

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties number: BA-2702

Name: 3033/Rt. 37 over West. MD. Railroad

The bridge referenced herein was inventoried by the Maryland State Highway Administration as part of the Historic Bridge Inventory, and SHA provided the Trust with eligibility determinations in February 2001. The Trust accepted the Historic Bridge Inventory on April 3, 2001. The bridge received the following determination of eligibility.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST	
Eligibility Recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	Eligibility Not Recommended <input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> None
Comments: _____	
_____	
Reviewer, OPS: <u>Anne E. Bruder</u>	Date: <u>3 April 2001</u>
Reviewer, NR Program: <u>Peter E. Kurtze</u>	Date: <u>3 April 2001</u>

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC BRIDGES  
HISTORIC BRIDGE INVENTORY  
MARYLAND STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION/  
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MHT No. BA-2702

SHA Bridge No. 3033 Bridge name Route 37 over Western MD Railroad

**LOCATION:**

Street/Road name and number [facility carried] MD Route 37

City/town Owings Mills Vicinity X

County Baltimore

This bridge projects over: Road      Railway X Water      Land     

Ownership: State X County      Municipal      Other     

**HISTORIC STATUS:**

Is bridge located within a designated historic district? Yes      No X  
National Register-listed district      National Register-determined-eligible district       
Locally-designated district      Other     

Name of district     

**BRIDGE TYPE:**

Timber Bridge     :  
Beam Bridge      Truss -Covered      Trestle      Timber-And-Concrete     

Stone Arch Bridge     

Metal Truss Bridge     

Movable Bridge     :  
Swing      Bascule Single Leaf      Bascule Multiple Leaf       
Vertical Lift      Retractable      Pontoon     

Metal Girder: X  
Rolled Girder X Rolled Girder Concrete Encased       
Plate Girder      Plate Girder Concrete Encased     

Metal Suspension     

Metal Arch     

Metal Cantilever     

Concrete X:  
Concrete Arch      Concrete Slab X Concrete Beam      Rigid Frame       
Other      Type Name

**DESCRIPTION:**

**Setting:** Urban \_\_\_\_\_ Small town \_\_\_\_\_ Rural X

**Describe Setting:**

Bridge 3033 carries MD Route 37 in an east-west direction over the Western Maryland Railroad. The bridge is in a relatively undeveloped area with no houses visible from the bridge and with wooded areas around the bridge, it traverses through a rock cut.

**Describe Superstructure and Substructure:**

Bridge 3033 is a three span simply supported bridge with an overall length of 77 feet. Spans #1 and #3 are 1.5 feet deep reinforced concrete slabs with lengths of 19 feet each. Span #2 is made up of ten concrete encased steel beams with a 7.0 inch concrete slab. Span #2 is 39 feet long. The substructure is made up of two concrete abutments and two rigid frame type concrete piers. The parapets are open ornamental concrete and integral to the deck. The clear roadway width is 26.75 feet. The bridge was built in 1941. The bridge supports two way traffic and is not posted.

The 1991 inspection described the bridge as in fair condition; at pier #2 the concrete encasement of the steel beams has areas of hollow sounding concrete with some spalling. The exposed steel beams in this area exhibit rusting and some delamination.

**Discuss Major Alterations:**

S.H.A. records do not indicate that any major alterations have been made.

**HISTORY:**

**WHEN was bridge built (actual date or date range)** \_\_\_\_\_ 1941 \_\_\_\_\_

**This date is:** Actual \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated \_\_\_\_\_

**Source of date:** Plaque \_\_\_\_\_ Design plans \_\_\_\_\_ County bridge files/inspection form \_\_\_\_\_

**Other (specify)** State inspection files

**WHY was the bridge built?**

To carry MD 37 over the railroad.

**WHO was the designer?**

State Highway Administration

**WHO was the builder?**

State Highway Administration

**WHY was the bridge altered?**

N/A

**Was this bridge built as part of an organized bridge-building campaign?**

Unknown

**SURVEYOR/HISTORIAN ANALYSIS:**

**This bridge may have National Register significance for its association with:**

- A - Events \_\_\_\_\_
- B- Person \_\_\_\_\_
- C- Engineering/architectural character \_\_\_\_\_

**Was the bridge constructed in response to significant events in Maryland or local history?**

Reinforced concrete slab bridges are a twentieth century structure type, easily adapted to the need for expedient engineering solutions. Reinforced concrete technology developed rapidly in the early twentieth century with early recognition of the potential for standardized design. The first U.S. attempt to standardize concrete design specifications came in 1903-04 with the formation of the Joint Committee on Concrete and Reinforced Concrete of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Maryland's road and bridge improvement programs mirrored economic cycles. The first road improvement program of the State Roads Commission was a 7 year program, starting with the Commission's establishment in 1908 and ending in 1915. Due to World War I, the period from 1916-1920 was one of relative inactivity; only roads of first priority were built. Truck traffic resulting from war-related factories and military installations generated new, heavy traffic unanticipated by the builders of the early road system. From 1920 to 1929, numerous highway improvements occurred in response to the increase in Maryland motor vehicles from 103,000 in 1920 to 320,000 in 1929, with emphasis on the secondary system of feeder roads which moved traffic from the primary roads built before World War I. After World War I, Maryland's bridge system also was appraised as too narrow and structurally inadequate for the increasing traffic, with plans for an expanded bridge program to be handled by the Bridge Division, set up in 1920. In 1920 under Chapter 508 of the Acts of 1920 the State issued a bond of \$3,000,000.00 for road construction; the primary purpose of these monies was to meet the state obligations involving the construction of rural post roads. The secondary purpose of these monies was to fund [with an equal sum from the counties] the building of lateral roads. The number of hard surfaced roads on the state system grew from 2000 in 1920 to 3200 in 1930. By 1930, Maryland's primary system had become inadequate to the huge freight trucks and volume of passenger cars in use, with major improvements occurring in the late 1930s. Most improvements to local roads waited until the years after World War II.

With a diverse topographical domain encompassing numerous small and large crossings, Maryland engineers quickly recognized the need for expedient design and construction.

In the early years, there was a need to replace the numerous single lane timber bridges. Walter Wilson Crosby, Chief Engineer stated in 1906, "The general plan has been to replace these [wood bridges] with pipe culverts or concrete bridges and thus forever do way with the further expense of the maintenance of expensive and dangerous wooden structures". Within a few years, readily constructed standardized bridges of concrete were being built throughout the state.

The creation of standard plans and a description of their use was first announced in the 1912-15 Reports of the State Roads Commission whereby bridges spanning up to 36 feet were to use standardized designs.

Published on a single sheet, the 1912 Standard Plans included those structures that were amenable to such an approach: slab spans, (deck) girder spans, box culverts, box bridges, abutments, and piers (State Roads Commission 1912). Slab spans, with lengths of 6 to 16 feet in two foot increments, featured a solid parapet that was integrated into the slab, with a roadway of 22 feet.

In the Report for the years 1916-1919, a revision of the standard plans was noted:

During the four years covered by this report, it has been found necessary to revise our standard plans for culverts and bridges, to take care of the increased tonnage which they have been forced to carry. Army cantonments...increased their operations several hundred per cent, and the brunt of the enormous truck traffic resulting therefrom, was borne by the State Roads of Maryland. In addition to these war activities, freight motor lines from Baltimore to Washington, Philadelphia, New York, and various points throughout Maryland, and the weight of many of these trucks when loaded, was in excess of the loads for which our early bridges were designed (State Roads Commission 1920:56).

Published on separate sheets, the new standard plans (State Roads Commission 1919) for slab bridges reveal that the major changes was an increase in roadway width from 22 feet to 24 feet and a redesign of the reinforcement. The slab spans continued to feature solid parapets integrated into the span. The range of span lengths remained 6 to 16 feet, but the next year (1920) witnessed the issue of a supplemental plan for a 20 foot long slab span (State Roads Commission 1920).

The 1924 standard plans remained in effect until 1930, when the roadway width for all standard plan bridges was increased to 27 feet in order to accommodate the increasing demands of automobile and truck traffic (State Roads Commission 1930). The range of span lengths remained the same, but there were some changes designed to increase load bearing capacities. The reinforcing bars were increased in thickness. Visually, the 1930 design can be distinguished from its predecessors by the pierced concrete railing that was introduced at this time.

Three years later, in 1933, a new set of standard plans was introduced (State Roads Commission 1933). This time, their preparation was not announced in the Report; new standard plans were by this time nothing special - they had indeed become standard. Once again accommodating the ever-increasing demands of traffic, the roadway width was increased, this time to 30 feet. The slab span's reinforcing bars remained the same diameter but were placed closer together to achieve still more load bearing capacity.

A system of standard nomenclature for plans was introduced at this time: span type was indicated by a two-letter designator followed by span length and the year of the plan. Thus, CS-18-33 indicates an 18 foot concrete slab of the 1933 standard plan design; CG-36-33 was a 36 foot concrete girder (T-beam) of the same year. The inclusion of the year designator gave ready access to design details for each bridge and indicates that the State Roads Commission anticipated revisions to standard plans.

Based upon documentary evidence, Baltimore County and City were the early pioneers in concrete bridge building in Maryland. The first reinforced concrete bridge documented in Maryland was the bridge at Sherwood Station, built in 1903 by Baltimore County.

Evidence from historic maps suggests that almost all of the extant concrete slab bridges built before 1940 in Baltimore County replaced earlier bridges. With the exception of two bridges, all of these structures lie on roads whose alignments have changed little since the middle of the nineteenth century. The two exceptions are both located on Shelbourne Avenue in Arbutus. Shelbourne Avenue does not appear on the 1850 map of Baltimore County but does appear on the 1915 map. Both concrete slabs bridges on Shelbourne Avenue, however, were built after 1915. The evidence therefore suggests that these two bridges were also built to replace previous structures.

**When the bridge was built and/or given a major alteration, did it have a significant impact on the growth and development of the area?**

There is no evidence to suggest that the construction of this bridge had a significant impact on the growth and development of this area.

**Is the bridge located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation and would the bridge add to or detract from the historic/visual character of the potential district?**

The bridge is not located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation.

**Is the bridge a significant example of its type?**

The bridge is a multiple-span combination slab and concrete-encased girder bridge which exhibits a level of ornamentation.

**Does the bridge retain integrity of important elements described in Context Addendum?**

This character defining elements have retained their integrity.

**Is the bridge a significant example of the work of a manufacturer, designer, and/or engineer?**

This bridge is not a significant example of the work of a manufacturer, designer, and/or engineer.

**Should the bridge be given further study before an evaluation of its significance is made?**

The history of building MD Rt. 37 could yield additional information about this bridge.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

County inspection/bridge files \_\_\_\_\_ SHA inspection/bridge files  X   
Other (list):

**SURVEYOR:**

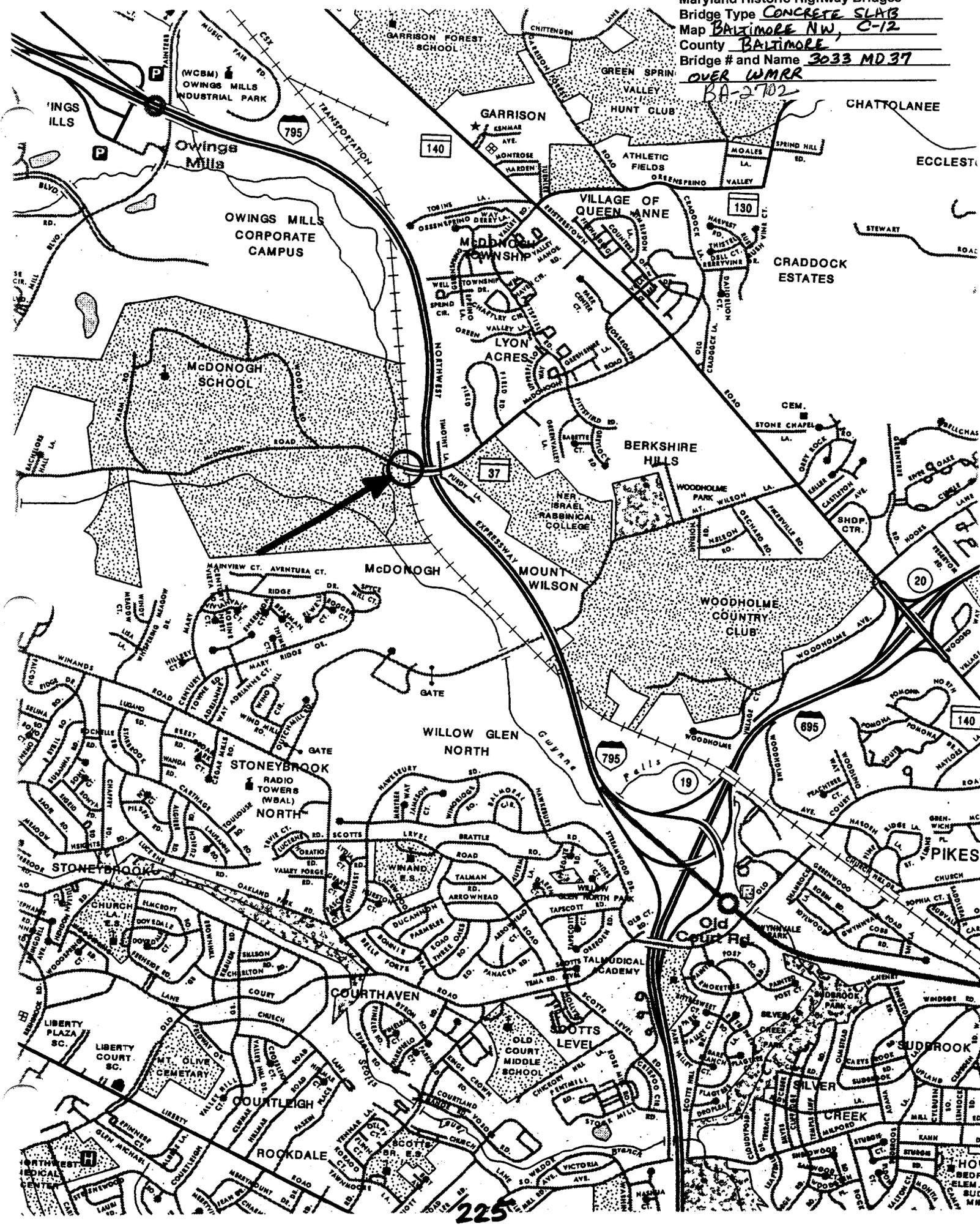
Date bridge recorded  08/25/95

Name of surveyor  Colin Farr

Organization/Address  P.A.C. Spero & Company, Suite 412, 40 West Chesapeake Ave., Baltimore, MD 21204

Phone number  (410) 296-1635  FAX number  (410) 296-1670

Maryland Historic Highway Bridges  
Bridge Type CONCRETE SLAB  
Map BALTIMORE NW, C-12  
County BALTIMORE  
Bridge # and Name 3033 MD 37  
OVER WMRR  
BA-2702





1 PA 2700

2 (3000) MD 37000 = MARK

3 BASTON, MA

4 V. Vieh

5 1130(00)

6 MD CHAS

7

8 1 of 3



1 BA 2702

2 (3023) N'D 37 Old WARR

3 F. A. Co., 1<sup>st</sup> D

3 D. Dietl

11/30/95

1/2 N. SLPJ

7 South 555 27100, Looking NORTH

2 2 3



1 BA 2702

2 (3023) MD 37 OVER VIMR

3 BA 5000, MD

4 D. Diehl

5 1/30/95

6 MD SHPO

7

8 32/3