofs. The original horizontal board exterior of 5001 Riverdale Road has been covered with rough textured stucco and the wraparound porch has been removed. The house retains many of its original 2/2 double-hung windows. A small shed roof addition to the rear (south) may represent the enclosure of a rear porch.

Significance Summary

5001 Riverdale Road is significant as an example of contractor-built speculative dwellings in emerging early 20th century railroad and streetcar suburbs like Riverdale. It is one of a group of four similar, if not identical, houses built in the popular Foursquare style of the day. The houses are the work of Walter R. Wilson, a Washington, DC, contractor and builder active in Riverdale and the adjacent subdivision of West Riverdale throughout the early 20th century. Although all of the houses have been altered to varying degrees, each retains some original detail and represents the proliferation of a popular building form in the suburb of Riverdale. The houses on Riverdale Road retain their residential uses. Wilson acquired Lots 1 and 2 in Block 49 from the Riverdale Park Company in February 1900. Assessment records indicate that Lot 1 was improved by 1904 and the house depicted in a real estate promotional brochure soon thereafter. Wilson retained ownership of the property until May 1911.

Acreage: 7,200 sq.ft.

Magi No.

DOE yes no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common 5001 Riverdale Road

2. Location

street & number 5001 Riverdale Road not for publicationcity, town Riverdale vicinity of congressional district 5th

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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 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 Robert M. and Sheila H. Smith

street & number 5001 Riverdale Road telephone no.:

city, town Riverdale state and zip code Maryland

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 7049

street & number 14735 Main Street folio 272

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title N/A

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. ^{PC} 68-4-93

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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.

5001 Riverdale Road (Block 49, Lot 1, Riverdale Park) is a two-story frame, hip-roof Foursquare. The house is one of a group of four; two of the houses are located at 5817 and 6001 Baltimore Avenue (Block 51, Lots 10 and 11) north of Madison Street; the other pair is located at 5001 and 5003 Riverdale Road (Block 49 Lots 1 and 2) at the intersection of Taylor Road. (See attached Locational Map)

All of the houses appear to have been similar or possibly identical when they were constructed and share the same scale, general fenestration patterns, steeply pitched hip roofs, attic dormers, off-center entries and projecting hexagonal bays at the first story. Both the interiors and exteriors of the four houses have been altered to varying degrees. Originally, all were sheathed with narrow horizontal board siding and had wraparound front porches with shed roofs. The assessment of current condition are based on a comparison with the c.1904 photograph (attached) and on oral interviews conducted with property owners.

The original horizontal board exterior of 5001 Riverdale Road has been covered with a rough-textured stucco. The wraparound porch has been removed, but across the main (north) facade is a large, unsheltered concrete slab. The house retains almost all of its original 2/2 windows. The entry door is old, but probably not original. There is a small shed roof addition to the rear (south) that may represent the enclosure of a rear porch.

NOTE

1. Oral Interviews conducted with Robert and Shiela Smith (5001 Riverdale Road), June 1991 and with Margaret B. Bright (6001 Baltimore Avenue) June 1991.

8. Significance

Survey No. ^{PC} 68-4-93

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

Specific dates c. 1904 **Builder/Architect** Walter R. Wilson, builder

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 and support.

The house at 5001 Riverdale Road is a significant example of an early 20th century contractor-built speculative dwelling. Part of a group of four similar, if not identical houses built in the popular Foursquare style of the day, the houses are the work of Walter R. Wilson, a Washington, DC, contractor and builder active in Riverdale throughout the early 20th century. Although all of the Wilson Foursquares have been altered to varying degrees, each retains some original detail and represents the proliferation of a popular building form in the emerging suburb of Riverdale. The houses on Riverdale Road remain in residential use, while those on Baltimore Avenue have long been used commercially.

The land on which the subdivision of Riverdale Park was built had been part of the Riversdale Plantation established in 1801 when Henri Joseph Stier, a Belgian aristocrat, purchased 800 acres north of Bladensburg, and began to develop a plantation. After Stier's return to Belgium in 1803, completion of the Riversdale mansion and management of the plantation were taken over by his daughter Rosalie and her husband George Calvert. The Riversdale Plantation became a model of its type, and remained within the Calvert family for three generations.¹ After the death in 1864 of Charles Benedict Calvert (son of Rosalie and George Calvert), a commission was appointed to divide the plantation among his heirs and a 300-acre dower lot (as well as the 175-acre lot adjoining it to the north) was sold by Calvert heirs in 1887 to John Fox, president of the Riverdale Park Company, a New York real estate syndicate which then began to develop the suburb of Riverdale Park.²

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

Survey No. PG-68-4-93

Section 8 Page 2

The land was platted in 1889 by D. J. Howell. Streets were laid out in a grid pattern, straddling the Washington line of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, which ran north and south through the new community and offered residents easy commuting into the Federal City to the southwest. Park spaces, and circles of green were provided in the plan and parkland was reserved around the Calvert mansion which was to be preserved "as a sacred relic of an era replete with memories."³ Streets were named for the Presidents of the United States, Washington through McKinley, as well as for other distinguished statesman such as Clay, Lafayette and Beale.⁴

Construction of dwellings began in the early 1890s. All were of frame construction, and reflected the popular tastes of the period, as illustrated in house catalogs of those years. Some were pyramidal-roof Foursquares, others front-gabled or cross-gabled; many were highlighted by projecting bays or corner towers, and almost all had prominent wraparound porches with jigsaw decorative details. By the turn of the century, the new suburb had approximately 60 dwellings, a Presbyterian church, a handsome Victorian schoolhouse and a railroad station; the latter two buildings were built by the Riverdale Park Company. There were two general stores, and telephone and telegraph communications were available. Concrete sidewalks were provided for the principal streets.⁵ Because of its convenient location, its efficient line of transportation into the City, its primary school, and its picturesque, tree-lined streets, Riverdale Park became one of the most desirable residential suburbs in the Washington area.

Walter R. Wilson (1867-1953) was a Washington, D.C., builder and real estate investor. An early real estate brochure promoting Riverdale Park depicts houses Wilson was constructing for himself and others as early as 1904.⁶ Two of the houses are those built by Wilson at 5001 and 5003 Riverdale Road, which were completed not long after the photograph was taken. After his purchase of over 200 lots in 1915, Wilson was largely responsible for the development of the nearby West Riverdale Subdivision.⁷ Little else is known about Wilson, although Prince George's County Land Records indicate that he owned land in Riverdale Park, West Riverdale and in the adjacent areas of Hyattsville through the 1930s.

All three houses connected to Wilson in the c.1904 promotional brochure were frame Foursquares.⁸ A popular house form throughout the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, Foursquares were built in a range of sizes and borrowed from a number of styles for decorative inspiration, most commonly the Colonial Revival, Prairie and Craftsman styles.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

Survey No. ^{PG} 68-4-93

Section 8 Page 3

Wilson acquired Lots 1 and 2 in Block 49 from the Riverdale Park Company in February 1900.⁹ Assessment records indicate that Lots 1 and 2 were improved (with the house depicted in the promotional brochure) by 1904.¹⁰ Wilson retained ownership 5001 Riverdale Road (Lot 1) until May 1911. Since then, each of the properties has changed hands several times. The house was purchased by its current owners Robert and Sheila Smith in July 1988.¹¹ (see attached Chain of Title).

NOTES

1. See Pearl, S.G., Riversdale, Historic Structures Report, Part II, History: M-NCPPC, 1979.

2. Prince George's County Land Records, JWB8:426,620; JWB12:484; JWB13:614.

3. Riverdale Park real estate promotional brochure, c. 1904.

4. Prince George's County Subdivision Plats, JWB5:747, Riverdale Park real estate promotional brochure.

5. Riverdale Park Real estate promotional brochure; see also Pearl, S. G., Victorian Pattern Book Houses in Prince George's County, Maryland, M-NCPPC, 1988.

6. "Riverdale Park" real estate promotional brochure, c.1904. No other secondary source material about Wilson is known to exist. The dates given are derived from the Wilson family crypt at Fort Lincoln Cemetery.

7. Francis Carmody had subdivided West Riverdale in 1906. In the fall of 1915, the vast majority of lots remained unsold and Wilson purchased them from Carmody. By the 1930s Wilson had developed most of the lots himself and sold off the houses. See Prince George's Land Records, 18 June 1915, 109:36.

8. The third house has not been identified, and may no longer be extant.

9. Prince George's County Land Records, 18:328.

10. Prince George's County Assessment Records, E.D. # 2, 1904.

11. Prince George's County Land Records, 97:432 and 7049:272.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG#68-4-93

See notes, Section #8

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 7,200 sq ft, BL 49, Lot 1, Riverdale Park

Quadrangle name Washington East

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

Zone	Easting			Northing							

B

Zone	Easting			Northing							

C

Zone	Easting			Northing							

D

Zone	Easting			Northing							

E

Zone	Easting			Northing							

F

Zone	Easting			Northing							

G

Zone	Easting			Northing							

H

Zone	Easting			Northing							

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 Howard S. Berger, Architectural Historian

organization Historic Pres. Section, M-NCPPC date June 1991

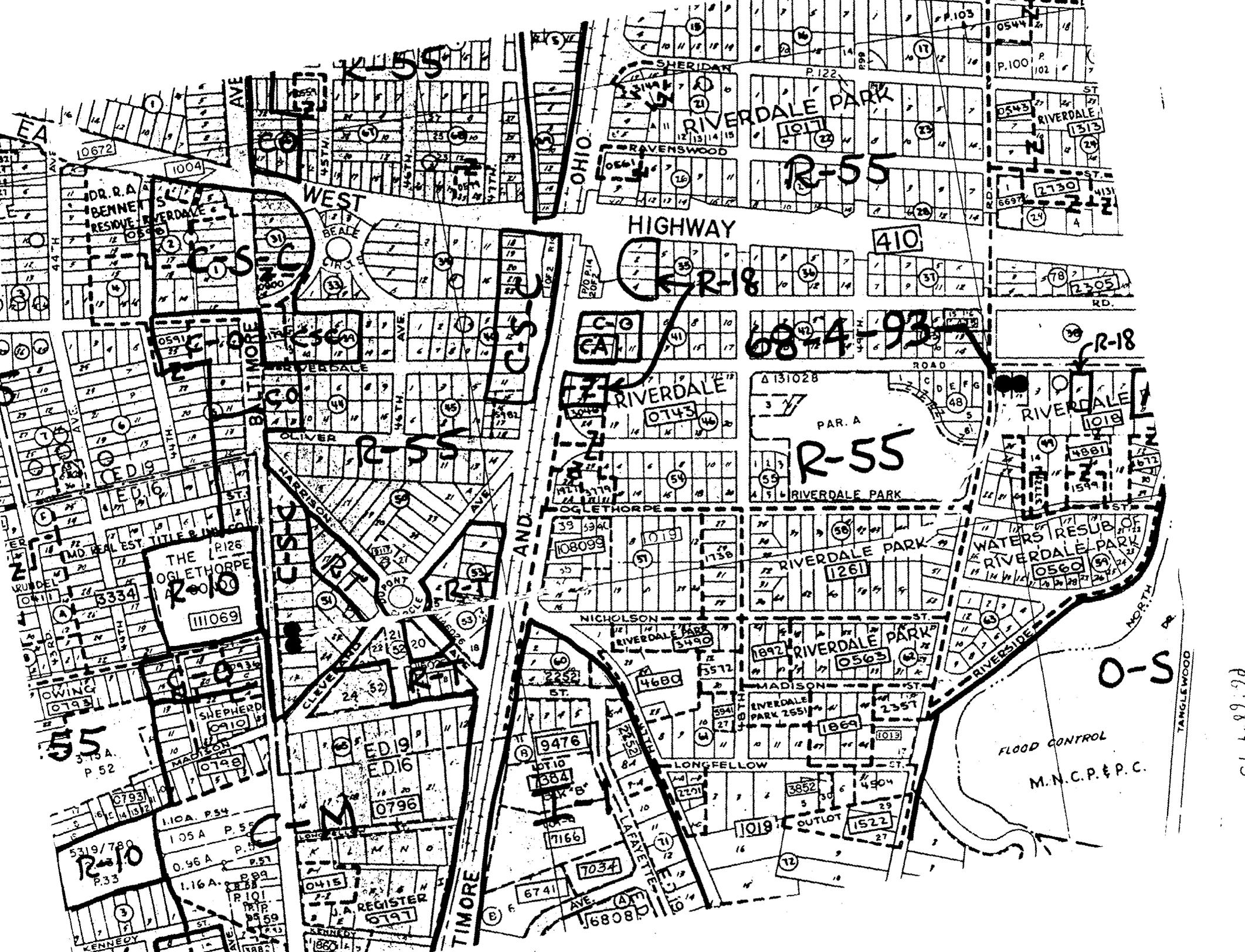
street & number 14741 Gov. Oden Bowie Dr. telephone (301) 952-3520

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



10672
1004

DR. R.A. BENNER
RESERVE

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

1004

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

1004

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

1004

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

1004

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

1004

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

1004

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

1004

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

1004

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

1004

WEST

BEALE

5591

ED 9

ED 6

THE OGLETHORPE
R-10
111069

3334

OWING
0793

5319/780
R-10
P.52

110A. P.54
105A P.55
0.96A P.57
1.16A P.58

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

5319/780
P.33
KENNEDY

OHIO

HIGHWAY

R-18

68-4-93

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

410

R-18

68-4-93

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

410

R-18

68-4-93

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

410

R-18

68-4-93

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

R-55

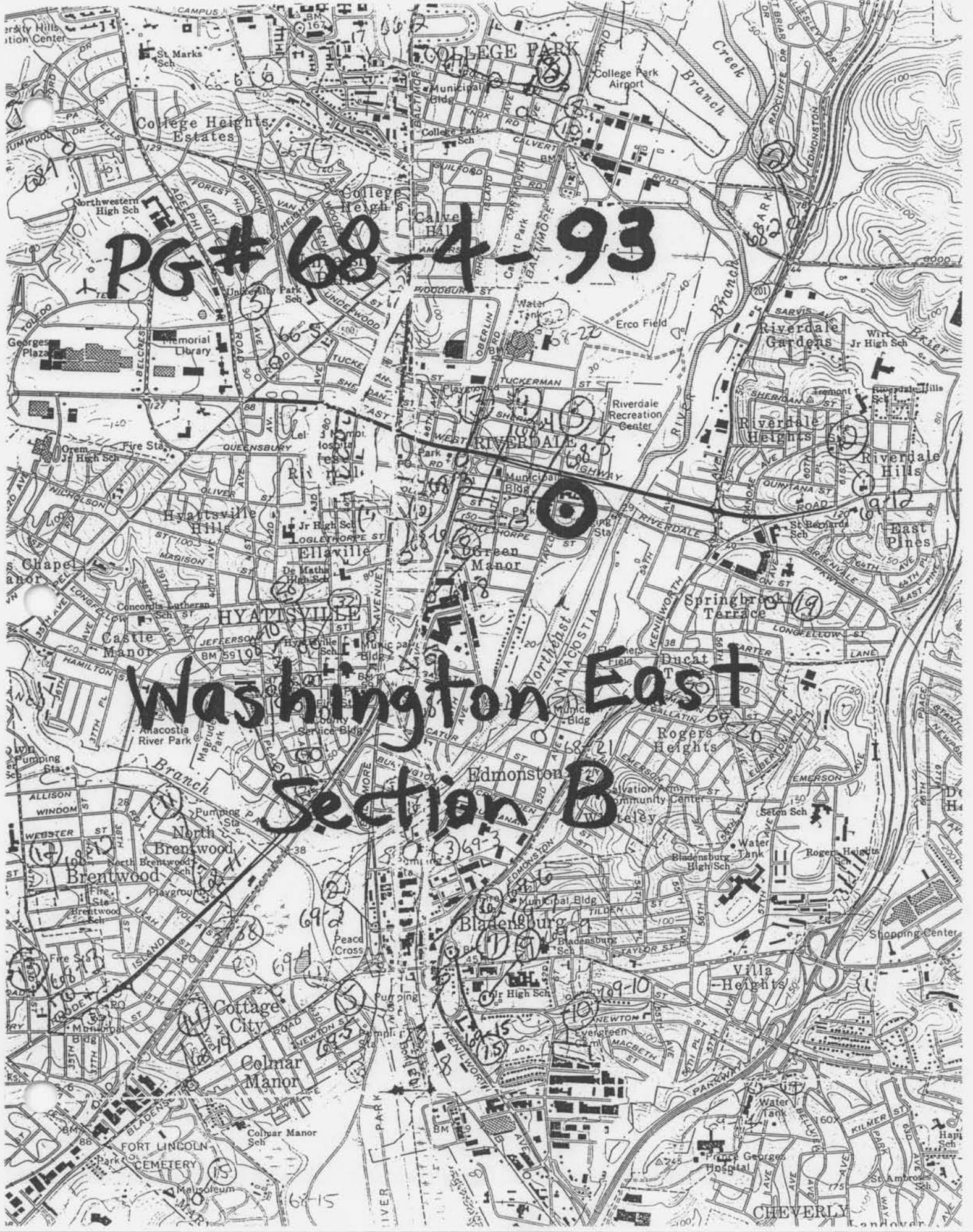
FLOOD CONTROL
M.N.C.P. & P.C.

TANGLEWOOD

CL 6-89-90

PG # 68-4-93

Washington East
Section B





5001 Riverdale Rd (at right)

PG# 68-4-93

Riverdale

Prince George's County, Maryland

Howard S. Berger

February 1991

From NW

NEG: MHT, CROWNSVILLE, MD

1 of 2



PG#68-04-93

Wilson Foursquares (c. 1904)
Riverdale

Prince George's County, MD

Howard S. Berger

February 1991

Detail: Wilson Houses From c. 1904 Real Estate
Promotional brochure

2 of 2