

**CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE  
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM**

Property Name: Building 10 Greenhouse Range 2 Survey Number: PG:61-18

Property Address: Beltsville Agricultural Research Center

Project: Proposed Controlled Environmental Facility Agency: USDA

Site visit by MHT Staff: no  yes Name L. Bowlin Date Jan. 9, 1995

District Name: North Farm historic district Survey Number: not yet assigned

     Listed       Eligible appears elig based on prelim docum survey ongoing Comment

Criteria:  A      B  C      D Considerations:      A      B      C      D      E      F      G      None

The resource  contributes/      does not contribute to the historic significance of this historic district in:

Location      Design  Setting      Materials  
     Workmanship  Feeling  Association

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)  
Building 10 or Range 2 is a long 1 1/2 story headhouse. The original five greenhouses attached to the headhouse and the Palmhouse were demolished in 1994. USDA is rebuilding the greenhouses but not the Palmhouse. Constructed of concrete block with brick veneer walls and concrete foundations, building 10 headhouse depicts features of the Georgian Revival style. Located within the greenhouses of North Farm, this building was constructed in 1939 to replace facilities located at USDA's property in Washington D.C. The Bureau of Plant Industry was a precursor of the USDA which conducted plant related research and development. The agency conducted scientific research that focused on crop research and production. The North Farm facility illustrates a cohesive design in its Georgian Revival offices, laboratories and greenhouses. An intensive architectural survey is currently being conducted of the North Farm. However, preliminary documentation indicates that the Farm is an NR eligible historic district under Criterion A and C for its association with government-sponsored plant research and development and for its representation as a Georgian Revival governmental complex. Please refer to inventory form for additional documentation. Although the integrity of entire building 10 has been compromised with the demolition of the greenhouses, the remaining headhouse still contributes to the historic district in location, setting, design.

Documentation on the property is presented in: Maryland Inventory Form and Determination of Eligibility Report in compliance file (BARC-CEF)

Prepared by: Robinson and Associates

L. Bowlin May 30, 1995  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

NR program concurrence:  yes      no      not applicable  
Orlando P. ... June 27, 1995.  
Reviewer, NR program Date

*gmg*

PG: 61-18

RANGE 2, BELTSVILLE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER

BELTSVILLE, PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD

Located at the North Farm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville Agricultural Research Station, Range 2 consists of a long 1-1/2-story headhouse. The five greenhouses originally attached to the rear of the headhouse, and the Palmhouse which was immediately adjacent to the building (and attached to the other greenhouses) were demolished in 1994. The building is of concrete-block construction, with brick veneer walls and concrete foundations. It is Georgian Revival in styling. The building was constructed in 1939 to replace facilities located on Constitution Avenue in Washington, D.C. Since its construction, the headhouse has been in continuous use as associated laboratory, office, and potting space for the United States Department of Agriculture.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Range 2, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center  
other names/site number Building 010

2. Location

street & number Beltsville Agricultural Research Center - West  
Not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Beltsville vicinity N/A  
state Maryland code MD county Prince Georges code 033  
zip code 20705-2350

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

4. National Park Service Certification

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**  
Range 2, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center)  
(Beltsville, MD)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)**

<b>Cat:</b>	<b>Sub:</b>
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE	horticulture facility
EDUCATION	research facility

**Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)**

<b>Cat:</b>	<b>Sub:</b>
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE	horticulture facility
EDUCATION	research facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)**

OTHER: Colonial Revival

**Materials (Enter categories from instructions)**

foundation concrete  
roof slate  
walls concrete block with brick veneer  
other copper gutters and downspouts, wood and stone trim.

**Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.**

**8. Statement of Significance See continuation sheet.**

**Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)**

Agriculture

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

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(Beltsville, MD)

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=====  
**Period of Significance**

1939-1944

**Significant Dates** 1939

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation** N/A

**Architect/Builder** Division of Plans & Service, Bureau of Agricultural  
Engineering, U.S. Department of Agriculture

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property  
on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

=====  
**9. Major Bibliographical References** See continuation sheet.  
=====

=====  
**10. Geographical Data**  
=====

**Acreage of Property**

Less than one acre.

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**  
**Range 2, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center)**  
**(Beltsville, MD)**

**UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)**

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	18	333150	4321290	
2				
3				
4				

**Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)**

This resource is bounded by the following streets located on the North Farm of the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center: Range 2 Drive to the north, Range 3 Drive to the south, 2nd Street to the east, and 3rd Street to the west.

**Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)**

These boundaries correspond to those traditionally associated with building. The roads around the building were constructed at the time of the construction of the building or soon thereafter. The boundaries represent the entire resource and all associated structures.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Carol Hooper, Architectural Historian  
organization Robinson & Associates date October 1994  
street & number 1710 Connecticut Ave., NW telephone (202) 234-2333  
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20009

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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Range 2, Beltsville Agricultural  
Research Center  
**name of property**  
Prince Georges, Maryland  
**county and State**DESCRIPTION

## Descriptive Summary

Located at the North Farm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville Agricultural Research Station, Range 2 consists of a long horizontal headhouse. Originally, five greenhouses were attached at right angles to the rear of the headhouse and a palmhouse -- a large free-standing greenhouse of a more decorative design -- was linked to its east side. The greenhouse structures were demolished in 1994 and the five greenhouses are now being replaced. The Palmhouse will not be replaced.

The front of the building faces northeast onto Range 2 Drive. Because of its sloped site, and to avoid shading the greenhouses, the headhouse is stepped to follow the contours of the topography.

The one-and-one-half story Georgian Revival building is of concrete block construction with brick veneer walls and concrete foundations. All downspouts and gutters are copper, and the roof throughout is of slate. Decorative detailing is limestone, with the exception of windowsills and interior door lintels, which are of cast stone.

## General Description

The Range 2 headhouse is 323 feet long and 30 feet wide. The building is separated into five stepped sections, each of which originally led to a separate greenhouse.

All five of the sections feature steel casement-style windows consisting of twelve panes, the central four of which pivot from the top. Doors throughout the building are half-glass with two vertical panels below and nine panes above.

The center three sections of the headhouse are largely identical. Each consists of five bays, with three windows to the east side, then a door, and a single window to the west. Downspouts located between the second and third windows and after the west window subdivide the stepped units into equal sections. This central portion of the building has a gabled roof with

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dormers located between the first and second windows and over the door. The small shed-type dormers have a hinged window with three fixed panes. Entrances to the building (one leading into each greenhouse) have simple hoods with supporting decorative brackets.

The slightly more elaborate end sections of the building frame the central section. The east end is developed as a separate pavilion with a hipped roof and a central, projecting gabled section. This projecting section has stone quoining with keystones above the door, and a single round ventilator with decorative stone work matching the quoining. This pavilion is identical to that at the east end of Building 011. The west section is longer than the others and includes a section similar to the three middle sections with a pavilion identical to the east pavilion at its end. The side elevations of the two end sections are simpler but largely similar to the front facades.

The visible section of the rear facade of the building is stucco. Although originally the rear consisted largely of greenhouses, currently most replacement greenhouses are in various stages of construction. Construction is completed on one replacement greenhouse only.

## Interior

The interior of the headhouses is utilitarian, with simple wood molding, exposed piping, and concrete floors. In general, the floor plan of the headhouses consists of an entrance way, with storage or laboratory space to either side. Leading off the entrance way is a corridor and work space -- an area set up with tables for potting, or used for equipment storage. The workspace acts as a hallway connecting the headhouses. Stairs to the upper story, which is used for storage, is also located off of this area. Access to the greenhouse is through a door in the work space which is aligned with the outside entrance door.

## Alterations

The major alteration to the building was the demolition of the greenhouses and of the Palm House. The greenhouses were gable-roofed with eaves of the "angle iron" type. Roughly 40' x 308', they were of galvanized steel construction with wood moldings, sash, and doors. The greenhouses' glass

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panels were 16" x 24". Each had vent sash at the ridge (gable) and on the sides at the eave line of the building.

The Palmhouse was a more ornate structure. Roughly 39 feet wide and 357 feet long, it had curved eaves that resembled an onion dome shape. The central sections of the front and rear facades were designed to project slightly and thus provided a more decorative treatment for these facades. An entrance vestibule was located on the east side of the building. (Secondary entrances were located on the north and south sides of the building.)

Aside from the demolition of the greenhouses, alterations to the rest of the building have been minor. They consist in general of the insertion of a number of window-unit air conditioners, security lights at the entrances, and assorted vents which penetrate the roof surface.

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(8-86)

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HISTORIC CONTEXT

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

**Geographical Organization:** Western Shore

**Chronological/Developmental Periods:** Modern Period

**Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):** Agriculture

**Resource Type:**

**Category:** Building

**Historic Environment:** Rural

**Historic Function(s) and Use(s):**

AGRICULTURE/horticulture facility  
EDUCATION/research facility

**Known Design Source:**

Division of Plans & Service, Bureau of Agricultural  
Engineering, U.S. Department of Agriculture

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Research Center  
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## Summary

Range 2 was one of the first handful of buildings constructed at what was then known as the Plant Industry Station. It was constructed to replace greenhouses located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Since 1939, it has been in continuous use as laboratories, offices, and potting space supporting plant research. When the building was constructed, its greenhouses (no longer standing) employed a number of innovative improvements, including basement sections that provided constant temperature and light relation rooms. The size of the greenhouses was also important; they were large enough to permit scientists to conduct statistically valid experiments using Latin squares. In later years the greenhouses and headhouse served as the site of important research in the field of nematology.

## Construction History of Range 2

In October 1933, the Bureau of Plant Industry purchased part of the current North Farm with Public Works Administration funds. At that time the site officially became the "U.S. Horticultural Field Station at Beltsville, Maryland." In addition to paying for the acquisition of the land, PWA funds for that year and the next few years were used for constructing the first buildings on the site and to clear the land, put in utilities, and construct roads and walks. Among the first buildings to be constructed were the Range 1 greenhouses and headhouses. These greenhouses were to become the model, in terms of design and layout, for all other greenhouses on the site, including the Range 2 group.

Range 2 was specifically built to replace a range of greenhouses located on Constitution Avenue between 12th and 14th Streets in Washington (now the site of the Smithsonian Museum of American History).<sup>1</sup> Although there was no

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<sup>1</sup>The 31 greenhouses, which accommodated 30,000 plants, were constructed in 1902 and demolished in March 1940. They were the site of popular annual amaryllis and chrysanthemum shows which were attended by the First Ladies.

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specific reason that the greenhouses had to be moved at the time (i.e., there were no specific construction plans for the site), it was a period when many of the operations of the Bureau of Plant Industry were being consolidated to the Beltsville site.<sup>2</sup> The official rationale for the move was that by having adequate greenhouse space adjacent to outdoor areas, plants could be moved efficiently from one to the other thereby dramatically increasing productivity." It also seems likely that the Bureau took advantage of the opportunity to get easily available PWA and CWA funding for a project that it had likely planned for some time.

Range 2 was part of the second wave of construction at the Plant Industry Station. It, along with the Heating Plant (Building 014) and the Cold Storage Building (Building 002) were all completed around 1939 using PWA and CWA funds.

Plans for the building were drawn up by the USDA's Bureau of Agricultural Engineering, Division of Plans and Service, and approved in October 1938. The Division of Plans and Services was the USDA's in-house design office and was responsible for the design of virtually all of the buildings at Beltsville. They also designed USDA buildings throughout the country, including the USDA's four regional labs.<sup>3</sup>

Bids were opened in November of that year and contracts for a total of \$169,213 were awarded soon after. Contractor for the headhouses and structure was Victor R. Beauchamp Inc. of Crittenden Street in Washington.

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<sup>2</sup>In addition, it is also possible that in light of the efforts to implement the McMillan Commission Plan for the Mall, the USDA was under increasing pressure from the Commission of Fine Arts to move the facilities.

<sup>3</sup>So far, little information on how the Division operated or who the major designers in the Division were has been uncovered. It appears, however, that during the late 1930s the Division was designing literally dozens of buildings at one time, and must have employed a substantial number of designers.

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The contractor for the greenhouses and palm house was American-Moninger Greenhouse Manufacturing Corporation, located in Brooklyn, New York.<sup>4</sup>

American-Moninger Greenhouse Manufacturing Corporation was a successor organization to American Greenhouse Manufacturing Company. American-Moninger advertised itself as a leader in its field, responsible for a number of innovations including the "first and only drip proof and leak proof gutter" and the first to advocate standard sizes for benches, houses, and standard slopes for greenhouse roofs. In addition to Range 2, the company also designed and built greenhouses at Bell Station (USDA's facility at Glendale, Maryland) and designed and built the U.S. Botanic Gardens greenhouse located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Their circa 1928 brochure suggests that in addition they designed facilities at "various experimental stations."<sup>5</sup>

Suppliers for the building included:

- Stone Trim: McLeod Ramborg Stone Co. (supplying buff limestone from the Indiana Limestone Corporation of Bedford, Indiana)
- Glass: 1/4 inch Polished Plate Glass from the Franklin Glass Co.  
1/8 inch Hammered Obscure Glass, Mississippi Glass Company.  
Fourco Glass Co. D.S.A.
- Mortar: Medusa Masonry Cement (Cleveland, OH) (for limestone).  
Blue Bond Cement (National American Cement Co.)
- Lintels and Window Sills: (Cast Stone) Edwards Art Stone Company

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<sup>4</sup>Contractor for the electrical, heating, and plumbing work was Robert Anderson, of Washington.

<sup>5</sup>American-Moninger Greenhouse Manufacturing Corporation, American Greenhouses [Trade Catalogue]. Brooklyn, NY: circa 1928. p.15.

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Prince Georges, Maryland

**county and State**Millwork: (Doors, Frames, Dormers, Cornices etc.) Washington  
Woodworking Company.

Iron: Atlas Machine &amp; Iron Works

Brick: Washington Brick Company, Muirkirk, Maryland

Slate: (Roofing) Thomas A. McConaty Co. Slate Manufactured by  
North Bangor Slate Co., Bangor, Pennsylvania. (12" x 20" x  
3/16")

Steel Windows: Crittall-Federal, Incorporated.

Structural Steel: Rosslyn Steel and Cement Company.

## Design Features

The greenhouses included a number of unique design features. Particularly innovative were the basement sections which provided constant temperature and light relation rooms. Also innovative for the date was the widespread use of unit heaters. A total of 53 unit heaters were installed in the range. These were used in coordination with manually controlled pipe coils located on the side walls of each section. The later were used to maintain a "base" temperature while the unit heaters were thermostatically controlled to compensate for fluctuations in temperature. This system allowed (for the time) unusually close control of temperature in the greenhouses. The use of unit heaters at the site was undoubtedly linked to experimental work done earlier on the heaters at facilities at the Bureau of Plant Industry's original research facility at Arlington.

Perhaps the most important innovation connected with the greenhouses was simply their size. According to one source, these were the first greenhouses designed in units large enough to permit "the laying out of Latin squares on roses, carnations, tomatoes, cucumbers, or other forcing crops."<sup>6</sup> By having

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<sup>6</sup>"News-letter of the Division of Fruit and Vegetable Crops and Diseases," V. XII, no. 1, January 1, 1940. NARA RG 54 Entry 135B

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enough space to grow large numbers of these plants, results obtained from experiments could be statistically valid.

## Use of Range 2

When constructed, the greenhouses were set aside for "breeding, cultural, nutrition, variety and other lines of work." Some 47 people were transferred to the North Farm with the completion of the new greenhouses.

By the early 1950s, the building was used for nematology research. Beltsville has been called the "cosmic center" for the study of Nematodes (or eelworms), which are parasitic unsegmented worms that live in soil, water or plants.<sup>7</sup> Nematodes are a concern to plant scientists because they often parasitize plants or are associated with plant disease. Over the years, USDA researchers have lead the field in developing control methods for nematodes. In the 1960s, the Range was the location of the North Farm's cafeteria.

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"Records of the Division of Fruits and Vegetable Crops."

<sup>7</sup>Michael Olmert, "Genes and Viruses are Harnessed on a Farm Tended by Scientists," Smithsonian Magazine, March 1982. Current ARS research on nematodes includes study of their benefits, such as their ability to attack the corn rootworm.

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Lease between Theodore Alexander Sellman and Robert Lee Sellman and the

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**name of property**  
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**name of property**  
Prince Georges, Maryland  
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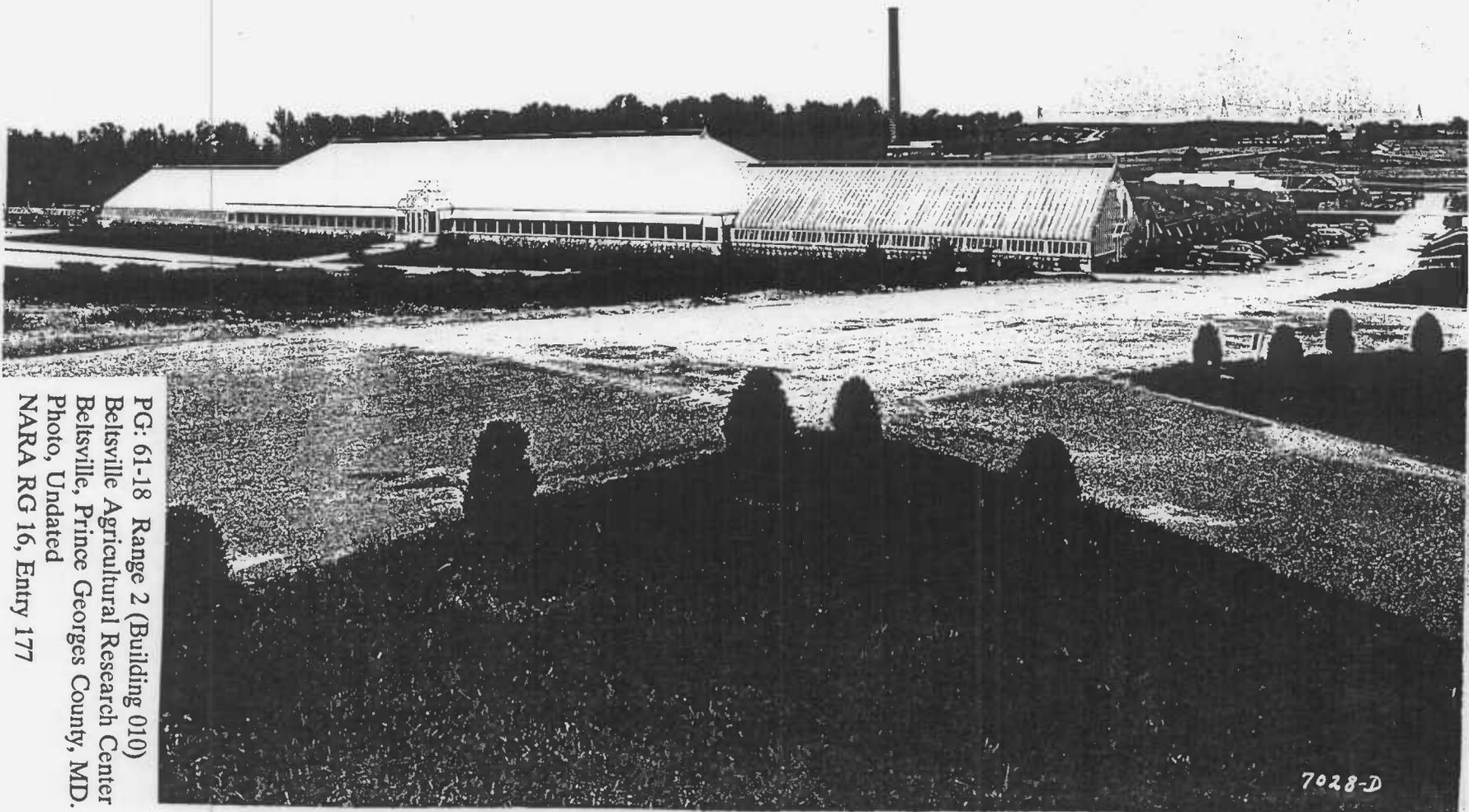
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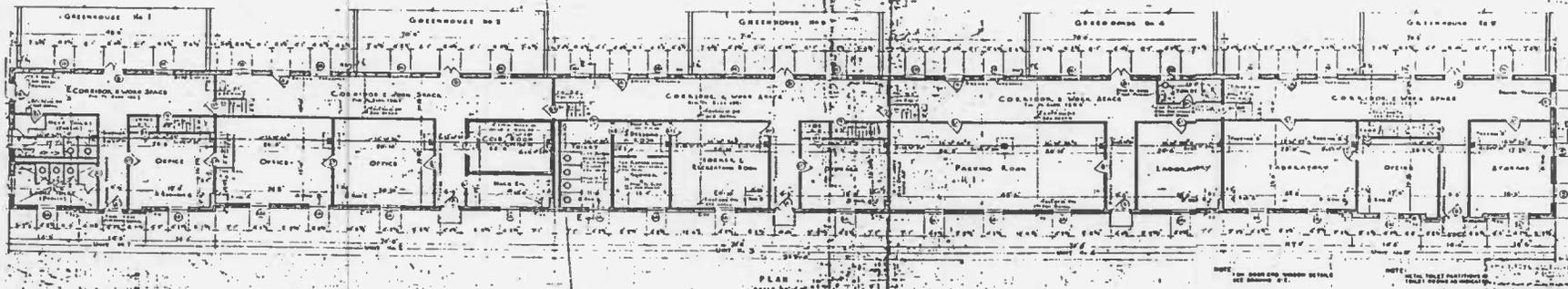
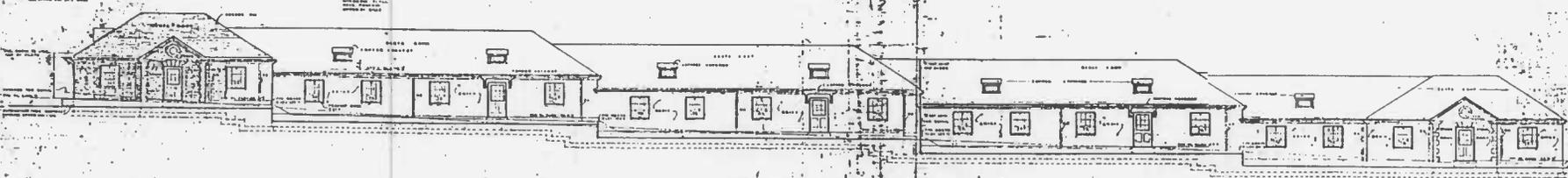
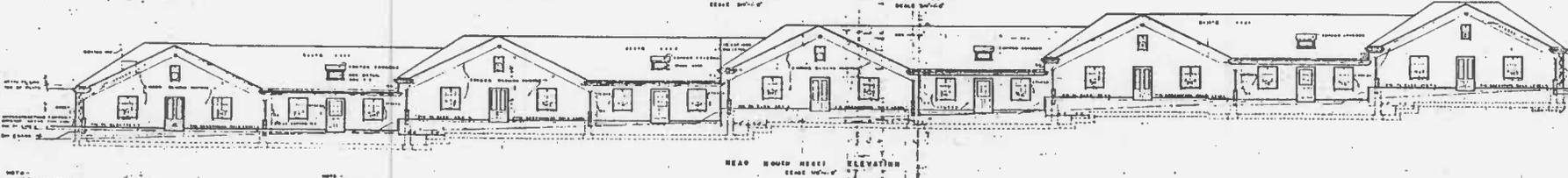
PG: 61-18 Range 2 (Building 010)  
Beltsville Agricultural Research Center  
Beltsville, Prince Georges County, MD.  
Photo, Undated  
NARA RG 16, Entry 177

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NOTE-ALL WORK ABOVE HEAVY LINE IS TO BE INCLUDED IN SUPERSTRUCTURE CONTRACT, EXCEPT FOR NOTES AS SHOWN.



**WALL REINFORCEMENTS**  
REINFORCEMENTS TO BE 1/2" OR 3/4" DIAMETER BARS  
AS SHOWN IN SECTION DRAWINGS. REINFORCEMENTS  
SHOULD BE PLACED IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO  
GIVE THE BEST RESULTS.  
REINFORCEMENTS TO BE PLACED IN SUCH A MANNER  
AS TO GIVE THE BEST RESULTS.  
REINFORCEMENTS TO BE PLACED IN SUCH A MANNER  
AS TO GIVE THE BEST RESULTS.



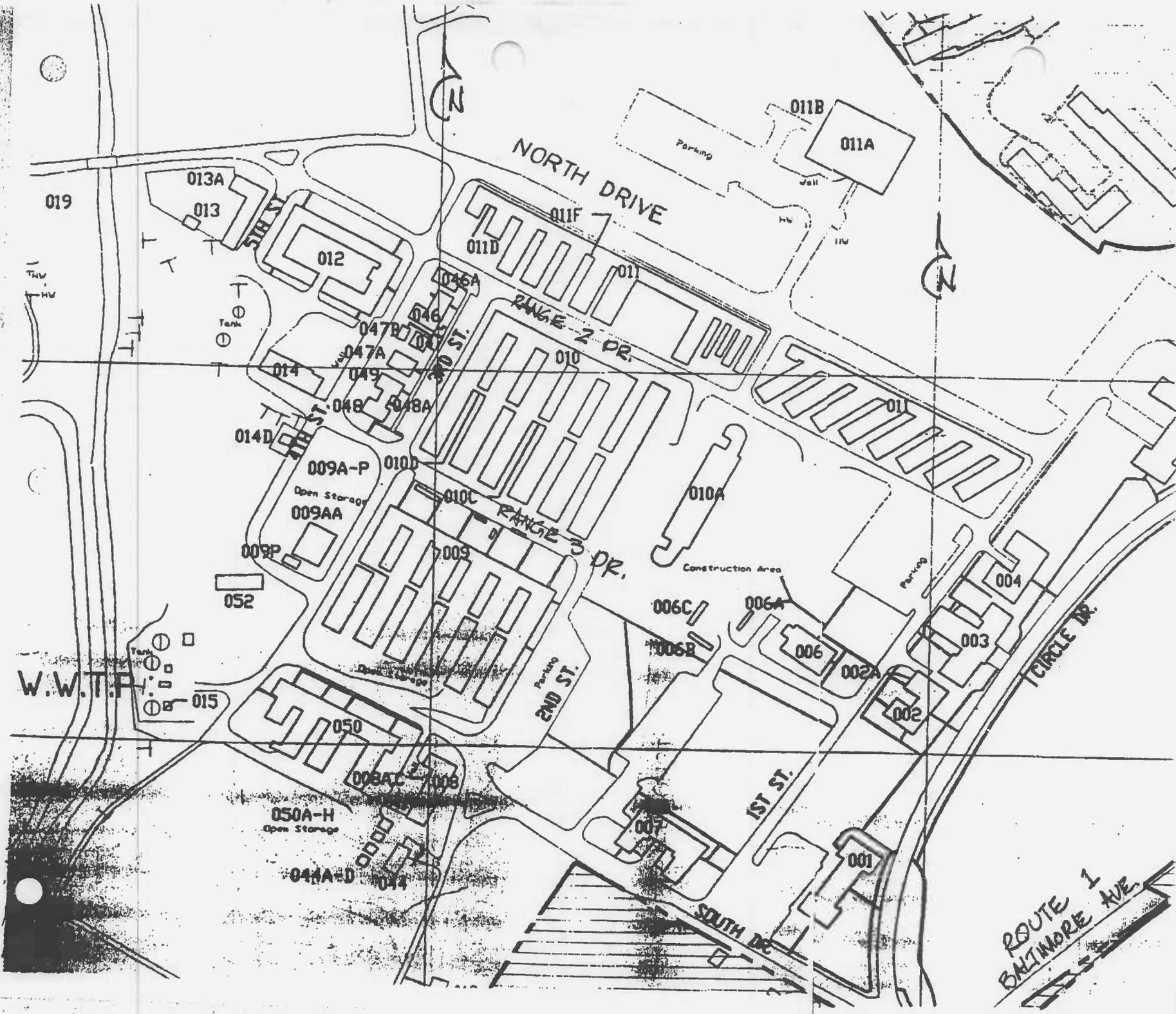
**HEADHOUSE ELEVATIONS & PLAN**  
PREPARED FOR BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY  
APPROVED FOR O.P.I.  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING  
DIVISION OF PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS  
HEADHOUSE AND GREENHOUSES  
NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL RESERVE CENTER  
10100 UNIVERSITY BLVD., BELTSVILLE, MARYLAND  
DATE: OCTOBER 15, 1938  
BY: [Signature]  
CHECKED BY: [Signature]

Plan (1938) Range 2 (Building 010)  
Beltsville Agricultural Research Center  
Beltsville, Prince Georges County, MD.

PG: 61-18

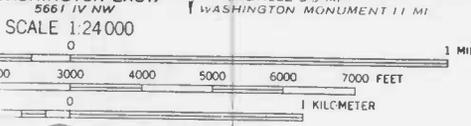
Beltsville Agricultural Research Center  
Site Plan

PG:61-18





PG: 61-18 Range 2 (Building 010)  
 Beltsville Agricultural Research Center  
 Beltsville, Prince Georges County, MD.  
 USGS Map Beltsville Quadrangle  
 1964, Photorevised, 1979



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route



QUADRANGLE LOCATION  
 Boundary lines shown in purple computed from latest information available from the controlling authority

BELTSVILLE, MD.  
 SW/4 LAUREL 15' QUADRANGLE  
 39076-A8-TF-024

1964  
 PHOTOREVISED 1979  
 DMA 5662 III SW-SERIES V833

WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 WASHINGTON, DC 20255, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
 PHOTOCOPYING AND SYMBOLOGY IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



PG. 61-18 Range 2 (Building 10), Beltsville Agricultural Research  
Center

Prince Georges County, MD

Carol Hooper, 9/1994, Neg at MD SHPO

Front (Northeast) Facade

1/2



PG: 61-18

Range 2 (Building 10), Beltsville Agricultural Research  
Prince Georges County, MD Center

Carol Hooper, 9/1994

Neg at IND SHPO

Headhouse #1

2/2