

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #75A-11 Building Date: 1880's

Building Name: Balser house (Coleman house)

Location: 7104 Marlboro Pike, Forestville, Maryland 20747

Private/Residence/Occupied/Fair/Inaccessible

Description:

The Amelia Balser House is a two-and-one-half-story frame gable-roofed duplex house, ca. 32 by 28 feet. Its main south facade is four bays wide, with doors in the first and fourth bays. The opening in the first (west) bay has a heavy Victorian door with arched panels. Across this south main facade runs a one-story shed-roofed porch; there are two interior chimneys. The surrounds of the windows are plain board painted dark green and surmounted by a crown molding. At the east gable end there is a one-bay two-and-one-half story half-gable (flounder) addition. Another three-bay-wide one-and-one-half-story half-gable (flounder) addition has been attached at right angles at the rear (northwest) of the house. There is a central doorway in its west facade, and a stove chimney between second and third bays on the west (only) slope of its roof. The entire house is covered with white asbestos shingle, windows are 2/2, the roof is of red standing-seam tin, and the foundations are of brick. The house fronts directly on Old Marlboro Pike.

Significance:

The Balser House is a rare surviving example of a nineteenth-century two-family town house. It was built shortly after 1881 by Amelia Balser on the site of the house in which her parents, the Charles Colemans, had previously lived. The 12-acre Coleman farm, which fronted on the Washington-Marlboro Road, was divided between Coleman's heirs, and during the latter years of the nineteenth century, the two-family house was shared by members of the Balser family. The two halves of the farm were rejoined and sold together in 1901 to William Gray, who in the next two years constructed the rear "flounder" kitchen wing, and excavated the basement under the main block. There have been three subsequent owners, and the two-family house has served as a dwelling for both owners and tenants. The house is unusual in the method of its expansion, i.e., the construction of flounder, or half-gable, additions, rare in Prince George's County. At the same time, it is a rare surviving example of a nineteenth-century duplex house.

Acreage: 1.02 acres

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Balser House (Coleman House)

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 7104 Marlboro Pike not for publication

city, town Forestville vicinity of congressional district 5

state Md. county

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 Kenneth Talbert

street & number 7110 Marlboro Pike telephone no.: 736-0080

city, town Forestville Road state and zip code Md. 20744

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P.G. County Courthouse liber 758

street & number Main Street folio 192

city, town Upper Marlboro state Md.

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title P.G. County Inventory of Historic Sites

date 1974 federal state county local

depository for survey records History Division, MNCPPC

city, town Riverdale state Md.

7. Description

Survey No. P.G. #75A-11

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input 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 checked="" 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 Amelia Balser House is a two-and-one-half-story frame gable-roofed duplex house, ca. 32 by 28 feet. Its main south facade is four bays wide, with doors in the first and fourth bays. The opening in the first (west) bay has a heavy Victorian door with arched panels. Across this south main facade runs a one-story shed-roofed porch supported by plain posts, square in section. There are two interior chimneys (not identical) between the first and second bays, and between the third and fourth bays. The surrounds of the windows are plain board painted dark green and surmounted by a crown molding.

At the east gable end there is a one-bay-wide two-and-one-half-story half-gable (flounder) addition; there is one window (both at first and second stories) on the south vertical face of this addition. Another three-bay-wide one-and-one-half story half-gable (flounder) addition has been attached at right angles at the rear (northwest) of the house. There is a central doorway in its west facade, and a stove chimney between second and third bays on the west (only) slope of its roof.

This building was constructed to house two families, the western half having been constructed earlier than the eastern; the exterior weatherboard of the western section is visible from the eastern section of the attic. Each of the living units consists of two rooms, front and back, on each floor, with a small enclosed staircase in the corner of the rear room. There is a basement under the front two rooms of the house, accessible only from a bulkhead opening at the west gable end; it was excavated early in this century for the installation of the furnace.

The entire house is covered with white asbestos shingle, windows are 2/2, the roof is of red standing-seam tin, and the foundations are of brick. The house fronts directly on Old Marlboro Pike.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input 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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1880's **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 Balser House is a rare surviving example of a nineteenth-century two-family town house. It was built shortly after 1881 by Amelia Balser on the site (and probably on the foundations) of the house in which her parents, the Charles Colemans, had previously lived. Charles Coleman immigrated from Germany as a young man, and since 1859 had operated a 12-acre farm on the north side of the Washington-Marlboro Road, at the western edge of the town of Long Old Fields (known after the Civil War as Forestville).¹ In 1875, Coleman sold the western half of his farm to Conrad Balser, husband of his daughter, Amelia; the dividing line of the property ran through the center of Coleman's former dwelling. This two-family house was destroyed sometime between this time and Conrad Balser's death in 1881; shortly after that time, Balser's widow, Amelia, built a new six-room, two-family house, first the west section and then the east.² The eastern half of the farm (six acres) was subsequently sold to the Balsers' son, William; William Balser and his family lived in the eastern section of the house, while the western section of the house was occupied by Mrs. Balser and her mother, Margaret Coleman.

The two adjoining halves of the 12-acre farm were sold together in 1901 to William Gray, commander of a riverboat line from Pennsylvania, who in the next two years constructed the rear "flounder" kitchen wing, and excavated the basement under the main block.³ There have been three subsequent owners, and the two-family house has served as a dwelling for both owners and tenants.⁴

The house is unusual in the method of its expansion, i.e., the construction of flounder, or half-gable, additions, rare in Prince George's County. At the same time, it is a rare surviving example of a nineteenth-century duplex house.

#8 Continued

Notes

1 P.G. County Deed, HB #10:385; P.G. County Census, 1860, 1880; G.M. Hopkins Atlas, 1878.

2 P.G. County Deed, HB #11:122; P.G. Equity #2547; P.G. County Census, and tax assessments.

3 P.G. County Deed, #13:196,198; P.G. Equity #3030.

4 See chain of titles; interviews with owner, resident and neighbor, February 1985.

170235504

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME					
COMMON:					
AND/OR HISTORIC: C. Coleman House					
2. LOCATION					
STREET AND NUMBER: 7104 Marlboro Pike					
CITY OR TOWN: Forestville					
STATE Maryland			COUNTY: Prince George's		
3. CLASSIFICATION					
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building	<input type="checkbox"/> Public	Public Acquisition:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied	Yes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process	<input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> Restricted
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Both		<input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____	
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY					
OWNER'S NAME: Mrs. Helen Stamp					
STREET AND NUMBER: 7104 Marlboro Pike					
CITY OR TOWN: Forestville			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:		

7. DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	(Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Uncltered <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	
<p>The building is a two story, frame house with a four-bay main (south) facade; the outer bays at either end are doors with narrow transom lights. Chimneys rise between the door and window bays on either end. A one story porch extends across the front. On the east end is a one bay, shed-roofed addition and on the rear, another addition. The present siding is asbestos shingle.</p>	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Empty box for Major Bibliographical References.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreege Justification:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Christopher Owens, Park Historian

ORGANIZATION: M-NCPPC DATE: 13 Sept 74

STREET AND NUMBER:
8787 Georgia Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Silver Spring STATE: Maryland

12. State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:
 National State Local

Signature

Chain of Title

Amelia Balser House PG #75A-11

- #758:192
2 Sept. 1944
Deed
Jadwiga Smolinski, widow of Joseph, to Kenneth Talbert; 11-1/4 acres from original 12-1/4 acre farm on Marlboro Pike, which Smolinskis acquired by #66:228.
- #66:228
16 Aug. 1910
Deed
Rosalie Gray, et al, to Joseph and Jadwiga Smolinski; part of lands which Gray acquired by #19:202 (a 6-1/3 acre parcel described in #13:196, and a 6 acre parcel described in #13:198); cf. agreement to sell part of this in #61:373.
- #19:202
13 June 1904
Deed
Marion Duckett, trustee, to Rosalie Gray; whereas by Equity Cases #2547 and #2555 Duckett had been ordered to convey to William Gray the 6 acre parcel (by #13:198) and the 6-1/3 acre parcel (by #13:196), which he did; but whereas by Equity #3030, these deeds are declared null and void; Duckett now executes legal deed to Rosalie Gray for these same parcels, plus another 10 acre parcel.
- #3030
1904
Equity
Decree; deeds #13:196 and 198 declared null; trustee Duckett ordered to executive deeds for same to Rosalie Gray, including lot which was "improved by Gray since his purchase, repairs to six-room house with kitchen and basement additional, also barn, stable, corn house, carriage house, poultry house"
- #13:198
2 Oct. 1901
Deed
Marion Duckett and Elbert Dent, trustees, to William Gray; by decree of Equity Court (#2555), trustees ordered to sell to Gray 6 acres, land of William H. Balser, described in JWB #31:179.
- #13:196
2 Oct. 1901
Deed
Marion Duckett and Elbert Dent, trustees, to William Gray, by decree of Equity Court (#2547), trustees ordered to sell to Gray 6-1/3 acres, land of Conrad Balser, described in HR #11:122.
- #2555
1902
Equity
Decree re land of William H. Balser; description of 6-1/4 acre parcel near Forestville with five-room dwelling and stable, narrow front on public road. Land not divisible; trustees ordered to sell.
- #2547
1899
Equity
Decree re land by Conrad Balser; Deposition that Conrad Balser died 1881, leaving widow Amelia & 6-1/4 acres unimproved. Mrs. Balser has since his death built a dwelling worth ca. \$800, on this 6-1/3-acre parcel which Conrad Balser acquired in 1875 by HR #11:122. Land not divisible; trustees ordered to sell.

- 2 -

JWB #31:179
20 Sept. 1894
Deed

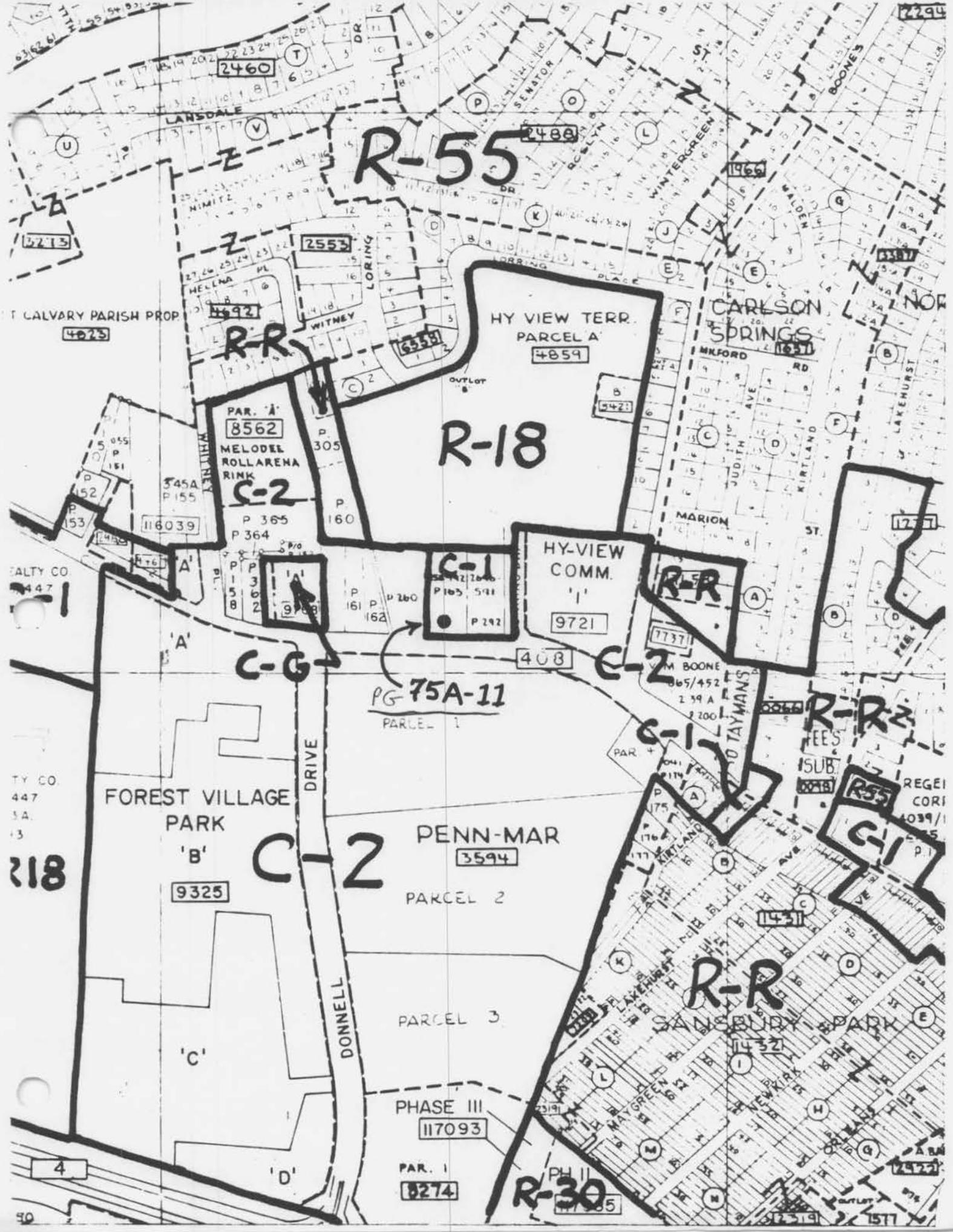
Martha Coleman, widow of Charles Coleman, (and other Coleman heirs) to William H. Balser (to correct JWB #24:678, 1893, which reads BASLER, and had incorrect metes and bounds) the remaining 6 acres unsold by HR #11:122 [this is easterly 6 acre lot]

HB #11:122
11 Dec. 1875
Deed

Charles Coleman et ux to Conrad Balser, 6-1/3 acres part of land which Coleman acquired from W.A. Jarboe; beginning at SE corner of Jackson land, N 10°W 60 perches, N 74°E 25 perches, S 62 perches to stake near center of Charles Coleman's former dwelling, through center of dwelling, S 4°W 4 perches to turnpike, then with N side of Turnpike N 84°W 10 perches to beginning, containing 6-1/3 acres. [this is westerly 6-1/3 acre lot]

HB #10:385
7 Aug. 1874
Deed

William A. Jarboe, administrator of Hilleary Jackson, deceased, to Charles Coleman, same 12-1/4 acres on which Charles Coleman now resides, and which has been possessed by Coleman since 1859.



2460

R-55

2488

2713

2553

4492

6558

CALVARY PARISH PROP
4923

RR

HY VIEW TERR.
PARCEL A
4859

CARLSON
SPRINGS
1631

R-18

PAR. 'A'
8562

MELODEL
ROLLARENA
RINK
C-2

HY-VIEW
COMM.
'1'
9721

RR

REALTY CO
447

C-1

116039
P 160
P 162
P 292

C-G

PG 75A-11
PARCEL 1

408

C-2

REALTY CO
447
3A
13

FOREST VILLAGE
PARK
'B'

218

9325

C-2

PENN-MAR
3594

PARCEL 2

PARCEL 3

PHASE III
117093

PAR. I
8274

R-30

RR

SANSBURY PARK

1432

4

50



P.G. #75A-11

Balser House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
February 1985
South elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #75A-11

Balser House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
February 1985
East elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #75A-11

Balser House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
February 1985
Northeast 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



NAME C. COLEMAN HOUSE

LOCATION 7104 MARLBORO PIKE FORESTVILLE, Md,

FACADE SE

PHOTO TAKEN 9/13/74 M DWYER

PG: 75A-11