

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #68-6 Building Date: ca. 1897

Building Name: Chambers Funeral Home

Location: 5801 Cleveland Avenue, Riverdale, Maryland

Private/Commercial/Occupied/Excellent/Accessible

Description:

The Chambers Funeral home is a three-story frame building, originally three bays by four bays with mansard roof (ca. 30'x35'), with a two-bay two-story gable-roofed addition to the south. Entrance was originally through the central bay of the three-bay north facade, sheltered by a one-story porch which ran the length of this main north facade. Dormers with shallow pediments pierced the mansard roof at third level, above the windows on the first and second stories. The building has been greatly altered since 1935 when it became a funeral home. The north porch has been enclosed and a projecting columned entrance has been built onto its central bay. The first-story openings on the west facade have been completely changed: the original four bays have been rebuilt adding a central opening with double doors and fanlight, sheltered by a columned portico, while the two openings flanking this entrance on each side have been moved slightly outward so that they are no longer aligned with the windows above them; these four first-story windows are now round-headed, with shallow keystone surrounds. In addition, the third dormer on the west facade has been doubled. The foundation of the building is of brick, there is vinyl siding over the original boards, and the roof is of slate.

Significance:

The Chambers Funeral home is housed in one of the earliest dwellings constructed by the Riverdale Park Company in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Although the lines of the original structure are easily recognizable, the building has been so greatly altered that very little of its original fabric and character remains. In the late 1880's, the Riverdale Park Company, a New York real estate syndicate, bought up much of the Calverts' Riversdale estate, and in 1889 began laying out residential lots for the planned suburb of Riverdale. In 1895 the company sold to Marion Wicks and his wife four unimproved lots; within two years, there was constructed on the lots a sizeable three-story mansard-roofed frame house, with a front porch and rear wing, assessed at \$1500 in value. In the next three decades, the house was the residence of the Severe, Magruder and Porton families, and in 1935 was sold to William W. Chambers, who converted it into one of a chain of funeral homes. Although it represents one of the larger and more impressive houses built in the early years of the Riverdale Park development, the Chambers Funeral Home is so altered that it is only a suggestion of its original historic character.

Acreage: ca. 1 acre

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Marion Wicks House

and/or common Chambers Funeral Home

2. Location

street & number 5801 Cleveland Avenue not for publicationcity, town Riverdale vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county PG

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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name W.W. Chambers Co., Inc.

street & number 5801 Cleveland Avenue telephone no.: 699-5500

city, town Riverdale, Md. state and zip code 20737

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P.G. Co. Courthouse liber 2221

street & number Main Street folio 564

city, town Upper Marlboro state Md

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title P.G. Co. Inventory of Historic Sites

date 1974 federal state county local

pository for survey records History Division, MNCPPC

city, town Riverdale, state Md.

7. Description

Survey No. P.G.#68-6

Condition		Check one	Check one
<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.

The Chambers Funeral home is a three-story frame building, originally three bays by four bays with mansard roof (ca. 30'x35'), with a two-bay two-story gable-roofed addition to the south. Entrance was originally through the central bay of the three-bay north facade, sheltered by a one-story porch which ran the length of this main north facade. Dormers with shallow pediments pierced the mansard roof at third level, above the windows on the first and second stories.

The building has been greatly altered since 1935 when it became a funeral home. Windows, originally 2/2 double hung sash, are now 6/6. The north porch has been enclosed and a projecting columned entrance has been built onto its central bay. The first-story openings on the west facade have been completely changed: the original four bays have been rebuilt adding a central opening with double doors and fanlight, sheltered by a columned portico, while the two openings flanking this entrance on each side have been moved slightly outward so that they are no longer aligned with the windows above them; these four first-story windows are now round-headed, with shallow keystone surrounds. In addition, the third dormer on the west facade has been doubled. The foundation of the building is of brick, there is vinyl siding over the original boards, and the roof is of slate.

A photograph from the Riverdale Park Real Estate brochure (ca. 1905) shows two central chimneys with corbelled caps which undoubtedly served fireplaces between front and back parlors on both sides of a central hall. These chimneys have been removed and the partitions between interior spaces have been greatly changed to accommodate the current use of the building.

8. Significance

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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 ca. 1897 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or

Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

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

The Chambers Funeral home is housed in one of the earliest dwellings constructed by the Riverdale Park Company in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Although the lines of the original structure are easily recognizable, the building has been so greatly altered that very little of its original fabric and character remains.

In the late 1880's, the Riverdale Park Company, a New York real estate syndicate, bought up much of the Calverts' Riversdale estate, and in 1889 began laying out residential lots for the planned suburb of Riverdale.¹ In 1895 the company sold to Marion Wicks and his wife four unimproved lots (#7, #8, #9 and #15, adjoining) in Block #52 just south of Dupont Circle on the Baltimore Pike. Within two years, there was constructed on the lots a sizeable three-story mansard-roofed frame house, with a front porch and rear wing, assessed at \$1500 in value.² Wicks defaulted in his mortgage payments, the mortgage was foreclosed and the house and lots were sold to Joseph A. Blundon, attorney for the developers, in 1900. Blundon subsequently sold the property to William and Katie Severe. In the next three decades, the house was the residence of the Severe, Magruder and Porton families, and in 1935 was sold to William W. Chambers, who converted it into one of a chain of funeral homes.³

Although it represents one of the larger and more impressive houses built in the early years of the Riverdale Park development, the Chambers Funeral Home is so altered that it is only a suggestion of its original historic character.

¹ Prince George's County Deed JWB #5:474

² Prince George's County Deed JWB #32:533; Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1890-1900; Prince George's County Plat JWB #5:475; Real estate brochure, Riverdale Park Company.

³ Prince George's County Deeds JWB #32:543; #3:501; #21:145; #84:162; #175:463; #250:85; #353:244; #422:371. Equity #2693.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

1666-6
P.O. #6

1700664511

NOMINATION FORM
for the
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME				
COMMON: Chambers Funeral Home				
AND/OR HISTORIC:				
2. LOCATION				
STREET AND NUMBER: 5801 Cleveland Avenue				
CITY OR TOWN: Riverdale				
STATE Maryland		COUNTY: Prince George's		
3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		STATUS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)		Public Acquisition:		Yes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		<input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY				
OWNER'S NAME: Chambers Funeral Home				
STREET AND NUMBER: 5801 Cleveland Avenue				
CITY OR TOWN: Riverdale		STATE: Maryland		
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION				
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Prince George's County Courthouse				
STREET AND NUMBER:				
CITY OR TOWN: Upper Marlboro		STATE: Maryland		
Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #):				
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS				
TITLE OF SURVEY: None				
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local				
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:				
STREET AND NUMBER:				
CITY OR TOWN:		STATE:		

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

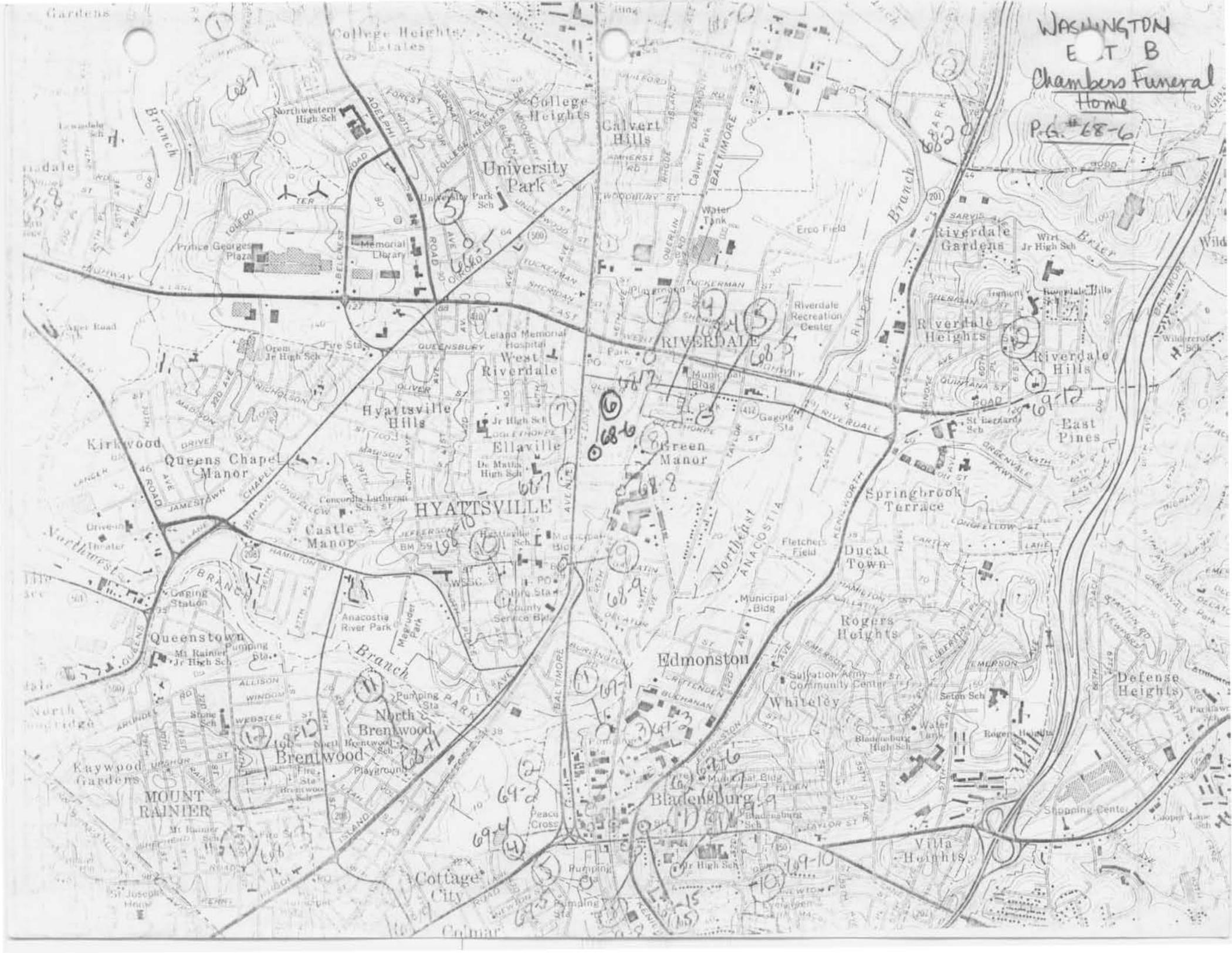
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The house is a 2½ story frame building with arched windows on the ground floor and a mansard roof. The entrance porch has four columns and an arched ceiling under the pedimented roof. There is a leaded fanlight over the doorway.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE			
<i>PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	
<i>SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)</i>			
<i>AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/> Historic <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> Art <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> Communications <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Industry <input type="checkbox"/> Invention <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> Literature <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Political <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/> Theater <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



WASHINGTON
E.T.B
Chambers Funeral
Home
P.G. #68-6

College Heights
Estates

Calvert Hills

University
Park

RIVERDALE

HYATTSVILLE

Edmonston

Bladensburg

Villa Heights

Gardens

Madale

Kirkwood

Northwest

North
Hedge

Kaywood
Gardens

MOUNT
RAINIER

St Joseph
High

Northwestern
High Sch

Prince Georges
Plaza

Orem Jr High Sch

Queens Chapel
Manor

Queenstown
Mt Rainier
Jr High Sch

Brenwood
Sch

Mr Hamer
Sch

Memorial
Library

Leland Memorial
Hospital

Hyattsville
Hills

Castle
Manor

Anacostia
River Park

North
Brenwood

Peace
Cross

Cottage
City

Colmar

University
Park Sch

West
Riverdale

Ellaville
De Mattia
High Sch

Hyattsville
Sch

Municipal
Bldg

North
Brenwood
Playgrounds

Pumping
Sta

Woodbury St

Tuckerman St

Shenandoah St

Green
Manor

Municipal
Bldg

Edmonston
Sch

Municipal
Bldg

Bladensburg
Sch

Water
Tank

Erpo Field

Riverdale
Recreation
Center

Gagong
Sta

Fletcher
Field

Municipal
Bldg

Whiteley
Sch

Bladensburg
High Sch

Bladensburg
High Sch

Branch

Branch

Riverdale
Heights

Springbrook
Terrace

Dual
Town

Rogers
Heights

Bladensburg
High Sch

Bladensburg
High Sch

Bladensburg
High Sch

Riverdale
Gardens

Wirt
Jr High Sch

Riverdale
Hills

St Richard
Sch

Longfellow St

Seton Sch

Rogers
Heights

Bladensburg
High Sch

Bladensburg
High Sch

Wild

68-1

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P.G. #68-6

Chambers Funeral Home

Prince George's County, MD

Susan G. Pearl

September 1984

North elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD

Chambers

ONE OF THE
LARGEST UNDERTAKERS IN THE WORLD



P.G. #68-6

Chambers Funeral Home

Prince George's County, MD

Susan G. Pearl

September 1984

West elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



P.G. #68-6

Chambers Funeral Home

Prince Geprge's County, MD

Susan G. Pearl

September 1984

Southwest 3/4 elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



NAME CHAMBERS FUNERAL HOME

LOCATION 5801 CLEVELAND AVE., RIVERDALE, Md.

FACADE W

PHOTO TAKEN 3/9/73 M DWYER