Radcliffe House
3052 Rogers Avenue
HO-617

Located on two acres on the west side of Rogers Avenue north of the intersection of Town and Country Boulevard, the house consists of two sections: a two story square Second Empire-style main block and an earlier two story rectangular section and an ell. The house sits atop a ridge overlooking a shopping center and dense residential development. However, it is surrounded by a stand of mature trees, including a State champion white oak tree, and the western portion of the property abuts the Sucker Branch stream valley which helps preserve its rural character.

This house is a rare example of Second Empire design in Howard County. There are a few earlier houses that were modernized with mansard roofs during the 1880s and 1980s, but there are no other known examples of pure Second Empire structures in the county. The house is a vernacular interpretation of the French high style, but the builder demonstrated a skillful and whimsical adaptation of the style.

HISTORIC PERIOD CONTEXT:

Region:	Piedmont
Period:	Industrial/Urban Dominance
Theme:	Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Community Planning
Resource Type:	Residence/rural vernacular
Site Types:	Standing structures

Survey No. HO-617

Magi No.

DOE __yes __no

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name) Radcliffe House

historic

and/or common Radcliffe House

2. Location

street & number 3052 Rogers Avenue (MD 99) ___ not for publication

city, town Ellicott City ___ vicinity of congressional district 6th

state Maryland county Howard

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	X park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	X not applicable	X no	___ military	___ other:

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

name Francis and Susan Rura

street & number 3052 Rogers Avenue telephone no.: (410) 454-4778

city, town Ellicott City state and zip code Maryland 21043

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Howard County liber 768

street & number 8360 Court Avenue folio 24

city, town Ellicott City state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. HO-617

Condition		Check one	Check one
X excellent	___ deteriorated	X unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

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

Located on 2 acres on the west side of Rogers Avenue north of the intersection of Town and Country Boulevard, the house consists of two sections: a two story square Second Empire-style main block and an earlier two story rectangular section with an ell. The house sits atop a ridge overlooking a shopping center and dense residential development. However, it is surrounded by a stand of mature trees, including a state champion white oak tree, and the western portion of the property abuts the Sucker Branch stream valley which helps preserve its rural character.

The three-bay-by-three-bay main block was designed in a vernacular Second Empire style about 1905 with a straight Mansard roof decorated with courses of sawtooth shingles. The Mansard's cornice is broken by gabled dormers. The cornice of the first story is embellished with small scrolled brackets and the siding is weatherboard.

The door is glazed with a transom light and a beveled glass pane over six panels. It is flanked by oversized windows. There are also two elongated windows on the east side and an entrance in the southeast corner. There are two slender corbelled brick chimneys in the center of the hipped standing seam metal roof. A broad porch with a shed roof supported by chamfered posts and decorated with scrolled brackets wraps around the north and east sides of the house. The windows are all 2/2 double hung sash.

Adjacent to the southwest side of the central block is a smaller two bay by two bay gabled roof structure which predates the main section. The original siding was probably clapboard but is now covered with asbestos. A one story one-bay-by-one-bay ell with a brick chimney joins the rear of the house, and a small vestibule dating from early to mid 20th century connects the ell with the main block on the north side. The roof is rolled asphalt and the house has a random-coursed fieldstone foundation.

A gabled frame shed is located southwest of the house and the foundations of what are believed to be the ice house and smoke house are west of the house. The foundation for the house's bank barn is no longer part of the property, but survives south of the house forming the wall of an apartment parking lot.

8. Significance

Survey No. HO-617

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
X 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
___ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: ___A ___B X C ___D
and/or
Applicable Exception: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G

Level of Significance: ___national ___state X local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This house is a rare example of Second Empire design in Howard County. There are a few earlier houses that were modernized with Mansard roofs during the 1880s and 1890s, but there are no other known examples of pure Second Empire structures in the county. The house is a vernacular interpretation of the French high style, but the builder demonstrated a skillful and whimsical adaptation of the style.

Like many of the houses along Rogers Avenue the house is made up of two separate structures joined together: a small 2-story frame house built efore 1860, and the larger Second Empire style block dating from the late 19th or early 20th century. County tax records list the house as dating from 1905, but deeds suggests it might have been built earlier.

For almost 100 years the house remained in the Radcliffe family. In 1863 Samuel Radcliffe bought the property from Eden Shipley who purchased the 51 acre tract from William Mercer of Loudon County a year earlier. This deed mentions a house on the site. In 1886 Samuel Radcliffe, who was a house painter, expanded his property, buying a second 59 acre parcel, which suggests that he was in the financial position to build a large addition to his existing house. The later parcel was sold off in small lots in 1940 and the original 51 acre property remained intact until it was sold to Samuel Pistorio in 1957. Pistorio subdivided the land and built an apartment complex adjacent to the site.

The house is an unusual example of vernacular Second Empire construction and retains its integrity in character and setting.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. HO-617

Howard County Land Records
1905 Ellicott City Directory
Interview with Susan Rura

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2

Quadrangle name Ellicott City, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Tax Map 17
Block 24
Parcel 625

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

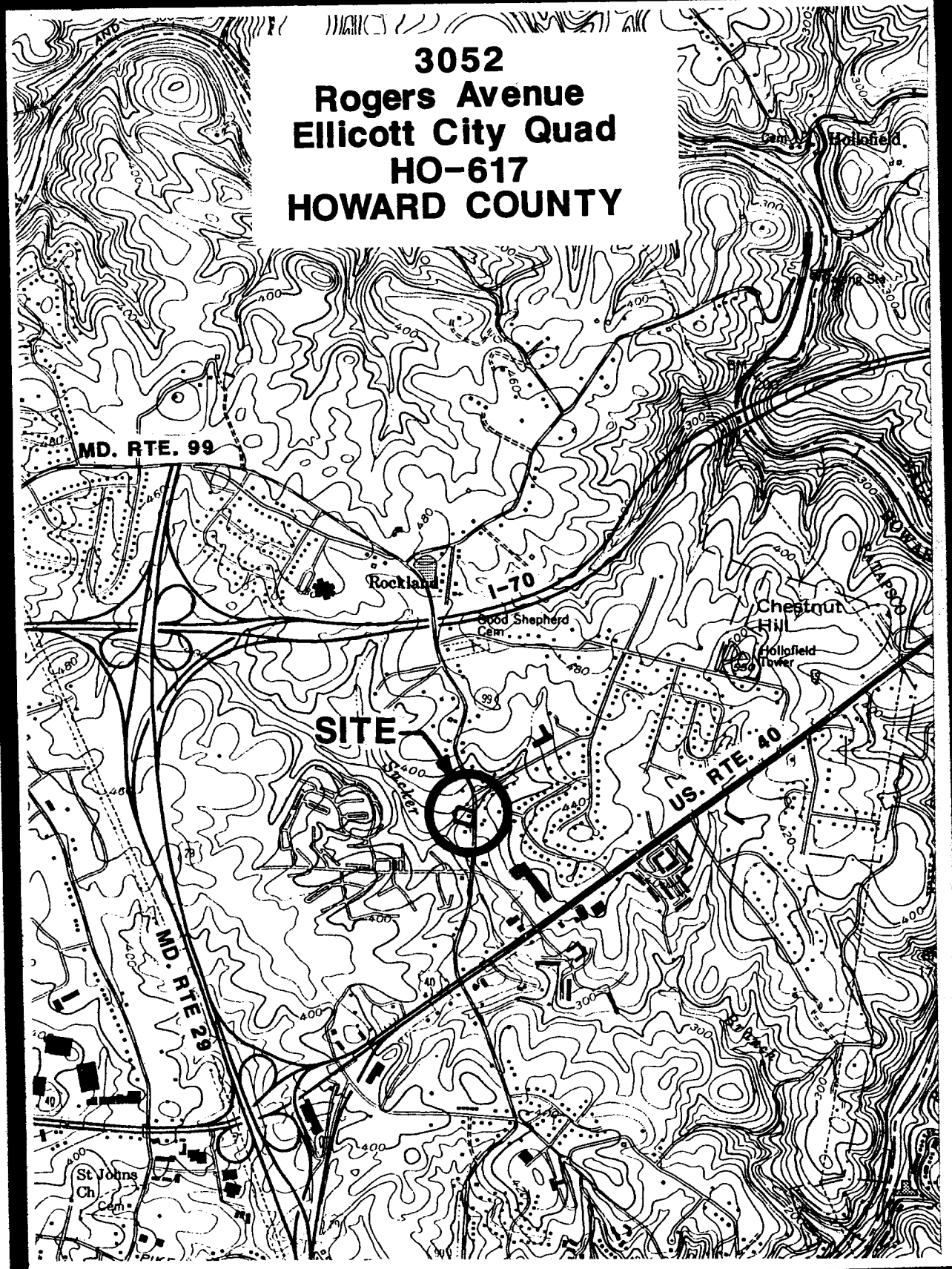
name/title	Amy Worden, Historic Sites Surveyor		
organization	Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning	date	November 1991
street & number	3430 Courthouse Drive	telephone	(410) 313-2037
city or town	Ellicott City	state	Maryland

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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

PS-2746

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HOWARD COUNTY