

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Charlton Heights

and/or common Berwyn Heights

## 2. Location

street & number Ruatan Street (5603-5822), 58th Avenue (8711-8801)  not for publication

city, town Berwyn Heights  vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

## 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 Fifty two (52) owners

street & number cf. building inventory telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber

street & number Main Street folio

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

# Description

Survey No. PG#67 - 22

ndition		Check one	Check one	
- excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
- good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
- 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.

## Description

The historic survey district in Berwyn Heights (formerly Charlton Heights) is two blocks of Ruatan Street, an area of approximately 800,000 square feet. It is located east of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, south of Greenbelt Road (Maryland Route 193) and west of Kenilworth Avenue (Maryland Route 201). It includes the buildings on both the north and south sides of Ruatan Street, between 60th Avenue on the east and Berwyn Road on the west.

The zoning is R-55 (single-family detached) throughout. Fifty-two (52) buildings are included and described. All are residences, although one (#7) was built as a school and has in the last decade been converted into a residence.

Seven (7) of the buildings were documented as part of the 1985-86 historic building survey of Prince George's County:

- Building Inventory #7: Berwyn Heights School - P.G. #67-7
- Building Inventory #13: Cross-Russell House - P.G. #67-13
- Building Inventory #14: O'Dea House - #67-11
- Building Inventory #19: Chlopicki House - P.G. #67-12
- Building Inventory #20: Gohr House - P.G. #67-14
- Building Inventory #40: Wolfe House - P.G. #67-15
- Building Inventory #52: Kleiner-Dillon House - P.G. #67-17

Inventory forms for these seven buildings are submitted as part of this District survey. A National Register nomination has been prepared for the O'Dea House.

The proposed district includes 13 contributing buildings and 39 non-contributing buildings. The contributing buildings range in date from 1888 to the 1920's. There are six Queen Anne/Victorian style frame houses built between 1888 and 1890, three folk Victorian frame houses of the turn of the century, two "Classic Box" style dwellings of circa 1910, one 1922 school building and one 1920's bungalow. The non-contributing buildings are small one-story or one-and-one-half-story dwellings built in the 1950's and 1960's.

The proposed district is characterized by a variety of dwelling types. The majority are small one-and-one-half-story side-gabled suburban cottages of the mid-twentieth century. The area is enlivened by the presence of some of the earliest residences in the Charlton Heights suburb, most built from pattern-book plans distributed by the Cooperative Building Plan Association. These houses (#13, 14, 19, 20, 40 and 52) are distinguished by exuberant Queen Anne/Victorian decorative detail; one house (#14) is in near-original condition, and is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The growth and development of the community are reflected

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STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

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Description (continued)

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in the folk Victorian (#33, 35 and 51), "Classic Box" (#4 and 9), and bungalow (#11) styles of dwelling, as well as the 1922 schoolhouse (#7).

The area is suburban, and consists of building lots approximately 50 by 200 feet, fronting on streets which criss-cross at varied angles. Set-back from the right-of-way is fairly uniform, ranging from 25 to 60 feet, the majority being set back 30 to 40 feet from the street. The streets are tree lined; there are no sidewalks on Ruatan Street, but the north-south cross street (58th Avenue) has a sidewalk on each side.

A building inventory follows; it includes brief descriptions of all 52 buildings. Maryland Historical Trust Inventory forms follow for the Berwyn Heights School, Cross-Russell House, O'Dea House, Chlopicki House, Gohr House, Wolfe House and Kleiner-Dillon House.

Building Inventory  
Berwyn Heights Survey District

- A = Contributing resource with exceptionally high level of integrity and historic and/or architectural significance.
- B = Contributing resource with high level of integrity and historic and/or architectural significance.
- C = Contributing resource with low level of integrity whose contribution could be enhanced by sympathetic rehabilitation or restoration, or by further research.
- E = A resource which does not contribute to the significance of the whole.

1. (E) 1950's House, 5822 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 34, Block 24, Lot 33.

One-story side-gabled house with brick veneer below windows, main facade, and gray vertical synthetic siding above brick. Three-by-two bay, with central entry under peaked cross-gable. Concrete steps to door.

2. (E) 1950's House, 5821 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 34, Block 23, Lot 35.

One-story hip roofed brick rambler. Projecting front gable, end chimney at ridge.

3. (E) 1950's House, 5819 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 34, Block 23, Lot 3.

One-story side-gabled house, similar to 5822. Brick veneer below windows, main facade, yellow horizontal siding above brick. Central entrance under peaked cross gable.

4. (B) "Classic Box" House, 5818 Ruatan Street (north side) ca. 1910, Tax Map 34, Block 24, Lots 17-19.

Two-and-one-half story hip roofed Foursquare house covered with rectangular brown shingles. Roof is of gray asphalt shingle. Three-by-three bay; 1/1 windows with plain board surrounds and deep overhanging eaves; one-story semi-octagonal projecting bay in first bay. Near-central corbelled brick chimney. Hip dormers in south, east and west planes of roof.

A good example of the popular "Classic Box" house style.

5. (E) 1950's House, 5817 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 34, Block 23, Lot 4.

One-story side-gabled house, similar to 5822. Dark siding above brick veneer. Picture window.

6. (E) 1950's House, 5813 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 34, Block 23, Lots 5 and 6.

One-story side-gabled house, similar to 5822 et al., but with one-story gable-roofed projecting wing on east end. Entrance in center but no cross gable.

7. (B) Berwyn Heights School, 5814 Ruatan Street, #67-7 (north side), 1922, Tax Map 34, Block 24, Lots 20 and 21.

One-story side-gabled frame school house. Five-bay south (main) facade with entrance in central bay. Newly-installed door with sidelights and large single-pane transom. Gabled entry porch. Bank of six large 9/9 windows across east and west gable ends. High molded concrete block foundation.

This substantial two-room schoolhouse was built in 1922 to replace the earlier schoolhouse in the community of Berwyn Heights; it is probably the best surviving example of a 1920's schoolhouse in Prince George's County.

8. (E) 1950's House, 5812 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 34, Block 24, Lot 22.

One-story side-gabled house, similar to 5822 et al., with entrance in first bay. Light brick veneer below windows, main facade, with yellow horizontal siding above brick. Picture window in second bay.

9. (C) "Classic Box" House, 5811 Ruatan Street (south side), ca. 1910, Tax Map 34, Block 23, Lots 7 and 8.

Two-story, frame Foursquare with pyramidal roof covered with white aluminum siding. Entrance in second bay of north facade. One-story gable-roofed wing, two-by-one-bay, extends to east. Corbelled chimney in west plane of roof. Concrete foundation.

A much-altered example of the popular "Classic Box" style of dwelling.

10. (E) 1950's House, 5810 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 34, Block 24, Lot 23.

One-and-one-half story side-gabled house with brick veneer below windows, main facade, and cream-colored synthetic horizontal sid-

ing above brick. Central entrance. Two gabled dormers in south roof.

11. (B) Bungalow, 5808 Ruatan Street (north side), ca. 1920's, Tax Map 34, Block 24, Lots 24 and 25.

One-and-one-half story side-gabled bungalow covered in light green synthetic horizontal siding. Three-by-three bay with entrance in central bay of south facade. Integral porch with tapered shingled posts on molded concrete block bases. Central gabled dormer with three small square windows.

Excellent example of the side-gabled bungalow style dwelling popular in the 1920's.

12. (E) 1950's House, 5809 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 34, Block 23, Lot 9.

One-story side-gabled house, similar to 5822 et al., with brick veneer below windows, main facade. Three-by-two bay with rear addition and door in first bay. Picture windows with modern black shutters.

13. (B) Cross-Russell House, #67-13, 5805 Ruatan Street (south side), 1889, Tax Map 34, Block 23, Lots 10 and 11, p/o 12.

Two-and-one-half story frame cross-gabled house. Entrance in first bay of north facade. Balustered balcony, fishscale shingles and perforated bargeboards. Wraparound porch.

A significant and visible reminder of the first dwellings in this late Victorian suburb.

14. (A) O'Dea House, #67-11, 5804 Ruatan Street (north side), 1888, Tax Map 34, Block 24, Lots 26 and 27.

Two-and-one-half story side-gabled frame house covered with plain horizontal boards on first story, scalloped shingles on second. Prominent octagonal projecting bay on south with three-story tower covered with scalloped and fishscale shingles and hip-roofed porch. Entrance in third bay of main (south) facade. Pedimented gable ends covered with fishscale shingles.

Outstanding example of an elegant pattern book house constructed by the Charlton Heights Improvement Company as a model home for this late Victorian suburb; a prominent landmark in this community.

15. (E) 1950's House, 5803 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 34, Block 23, Lot 13, p/o 12.

One-story side-gabled house covered with light green asbestos shingles. Three-by-two bay, with door in first bay of three bay north facade. Picture window in second bay.

16. (E) 1950's House, 8711 58th Avenue (southeast corner), Tax Map 34, Block 23, p/o Lots 14 and 15.

One-and-one-half story brick side-gabled house with projecting gabled entry on west facade and gabled dormer. Faces 58th Avenue.

17. (E) • 1950's House, 8801 58th Avenue (northeast corner), Tax Map 34, Block 24, p/o Lots 28 and 29.

One-and-one-half story side-gabled brick house. Three-by-two bay, with entry in third bay of west facade, facing 58th Avenue. Two gable dormers in west plane of roof. Gable-roofed wing at north end.

18. (E) 1950's House, 8800 58th Avenue (northwest corner), Tax Map 34, Block 7, Lot 45.

One-story ell-shaped brick ranch with gable roof. White aluminum siding on gable ends. Entrance in ell. Garage attached.

19. (A) Chlopicki House, #67-12, 5717 Ruatan Street (southwest corner), 1889, Tax Map 34, Block 8, Lots 1-4.

Two-and-one-half story frame cross-gabled house with three-story tower. T-shaped, with main block and rear south wing. Main block two-by-three bay, with entrance in second bay of asymmetrical north facade. Three-story pyramidal roof tower in northwest corner. Gable ends decorated by ramiform panelling.

Outstanding example of Queen Anne style dwelling constructed from pattern book design; one of the earliest houses in Charlton Heights, and a prominent landmark in the community.

20. (B) Gohr House, #67-14, 5712 Ruatan Street (north side), 1889, Tax Map 34, Block 7, Lot 47.

Two-story side-gabled frame house covered in horizontal boards. Red aluminum shingle roof. Pedimented entry porch centered in main (south) facade with pediment ornamented with geometric

panels. East and west gable ends sided with scalloped shingles. Additions to east and north elevations.

One of the early houses built by the Charlton Heights Improvement Company from a pattern book design; a prominent landmark in the community.

21. (E) 1950's House, 5715 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 34, Block 8, Lot 5A.

One-story side-gabled house with red shingles below windows, white vertical siding above shingles on main (north) facade. Entrance in first bay. Second bay has picture window; third bay, double window. Red shutters and concrete foundation.

22. (E) 1950's House, 5710 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 48.

One-story hip roof house with brick veneer below windows (main facade) and yellow horizontal siding above brick. Four-by-one-bay, entrance recessed in third bay.

23. (E) 1950's House, 5713 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 6A.

Same as 5715. One-story side-gabled house with green shingles instead of red below windows and white vertical siding above shingles, main facade. Entrance in first bay. Second bay has picture window; third bay, double windows. White shutters.

24. (E) 1950's House, 5708 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax map 33, Block 7, Lot 24.

One-and-one-half story side-gabled house with white aluminum siding. Central entrance, on concrete basement. Double dormer across south facade.

25. (E) 1950's House, 5709 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lots 7 and 8.

One-and-one-half-story three-bay side-gabled house covered with white aluminum siding. Gable-roofed projecting bay in first bay (eastern-most). On concrete basement. Porch in interior corner of projecting bay.

26. (E) 1950's House, 5706 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 25.

One-and-one-half-story side-gabled house. Three-by-two-bay with a central entrance. Concrete basement and awnings.

27. (E) 1950's House, 5702 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 26.

Two-story side-gabled house, with brick veneer on first story and white horizontal aluminum siding above brick. Door in first of two bays on south facade. Picture window in second bay.

28. (E) 1950's House, 5705 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 9.

One-story side-gabled house covered with yellow synthetic siding above high brick basement. Three-bay with door in third bay.

29. (E) 1950's House, 5703 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 10.

One-story side-gabled house with white siding above brick. Door in first bay. Mirror image of 5703.

30. (E) 1950's House, 5701 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 11.

Same as 5705, with white siding above brick.

31. (E) 1950's House, 5628 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 27.

One-and-one-half story side-gabled house with yellow siding. Three-bay, with central entrance. On concrete foundation.

32. (E) 1950's House, 5626 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 28, p/o Lot 29.

One-and-one-half story side-gabled house with gray aluminum siding. Four bay, with entrance in third bay.

33. (B) House, 5625 Ruatan Street (south side), ca. 1900, Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 13.

Two-and-one-half story front-gabled frame house with pedimented north gable end and blue asbestos shingle siding with white trim. 2/2 windows with plain board surrounds. Gable dormer in west plane, chimneys in east. One-story hip-roof porch across north facade. Rear addition.

This house exemplifies the simple front-gabled dwelling of the turn of the century, of which there are numerous examples in the Berwyn Heights community.

34. (E) 1960's House, 5623 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 14.

One-story side-gabled house, brick veneer, three-by-two bay. Door in central bay with classical surround, broken pediment.

35. (B) House, 5622 Ruatan Street (north side), ca. 1900, Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 30, p/o Lot 29.

Two-and-one-half story front-gabled frame house, painted yellow, with three-bay main facade (south) at gable end. Door in first bay, 2/2 full-length windows in second and third bays, with transoms. One-story shed-roofed porch across main facade. Flared eaves with crown molding, returned cornices. Two corbelled brick chimneys at ridge.

This house exemplifies the front-gabled dwellings of the turn of the century, of which there are numerous examples in the Berwyn Heights Community.

36. (E) 1950's House, 5620 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 31.

One-and-one-half story side-gabled house with white aluminum siding over brick basement. Entrance in first of three bays. Full dormer across second level south facade. Black shutters.

37. (E) 1950's House, 5618 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lots 32 and 33.

One-story side-gabled house with jerkinhead roof, brown and salmon shingle siding. Central entrance with classical-revival entry porch.

38. (E) 1950's House, 5621 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 15.

One-story side-gabled house, with beige siding and dark brown shutters above brick basement. Four bay, with entrance in second bay. Dark brown shutters.

39. (E) 1950's House, 5619 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 16.

One-story side-gabled house with aqua siding above light brick basement. Four bay, with entrance in second bay.

40. (B) Wolfe House, #67-15, 5617 Ruatan Street (south side), 1889, Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 17.

Two-and-one-half story frame mansard roof house with white metal siding. Five-by-two bays with double door in central bay. One-story hip-roofed porch across main (northwest) facade, with lattice frieze. Roof covered with patterned tin. Four dormers in main facade.

This house is a rare local example of a late Victorian dwelling with second empire decorative detail; although altered, it is a prominent landmark in this late nineteenth century suburb.

41. (E) 1950's House, 5616 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lots 34 and 35.

One-story gabled front and ell wing with white aluminum siding. Door in ell wing.

42. (E) 1950's House, 5612 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 36.

One-story side-gabled house with white aluminum siding above brick basement. Four bay, with salmon shutters and exterior chimney.

43. (E) 1950's House, 5615 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 18.

One-story side-gabled house with yellow siding above brick basement. Four bay, with entrance in second bay.

44. (E) 1950's House, 5613 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 19.

Same as 5615, with blue siding.

45. (E) 1950's House, 5610 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 37.

One-story side-gabled house with light blue siding above high brick basement. Four bay, with entrance in first bay.

46. (E) 1950's House, 5608 Ruatan Street (north side), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lot 38.

- One-story side-gabled house with white siding above high brick basement. Four bay with entrance in fourth bay.
47. (E) 1950's House, 5611 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 20.
- One-story side-gabled house with beige asbestos shingles. Three-bay with entrance in center.
48. (E) 1950's House, 5609 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 21.
- Same as 5611, with dark brown shingles.
49. (E) 1950's House, 5607 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 22.
- One-story side-gabled house with white asbestos shingles above high brick basement. Three-bay, with entrance in first bay.
50. (E) 1950's House, 5605 Ruatan Street (south side), Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lot 23.
- Same as 5607.
51. (C) House, 5600 Ruatan Street (northeast corner, at 56th Avenue), Tax Map 33, Block 7, Lots 39 and 40, ca. 1900.
- Two-and-one-half story frame cross-gabled house covered with pink and gray asbestos shingles. Front-gabled three-bay main facade (south), with entrance in south bay. Two-and-one-half story two-bay rectangular projecting bay to west, with 2/2 double windows.
- This house exemplifies the front-gabled dwelling type of the turn of the century, in this case distinguished by a rear cross-gable wing; this was a popular house type in the Berwyn Heights community.
52. (B) Kleiner - Dillon House, #67-17, 5603 Ruatan Street (south side), 1888, Tax Map 33, Block 8, Lots 24 to 26.
- Large two-and-one-half story gable-roofed frame house, of late Victorian Shingle style, with three-story octagonal corner tower, and abundant Queen Anne style decorative detail.
- Outstanding example of late Victorian pattern book house, constructed by the Charlton Heights Improvement Company as a model home for the new suburb; a prominent landmark in this community.

# 8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1888-1930's Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or

Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

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

### Significance

The historic survey district in Berwyn Heights is a two block area of the town which was platted in 1888 as Charlton Heights. The 52 buildings included in this survey reflect the residential character of the community over more than a half century. Six of them are substantial Queen Anne/Victorian frame dwellings which survive from the first two years of the Charlton Heights development. The period of significance of the buildings ranges from 1888 (when the town was first platted) into the 1930's; later (1950's and 1960's) small cottages (non-contributing) have filled in the lots, and completed the development of the community.

### History and Support

The area which became Charlton Heights was, in the second half of the nineteenth century, an agricultural region. Major landholdings in the area were Toaping Castle of the Walker family approximately one mile to the east, the Amos Reed farm just north of the Branchville Road, and the "Yarrow" or "Sportland" farm of Ethan Allen Jones (and, later, General Carrington) located on land which became the southerly section of Berwyn Heights.<sup>1</sup>

The nearest village was Branchville, a small community settled after the Civil War on the Washington line of the B&O Railroad. This little settlement, which by 1878 could boast a population of 50, clustered around the general store and post office operated by Pinkney A. Scaggs.<sup>2</sup> The first primary school in the area was an early one, built in 1858 just east of the road to Bladensburg. Later, in the 1870's, Miss Mary Keech established the Waverly Seminary for young women to the southeast. The Pine Grove School was established in the 1880's near the site of the old primary school; it was replaced in 1922 by the substantial two-room school-house on Keleher (now Ruatan) Avenue.<sup>3</sup> The first church in the area was

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM  
Statement of Significance (continued)

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established in 1875; built on one acre of land donated by Jonathan T. Walker of Toaping Castle, it stood on the south side of the Branchville Road (between present day 60th Avenue and Cunningham Drive), and was named Haddaway Chapel in honor of its first pastor, Rev. Samuel W. Haddaway. (This chapel burned to the ground in 1907, the lot was subsequently sold, and only a few deteriorated gravestones remain to mark the site of the chapel and cemetery).<sup>4</sup>

Beginning in the 1870's, the area northeast of Washington was the scene of active and continuous development, as the population of the Federal City increased and the railroad suburbs gradually grew and expanded around it. Hyattsville was the first major development in Prince George's County, and others, like The Highlands, College Park, Riverdale Park and Central Heights, soon attempted to repeat its success. In 1887, Edward Graves of Washington, D.C. purchased 383 acres south of the Branchville Road and bounded on the west by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. He engaged the firm of Newby and Howell to survey and plat a new residential community, and called it Charlton Heights.<sup>5</sup> The plat of 1888 showed 50-foot-wide streets, criss-crossing at varied angles, and lots of approximately 50 by 200 feet. Graves sold the land in 1888 to the Charlton Heights Improvement Company, which immediately began construction of dwellings ordered by pattern through the mail. Within the same year, the Company began to sell lots, some unimproved, and some with new houses already erected.<sup>6</sup> By the end of the first year, approximately 20 houses had been built, and the new town became the home principally of professionals who used the Baltimore and Ohio railroad to commute into Washington, D.C.<sup>7</sup>

For the next three years, the Charlton Heights Improvement Company continued to sell lots, but with only limited success. In 1892, Edward Graves, the developer, and James Waugh, secretary of the Company, both of whom resided in Charlton Heights, bought the remaining unsold lots; they continued to sell them, and the Charlton Heights Improvement Company ceased operations. In 1896, by an act of the Maryland General Assembly, the town was incorporated, and its name was changed to Berwyn Heights. It continued to grow slowly; by 1910, the population was slightly over 150, and there were 38 dwellings.<sup>8</sup> Today most of the lots have been filled in by 1950's subdivision housing, and Berwyn Heights is a quiet residential community with curving streets and old trees, set back and somewhat secluded, between two major highways.

The buildings of this survey district reflect the suburban residential character of the community over more than a half-century. They include some of the first dwellings constructed by the Charlton Heights Improvement Company to attract purchasers to the new community. Four of these dwellings were constructed from designs produced by the Cooperative

Building Plan Association in New York City, and distributed through the periodical publications of R. W. Shoppell, president of the Association. Through Shoppell's publications, working plans and specifications could be ordered at a very low price, together with an estimate of total cost based on local labor and materials. This allowed to people of moderate means the possibility of a well-built and stylish house previously available only to the wealthy. It also provided an outstanding opportunity to real estate speculators for the development of high-class and attractive, but attainable, suburban residences.<sup>9</sup>

The four dwellings in this survey district which are known to have been constructed from Shoppell designs are the following:

Building Inventory #14 (O'Dea House) built in 1888 from Design #216 of Shoppell's Artistic Modern Houses of Low Cost (1888);

Building Inventory #19 (Chlopicki House), built in 1888 from Design #449 of Shoppell's Modern Houses (1887), with adaptations from Design #277 of Artistic Modern Houses of Low Cost (1888);

Building Inventory #20 (Gohr House) built in 1890, adapted from Design #204 of Shoppell's Modern Houses (1887); and

Building Inventory #52 (Kleiner-Dillon House) built in 1888 from Design #462 of Shoppell's Modern Houses (1887).

Two other houses, Building Inventory #13 (Cross-Russell House) built in 1888, and #40 (Wolfe House) built in 1889, resemble designs distributed by Shoppell, but the specific patterns have not yet been identified.

Three others (Building Inventory #33, 35 and #51) were constructed at the turn of the century, and represent the modest vernacular frame dwellings which were springing up in suburban developments. Two more (#4 and #9) are good examples of the Foursquare or "Classic Box" design which was popular circa 1910. One other (#11) is an excellent example of the bungalow style of dwelling of the 1920's and 1930's. Building Inventory #7 is a substantial two-room schoolhouse of 1922 which rests on a high basement; it has been converted into a residence in recent years. All the rest of the buildings (39) are modest dwellings of the 1950's and 1960's, one or one-and-one-half story cottage-style or rambler-type suburban dwellings. The survey district therefore reflects the residential character of this community for nearly three quarters of a century, from 1888 to the early 1960's, and from the ornate and substantial to the modest and small. It also includes the schoolhouse which, from 1922 to 1958, was the educational.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

Survey No. PG#67-22

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center of the residential community. The boundaries of the survey district may be expanded or adjusted at some future time.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> G. M. Hopkins, Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, 1878; cf. Prince George's County Inventory File #67-5.

<sup>2</sup> G. M. Hopkins, op. cit.; Maryland Gazeteers, statistics for Prince George's County, 1871, 1878, 1882.

<sup>3</sup> Acts of Maryland, Chapter #430, 1858; Maryland Gazeteers, 1871, 1878, 1882, 1876, 1894-95; G. M. Hopkins, op. cit.; G. M. Hopkins, Map of Vicinity of Washington, 1894; Prince George's County Inventory File #67-7.

<sup>4</sup> Maryland Gazeteers, cf. supra, G. M. Hopkins, op. cit.; 1878, 1894; Prince George's County Deed. HB#10:176; D. D. Skarda, Berwyn Heights-History of a Small Maryland Town.

<sup>5</sup> Prince George's County Deeds, JWB #9:127, 130; Prince George's County Plat, JWB #10:309.

<sup>6</sup> Prince George's County Deeds, JWB #11:543; R. W. Shoppell Modern Houses, 1887; Artistic Modern Houses at Low Cost, 1888; Beautiful Homes, 1887; Building Plans for Modern Low Cost Houses, 1884, etc.; cf. Charlton Heights Improvement Company deeds, 1888.

<sup>7</sup> Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1888-1890; Census for Prince George's County, E. D. #1, 1900.

<sup>8</sup> JWB #20:496; JWB #21:225; JWB #22:53; G. M. Hopkins map, 1894; Census for Prince George's County, E.D. #1, 1900, 1910; Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1890-1910; Skarda, D.D., Berwyn Heights - History of a Small Maryland Town.

<sup>9</sup> R. W. Shoppell, Building Plans for Modern Low Cost Houses, 1884; Modern Houses, 1887; Modern Houses, 1888; Artistic Modern Houses of Low Cost, 1888; Building Designs, 1889.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Cf. Notes, Item #8

## 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property ca 800,000 sq feet

Tax Maps 33 & 34

Quadrangle name Washington East, section C

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

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

Buildings on both sides of Ruatan Street, between 60th Avenue on the east, and Berwyn Road on the west.

### 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 Susan G. Pearl, Research Historian

organization P.G.Co. Historic Preservation Commission date September 1986

street & number c/0 County Planning, MNCPPC telephone 301-952-3521

city or town Upper Marlboro state MD

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





PG # 67-22

USGS

WASHINGTON EAST QUADRANGLE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - MARYLAND  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5662  
LA

76°52'30"  
39°0'

