

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes ___
no ___

Property Name: Purnell Branch Bridge, Bridge No. 23008 Inventory Number: WO-483
 Address: US 113 over Purnell Branch Historic district: ___ yes no
 City: _____ Zip Code: _____ County: Worcester
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Snow Hill
 Property Owner: MD SHA Tax Account ID Number: _____
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): _____ Tax Map Number: _____
 Project: US 113 over Purnell Branch, Br. No. 23008 Agency: MD SHA
 Agency Prepared By: MD SHA
 Preparer's Name: Rita Suffness Date Prepared: 04/14/2004

Documentation is presented in: Project Files, 2380123-B00800

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: Eligibility recommended ___ Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: ___ A ___ B C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: _____
 Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: ___ yes Listed: ___ yes

Site visit by MHT Staff ___ yes no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Description:

Bridge No. 23008 is a three-span, concrete, slab structure with decorative metal railings. The bridge's overall length is 66 feet made up of three 22-foot sections. Replacement, concrete endposts at the end of the bridge anchor the superstructure to the concrete abutments. Metal guardrail is fastened to each of the four bridge anchors. ADA-compliant sidewalk ramps at each end replaced the original rounded sidewalk sections in improvements that occurred prior to 1990. The railings are made up of three sections of railings, each within steel I-beam post brackets, the balusters of which feature short and long sections of vertical rod members turned on angle to approximate a diamond shape. The total width of the structure is 30' including a two-lane roadway, sidewalk and railing. The superstructure is supported by four concrete monotube piles. The bridge was constructed by the State Roads Commission of Maryland as part of statewide road improvement programs aimed at upgrading transportation facilities for local as well as regional traffic needs.

Significance:

Purnell Branch Bridge (Bridge No. 23008) is one of the few remaining examples of concrete slab bridges constructed immediately after World War II on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, based on a plan developed in 1948, and is one of only five multiple span,

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended ___

Criteria: ___ A ___ B C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

MHT Comments: *Representative example of its type; only 5 remain.*

[Signature]
 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

4/15/04
 Date

[Signature]
 Reviewer, National Register Program

4/15/04
 Date

200401189

concrete slab bridges remaining in the state built between 1950 and 1955. Purnell Branch Bridge (Bridge No. 23008) retains sufficient integrity and architectural detailing in its design as well as historical association with the state's transportation system growth to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, the bridge is one of the few remaining multi-span, concrete slab bridges constructed just after the cessation of the hostilities of World War II through 1955. It is significant as a component of the transportation infrastructure inaugurated by Governor William Preston Lane in his plan to launch the greatest road building program in Maryland's history. It was designed during the intense years of 1947 and 1948 when the Division of Bridge Design completed preliminary studies, estimates and schemes for constructing more than 50 new and improved bridges, as well as for the repair and strengthening existing structures.

Under Criterion C, Bridge No. 23008 is a good example of a concrete slab structure retaining character defining elements which has undergone almost no alteration, apart from the pre-1990 replacement of the endposts and sidewalk curb terminations at the four ends. Its lack of significant alterations makes the bridge an unaltered representative of the type and demonstrates the stability of its overall design. The ornate metal railing is a departure from the State's more utilitarian railing designs and is evidence of a bit of decorative individuality in this structure through the artistic treatment of a non-structural element.

| | |
|---|---|
| MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW | |
| Eligibility recommended _____ | Eligibility not recommended _____ |
| Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D | Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G |
| MHT Comments: | |
| _____ | _____ |
| Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services | Date |
| _____ | _____ |
| Reviewer, National Register Program | Date |

**Wicomico County
Historic Site Summary Sheet**

Survey No.: WO-483

Name: Purnell Branch Bridge (US 113 Business)
MDOT Bridge No. 23008

Location: US 113 Business over Purnell Branch, between Snow Hill and Wesley

Date: 1952

Access: Public

Description:

Bridge No. 23008 is a three-span, concrete, slab structure with decorative metal railings. The bridge's overall length is 66 feet made up of three 22-foot sections. Replacement, concrete endposts at the end of the bridge anchor the superstructure to the concrete abutments. Metal guardrail is fastened to each of the four bridge anchors. ADA-compliant sidewalk ramps at each end replaced the original rounded sidewalk sections in improvements that occurred prior to 1990. The railings are made up of three sections of railings, each within steel I-beam post brackets, the balusters of which feature short and long sections of vertical rod members turned on angle to approximate a diamond shape. The total width of the structure is 30' including a two-lane roadway, sidewalk and railing. The superstructure is supported by four concrete monotube piles. The bridge was constructed by the State Roads Commission of Maryland as part of statewide road improvement programs aimed at upgrading transportation facilities for local as well as regional traffic needs.

Significance:

Purnell Branch Bridge (Bridge No. 23008) retains sufficient integrity and architectural detailing in its design as well as historical association with the state's transportation system growth to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, the bridge is one of the few remaining multi-span, concrete slab bridges constructed just after the cessation of the hostilities of World War II through 1955. It is significant as a component of the transportation infrastructure inaugurated by Governor William Preston Lane in his plan to launch the greatest road building program in Maryland's history. It was designed during the intense years of 1947 and 1948 when the Division of Bridge Design completed preliminary studies, estimates and schemes for constructing more than 50 new and improved bridges, as well as for the repair and strengthening existing structures.

Under Criterion C, Bridge No. 23008 is a good example of a concrete slab structure retaining character defining elements which has undergone almost no alteration, apart from the pre-1990 replacement of the endposts and sidewalk curb terminations at the four ends. Its lack of significant alterations makes the bridge an unaltered representative of the type and demonstrates the stability of its overall design. The ornate metal railing is a departure from the State's more utilitarian railing designs and is evidence of a bit of decorative individuality in this structure through the artistic treatment of a non-structural element.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WO-483

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Purnell Branch Bridge
other MDOT Bridge No. 23008 (US 113 Business)

2. Location

street and number US 113 Business over Purnell Branch not for publication
city, town Snow Hill X vicinity
county Worcester

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

name Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration
street and number 707 North Calvert Street, PO Box 717 telephone
city, town Baltimore state MD zip code 21202

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Courthouse tax map and parcel
city, town Snow Hill liber folio

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Recorded by HABS/HAER
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
 Other: _____

6. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Current Function | | Resource Count |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape | Contributing Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture | <input type="checkbox"/> buildings |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> defense | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | <input type="checkbox"/> sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | | <input type="checkbox"/> domestic | <input type="checkbox"/> social | <input type="checkbox"/> structures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> objects |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> funerary | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> Total |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> government | <input type="checkbox"/> unknown | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> health care | <input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> other: | |
| | | | | Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory |
| | | | | <u> 1 </u> |

7. Description

Inventory No. WO-483

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

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

Purnell Branch Bridge carries US 113 Business over the Purnell Branch of the Pocomoke River just northeast of the Worcester County seat of Snow Hill. US 113 Business travels in a north-south direction along the Delmarva Peninsula. Bridge No. 23008 is a three-span, concrete slab structure with decorative metal railings. The bridge's overall length is 66 feet made up of three 22-foot sections. Replacement, concrete endposts at the end of the bridge anchor the superstructure to the concrete abutments. Metal guardrail is fastened to each of the four bridge anchors. ADA-compliant sidewalk ramps at each end replaced the original rounded sidewalk sections in improvements that occurred prior to 1990. The railings are made up of three sections of railings, each within steel I-beam post brackets, the balusters of which feature short and long sections of vertical rod members turned on angle to approximate a diamond shape. The total width of the structure is 30' including a two-lane roadway, sidewalk and railing. The superstructure is supported by four concrete monotube piles. The bridge was constructed by the State Roads Commission of Maryland as part of statewide road improvement programs aimed at upgrading transportation facilities for local as well as regional traffic needs.

Bridge inspection reports do not indicate that Bridge No. 23008 has undergone any significant alterations since its construction in 1952. It was built to plans developed in 1948.

8. Significance

Inventory No. WO-483

| Period | Areas of Significance | Check and justify below | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> performing arts | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2000- | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> social history | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | | <input type="checkbox"/> maritime history | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ | |

Specific dates 1952, to 1948 plans **Architect/Builder** State Roads Commission of Maryland

Construction dates 1949 to 1952

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Significance

Purnell Branch Bridge (Bridge No. 23008) retains sufficient integrity and architectural detailing in its design as well as historical association with the state's transportation system growth to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, the bridge is one of the few remaining multi-span, concrete slab bridges constructed just after the cessation of the hostilities of World War II through 1955. It is significant as a component of the transportation infrastructure inaugurated by Governor William Preston Lane in his plan to launch the greatest road building program in Maryland's history. It was designed during the intense years of 1947 and 1948 when the Division of Bridge Design completed preliminary studies, estimates and schemes for constructing more than 50 new and improved bridges, as well as for the repair and strengthening existing structures.

Under Criterion C, Bridge No. 23008 is a good example of a concrete slab structure retaining character defining elements which has undergone almost no alteration, apart from the pre-1990 replacement of the endposts and sidewalk curb terminations at the four ends. Its lack of significant alterations makes the bridge an unaltered representative of the type and demonstrates the stability of its overall design. The ornate metal railing is a departure from the State's more utilitarian railing designs and is evidence of a bit of decorative individuality in this structure through the artistic treatment of a non-structural element.

Narrative History

The predecessor to US Route 113 in Maryland was a narrow local road running through Wicomico and Worcester counties. At a more regional scale, the road traversed the Delmarva Peninsula in a north-south direction connecting the states of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Along its length in Maryland, the road passed through the small rural communities of Snow Hill, Newark, Ironshire, Belin and Bishop, culminating in Dover, Delaware. These communities were mostly agricultural in nature and the road was a main transportation link to market cities to the north.

US 113 follows a very old north-south route along the high ground between the Pocomoke River and Sinepuxent Bay. A road was in place there by 1697, when a report of the sheriff of Somerset County notes that a Presbyterian church was located on "the Road going up along the Sea Side", a term that was used to describe the road for many years. The town of Snow Hill, at the southern end of the project corridor, was created by a legislative decree in 1686, but patents had been issued for land in the area since 1670. A map of Maryland made in that same year by Augustine Herrman is the first to show European settlement along the Pocomoke River. Plantations are represented on both sides of the river from the bay to Dividing Creek in the south part of Worcester County. Although land was patented "on the Sea Board Side" from 1666, based on the Herrman map and other evidence it appears that European settlement of the project vicinity did not occur until after 1670, and not in significant numbers until the late 1680s.

As the Eastern Shore was settled, a network of dirt roads connected the various towns. By the 1700's, a north-south highway, roughly following US 13 and US 113 of today, started at Newcastle, passed through Dover, Milford and Georgetown in Delaware, then St.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WO-483

Purnell Branch Bridge (US 113 Business) MDOT Bridge No. 23008 Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

Martins, Snow Hill and Pocomoke in Maryland, before proceeding down the Eastern Shore of Virginia to Cape Charles. This gave the lower Eastern Shore a direct route to the North. US 113 was an earth and shell road until 1906, when the portion at Snow Hill was paved during the 1906 through 1921 time period. By 1912, US 113 between Snow and Berlin was paved; Berlin to Sowell was paved between 1916 and 1917.

Prior to 1900, road building was done at a local level with no consistency between counties or states. The increased use of automobiles and the deplorable condition of local roads in the first decade of the twentieth century led to the country's Good Roads Movement. This movement called for centralized management, federal funding, and professional engineers as highway planners. Its top priority was improving primary state roads and connecting county roads to ease vehicular travel. Improvements included widening, straightening, and grading roads. The replacement of outdated bridges with wider and stronger structures was also an important priority. Maryland's Good Roads Movement was spearheaded in 1908 (P.A.C. Spero & Associates and Louis Berger & Associates 1995:26). Soon after, the Maryland State Roads Commission was formed. In 1912, district engineering offices were instituted. By 1917, every state had created a road department staffed by civil engineers. To receive federal funds for road construction, each state had to designate seven percent of its rural mileage as part of the federal-aid primary network. Between 1920 and 1923, many miles of concrete roadway were built in Worcester County using federal and state-aid funding.

During this period, standardization of such road-related features as bridges and culverts began. The roads movement required the construction or reconstruction of inadequate bridges. Standard construction designs saved time, labor, and money. Standard designs also created consistency in highway appearance when traveling Maryland's roads. In the 1930s, the Maryland State Roads Commission increased its emphasis on standardized designs in response to the increased numbers of tractor-trailers on the roadways. The majority of the bridge designs were created for strong concrete structures able to carry a substantial amount of high-speed weight.

During the Depression of the 1930s, President Roosevelt invested federal money into an aggressive highway construction program aimed at creating jobs and stimulating the economy. The highway program continued to flourish throughout the end of the 1930s. The highway construction program continued in earnest during the 1940s and 1950s in response to America's entrance into World War II and the Korean War. During this period, dozens of roads were designated as defense highways. These highways were used for troop, war material, and supply movement to and from continental military installations. Many of these roads were upgraded to dualized or divided highways to handle the increased traffic.

In 1947 Governor William Preston Lane unveiled his plan to launch the greatest road building program in Maryland's history. In response, between 1947 and 1951, 757 miles of roads were built or rebuilt, and the SRC's annual budget increased from seven to 33 million dollars. In October of 1947, a time of transition, a new chief engineer—William F. Childs, Jr.—took office at the SRC. His first order of business was to reorganize the engineering division, appointing Walter C. Hopkins the deputy chief engineer. Bridge division staff generally possessed greater and more specialized engineering skills than any of the other units. The Division of Bridge Design found it increasingly overwhelmed, becoming involved not only in preparing plans and specification for structures on new roadways, but also to repair and widen many existing bridges. During 1947 and 1948, the Division of Bridge Design completed preliminary studies, estimates and schemes for constructing more than 50 new and improved bridges, as well as for the repair and strengthening existing structures. Between 1950 and 1952 it sent out 250 drawings of highway structures to bid. In the early 1950's, Governor Thomas R. McKeldin, advocating a modern state highway system, inaugurated his 12 year program, covering the 1950's through 1965. Some highlights of the first six years of the 12-year program included the construction of a dualized US 13, the Baltimore National Pike, among others. US 13 served the communities of Salisbury before crossing over into Delaware to traverse Laurel, Bridgeville and Harrington, in the center of the Eastern Shore. US 13 may have been used as a defense highway given the military bases along the peninsula particularly in Virginia. US 113 was built as an easterly branch of US 13 in order to serve the towns to the east of the US 13 corridor, and the two roads intersected in Dover, Delaware. The existing two-lane Bridge No. 23008

**Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form**

Inventory No. WO-483

**Purnell Branch Bridge (US 113 Business)
MDOT Bridge No. 23008
Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 2

was built to carry the original US 113 over Purnell Branch, before Snow Hill was bypassed in 1976, and the section on which the bridge is located re-designed as US 113 Business.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. WO-483

Maryland State Roads Commission

1948 Superstructure Details Plan and Plan, Elevation & Substructure Details for Concrete Slab Bridge US Route 113 Business over Purnell Branch. Plans on file at the Office of Bridge Design, Maryland State Highway Administration, Baltimore.

P.A.C. Spero & Company and Louis Berger & Associates

1995 Historic Highway Bridges in Maryland: 1631-1960, Historic Context Report. Prepared for the Maryland State Highway Administration and the Maryland Historical Trust.

see Continuation Sheet 9-1 for additional Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property less than one acre
Acreage of historical setting same as above
Quadrangle name Snow Hill, MD

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The recommended National Register boundary for the Purnell Branch Bridge (US 113 Business) includes a rectangular area encompassing the structure, plus the SHA right-of-way within which it is located. The boundary includes the bridge, its abutments, and associated roadway.

The boundary was drawn to encompass only the bridge and its associated features.

11. Form Prepared by

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|-----------|----------------|
| name/title | Rita Suffness | | |
| organization | Maryland State Highway Administration. | date | April, 2004 |
| street & number | 707 N. Cavert Street | telephone | (410) 545-8561 |
| city or town | Baltimore | state | MD |

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

**Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form**

Inventory No. WO-483

**Purnell Branch Bridge (US 13 Northbound)
MDOT Bridge No. 23008
Continuation Sheet**

Number 9 Page 1

9. Bibliography (continued)

Rose, Mark H.

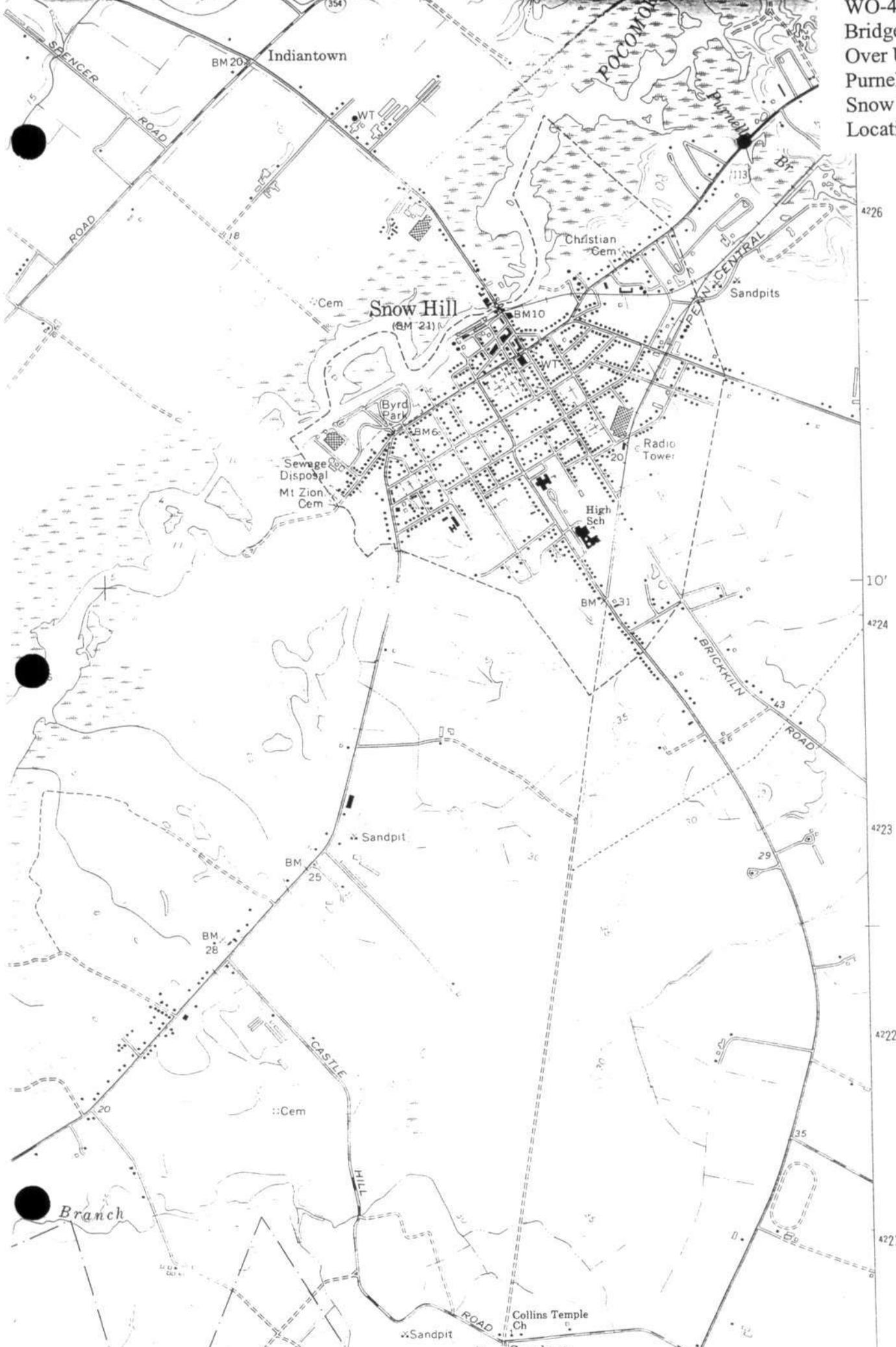
1990 *Interstate: Express Highway Politics, 1939-1989*. Revised edition originally published in 1979. The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville.

United States Geologic Survey

1966 *Snow Hill, MD*. 7.5' topographic quadrangle.

1901 *Snow Hill, MD-DE*. 15' topographic quadrangle, reprinted 1934.

WO-483
Bridge No. 23008
Over US 113 Business
Purnell Branch Bridge
Snow Hill Quadrangle
Location Map



4226
10'
4224
4223
4222
4221



NO 483

Purnell Branch Bridge

US 113

nests at MIT
south parapet, south
face 1 kg NW
Suffern 4/7/04

1/4



23008

W0483

Pumell Branch Bridge

US 113

keys at 171/17

endpost, SE.

Suff. 417/04

2/4



W0483

Pumell Branch Bridge

US 113

regs at mt T
outside (south face) of
north parapet

Suffern 417104

3/4



23008

WO 483

Purnell Branch bridge

US 113

near MATT

inside face of north
garage

Supper 4/7/04

4/4



W0483

Purnell Branch Beds

US 113 over Purnell
Branch

SW approach road

looking NE.

Suffern MD SHA

near at MHT

516



W0-483

Purnell Branch Beds

US 113 ore

Purnell Branch

North (NW) Elevation)

Supplies 1110 STA
DIT 111 to office

6/6