CARR-1487

Sykesville Schoolhouse
524 Schoolhouse Road
Sykesville, Maryland

23. Project Narrative - Old Schoolhouse

a. Historical and Architectural Significance

This building is of unique importance to the understanding of local black American history. The schoool, attended by blacks only, was built by blacks and had black teachers. It was the focal point of an insular community which was geographically and socially isolated from Main Street Sykesville. Most of the older residential buildings in the immediate area around the Schoolhouse have been replaced in modern times. The Schoolhouse remains as a reminder of the separate path taken by the races in education, as in many other ways.

The structure once enclosed a single large room where all grades, one through six, were taught. This style was once common in Carroll County, though most other locally surviving examples are stone or brick. This Schoolhouse preserves, in humble rubblestone and frame, the one-room schoolhouse of rural America.

b. Danger to the Resource

The Schoolhouse has not been used for educational purposes since about 1935. Although not deteriorated to the point of ruin, it needs much in the way of repair and maintenance. Roofing has been patched in recent years, but now requires complete replacement. An entrance portico/porch has been removed. The wood siding, which was historically unpainted, is in need of patching. Windows and doors are in poor condition, and the building is unheated. The process of deterioration, which has continued for some years, is accelerating. Restoration and repairs are needed soon if this structure is to be passed on as a historic memorial to black American historiy.

c. Compliance with Selection Criteria

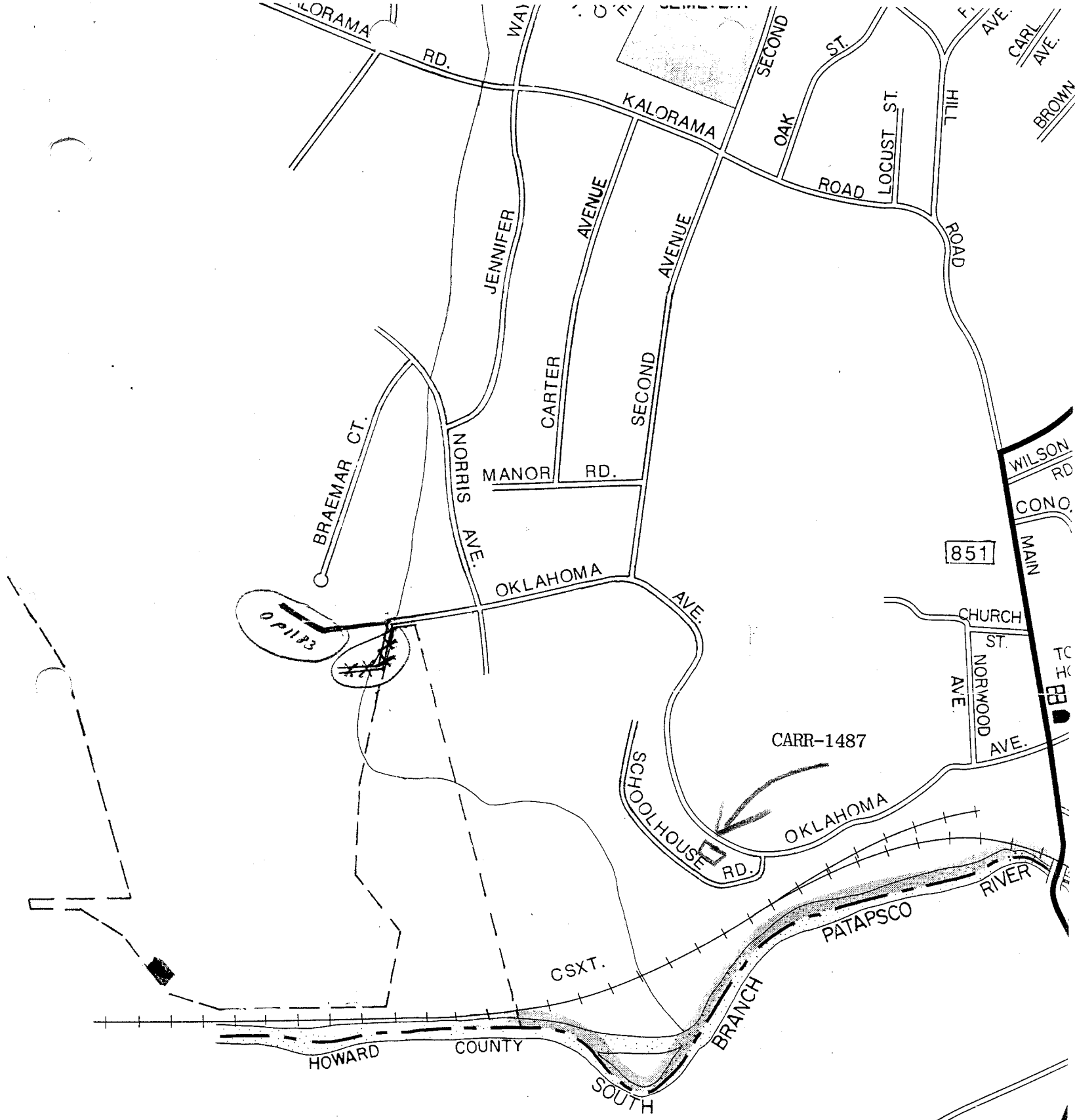
This project meets criteria I. through V. of the selection process. The building itself illustrates the black way of life in rural Maryland. It stands at the entrance to the historic community, emblematic of the struggle for an improved life experienced by black individuals. It is needed to

educate the larger community about experiences and issues which would not otherwise be fully understood. Attention to the building at this time will create confidence and pride in this segment of the community. It will augment other recent and ongoing historic preservation efforts in Sykesville.

d. Work Description

All work on the property will be performed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. The rehabilitation of the Schoolhouse will concentrate on physical preservation, and the presentation of the structure as much "as it was" as possible. To this end, planned changes are minimal. ADA-required access will be limited to recorded views of the interior accessible at ground level.

The roof will be replaced with a new metal roof, like in material and style to the original roof. No new exterior features will be added. The removed portico will be rebuilt. Exterior siding and trim will be repaired and replace as needed to match original. Doors and windows will be repaired or replaced in like kind, as necessary. On the interior, the plaster walls with wainscoating on all four sides of the room, will be repaired and repainted. A new oil furnace will be installed to heat the structure. New electrical wiring will be installed, and thermal insulation will be installed in the roof area (not visible to the public). No new plumbing is planned.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