Ho - 434
The Cissel Farm/Sandstone Farms
Highland
Private

Circa 1760

The sixteen acre farm faces east, lying on what was once a 176 acres, part of two tracts of land called "Hammond and Gist" and "Bite the Biter", which were acquired and owned by the Cissel family until 1962 when Mr. John Lane acquired it.

The Cissel Farm is built in several sections around an old two and a half story gabled roof (running east-west) kitchen, whose north wall is connected to an early two and a half story frame house. The latter, now one large living room, once comprised a central hall with library and living room to the north and staircase on its east wall. This was extended westward and connects with a three story high dining room off the kitchen's west wall and a one story high, shed roofed "L" shaped family room formed byenclosing an open porch on the living room's west wall.

The building stands above a valley of unsurpassed beauty on the western border of Howard County, which area is in need of protection from a PEPCO power line planned in the area.

7 DESCRIPTION

Ho - 434
Dist. 5

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The old Cissel Farm faces east on a high ridge line overlooking the middle Patuxent River Valley. It is located in the middle of some 16 acres of sloping land, presently used as a horse farm.

The building consists of several sections, the oldest of which appears to be the present two and a half story kitchen which at one time held a huge cooking fireplace with crane for hanging the pots for cooking. The foundation for this chimney, set into the kitchen's south wall, can be seen in the cellar with its field stone foundation walls for both the kitchen and the present living room which at one time comprised three rooms: a hall, library and living room. The basement holds log ceiling joists which indicate this building to be of considerable age.

Springing from the north wall of the kitchen is the large living room which holds a lovely staircase along its east wall which at one time spiraled into what was once a hall. The living room has been extended westward. This added interior space has a north door leading into a family room, known as the Maryland room, which at one time was an L shaped, one story high, shed roofed, open porch and an interior south door which leads into a charming dining room with west bay window extending vertically to the second floor bedroom above, whose six-over-six windows hold their original hand blown lights.

The south wall of the dining room leads into a small corridor and staircase down to what was once a dairy and which has been created into a charming bedroom with a small addition on its west wall holding the washer-dryer laundry center. The gabled roof of this charming one story high frame building runs east-west and holds a wide brick chimney with exterior barbeque in the center of its south wall.

Going to the second floor we find the wide, kitchen, north wall stone chimney on the north wall of the bathroom which leads into a central hall running east-west from the front of the house to two steps leading into the charming bedroom above the dining room. A comfortable bedroom lies off the south wall of this hall which turns northward to meet several steps which lead up to the second floor hallway on the east wall of the living room section of the house. A bedroom lies off the west wall of this hall which leads northward into the large master bedroom, lying above the major part of the downstairs living room.

The attic is perhaps the most fascinating and perplexing section of the house. Here we see the old chimney rising from the west wall of the old kitchen. On either side of this chimney are evidences of a lower gabled roof, outlined by an exterior beaded wood framework.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

Description (cont.)

This would seem to belie the fact that the kitchen came first and encourage us to believe that the original log house was the present living room with a later kitchen addition. Even more interesting is the tremendous width of the boards which form the gabled roof (running north-south) of the main body of the house with the intersecting gabled roof (running east-west) of the three story high dining room addition. The roof appears to have been constructed all at one time with these wide boards of some twenty four to thiry inches in width.

The exterior west wall of the dining room addition is particularly noteworthy with its two story high bay window crowned by the attic gabled roof's sharp outline, extending beyond the north and south sides of the bay window and forming a particularly interesting silouette.

This picturesque building complex is completed and unified by a two story high flat roofed open porch running along the entire east elevation of the kitchen and living room section of the building, supported by round wooden columns.

West of the one story high, shed roofed, L shaped, Maryland room's west wall extends a one story high, two bay wide, one room deep, gabled roof (running east-west) cinderblock room holding a lovely pear shaped indoor sylvan pool. A sliding glass door opens on the west wall while two large north and south apertures are filled with some 108 glass blocks which diffuse the light while allowing privacy.

A garage with upstairs apartment lies north west of the house which is surrounded by lovely pasture.

The Cissel family cemetary lies east of the house.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

Ho - 434
Dist. 5

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	X ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	X CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
X 1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES circa 1760 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Cissel farm is significant historically, architecturally and and in the area of conservation.

The farm lies on what was once a 176 acres, part of two tracts of land called Hammond and Gist and Bite the Biter, which were acquired by the Cissel family.

The original owner, Cissel is thought to be buried in the old cemetery, whose tombstone shows a date of death to be 1775. On January 5, 1846 Benjamin and Eleanor Cissel et al conveyed 157.5 acres to Philip Cissel. (6-295) The house and property passed down through the Cissel family until on May 28, 1932 Ella B. Cissel conveyed the land to C. Claude Cissel (143-510) On July 7, 1959 the farm was conveyed by Rosalie Hall, unmarried to another C. Claude Cissel and Mollie, his wife, with some 46 acres "together with the buildings". (336-235)

On the 13 May, 1960 Mollie H. Cissel, widow, conveyed the property to Cissel Farms, Inc. by deed. (352-256) On May 28, 1960 Cissel Farms, Inc., conveyed the property to John T. Lane. On May 14, 1965 Louisa M. Lane acquired from Cissel Farms, Inc., parcel #1 (439-734).

Later in that year, on October 5, 1965 Louisa M. Lane, widow, conveyed the property "together with the buildings" to Wilber and Lena Berry, wife who on September 13, 1971 sold the property to the present owners and occupiers of the house, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Smith. (570-621)

Architecturally, this old farm house is representative of early Howard County log construction. The supporting beams in the fieldstone basement are of log construction and the floor boards of wide, random width, indicating early construction. The house is noteworthy not only for its association with the Cissel family and its eighteenth century construction but in its complexity of additions. The house grew like topsy with living room extended westward for more spaciousness and a one story high, shed roofed open porch enclosed to accommodate a family room.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

Significance (cont.)

The dining room with its west wall bay window is especially noteworthy and through examination of the attic roof rafters and early glass panes indicates a relatively early construction date. The two story high open porch on the east wall of kitchen and dining room sections gives an almost antebellum, Palladian flavor to an early Howard County log house. It is representative of the manner in which old houses accomodate themselves to growing needs and the individual tastes of their owners and as such is an outstanding example of American eclectic architecture.

In the field of conservation the building stands above a valley of unsurpassed beauty on the western border of Howard County. From its second floor west windows the PEPCO power line in Montgomery County which is to serve Montgomery County and Washington, D.C. can be seen. Proposals have been made to place the line along the little Patuxent River in the valley south of the house and very closely adjacent to it. This area is presently used as pasture for the Sandstone Horse Farms horses. It is hoped that PEPCO can find another alignment as this scenic area should be conserved for the enjoyment of future generations of Howard Countians.

For these reasons Cecil Farm should be placed on the National Register and included in any future local landmark legislation.

Ho- 434
Dist. 5

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Howard County's Land Records
Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Smith
on October 29, 1977.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 16.2666 Acres

Please see Attachment 1, Tax Map 40 p. 307.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Liber 570, folio 621

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
Maryland	Howard

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Cleora Barnes Thompson, Archivist

ORGANIZATION
Office of Planning & Zoning-Comprehensive Planning Section

DATE
465-5000 x257

STREET & NUMBER
3450 Court House Drive

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN
Ellicott City

STATE
Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

PS-1108

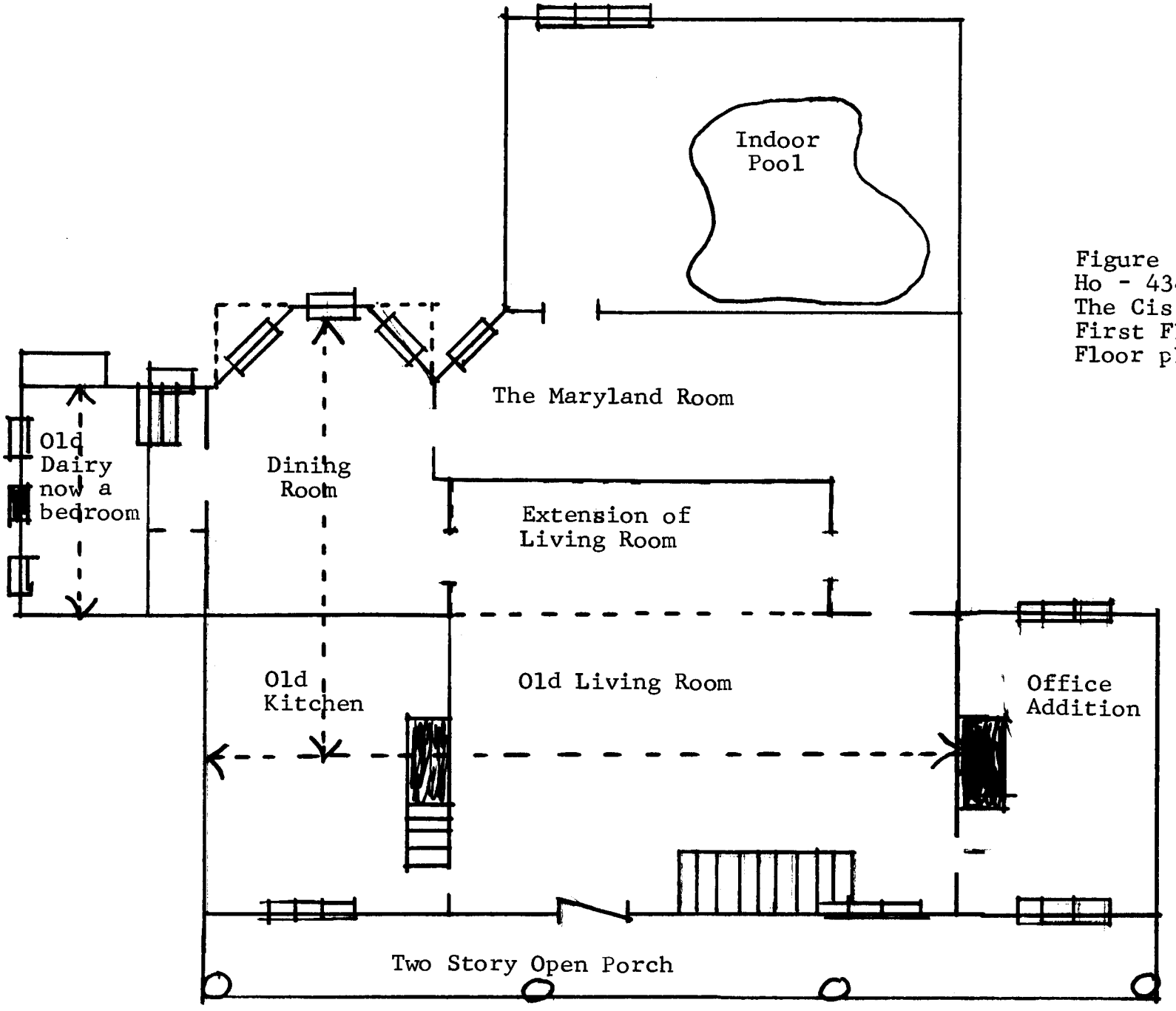
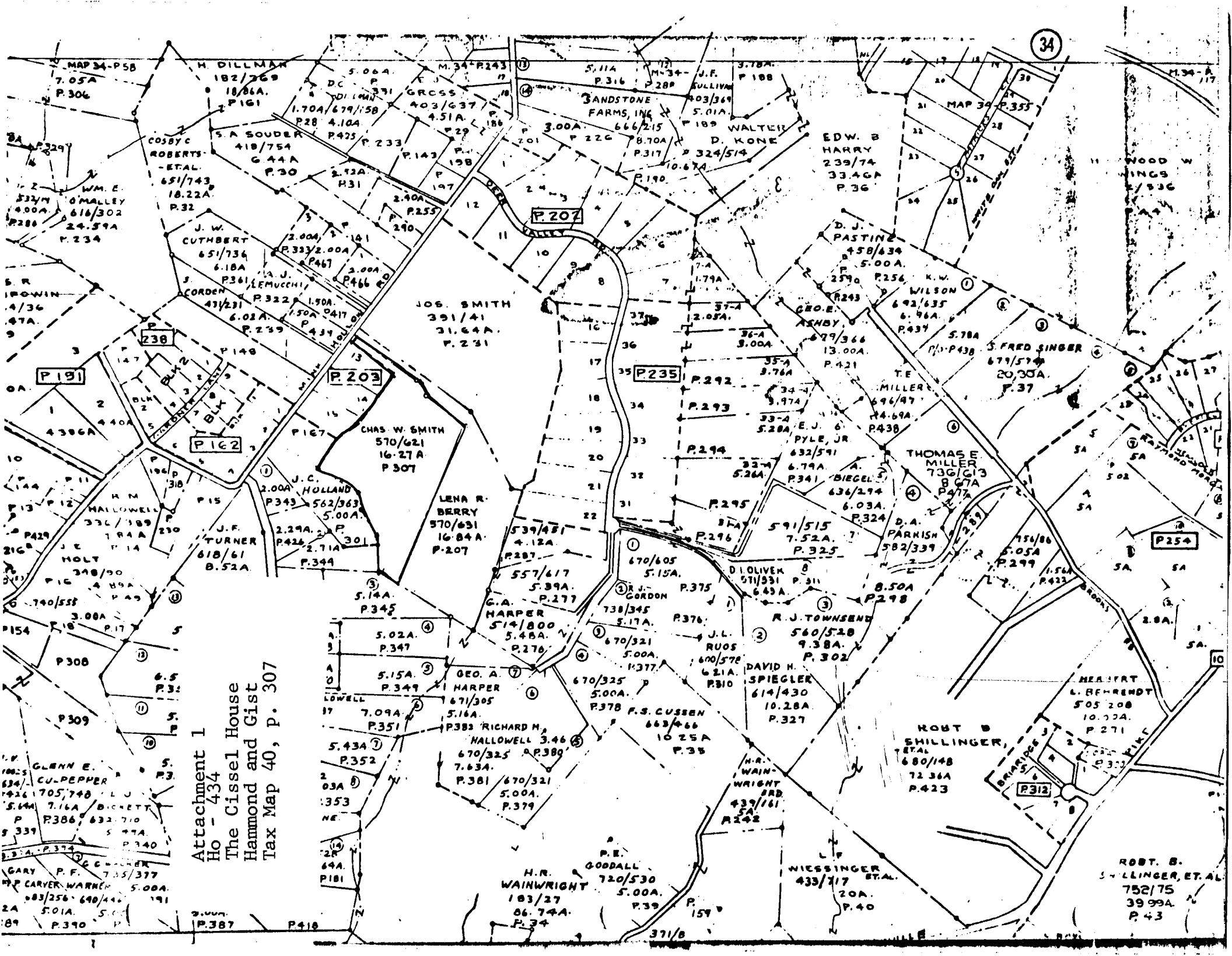
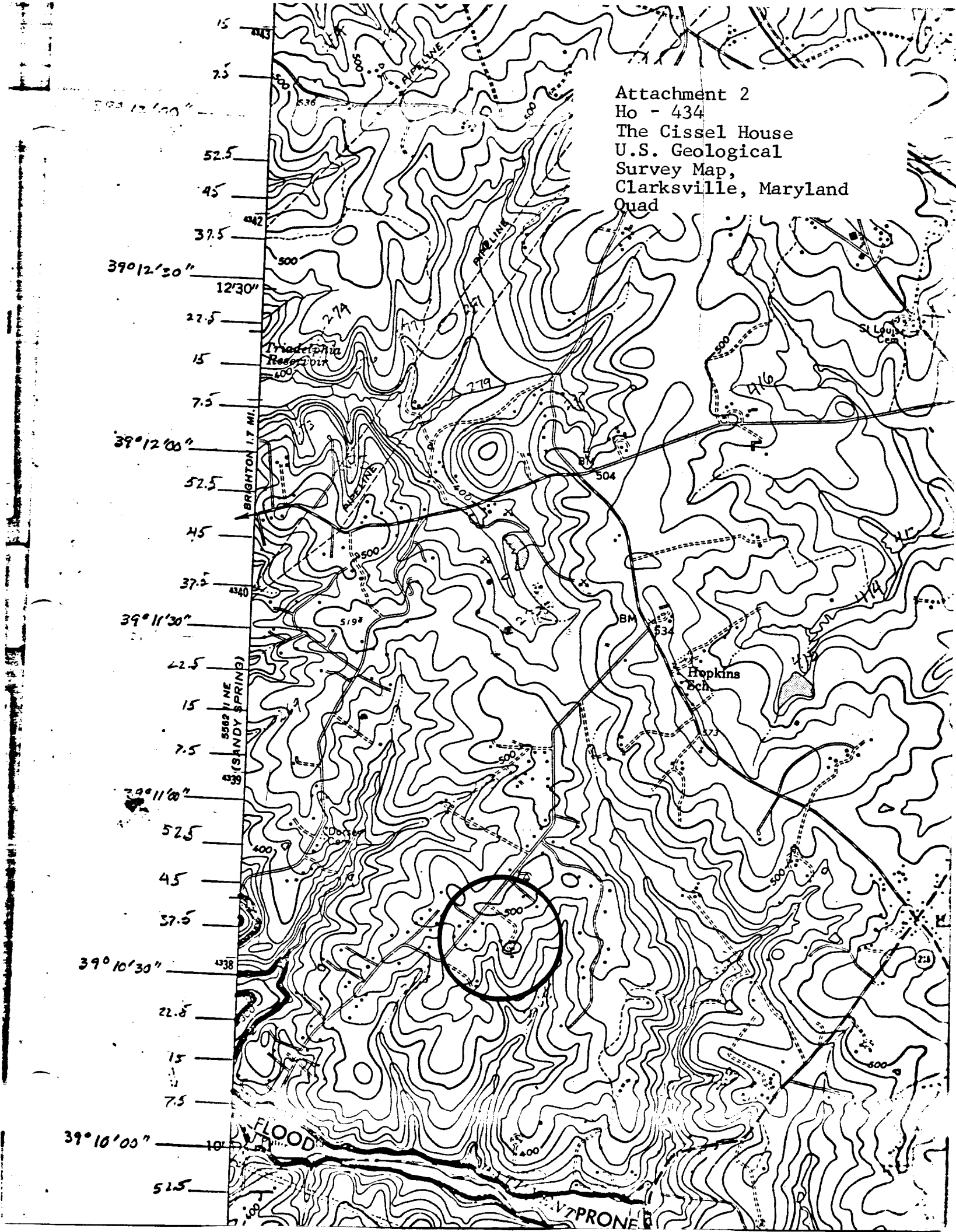


Figure 1
Ho - 434
The Cissel House
First Floor
Floor plan



Attachment 1
Ho - 434
The Cissel House
Hammond and Gist
Tax Map 40, p. 307

Attachment 2
Ho - 434
The Cissel House
U.S. Geological
Survey Map,
Clarksville, Maryland
Quad



HO-434
THE CISSEL FARM
NORTH EAST