

ArcHistory
Judith A. Christensen
6 Walker Avenue Gaithersburg MD 20877
301-926-2650

HISTORIC DESIGNATION EVALUATION ANALYSIS

October 26, 2007

SUBJECT: 9200 Darnestown Road

CONCLUSION: The site and house at 9200 Darnestown Road, built in 1947 and owned by Thomas M. Veirs Jr. et al. fails to meet all but one of the criteria for designation as a Rockville Historic District (single site) in accordance with the adopted City of Rockville criteria. The structure is 60 years old and therefore requires a review for significance and a recommendation on eligibility for significance from the Historic Preservation staff and the Historic District Commission, if staff believes it is warranted, when substantial alterations or demolition is proposed. While a finding that a site or structure meets any one of the approved and adopted Rockville criteria below can be grounds for a recommendation of eligibility, a single site historic district should present a strong case for designation -- strong historic associations and high architectural integrity or restorability. In this case, the single criterion that this site meets is exhibiting "distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction." It is a typical example of upper middle class Colonial Revival late 1940s architecture. The criteria of typicality tends to preclude single site designation as it basically means it meets the age requirement and is not altered, but it not significant architecturally as an example by a master.

Historic and Cultural Significance

Criteria:

- Has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the **City**
- Has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the **County**
- Has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the **State**
- Has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the **Nation**
- Is the site of a significant historic event
- Is identified with a person or a group of persons who influenced society
- Exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political or historic heritage of the County and its communities

The house at 9200 Darnestown Road has been located within Montgomery County for more than 60 years and was not included in Montgomery County's Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County and was also not included in the 1989 City of Rockville Inventory of Historic Resources, the Historic Building Catalog. However, at the time of the Atlas and Catalog publication, the building was less than 50 years old and not eligible for National Register Listing unless of

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exceptional significance. The history of the site does not show that it has value to the development history, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, County, State, or Nation. It is not identified or associated with any significant historical event. Although the land was owned at times by Chandler Keys, Henry Hurley, and the Veirs family, all significant individuals and families to Rockville, their ownership pre-dated the present structure that was built in 1947. In addition, the setting has changed. The semi-rural suburban landscape that once predominated along Darnestown Road is now gone. The house abuts several mid-to-late 20th Century residential subdivisions. The recently constructed Falls Grove mixed-use development completed the transformation from an agricultural suburban area to a residential and urban area. This has happened within the past ten years.

The brick two-story Colonial revival house with wings is an example of housing that is typical of its construction period and is common to Rockville, Montgomery County, and surrounding areas. It is primarily distinguished by its setting. The property is noticeable for its mature trees and landscape on a large lot area and its siting for privacy and presentation.

Architectural and Design Significance

Criteria:

- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction
- Represents the work of a master
- Possesses high artistic values
- Represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, or
- Represents an established or familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or county due to its singular physical characteristic or landscape.

The house is an example of a brick colonial-revival style house which was popular in the 1940s. At 2,714 square feet of floor space, it is more spacious than the middle-class tract homes of the 1940s, which generally are from 1,000 to 1,200 square feet. It was likely a custom-built home with the input of an architect, but the design is neither unique nor trendsetting. It fits well among the Colonial Revival styles of the 1940s. The builder of the original two story rectangular house with side porches was Harold Ward of Gaithersburg. The present owners, Tom and Happy Veirs, are the original owners who worked with Harold Ward to design a house that met their needs. They did not purchase commercially available plans, but worked with Harold Ward's son, who served as the architect. As the family grew and needed more space, a later addition and a rear woodshop was designed by Jim Hinkley.¹

The house does not represent the work of a master. It is a vernacular example of residential construction modified to suit the taste and needs of the owners. As a typical example, the house does not possess high artistic value.

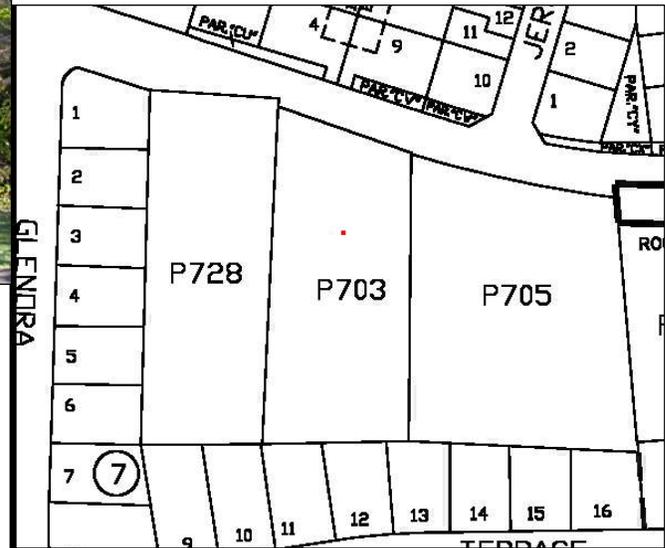
It is not a familiar visual feature of the neighborhood. The house is not visible from Darnestown Road due to landscaping that separates it from Darnestown Road and provides privacy. It does not represent an established or visual feature of the neighborhood, community or county due to its singular physical characteristic or landscape. The area in which the property is located has changed significantly over the past 40 years due to road widening, subdivision development, and development of Falls Grove across Darnestown Road.

¹ Interview with Tom Veirs Jr. and Happy Veirs by Judy Christensen, December 2007.



BACKGROUND

9200 Darnestown Road is located in Rockville MD and is sited on Parcel 703 with additional land on 728, Tax map FR53, tax accounts 00055677 and 00157275. Parcel 703 is 2.00 acres and parcel 728 is 1.60 acres.



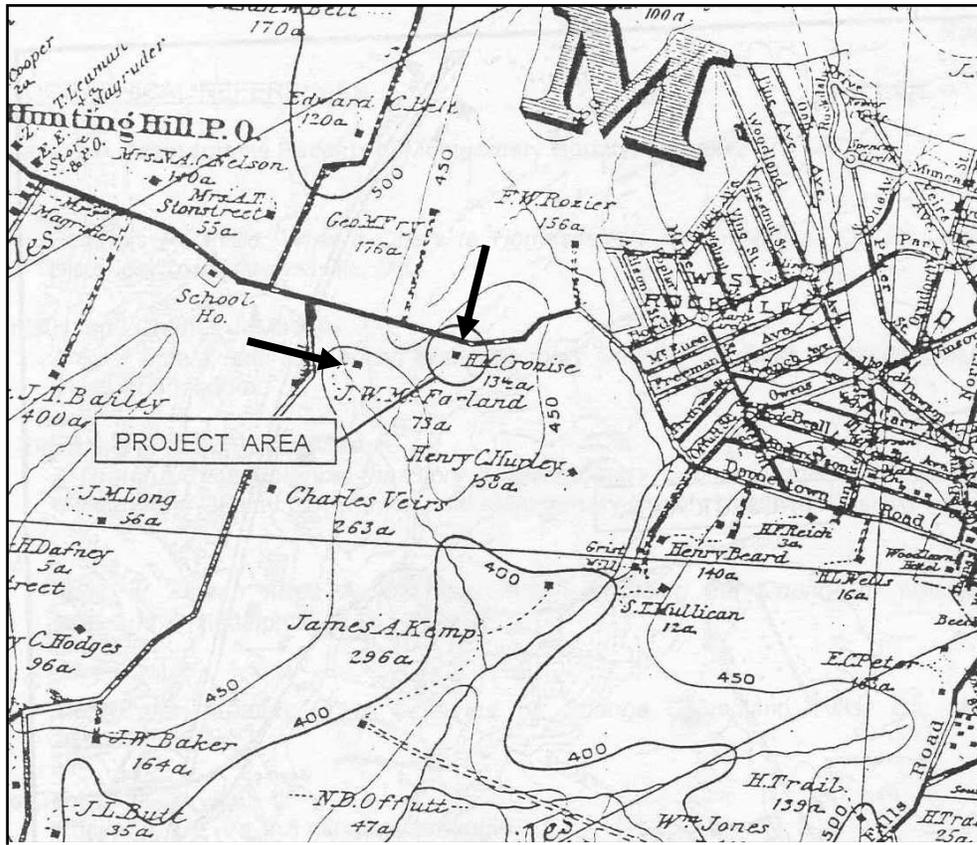
Parcel 703 is improved with a Colonial-revival-style, brick, two-story house with a garage wing, a later addition, an open side screened porch and a basement. It was built in 1947. The living area totals approximately 2,714 square feet according to Maryland State property tax data. Parcel 728 is used as a side yard and workshop location.

The staff and/or the Rockville Historic District Commission (HDC) reviews all sites in the city or proposed for annexation into the city that are 50 years of age or older and proposed for significant alteration or demolition to determine architectural, cultural or historical significance to the City of Rockville. If the HDC finds that the property meets the criteria for historic designation, it submits its recommendation to the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council for further evaluation and decision.

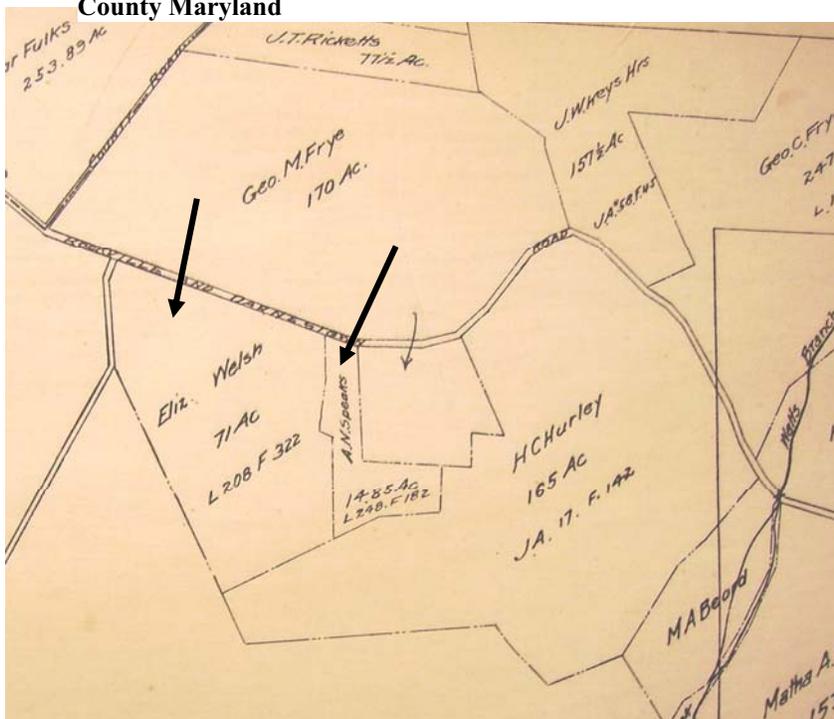
Summary History

Parcels 728 and 703 were part of a larger 229 acre farm purchased by Henry Hurley in 1852 from Chandler Keys, who obtained it from the Wootton family. In 1889 and 1890, two portions of the Hurley Farm, one at 66 acres, 13 square perches, and the other at 20.5 acres, came into the ownership of James McFarland. Shortly after, they both went through a succession of owners and eventually were reunited by Charles and Rose Veirs and their son, Thomas Magruder Veirs (Sr.), through purchases in 1928 and 1931.

By 1894, several structures appear to be on the two McFarland parcels, marked with a small black square. One is denoted as H.M. Cronise, 13+ acres. The other, west of the Cronise house and set back from Darnestown Road near the present Glen Mill Road is listed as J.W. McFarland, 75 acres. (see maps, page 4)



1: G.M. Hopkins 1894 Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington- Montgomery County Maryland



2: 1919 Deets and Maddox Real Estate Atlas of Montgomery County, Maryland

The Deets and Maddox Real Estate Atlas of Montgomery County, published in 1919, shows how the Hurley Farmland was distributed by the mid teens in the 20th Century. Elizabeth Welsh had purchased 71 acres of the McFarland acres. This became the 70-acre "Locust Grove" farm under Veirs ownership. The adjacent 20.5 acre parcel had been sold in several lots. Alfred N. Speaks owned the contiguous and largest parcel at 14.85 acres. Part of this lot of land was sold to Hanson Cronise with a new house in 1890 by James McFarland for

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\$1,023.75. The house was subsequently addressed as 9150 Darnestown Road and was known as the H.M. Cronise-Veirs House (Mike Dwyer, MHT# M: 26/2.)

The exterior of the Cronise house at 7150 Darnestown was extensively renovated after Charles Veirs' purchase in 1931. It was recently demolished after a significance review by the City of Rockville found the house lacked architectural integrity and the historical information was not sufficient to meet the criteria for designation as a single site historic district.

Ownership History

Parcel 703 is a small portion of the original patent by Arthur Nelson called Exchange/New Exchange Enlarged. A portion of this large land patent was purchased before 1800 by T.S. Wootton, the progenitor of the Montgomery County Wootton family. He was the son of Turnor Wootton and his second wife, Elizabeth Sprigg, the young widow of Henry Wilson and the daughter of (British) Lt. Col. Thomas Sprigg.² They had three known children: Thomas Sprigg, William Turnor, and Richard.³ Thomas Sprigg Wootton is known as "The father of Montgomery County."

In 1778, Thomas Sprigg Wootton deeded 383 acres of "Exchange and New Exchange Enlarged" to his brother, Richard.⁴ It was described as lying two miles outside "Montgomery Courthouse" in the tax assessment of 1783, "where...T. S. Wootton lately resided." In 1803, Richard gave the 383 acres and other land to total 400 acres to his daughter, Elizabeth Wootton, as dower upon her marriage to Lewis Beall in 1802.⁵

Lewis and Eliza Beall lived on their farm, Rose Hill, on Great Falls Road near Rockville until Lewis died in 1811. After his death, the young widow Beall and her father sold part of her dower property to Henry Strause and Otho H. Williams in 1813 to pay Lewis' debts and repurchase Rose Hill. The property later came back to the Wootton family, Turner and Olivia Wootton.⁶

During Turner and Olivia Wootton's ownership in the mid-19th century, the family property was divided and Chandler Keys purchased 229 acres in 1848. The deed reserves use of the family burial ground and privileges of the Watts Branch millstream to the Wootton family. The 229 acres of land near Rockville was purchased in 1852 by 21-year-old Henry Hurley of Washington, D.C.⁷ it stretched along the Darnestown Road from a point near Watts Branch to Glen Mill Road. Hurley operated a dairy farm and boarded horses.⁸ Hurley borrowed \$8,398 from Susannah Ireland in 1865, using his land as security.⁹ Around 1870, the old house burned to the ground and the present dwelling at 411 Feather Rock Court (a Rockville Historic District) was constructed on its foundations. He defaulted on the loan payments, and advertised the farm for sale.¹⁰

The farm did not sell and was lost to Samuel Fowler, Trustee of the deceased Irelands' estate.¹¹ Fowler also advertised, receiving no "adequate" bid though April, May and June of 1873. On August 6, he sold

² Across the Years in Prince George County, By Bowie, 1947, (Md. State Historical Society) call no. MR187-P9B6)

³ Ibid

⁴ Land Records of Montgomery County, Md., (L/f) A/112 (March 13, 1778).

⁵ Land Records, (L/f) K/465 (April 27 1803).

⁶ Land Records, (L/f) R/36 (December 28, 1813).

⁷ Land Records of Montgomery County, JGH 1/470 (October 22, 1852).

⁸ Assessment Records, 1857.

⁹ Land Records, op, cit, EBP 2/108 (May 8, 1865).

¹⁰ Montgomery County Sentinel. April 4, 1873.

¹¹ Montgomery County Equity records, Judgment EBP 8/303 et seq.,

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107-3/8 acres (known as the “front part”) at \$30 an acre to Henry Hurley.¹² Hurley was acting for his minor children, Henry Clarence, Andrew Jackson, and Ida.¹³ The remaining 124-1/2 acres were sold to Hattersley W. Talbott, Trustee as an “investment of money from Susan Ireland’s estate” for \$1920.¹⁴

Although Henry continued to farm his land, his financial troubles continued through 1870s. His children raised the purchase money to buy back the farm. In 1874, a bill of sale was recorded to Ida for \$1000. After Andrew and Henry C. reached the age of majority, Henry conveyed the 107 acres to them. They also purchased the 124-1/2 acres from Talbott, reuniting the original parcel. In 1889-90, Andrew and Ida sold their interest to Henry C.¹⁵ Subsequently approximately 100 acres were sold off from the farm to various purchasers.

James McFarland, a farmer, bought two parcels of Hurley land around 1890. In 1890 McFarland purchased 66 acres 13 square perches (66.08125 acres) of the former Hurley Farm from George M. and Ellen Fry.¹⁶ The land transfer record from Hurley to Fry is not available. Previously in 1889, McFarland had purchased 20.5 acres¹⁷ along Darnestown Road directly from Henry C. Hurley. His total acreage as one parcel was 86.58125 acres. McFarland further subdivided the property to accommodate other purchasers and built a house, which he sold to Hanson M. Cronise with 13.65 acres of land for \$1,023.75, plus Cronise bought an additional half acre (0.5) acre of land for a total of 14.15 acres. This land included 282.8 feet of frontage along Darnestown Road. The improvements were assessed at \$1,200 in 1890. (MC Tax Assessment 1890). In 1893, the Cronises mortgaged the property to Ella C. White for \$950. It was again lost to foreclosure when Albertina C. King purchased it in 1901 and defaulted on the mortgage.¹⁸ It was advertised and sold in 1904 to James F. Burroughs for \$1,500. Burroughs also purchased an additional plot of 0.71 acres of land from McFarland¹⁹ to bring the total to 14.86 acres. It was subsequently sold to Edwin and Elizabeth Monday in 1905, Fanny Brown in 1907, Alfred Speake in 1914, Alfred Ray in 1916, and Harvey Grant in 1919.

The valuations recorded in tax assessment records for the property remained steady throughout this time period, indicating few changes through 1928. Charles C. Veirs and his wife Rose purchased the tract in 1931.²⁰ The house on the property was later given a street address of 9150 Darnestown Road. Charles Veirs owned a farm immediately south of the Hurley Farm. He was a dairy farmer, but also raised hay, corn, and wheat.²¹

The remainder of the combined 20.5 acres and 66 acres 13 square perches was sold to Elizabeth Welsh by the McFarlands in 1909.²² The acreage was rounded off on the 1919 Atlas at 71 acres but probably was 71.93125 acres. The total sold is not given in the deed.

¹² Land Records op. cit. EBP 13/56 (December 9, 1874)

¹³ Land Records op. cit. EBP 13/56 (December 9, 1874)

¹⁴ Land Records, EBP 25/260 (December 20, 1881).

¹⁵ Land Records, JA17/402 (January 23, 1889); JA17/406 (September 23, 1887; recorded April 15, 1890).

¹⁶ JA17/405

¹⁷ Land Records JA17/405 and , JA17/408. (Both recorded on April 16 1890.)

¹⁸ Montgomery County Equity Record #2072

¹⁹ Land Records 178/73 (1904) (McFarland to Burroughs)

²⁰ Land Records 514/277 (1931) to Marjorie and Harry Grant for 14.85 acres.

²¹ Kevin Newcomer and Michael Dwyer , MHT Form #M:26-1, The Cronise/Viers House (Glen Haven) at 9400 Darnestown Road.

²² Land Records 208/322 (1909) McFarland to Welsh.

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Charles and Rose Veirs' son, Thomas Magruder Veirs (Sr.), was also a dairy farmer. In 1928, he purchased the Welsh parcel of about 70 acres.²³ It had been briefly owned in the interim by Mary L. Schoenberger in 1922,²⁴ but she sold it in 1923 to William Ritchie.²⁵ Charles Veirs died in 1938. His widow, Rose, conveyed the now 12.65 acre property at 9150 Darnestown Road to T. Magruder Veirs (Sr.). A small parcel of land was conveyed to another party. At this point, T. Magruder Veirs Sr. owned most of the two original McFarland parcels.

T. Magruder Veirs (Sr.) operated a dairy farm and also bred and grew roses. The title to the land was cleared by a sale and repurchase from attorney Robert W. Vinson in 1944.²⁶ By 1965, most of the former farm and nursery was sold for development as the Glenora Hills subdivision. The subdivision took most of the rear portion of the 14.85 acre lot, leaving Veirs Sr. with a 2 acre lot recorded in a survey made by R.K. Maddox, County Surveyor, on August 9, 1948.²⁷ Veirs also kept a 1.60 acre lot from the Locust Grove Farm. To further complicate things, a small portion of land was swapped by the developers with the adjacent Lakewood Country Club to build West Ritchie Parkway, now Wootton Parkway.

T. Magruder Veirs Sr. deeded the "rest and residue" of those two tracts of land containing 70 acres and 12.64 acres respectively" to son Thomas M. Veirs in 1973.

Conclusion

It is the conclusion of this researcher and historian that the structure at 9200 Darnestown Road does not meet the criteria for designation as a single site historic district in the City of Rockville. Although it can be connected through ownership with several persons who are significant to Rockville (Keys, Hurley, Veirs), no structure was on the property until 1947. It served as a farm, then a rural small acreage and home, and was finally subdivided into a large building lot. It is not the site of a significant historic event nor is it associated with persons who have influenced society. The ownership chain is essentially the same as the property at 9150 Darnestown, which was not found to be significant under historical and cultural criteria. Although the structure is a recognizable example of a typical late 1940s Colonial Revival residence, it is not unique, does not possess unique features, nor is it the work of a master architect and it is not a familiar visual feature. The criterion met, typicality, is not generally sufficient to render the site significant as a single site historic district. A single site historic district generally requires that several of the designation criteria be met or one criterion be strongly met. The property at 9200 Darnestown Road does not meet the criteria necessary for designation as a single site historic district in the City of Rockville.

²³ Land Records 458/96 (1928) Prettyman, Trustee for estate of W. Ritchie to T. M. Veirs.

²⁴ Land Records (1922) Welsh to Schoenberger.

²⁵ Land Records 342/169 (1923) Schoenberger to Ritchie.

²⁶ Montgomery County Land Records L/f 458/96. 932/226 (1944)

²⁷ Land Record 22938/601-604

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Attachment 1

Bibliography:

Montgomery County Historical Society, biography files and obituary files- April 20, 1976. (See Below)

Peerless Rockville Historic Preservation, Ltd. files

Land, Equity, and Tax Assessments Records of Montgomery County, Maryland

1890 Peerless Rockville: What It Offers to Homeseekers and Investors. On file, Maryland

Historical Trust. Crownsville, Md.

Deets, Edwards H. and Charles J. Maddox 1917 A Real Estate Atlas of the Part of Montgomery County, Maryland. Rockville, Maryland:

Hopkins, G.M. 1894 Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington including the County of Montgomery,

Maryland. Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins.

United States Geological Service 1908-84 Rockville, Md.-Va. 7.5 minute quadrangle.

VEIRS, BETTY GRIFFITH. Suddenly, on Friday, August 23, 1968, at her home, 9400 Darnestown rd., Rockville, Md., **BETTY GRIFFITH VEIRS**, beloved wife of T. Magruder Veirs; mother of Thomas M. Veirs Jr.; grandmother of Harriette, Valerie, Tom, Kate, Dick, Celeste, John and Teresa Veirs; sister of Mrs. Frank I. Davis Sr. Friends are invited to call at the Colonial Funeral Home of Robert A. Pumphrey, Rockville, Md. (parking in rear), from 7 to 9 p.m., where services will be held on Monday, August 26, at 10 a.m. Interment Rockville Cemetery. 25

Thomas Veirs, dairy farmer *See obit. 4/20/76*

Thomas Magruder Veirs Sr., 81, died in Sibley Hospital April 18 after a long illness. He was a life long resident of the Glen Haven area of Montgomery County where he operated a dairy farm and grew experimental roses.

and Gertrude Peter, all of Rockville; an only son, Thomas Magruder Jr., of Rockville; eight grandchildren, and one great grandchild. His first wife, Betty Griffith Veirs, died in 1968.

Mr. Veirs leaves his wife, Alta Eckenrode Veirs of the home at 9400 Darnestown Road, Rockville; three sisters, Fanny Pate, Florence Abert

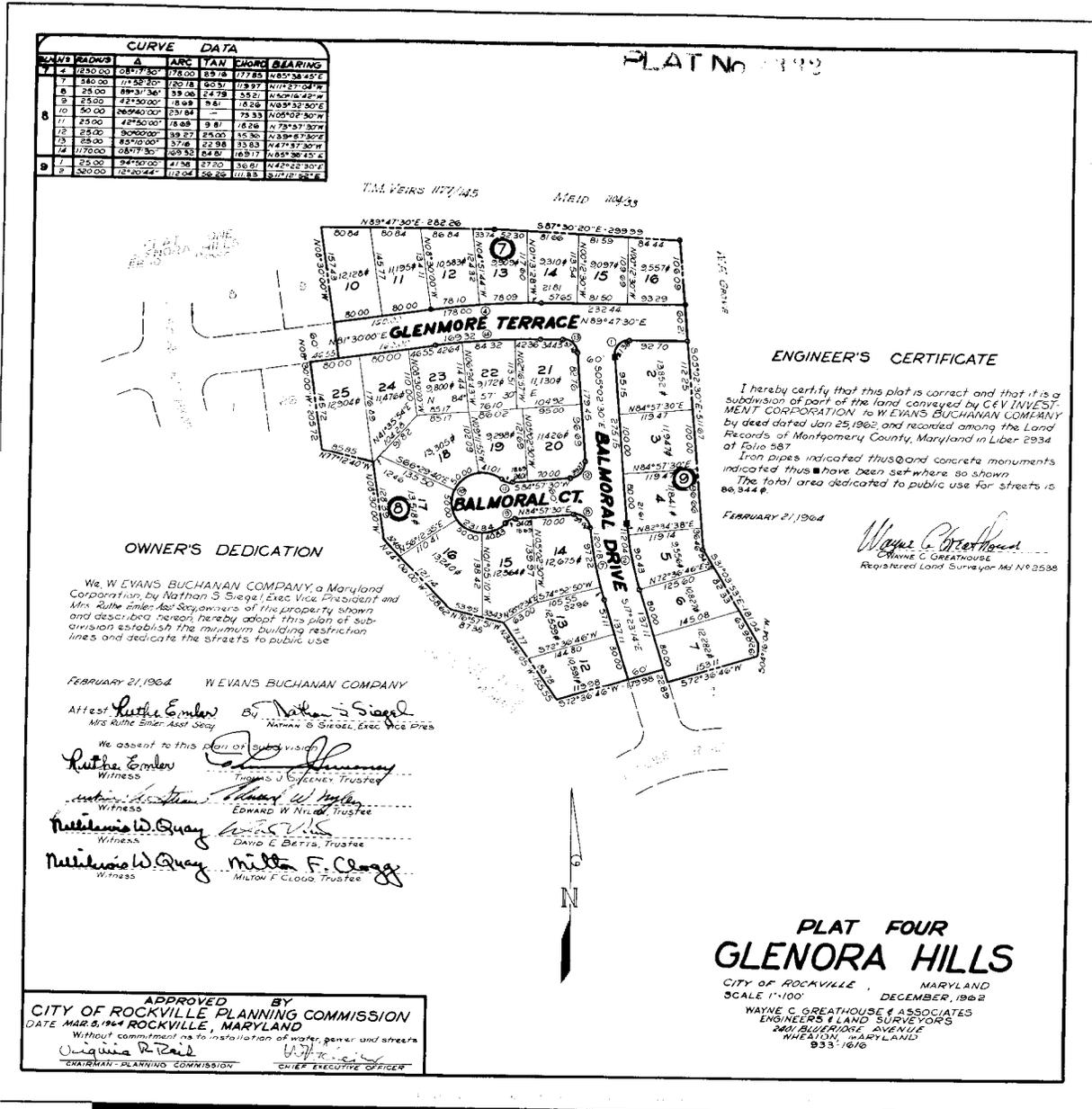
VIERS, THOMAS MAGRUDER SR. On Sunday, April 18, 1976, of Rockville, Md., beloved husband of Alta Reed Veirs; father of Thomas M. Veirs Jr.; brother of Florence Abert, Frances Pate, Gertrude Peter and the late C. Clifton Veirs. Eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild also survive. Friends will be received at PUMPHREY'S COLONIAL FUNERAL HOME, 300 West Montgomery ave. (route 28 just off I-270), Rockville, Md., on Wednesday, from 3 to 5 and 7 to 9 p.m., where services will be held on Thursday, at 11 a.m. Interment Rockville Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Foundation, in care of N.I.H., Bethesda, Md. 20014.

VEIRS, THOMAS MAGRUDER, SR., On Sunday April 18th, 1976, of Rockville, Md., beloved husband of Alta Reed Veirs, father of Thomas M. Veirs, Jr., brother of Florence Abert, Frances Pate, Gertrude Peter and the late C. Clifton Veirs, eight grandchildren and one great grandchild also survive. Friends will be received at PUMPHREYS COLONIAL FUNERAL HOME, 300 West Montgomery Ave., (route 28, just off I-270) Rockville, Md., on Wednesday from 3 to 5 or 7 to 9 P.M., where services will be held on Thursday at 11 A.M. Interment Rockville Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Foundation, care of N.I.H., Bethesda, Md., 20014.

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Attachment 2

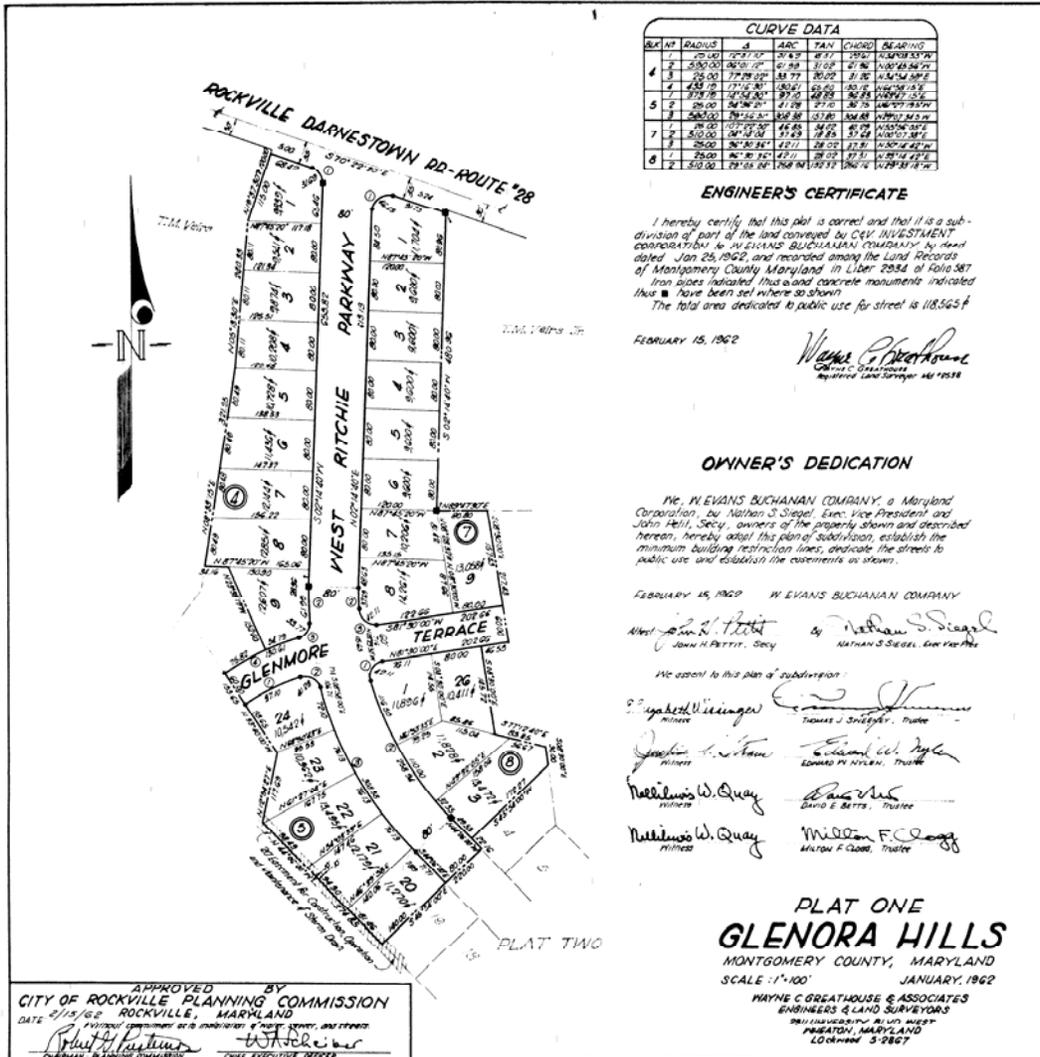
Plat # Four and Plat # One, Glenora Hills 1962. Plat 4 shows T.M. Veirs Jr.'s Parcels 728 and 703 above the rear property boundaries of Block 7 on Glenmore Terrace. To the east is Parcel 705, 2.21 acres of land at 9150 Darnestown Road owned by C. Donald and Irene Meid (Lf 1104/33).



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Attachment 3

Plat One of Glenora Hills shows the T.M. Viers Jr. land at 9200 Darnestown Road to the right of Block 7 on West Ritchie Parkway. The undeveloped 7+ acres of land to the left of Block 4 on West Ritchie Parkway is the other parcel owned by T.M.Veirs Jr. at 9400 Darnestown Road. This parcel has since been developed.



9200 Darnestown Road

Description: 9200 Darnestown Road is a Colonial Revival two-story rectangular brick house built in 1947. It faces north on a 3.60-acre lot. It possesses most of the typical features of the Colonial Revival style, as enumerated below:

*Colonial Revival houses have many of these features:*²⁸

- Symmetrical façade
- Rectangular
- 2 to 3 stories
- Brick or wood siding
- Simple, classical detailing
- Gable roof
- Pillars and columns
- Multi-pane, double-hung windows with shutters
- Dormers
- Temple-like entrance: porticos topped by pediment
- Paneled doors with sidelights and topped with rectangular transoms or fanlights
- Center entry-hall floor plan
- Living areas on the first floor and bedrooms on the upper floors
- Fireplaces

About the Colonial Revival Style

Colonial Revival became a popular American house style after it appeared at the 1876 US Centennial Exposition. Reflecting American patriotism and a desire for simplicity, the Colonial Revival house style remained popular until the mid-1950's. Between World War I and II, Colonial Revival was the most popular historic revival house style in the United States.

Some architectural historians say that Colonial Revival is a Victorian style; others believe that the Colonial Revival style marked the end of the Victorian period in architecture. The Colonial Revival style is based loosely on Federal and Georgian house styles, and a clear reaction against excessively elaborate Victorian Queen Anne architecture. Eventually, the simple, symmetrical Colonial Revival style became incorporated into the Foursquare and Bungalow house styles of the early 20th century.²⁹

²⁸ Jackie Craven, "Picture Dictionary of House Styles in North American and Beyond", <http://www.Architecture.About.com>

²⁹ Ibid.

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Front (north) facade



Original main house block of 9200 Darnestown Road- north façade showing 8/8 double hung windows flanked by operable shutters. Note the arched first story window openings.

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Front entrance door to 9200 Darnestown Road showing side lights, paneled door, and fanlight.



Garage and addition to the west facade

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Garage and addition on the west façade.



Rear (South) façade showing rear addition and garage.

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East and south facades showing quarter round windows flanking exterior chimney and screened side porch. Below: Workshop in rear yard.



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East façade of workshop building.



Below: Shed in rear east corner of lot.

