CAPSULE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey No.: PG:74B-22 **Construction Date:** circa 1920-1977

Name: Robinson Property

N.E.

Location: 3603 and 3805 Crain Highway, Mitchellville vicinity, Prince George's County

Private/Agriculture, Private Residence/Occupied/Good/Restricted

Description:

The Robinson Property is located on the east side of Crain Highway (U.S. 301) in the Mitchellville vicinity, Prince George's County. This tract of land functioned as the Robinson family farmstead from 1873 to 1994. Currently, the property consists of two separate tax parcels containing two houses, two barns and various other outbuildings. The buildings are arranged along a gravel lane extending east from Crain Highway. The parcel adjacent to Crain Highway is known as 3805 Crain Highway and is a 20 acre (8 hectare) tract owned by Amedeo and Maria Conti. The land was subdivided from the Robinson farmstead in 1976. This parcel contains a house and garage constructed in 1977 and a circa 1920 tobacco barn. The second parcel, 3603 Crain Highway is a 64.71 acre (26 hectare) tract which remained in the Robinson family until 1994. The property contains a house constructed circa 1965, a garage constructed circa 1930, a shed built circa 1950 and a circa 1940 tobacco barn. The original house was demolished and replaced by James K. Robinson with the circa 1965 structure. 3603 Crain Highway was purchased by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in 1994 for conservation as open space within the Green Branch Community Park.

Significance:

The Robinson Property consists of modern residential structures with older agricultural outbuildings. This occurrence is somewhat common throughout the region. During the twentieth century, agricultural lands along the U.S. 301 corridor were attracting new settlers seeking a rural atmosphere and an easy commute to Washington D.C. and Annapolis. The completion of U.S. Route 50 in 1957 increased accessibility of the U.S. 301 corridor to major urban centers. Long-neglected farmhouses were replaced with modern dwellings by new residents, while other farms were subdivided into suburban 'farmettes'. The subdivided farm parcels often contained older farm outbuildings which continued in use.
The residences on the Robinson Property are common building types which were not constructed during an historic period. The agricultural outbuildings are ubiquitous to the region. Evaluated in its entirety, the farmstead lacks buildings of architectural, material, design or historical significance.

Preparer:
P.A.C. Spero & Company
November 1998

Survey No. PG:74B-22

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties

DOE ___yes ___no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Robinson Property (Preferred)

and/or common Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission / Conti Property

2. Location

street & number 3603 and 3805 Northeast Crain Highway ___ not for publication

city, town Mitchellville _X_ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Prince George's

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___district	_X_public	_X_occupied	_X_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	_X_yes: restricted	___government	___scientific
	___being considered	___yes: unrestricted	___industrial	___transportation
	_X_not applicable	___no	___military	___other:

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

name Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission / Amedo and Maria Conti

street & number 6600 Kenilworth Avenue / 3805 Northeast Crain Highway telephone no.:

city,town Riverdale / Mitchellville state and zip code MD 20737 / 20717

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Land Records Office of Prince George's County liber 9922 / 4686

street & number 14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive folio 150 / 380

city,town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___federal ___state ___county ___local

depository for survey records

city,town state

7. Description

Survey No. PG:74B-22

Condition		Check one	Check one	
___excellent	___deteriorated	___unaltered	_X_original site	
___good	___ruins	_X_altered	___moved	date of move _____
_X_fair	___unexposed			

Resource Count: 7

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

The Robinson Property is located on the east side of Crain Highway (U.S. 301) in the Mitchellville vicinity, Prince George's County. This tract of land functioned as the Robinson family farmstead from 1873 to 1994. Currently, the property consists of two separate tax parcels containing two houses, two barns and various other outbuildings. The buildings are arranged along a gravel lane extending east from Crain Highway. The parcel adjacent to Crain Highway is known as 3805 Crain Highway and is a 20 acre (8 hectare) tract owned by Amedeo and Maria Conti. The land was subdivided from the Robinson farmstead in 1976. This parcel contains a house and garage constructed in 1977 and a circa 1920 tobacco barn. The second parcel, 3603 Crain Highway is a 64.71 acre (26 hectare) tract which remained in the Robinson family until 1994. The property contains a house constructed circa 1965, a garage constructed circa 1930, a shed built circa 1950 and a circa 1940 tobacco barn. The original house was demolished and replaced by James K. Robinson with the circa 1965 structure. 3603 Crain Highway was purchased by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in 1994 for conservation as open space within the Green Branch Community Park.

The 20 acre (8 hectare) parcel at 3805 Crain Highway contains a house, garage and tobacco barn. The gravel lane which extends east from Crain Highway separates the house and garage on the south side of the lane from the tobacco barn on the north side of the lane. The house, constructed in 1977, is a wood-frame, split-level building with a brick and aluminum sided exterior. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the windows are wood double-hung units. The detached garage building is located east of the house. Contemporary with the house, the front-gable garage is a 2-story wood-frame building with an apartment unit on the second story. The exterior is covered with brick and aluminum siding. The first story has a wood overhead door, while the second story has an entrance and vinyl 1/1 double-hung windows. The tobacco barn, constructed circa 1920, is located north of the house and garage. The wood-frame building is supported by concrete piers, has vertical wood siding and a standing-seam metal roof. The barn is oriented east-west, adjacent to the gravel lane. Wood double-doors are located on the south, long side of the barn. The southern roof slope has been raised, enlarging the capacity of the loft and increasing the amount of southern exposure to the drying tobacco crop.

Located at the end of the gravel lane, east of the previously mentioned buildings, is 3603 Crain Highway. This cluster of buildings include a circa 1965 house, circa 1930 garage, circa 1950 shed and circa 1940 tobacco barn. The present house is located at the site of the original Robinson farmhouse. The house is a 1-story brick structure with a side-gable roof and front-gable porch. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the windows are wood 2/2 double-hung units with horizontally divided lights. South of the house is a small 1-story wood-frame garage. The garage has a front-gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The structure rests on a concrete slab and is covered with modern textured plywood. The north elevation has an open garage bay. A shed is located adjacent to the garage. Constructed circa 1950, the concrete block structure has a side-gable roof covered with asphalt shingles and two enclosed openings on the north elevation. Located south of the house and outbuildings is a tobacco barn. Constructed circa 1940, the building has a concrete block foundation, vertical wood siding and a standing-seam metal roof. The building has hinged ventilators and double doors on the gable ends. The south gable end also has an open bay for equipment storage.

The property is located within a rapidly growing section of Prince George's County in close proximity to U.S. Route 50 (John Hanson Highway). Heavy commercialization has occurred to the north of the property and high-density residential developments are under construction to the west. The Robinson Property is part of a small agricultural community of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century farmsteads along Crain Highway and Mill Branch Road.

8. Significance

Survey No. PG:74B-22

Period	Areas of Significance -- Check and justify below			
__prehistoric	__archaeology-prehistoric	__community planning	__landscape architecture	__religion
__1400-1499	__archeology-historic	__conservation	__law	__science
__1500-1599	__agriculture	__economics	__literature	__sculpture
__1600-1699	__architecture	__education	__military	__social/ humanitarian
__1700-1799	__art	__engineering	__music	
__1800-1899	__commerce	__exploration/settlement	__philosophy	__theater
X 1900-	__communications	__industry	__politics/government	__transportation
		__invention		__other (specify)

Specific dates circa 1920 – 1977 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

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 Robinson Property was purchased in May 1873 by James G. Robinson from the trustees appointed by the Circuit Court in the case of Charles Gambill versus Elizabeth Hamilton. James G. Robinson purchased 97.5 acres (39.5 hectares) of real estate in Prince George's County called "Gantts Field." A house was constructed on the property circa 1875. The building appears on the 1878 edition of G. M. Hopkins' Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, Including the County of Prince George's, Maryland. After Robinson's death, the property was transferred to his wife Nellie Robinson. She willed the property to her son and daughter-in-law, Roger and Jennie Robinson. During their ownership, they transferred approximately 9 acres (3.6 hectares) of the property. Of the 9 acres (3.6 hectares), 3 acres (1.2 hectares) were transferred to Harriet Robinson in 1946 and 6 acres (2.4 hectares) to Mrs. Helen Phelps in 1958. Upon Roger Robinson's death, the remaining land, assessed as 85.255 acres (34.5 hectares), passed to James K. and Harriet Robinson. In 1965, the old farmhouse was replaced with the current 1-story brick dwelling at 3606 Crain Highway. The Robinsons sold 20 acres (8 hectares) to Amedeo and Maria Conti in 1976, retaining a right-of-way for the farm road. There was a covenant placed on the property forbidding the subdivision of the land for 15 years or until the remaining 65 acres (26.3 hectares) had been subdivided into 5 or more parcels. James K. and Harriet Robinson sold the remaining 65 acres (26.3 hectares) to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in 1994 as open space. Restrictions placed on the land prevent it from being developed without written approval and replacement of the land with an equivalent land area. The M-NCPPC and the Contis remain the current owners.

Since the original farmhouse is no longer extant, the tobacco barns are the remaining buildings which represent the historic use and occupation of the property. The production of tobacco created the need for a barn designed for the special storage and "curing" of the crop. The structures were long, wooden buildings with a gable roof. The interior had a central aisle and was divided into compartments by a network of wooden beams and "tie-poles." From these beams the tobacco was hung and allowed to naturally air-dry. To facilitate the curing process, the barns were designed with several methods of ventilation. Many barns had windows or ventilators near the roof ridge, while others had vertical boards which were hinged for vent openings or loosely spaced. Another common feature was the elevation of the barn on "legs" which provided air circulation from below the barn.

The Robinson Property consists of modern residential structures with older agricultural outbuildings. This occurrence is common throughout the region. During the twentieth century, agricultural property along the U.S. 301 corridor was attracting new settlers seeking a rural atmosphere and an easy commute to Washington D.C. and Annapolis. The completion of U.S. Route 50 in 1957 increased accessibility of the U.S. 301 corridor to major urban centers. Long-neglected farmhouses were replaced with modern dwellings by new residents, while other farms were subdivided into suburban `farmettes'. The subdivided farm parcels often contained older farm buildings which continued in use.

8. Significance (Continued)

National Register Evaluation:

Constructed between circa 1920 and 1977, the extant buildings on the Robinson Property are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Since all structures dating to the original occupation of the property are no longer extant, the property does not retain sufficient integrity to convey National Register significance. The property is not eligible under Criterion A, as research conducted indicates no association with any historic events or trends significant in the development of national, state, or local history. Historic research indicates that the property has no association with persons who have made specific contributions to history, and therefore, it does not meet Criterion B. It is not eligible under Criterion C, as the remaining structures are ubiquitous building types which lack individual significance.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Eligibility recommended _____ Eligibility Not Recommended _____

Comments

Reviewer, OPS: _____ Date: _____

Reviewer, NR Program: _____ Date: _____

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG:74B-22

See Attached

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____
Quadrangle name Bowie, MD Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

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 Tim Tamburrino

organization P.A.C. Spero & Company date November, 1998

street & number 40 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 412 telephone (410) 296-1635

city or town Baltimore 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 purposed 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
(410) 514-7600

9. Major Bibliographical References (Continued)

Boucher, Jack E. 1993. Landmarks of Prince George's County, Maryland. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Bowie, Effie Gwynn. 1975. Across the Years in Prince George's County. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company.

Gottfried, Herbert and Jan Jennings. 1988. American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press.

Gowans, Alan. 1992. Styles and Types of North American Architecture. New York: Harper Collins.

Hopkins, G. M. 1975. Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington Including the County of Prince George, Maryland. Riverdale, Maryland: Reprint by the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Martenet, Simon J. 1996. Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland, 1861. Riverdale, Maryland: Reprint by the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. 1993. Illustrated Inventory of Historic Sites, Prince George's County, Maryland. Upper Marlboro.

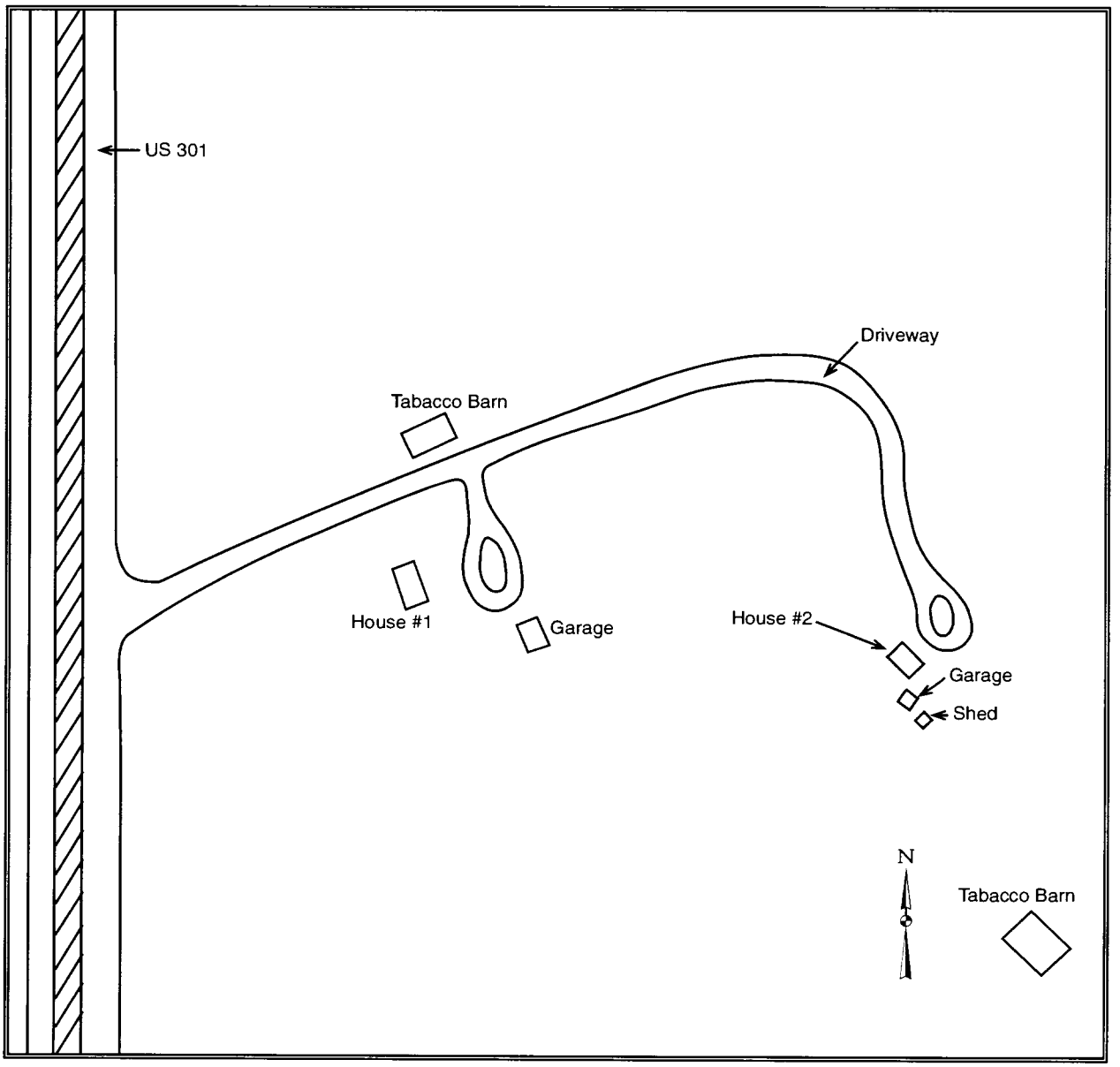
Pearl, Susan G., Marina King and Howard S. Berger. 1991. Historic Contexts in Prince George's County. Upper Marlboro: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Prince George's County Land Records Office. County Administration Building, Upper Marlboro, MD.

Prince George's County Office of Assessments and Taxation. Prince George's County Courthouse, Upper Marlboro, MD.

10. Geographical Data (Continued)

Resource Sketch Map:



CONTINUATION SHEET

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
RESOURCE NAME: Robinson Property
SURVEY NO.: PG:74B-22
ADDRESS: 3603 and 3805 Crain Highway, Mitchellville vicinity, Prince George's County

Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Data Sheet

Historic Context:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period Theme (s):

Industrial/Urban Dominance, A.D. 1870-1930
Modern Period, A.D. 1930-Present

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Agriculture
Architecture

RESOURCE TYPE:

Category (see Section 3 of survey form):

Buildings

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

Rural

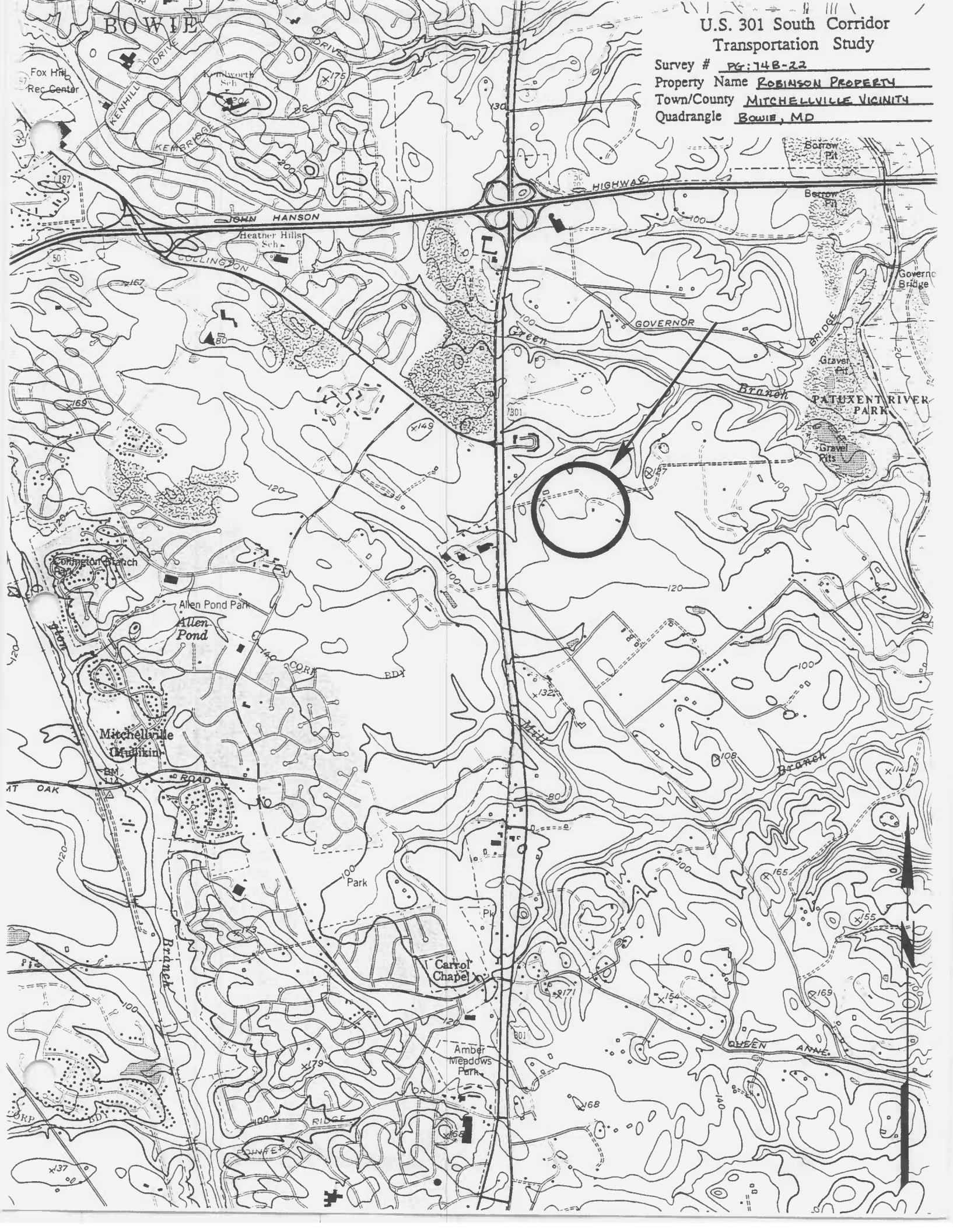
Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

Agriculture
Private Residence

Known Design Source (write none if unknown):

None

Preparer:
P.A.C. Spero & Company
November 1998

U.S. 301 South Corridor
Transportation Study

Survey # PG:74B-22
Property Name ROBINSON PROPERTY
Town/County MITCHELLVILLE VICINITY
Quadrangle BOWIE, MD