

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

NR Eligible: yes \_\_\_  
no X

Property Name: John Higgins House Inventory Number: M:26-10-66

Address: 300 Great Falls Rd. City: Rockville Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

County: Montgomery USGS Topographic Map: Rockville

Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Parcel #: \_\_\_\_\_ Tax parcel Map Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Account ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Project: MD 189 Streetscape Agency: SHA

Site visit by MHT staff X no \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_ Eligibility not recommended X

Criteria: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D Considerations: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ E \_\_\_ F \_\_\_ G \_\_\_ None

Is the property located within a historic district? \_\_\_ no \_\_\_ yes Name of District: \_\_\_\_\_

Is district listed? \_\_\_ no \_\_\_ yes District Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

Project Review and Compliance Files

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

The John Higgins House is a 2-12 story house, 5 bays wide with 2 over 2 windows. There are also oriel windows on the first floor. The exterior has been covered in aluminum siding and the roof is covered in asphalt shingles. While this is a 19th century house, the building lacks integrity. SHA proposed that it along with several other houses might form an extension of the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District. However, given the lack of integrity, the Trust is of the opinion that the house and the district are not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B or C.

Prepared by: Rita M. Suffness, SHA Date Prepared: 05/05/2000

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended ___	Eligibility not recommended <u>X</u>
Criteria <u>X</u> A <u>X</u> B <u>X</u> C ___ D	Considerations ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G ___ None
MHT Comments:	
<u>Anne E. Bruder</u>	<u>September 25, 2000</u>
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	Date
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>5/2/01</u>
Reviewer, NR Program	Date

Site: M:26/10/66

John Higgins House

300 Falls Road

Built: 1889

Private

The John Higgins House occupies the northern lot of the 13 acre estate locally known as "Higginsville". Constructed for John J. Higgins, the 9 room house was occupied until 1932 by his family. In the 1960s its front facade was altered by stone veneer, new windows, and the flattening of its corner turret, but vestiges of its Queen Anne / Eastlake vocabulary remain on the rear and sides.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic The John Higgins House

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 300 Falls Road  not for publication

city, town Rockville  vicinity of congressional district 8

state Maryland county Montgomery

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Mr. and Mrs. Henry B. Bruns

street & number 300 Falls Road telephone no.: 762-7815

city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery Co. Land Records liber 4963

street & number Montgomery Co. Courthouse folio 817

city, town Rockville state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town  state

# 7. Description

Survey No. M-26/10/66

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

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

The John Higgins house faces west on Great Falls Road where it intersects with Potomac and Williams Streets. It is sited near the western extreme of the lot. The land slopes steeply down to the east. Thick shrubbery and a number of evergreens shade the south facade. Larger, deciduous trees are at the rear of the house.

This large two-and-1/2-story, modified hipped-roofed house sits on a fieldstone foundation that rises in the rear to accommodate the steep slope. It is sheathed in stone veneer on the west facade, first story and asbestos shingle siding on the remaining facades on both stories. The roofing material is asphalt shingles. The plan is a square with a one-story addition at the southeastern corner. Almost all of the windows are two-over-two or one-over-one, now covered with storm windows as are the doors. A skylight is near the center of the front sloping roof. There is one interior chimney.

Although a late-19th-century house, little remains in architectural detailing from that period. The basic house form of this vernacular Queen Anne-style house, however, is intact.

The northwest (front) facade has three bays. Single two-over-two sash windows are in the first two bays of the second story. A four-light small oval window is in the first bay of the first story while a double entrance door with transom is in the middle bay. Covering the doorway is a one-story open portico with hipped roof supported on two square posts. Flagstone covers the foundation and steps. A wide two-story tripartite bay with paired one-over-one windows in the center bay of the second story and single one-over-one windows on either side. Single aluminum framed windows are in each side on the first-story bay. This bay is topped with a turret which flares slightly at the eaves, as does the line between the first and second levels.

The east facade has three bays. Individual two-over-two sash windows are on both stories of the first bay; smaller one-over-one sash windows are in the second bay, both stories. Another small four-light oval window, identical to that on the front, is in the third bay on the first story near the northwest corner. A large gable dormer with triple windows projects from the center of the roof on this facade.

The southeast (rear) facade is asymmetrically arranged with four two-over-two sash windows placed randomly in the additions and main block. A projecting one-story kitchen addition with deck and exposed stairway dominate this facade. An enclosed area with covered exterior door are directly above. The remaining facade at the northeast corner appears recessed, but is actually the main block exposed. An interior brick chimney rises well above the roof of the house and addition.

Continued on attachment 7.1





M: 26/10/66.  
The John Higgins House  
Attachment 8.1

John and Laura improved their property by planting many young shade trees. In April, 1891, these trees were the subject of the Town Commissioners' vote to request John Higgins to remove the trees planted in the road in front of his house due to several complaints. 4/ Today, several of these large trees still closely border Great Falls Road.

John became a founder and Assistant Treasurer of the Farmer's Bank, School Examiner, an officer of the Agricultural Society, and Trustee of the Rockville Academy. In 1916, still seeking improvement of the "Higginsville" area, John petitioned the Town Council for 270 feet of concrete sidewalk on Falls Road, "...he would pay for the labor". The Higgins' raised eight children in the house. John died in 1922 and Laura ten years later.

After 1908 Clarence Hickerson was the owner of Sophia's house nearby at #308 Great Falls Road as well as the original Higgins lands. Mr. Hickerson owned the flour mill on the north side of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad tracks in Rockville and extensive real estate in town; after 1932 he added the John Higgins house to his holdings. Like the former owner of the land he was forced to mortgage his properties during the Depression; at the 1935 Tax Sale of the subject house the only bidder was the Loan Association which held the mortgage. 6/

The building partnership of Franklin and Bradley Karn invested in the land in 1938, but it was not until the post-war era that the Higginsville area property was subdivided for new housing. Franklin Karn named his new development "Hill-an-Dale". 7/ The John Higgins house was platted in 1952 as Lot 1 of Block C, lying north of Dale Drive and west of Laura Lane (streets named for Mr. Karn's daughter and grandson). Mr. Karn lived in the Sophia Higgins house during this period, but the house was later demolished.

The Van Piper family owned the John Higgins house until 1963, and it remained unaltered until that time. The subsequent owners were the Kabaker family, 8/ who gave the old home a new look. Its exterior was covered with asbestos shingles, a layer of stone veneer was applied to the front facade, and the fenestration was changed to include neo-Georgian oval windows; a new entry porch replaced the old verandah. But some traces of the Queen Anne/Eastlake style remain in the Rockville bay with incised bracketing on the south side of the house, third floor fancy windows, and the pyramid roof topping the partially disguised corner turret.

Since 1977 Henry and Ruth Bruns have owned the property.

Footnotes on attachment 8.2

M: 26/10/66  
The John Higgins House  
Attachment 8.2

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Footnotes:

1. Frank Higgins received his acreage in 1886 and contracted with Edwin West for construction of his residence. John Higgins received his half acre in 1889 (Montgomery County Land Record JA13/6) and due to the similarities of construction and detailing such as the Rockville bay it, too, is attributed to Edwin West. For Frank Higgins House see Survey Site 26/10/7.
2. Montgomery County Land Records JA12/199, records the \$2,000 mortgage from the Mutual Building Association.
3. Montgomery County Judgment Records, Equity Case #877, Advertisement at Liber JA 5/22.
4. City of Rockville Minutes - Record Book #1 (1886-1917).
5. Higgins family information is found in several files at Montgomery County Historical Society, as well as newspaper abstracts, memoirs by various writers, and public records.
6. Tax Sale in August, 1936 recorded in Judgment Record 78/145 for 12-5/8 acres and a two-story, 10 room house with two baths.
7. Montgomery County Plat Book 42, page 3107.
8. Land Records, op. cit. 3051/307 (1963).

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M:  
John Higgins House  
Attachment 7.1

The southwest facade has two-over-two sash windows on each story of the first bay. A two-story "Rockville bay" is in the second bay; decorative braces on either side of the first story support the second story. Paired windows are centered in this bay, which is topped by a gable with two-light round-arched attic window. A stairway off the kitchen addition and rear deck provides access to a small, shaded brick patio.

Interior

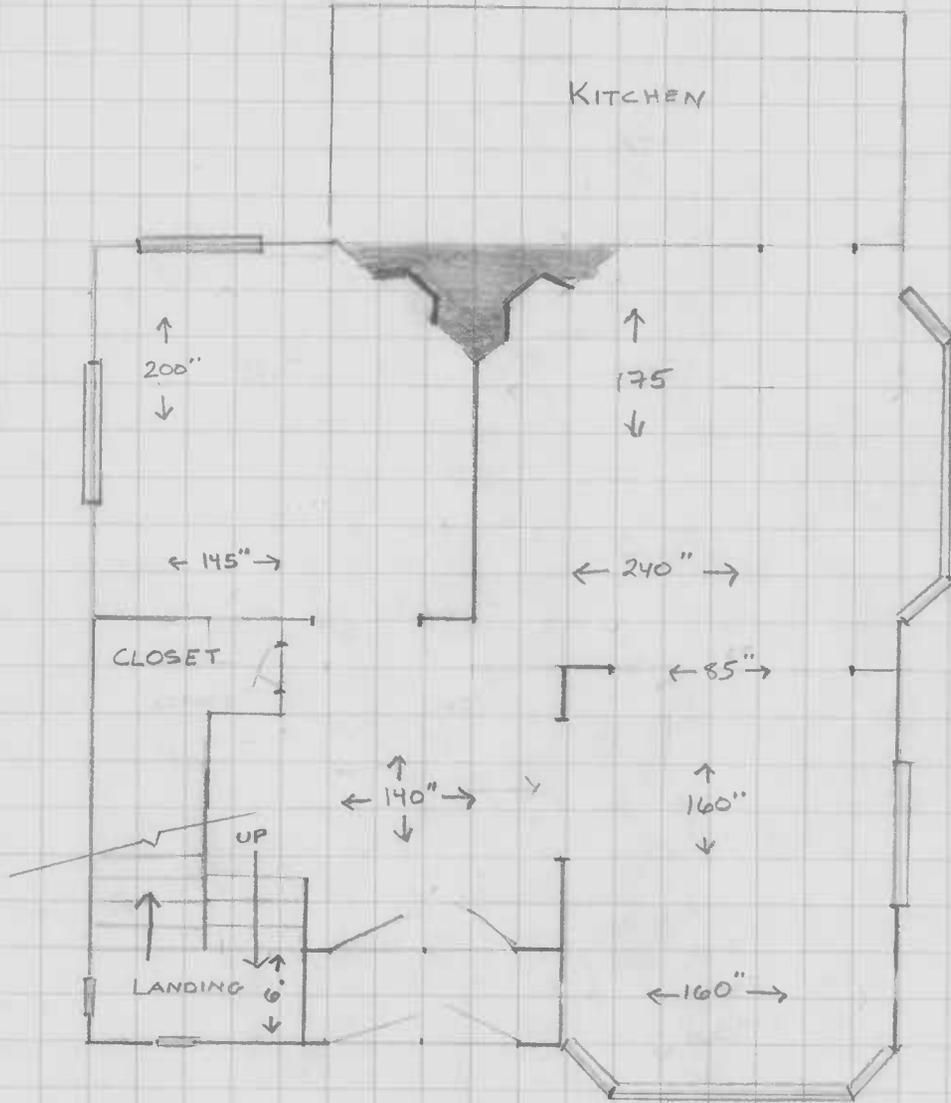
A small vestibule with original tile is reached through the double entrance doors. The large entry hall and dining room make up the front two rooms; two parlors make up the rear two. Much of the original wood work is intact, including the stair railing. The parlors retain the original mantle pieces.

See attachments 7.2, 7.3 for plans.

M: 26/10/66

The John Higgins House  
Attachment 7.2

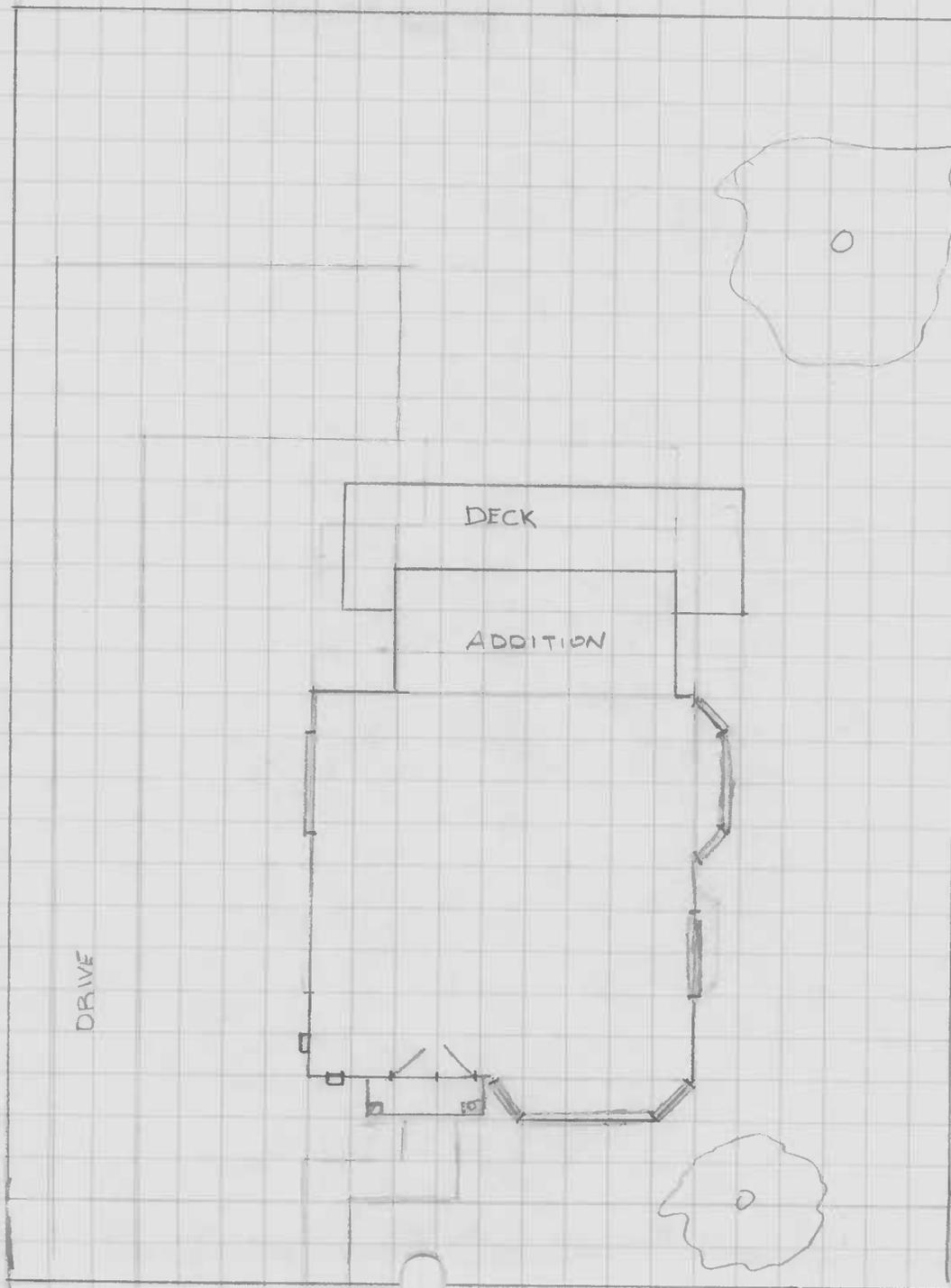
First Floor Plan of 300 Falls Road



Steven Kay  
April 1985

M: 26/10/66  
The John Higgins House  
Attachment 7.3

Site Plan of 300 Falls Road



300  
GREAT FALLS ROAD

Steven Kay  
April 1985<sup>4</sup>

GREAT FALLS ROAD



**RICHARD H. ANDREWS**  
**424-8282**  
**1608 FARRAGUT AVE.**  
**ROCKVILLE, MD 20851**

0895-20-3

MD: 26/10/66  
John Higgins House  
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