

**Maryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

Survey No. M:33-21  
Magi No.  
DOE \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic White Oak Marine Barracks

and/or common Building 90

**2. Location**

street & number 10901 New Hampshire Avenue \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Silver Spring \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 4th

state Maryland county Montgomery

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input 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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name U.S. Navy - White Oak Laboratory

street & number 10901 New Hampshire Ave. telephone no.

city, town Silver Spring state and zip code MD 29093-5000

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. liber

street & number folio

city, town state:

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title

date \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town state:

## 7. Description

Survey No. M:33-21

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	date of move <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

Building 90 was constructed in 1946 to house the Marine guard stationed at the Naval Ordnance Laboratory, White Oak. Located approximately 1,170 feet (0.22 miles) to the east of the entrance to the main administration building (Building 1-4 [M:33-14]) and 2,200 feet to the east of the Main Gate on New Hampshire Avenue, it is the easternmost of the 11 World War II era structures that comprise the Front Area at White Oak. The clear spatial separation of this building from the other components of the Front Area reinforces the functional differences of this originally residential structure, when contrasted with the other buildings housing the offices and laboratories of the Front Area.

Stylistically, Building 90 shares the design of the principal structures of the Front Area (e.g., Buildings 1-4 [M:33-14], 5 [M:33-15] and 30 [M:33-18]). The two-story building has a simple H-shaped plan, approximately 153-feet long by 80-feet wide. The slope of the ground surface downward toward the northeast exposes the basement level, making the northeast facade appear to be three stories.

The brickwork of Building 90 is Flemish bond with headers and stretchers alternating in each row and column. The limestone coping is curved and projects outward from the plane of the facade.

The design of the main entrance parallels that found on the other buildings in the Front Area at White Oak. It consists of a pair of plate-glass doors with a flat unadorned overhang. Around the door, a rectangular border of limestone extends upward, enclosing the window above the door on the second level. Unlike the other buildings in the Front Area at White Oak, the recessed brick around the doorway on Building 90 is within the limestone border.

The windows also exhibit the same overall design as the principal Front Area buildings, consisting of a vertical pair of windows set in a frame of recessed brick. The arrangement of the lights in the individual windows varies slightly from the dominant pattern at the White Oak Laboratory. The metal frame windows of Building 90 are divided vertically into three sets of two equal panes which are smaller than the typically oversized windows common in the other laboratory buildings in the Front Area. The smaller size of these windows may be a result of the slightly lower ceiling height in this building (e.g., 11'6" for ceilings in Building 90 compared to 13' for Building 30 [M:33-18]), and its original design as a residential structure.

The interior of Building 90, as well as the other administration and small laboratory buildings in the Front Area at White Oak, are largely similar consisting of long narrow corridors forming a spine for each structure.

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## 7. Description (Cont.)

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Suspended ceilings have been added in most areas to cover the formerly exposed utility lines. The original incandescent lights have been replaced by fluorescent lights. Ceilings are still relatively high, contributing to the narrow feeling of some of the hallways.

The interior load-bearing walls that separate the work areas in the large shops and laboratories are typically of brick laid in the same bond as the exterior walls, although filled windows may vary in pattern or material (e.g., concrete block).

Originally, a four bay garage was located in the northeastern corner of the exposed basement level, but this has been converted to office/laboratory space. A small bowling alley, also originally located in the basement, has been removed. Other apparent modifications have been limited, consisting of upgrading and maintaining the facility with conversion from incandescent to fluorescent lights and the addition of window-mounted air conditioners.

# 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archaeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archaeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1945-1949 Builder/Architect U.S. Navy/Eggers & Higgins, N.Y.

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
 and/or  
 Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  
 Level of Significance:  national  state  local  None

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

### Statement of Significance

Discussions of the potential NRHP eligibility of Building 90 which is one of the eight World War II era structures that comprise the Front Area at the White Oak Laboratory are influenced by three factors:

- The apparent absence of unique and significant events/developments or persons associated primarily with Naval activities at White Oak;
- The absence of unique architectural styles or architecture that embodies the best characteristics of a style or period; and,
- The relatively recent age (e.g., construction of the first structure was begun in 1945) in light of the absence of overwhelming significance as noted above.

### Historical background and significance:

Established when existing facilities of the Naval Ordnance Laboratory became insufficient to meet the increasing need for Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation facilities late during World War II, the White Oak Laboratory was only one of a variety of such facilities established throughout the areas of Maryland and Virginia around Washington, D.C. These technical and administrative centers were developed to maximize accessibility to military headquarters in Washington while being located in areas that provided the environmental conditions necessary for the performance of their missions and the social atmosphere necessary to attract and keep skilled personnel. For White Oak, these resources included the scientific/academic community of Washington and the surrounding area of Maryland while still being somewhat removed from the city congestion and security problems presented by a more urban center. Also, electromagnetic experiments (conducted in areas east of the Front Area) required magnetically neutral conditions.

The White Oak facility that developed during the final years of World War II reflected administrative and research work that was task-specific, contributing to larger weapons system development programs that included work done at other naval facilities. White Oak remained a group of buildings housing offices, laboratories, and shops designed for the tasks at hand. Upon completion of a set of activities, the facilities were refitted for the next set of required tasks. As a result, the facilities in the Front Area of White Oak were continuously changing with new sets of equipment installed for as long as necessary, before they were replaced or moved to a new area of the White Oak Laboratory or to another naval facility.

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## 8. Significance (Cont.)

Survey No. M:33-21

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The result of this role for White Oak was that, while it was an integral part of the Naval research and development program during World War II, there are no obvious manifestations of that role in the buildings or the setting of the Front Area of the White Oak Laboratory as they exist today, the generally high degree of integrity of location, setting and design notwithstanding.

Building 90, as well as all of the structures of the Front Area of White Oak, whether viewed individually or as a potential district, do not exhibit the integrity of association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of history (i.e., NRHP Criteria a, 36 CFR 60.4).

The Naval Ordnance Laboratory, while housed at White Oak, included Naval and civilian personnel who may have achieved considerable personal or professional renown. However, such individual importance was not connected with their tenure at White Oak and so would not satisfy NRHP Criteria b.

Since White Oak is a product of Navy activities begun during World War II and a relatively recent entity, it is unlikely that Building 90, or any component of the environment of the Front Area has the potential to yield information important to history itself. White Oak's potential historic importance lies in the scientific developments that have occurred there. Information about these developments are likely to be contained in documentary sources such as scientific notes and archives that exist separately from the physical structures that constitute the Front Area of White Oak. In addition, detailed plans and drawings exist that document the buildings of the Front Area are archived by the Public Works Department at White Oak, further reducing the potential for NRHP eligibility under Criteria d.

Building 90 exhibits the principal design shared by the original administration/laboratory buildings of the Front Area at White Oak. The exterior facades of any of these buildings (with the exception of Building 71) have not been substantially modified and appear largely the same as they would have shortly after their construction.

Although this building has maintained its architectural integrity, the combination of the campus-like setting and the "starved classicism" style that is expressed is not unique in the architecture of the period, or in federal buildings in general in the region around Washington, D.C. The stylistic elements suggests the continuation of modern architectural influences on the more formal classical designs as expressed in other buildings designed during the 1920s and the 1930s.

The buildings of the Front Area do not appear to satisfy eligibility Criteria C, for inclusion in the NRHP since they are neither distinctive examples of this architectural type nor "a significant and distinguishable entity" (U.S. Department of the Interior 1991).

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. M:33-21

Anonymous, 1959, "History of the Naval Ordnance Laboratory", manuscript on file at NSWC, White Oak, Maryland.

Craig, Lois, 1978, *The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in United States Government Buildings*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Dittman, Richard B., 1973, letter to Stanley S. Jones, U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory, White Oak, Maryland, January 29, 1973, on file at Department of Public Works, NSWC, White Oak, Maryland.

Greenhorne & O'Mara, Inc., 1992, *Historic and Archaeological Resources Protection (HARP) Plan for Naval Surface Warfare Center, White Oak, Maryland*, on file at U.S. Navy, Engineering Field Activity-Chesapeake, Washington, Navy Yard, Washington, D.C.

Smaldone, Joseph P., 1977, *History of the White Oak Laboratory 1945-1975*, Naval Surface Weapons Center, Silver Spring, Maryland.

U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory, 1949, *The U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory; General and Descriptive Information*.

## 10. Geographical Data

### Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name	Beltsville, MD	Quadrangle scale	7.5 Min.
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UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

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

### Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	Maryland	code	MD	county	Montgomery	code	031
state		code		county		code	

## 11. Form Prepared By

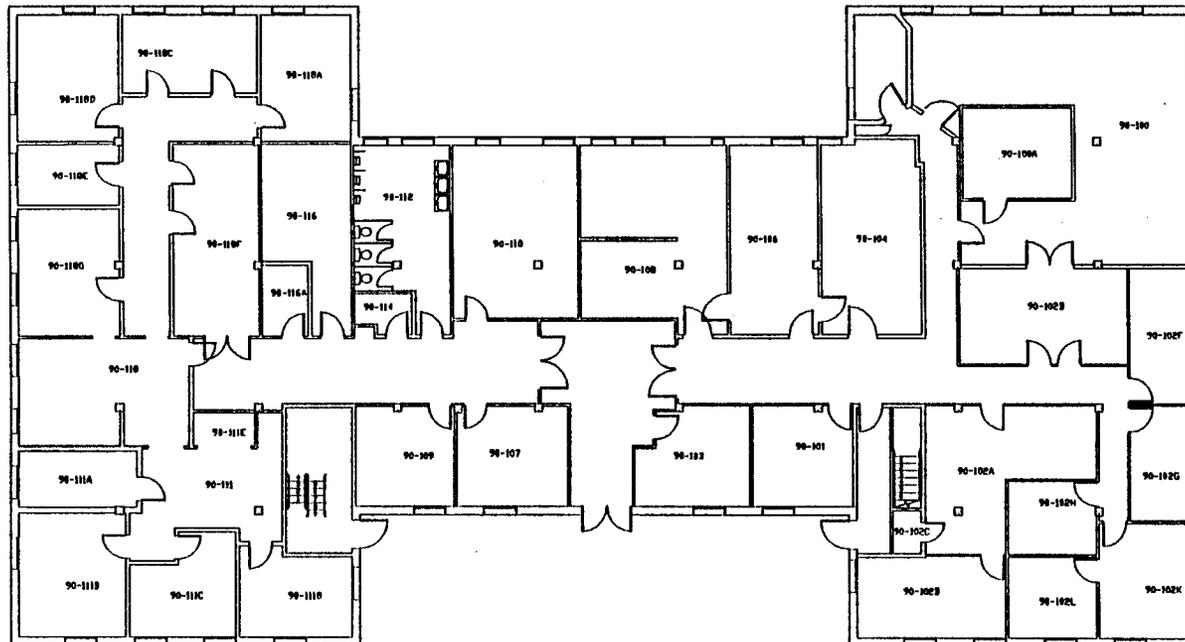
name/title	Mark Rosenzweig, Ph.D./Chief Archaeologist		
organization	Ecology and Environment, Inc.	date	March 25, 1994
street & number	368 Pleasantview Drive	telephone	716/684-8060
city or town	Lancaster	state	New York

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  
DHCP/DHCD  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
514-7600

A-80



SOURCE: U. S. Navy NSWC White Oak Department of Public Works.

**SURVEY NO. M:33-21, BUILDING 90 (FIRST FLOOR)  
NSWC WHITE OAK, SILVER SPRING, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**





**FRAMEWORK FOR IDENTIFYING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA**

**HISTORIC CONTEXT:**

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont/Western shore

Chronological/Development Period(s):

Modern Period (1945-present)

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Military (World War II/Post World War II Era)  
Engineering/Invention

Resource Type:

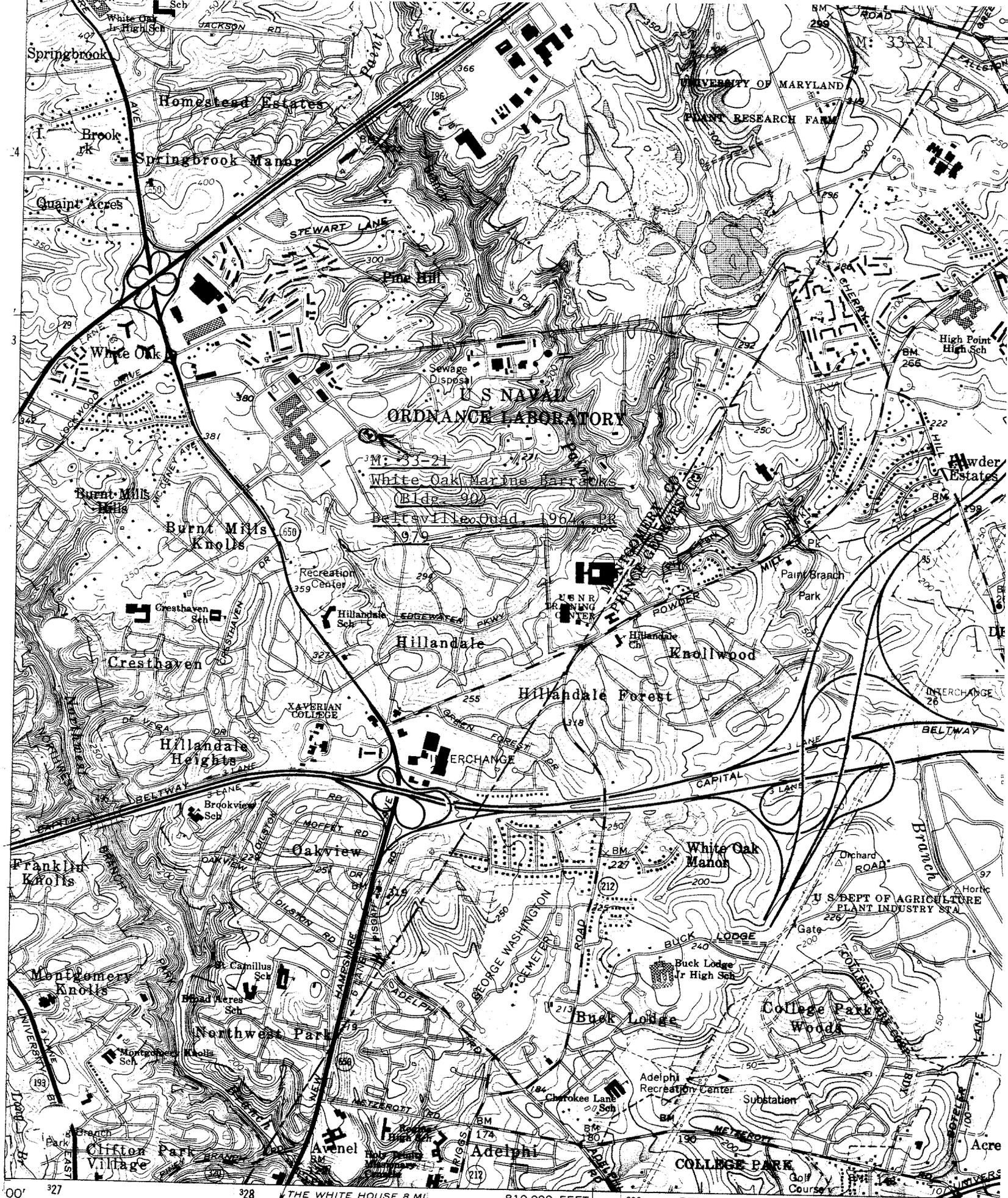
Category: Buildings

Historic Environment (urban, suburban, village, or rural): suburban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Laboratories for testing and development of military (Navy) weapons systems.

Known Design Source:

Eggers & Higgins, Architects, New York, New York  
Taylor & Fisher, Baltimore, Associates



M: 33-21  
 White Oak Marine Barracks  
 (Bldg. 90)  
 Beltsville Quad. 1964 PR  
 1979



① M. 33-21

NSWC White Oak Laboratory

Damage Branch OPN

Building 90

Montgomery Co MD

Ecology & Environment Inc.

Nov 1993

US NAVY - EFA Chesapeake

Looking E W elevation