PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #68-24 Building Date: ca. 1870

Building Name: Costinett House

Location: 4901 40th Place, Hyattsville, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description

The Costinett House is a two-story frame hip-roof dwelling, distinguished by its classical roofline and chimneys, and its decorative Italianate cornice brackets. The house is two stories high, three bays by two bays. Entrance is in the central bay of the three bay west facade, through a door with single-pane sidelights over molded wainscot panels. The door and windows have classical enframements. Across the main west facade is a one-story hip-roof porch. The original wooden siding of the house is covered by light green grainedvinyl siding. The hip roof is covered with pattered shingle. The cornice is boxed with crown molding, and there is a continuous board frieze, with bed molding, around the house. Frieze and cornice are decorated with fine scroll brackets and pendants. A stuccoed chimney rises from each of the north and south planes of the roof. The building rests on a high brick foundation.

Significance

The Costinett House is an unusual example of a hip-roof Victorian dwelling with Georgian Revival features which make it a noticeable landmark in the Town of Hyattsville. It stands on one of the lots in Hyatts' Addition to Hyattsville, and is possibly the oldest house still standing in Hyattsville. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Christopher C. Hyatt had purchased property at the intersection of the Turnpike and the railroad north of Bladensburg. In 1873, a section of his property was surveyed and platted into building lots, and came to be known as Hyatts Addition to Hyattsville. At this time, the subject house already stood facing the County Road. It was probably built by Christopher Hyatt between the end of the Civil War and 1873. Hyatt sold the house and adjoining grounds in 1877 to Reverend John J. McElhinney of Fairfax, Virginia. The property was sold after Mrs. McElhinney died in 1905. For many years in this century, it was the home of the Costinett family. In a court case in 1931, the house was described as perhaps "50 years old", "one of the oldest houses in Hyattsville". The house has changed hands several times since it was sold in 1935. It is a handsome example of Victorian suburban architecture, with Georgian Revival features, and fine Italianate detail in its cornice brackets and pendants. It may be the oldest house still standing in Hyatttsville, and is a visible and familiar landmark in that Victorian community.

Acreage: 15,132 square feet

Survey No. P.G.68-24

Magi No.

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic McElhinney House

and/or common Costinett House (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 4901 40th Place ___ not for publication

city, town Hyattsville ___ vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

3. Classification

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

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

name Sri Kuhns

street & number 4901 40th Place telephone no.:

city, town Hyattsville state and zip code Maryland 20781

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber #5540

street & number Main Street folio 730

city, town Upper Marlboro, 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. P.G. #68-24

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

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

The Costinett House is a two-story frame hip-roof dwelling presently covered with vinyl siding. It is distinguished by by its classical roof-line and chimneys, and its decorative Italianate cornice brackets; it stands on one of the early lots platted in the Town of Hyattsville.

The house is two stories high, three bays by two bays. Entrance is in the central bay of the three bay west facade, through a door with single-pane sidelights over molded wainscot panels. The door itself has six panels. The door and windows have classical enframements: plain board surrounds with outer bead, and wider lintels, painted white. The principal west door is flanked by full-length openings; double-doors with four lights in each leaf. Enframement is the same as that of the principal entrance. Other windows are 2/2 double hung sash; the window over the principal entrance lights a recently added bathroom, and is smaller, 6/1.

Across the main west facade is a one-story hip-roof porch with concrete floor; its plain aluminum cornice is supported by slim fluted aluminum columns. This porch wraps around to the south and shelters one bay of the south facade. Sheltered by this portion of the porch is a one-story projecting semi-octagonal bay. Each of the three windows in this projecting bay is 2/2 double hung sash, over a horizontal molded panel.

The original wooden siding of the house is presently covered by light green grainedvinyl siding. The hip roof is covered with pattered shingle. The cornice is boxed with crown molding, and there is a continuous board frieze, with bed molding, around the house. The frieze and cornice are decorated with fine scroll brackets and pendants. A tall stuccoed chimney rises from each of the north and south planes of the roof,but the northerly chimney is false. There is a gable dormer centered in the east (rear) plane of the roof. Its cornice has crown molding and applied dentil decoration, and it encloses a tall 2/2 window. There is evidence in the framing of the attic that there was originally a corresponding dormer in the main west plane of the roof, but it has been removed and structurally closed.

The building rests on a high brick foundation which encloses a basement under the southerly portion of the house. Outside entrance to the basement is through a bulkhead opening under the first (southeast) bay of the east facade.

A one-story shed-roof porch shelters the central bay of the east facade. Its wooden floor rests on brick piers; its cornice has crown molding and is supported by plain wooden posts.

Interior of the house consists of a central stairhall with two rooms on each side. The single flight open-string stair rises along the north wall of the stairhall; it has a heavy turned newel and turned balusters. Beneath this staircase, another flight leads down into the basement. Door - and window surrounds have bold multi-band astragal moldings. Floors are of narrow boards, and the plain high baseboard has a crown molding.

The house is set back only ca. 20 feet from the street, and a white picket fence forms the westerly boundary of the lot. The driveway is immediately south of the house; it leads to a paved parking area behind (east of) the house. The rear yard extends east to the dead end of Decatur Street. There are several old trees in the small front yard.

8. Significance

Survey No. P.G.#68-24

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

Specific dates ca. 1870 **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.

The Costinett House is a good and unusual example of a hip-roof Victorian dwelling with Georgian Revival features which make it a noticeable landmark in the Town of Hyattsville. It stands on one of the lots in Hyatts' Addition to Hyattsville, and is possibly the oldest house still standing in Hyattsville.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Christopher C. Hyatt had purchased property at the intersection of the old Washington Baltimore Turnpike and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad north of Bladensburg; he built his brick mansion (no longer standing) on the west side of the railroad, and opened a store directly across the tracks. In 1859, Hyatt was appointed postmaster of the new crossroads community which from thence forward was to bear his name.[1]

In 1873, Hyatt had a section of his property surveyed and platted into building lots roughly 60 by 280 feet. This roughly 20-acre area was known as Hyatts Addition to Hyattsville.[2] By 1878 the town was developing into a desirable place of residence for commuters to the Capital city. An 1878 account describes the new town as follows: "Hyattsville, on the Washington Branch of the Baltimore Ohio Railroad, is a beautiful village, tasteful houses in the modern style of architecture, ornamented with gardens and lawns, is largely indebted, for its prosperity, to Christopher C. Hyatt, ...it has gradually increased in beauty and prosperity until its stands as one of the foremost villages between Baltimore and Washington.[3]

At the time Hyatts' Subdivision was platted in 1873, the subject house already stood facing the County Road, on land which would become part of Lot #6.[4] It was probably built by Christopher Hyatt between the end of the Civil War and 1873, although it is not known exactly when or for whom it was built. In any case, Hyatt sold the house and adjoining grounds (the northern part of Lots 4, 5 and 6 and Lots 7 and 8 of Hyatt's Addition) in 1877 to Reverend John J. McElhinney of Fairfax, Virginia.[5] The McElhinney family apparently used the house only as a part-time home, and continued to reside in Virginia. After Mrs. McElhinney died in 1905,

her executor sold the property.[6] For many years in this century, it was the home of the Costinett family. Anna Costinett died intestate in 1928, and her family brought the decision to the Equity Court in order to enable her widower and children to dispose of the property at an advantageous price. Depositions taken in 1931 during the Court's hearing described the house as perhaps "50 years old", "one of the oldest houses in Hyattsville", "an eight room dwelling with a couple of little sheds in the rear," with a "pretty good appearance for an old house, pretty well taken care of, and not specially in need of repair, but, of course, it is old timber," and "a very old piece of property."[7]

The property has changed hands several times since it was sold in 1935. In 1957, Lot #6 was resubdivided into smaller building Lots #50-53. The house stands on what is now designated Lot #52.[8] It is a handsome example of Victorian suburban architecture, with Georgian Revival features, and fine Italianate detail in its cornice brackets and pendants. It may be the oldest house still standing in Hyatttsville, and is a visible and familiar landmark in that Victorian community.

Notes

1 Prince George's County Deeds JBB #1:280; JBB #2:481; JBB #4:113, 337; CSM #3:476, 477.

2 Prince George's County Plat HB #8:176.

3 G.M. Hopkins Atlas of Prince George's County, 1878, "Historical Sketch".

4 E.R. McKean Map of Hyattsville, 1873, Library of Congress; cf. also Martenet map of Prince George's County, 1861, and G.M. Hopkins Atlas of Prince George's County, 1878.

5 Prince George's County Deeds HB #2:170; JWB #11:225.

6 Prince George's County Will WRS #1:486; Prince George's Equity #3349; Prince George's County Deed #38:267.

7 Prince George's County Equity #8257.

8 Prince George's County Plat WWW #30:37.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G.#68-24

cf notes, Item #8

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 15, 132 sq. ft.

Tax map 50, 10t 52 4300

Quadrangle name Washington East, Section E

Quadrangle scale

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

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

Verbal boundary description and justification

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/Architectural Historian

organization Historic Preservation Commission c/o MNCPPC date September 1987

street & number 4010 County Administration Building telephone 952-3521

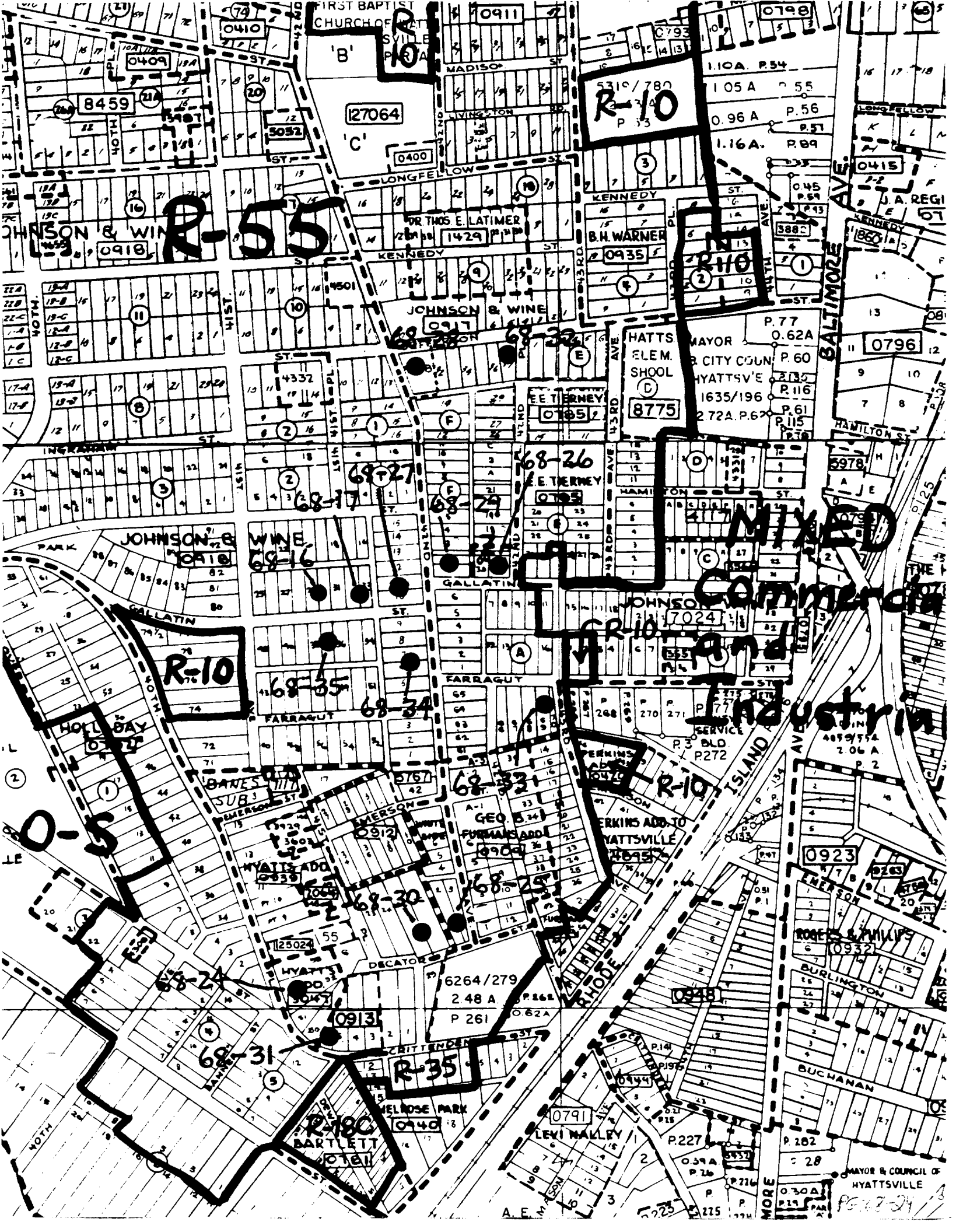
city or town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

PS-2746



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF HYATTSVILLE
R-10
R-55
R-10
R-110
MIXED Commercial and Industrial
R-10
R-10
R-35
R-18C
O-S
JOHNSON & WINE
DR. THOS. E. LATIMER
B.H. WARNER
HATTS ELEM. SHOOL
MAYOR & CITY COUN HYATTSV'E
E.E. TIERNEY
GALLATIN
FARRAGUT
HOLLIDAY
BANES SUB
HYATTS ADD
GEO. B. FURMANS ADD
PERKINS ADD. TO HYATTSVILLE
ROGERS & PHILLIPS
LEVI NALLEY
BARTLETT
MAYOR & COUNCIL OF HYATTSVILLE
BALTIMORE AVE
ISLAND AVE
RHODE
MADISON ST
LONGFELLOW ST
KENNEDY ST
HAMILTON ST
INGRAHAM ST
EMERSON ST
DECATOR
CRITTENDEN
BURLINGTON
BUCHANAN
LIVINGSTON RD
HAMILTON ST
PARK
40TH
41ST
42ND
43RD
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WASHINGTON EAST
Chatham
University Hills Recreation Center
Byrd Stadium
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
St. Marks Sch
College Heights Estates
Northwestern High Sch
College Heights
Calvert Hills
University Park
University Park Sch
Prince Georges Plaza
Memorial Library
Leland Memorial Hospital
West Riverdale
Hyattsville Hills
Ellaville
Queens Chapel Manor
Concordia Lutheran Sch
HYATTSVILLE
Castle Manor
Anacostia River Park
Magruder Park
North Brentwood
Brentwood
Cottage City
Colmar
Peace Cross
Bladensburg
Bladensburg Sch
Jr High Sch
Villa Heights
Shopping Center
Edmonston
Northeast
Fletchers Field
Ducat Town
Rogers Heights
Springbrook Terrace
Green Manor
Gaging Sta
RIVERDALE
Riverdale Recreation Center
Riverdale Heights
Riverdale Hills
East Pines
Riverdale Gardens
Wirt Jr High Sch
Erco Field
Water Tank
Calvert Park
Paint Branch Park
College Park Airport
College Park Sch
Municipal Bldg
COLLEGE PARK
Berwyn Heights
Lakeland Sch
Trailer Park
Playground
Indian Creek
Branch
Paint Branch
Creek
Brier
Pumping Sta
Fire Sta
Orem Jr High Sch
Rainier High Sch
Pumping Sta
Municipal Bldg
Evergreen
Water Tank
Bladensburg High Sch
Rogers Heights Sch
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PG#68-24

Costinett House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
January 1987
Northwest 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD

PG#68-24

Costinett House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
January 1987
South elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD

PG#68-24

Costinett House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
January 1987
Southeast 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD

4901

PG#68-24

Costinett House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
January 1987
West detail
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD

PG#68-24

Costinett HOuse
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
January 1987
East elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD