

Prince George's County Historic Site Summary Sheet

Survey No: PG76A25

Name: L and R Lawnmower

Date: ca. 1945

Location: 4901 Old Branch Avenue, Temple Hills, MD

Access: Private

Description: The L and R Lawnmower structure is a sprawling, one-story structure which has brick facing and raised parapet on the east entrance elevation. This elevation, with two main entrances as a result of its internal division by the Paraters, is divided into a three bay section on the south (two industrial metal sash windows on either side of a center door) and a three part window between principal and secondary doors in the north half of the structure. It was operated for twenty years or so by Pat Henry as a convenience store and a sandwich carryout.

Significance: This dilapidated and poorly maintained concrete block structure is the only extant commercial structure which predates the rapid and thorough transformation of the largely agricultural area of Wood's Corner into densely developed corridor which occurred in the last few decades. Rented by Pat Henry for the operation of a modest grocery store and carry-out, it was closed ca. 1960 when the proprietor closed the business and re-opened further south in Prince George's County.

PG76A25
L and R Lawnmower
Temple Hills, Maryland

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period (s): 1930-Present

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme (s): Commerce

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Function (s) and Use (s): Commercial/Store

Known Design Source: None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. PG76A25

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common L and R Lawnmower

2. Location

street & number 4901 Old Branch Avenue

N/A - not for publication

city, town Temple Hill

vicinity of

congressional district

state MD

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 type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Gilman Parater

street & number 5418 Old Branch Avenue

telephone no. 301 4232283

city, town Temple Hills

state and zip code MD 20748

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.

County Courthouse

liber 4428

street & number

folio 230

city, town Upper Marlboro

state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title N/A

date

federal state county local

pository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Survey No. _____

Condition

- excellent
- good
- fair

- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- moved date of move _____

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

See Continuation Sheet 7.1

8. Significance

Survey No. PG76A25

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" 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 ca. 1915 **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.

See continuation sheet 8.1

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No PG76A25

Personal Communication with Mrs. Paræer, Mr. Mac McCammon, Ms. Shirley Eppard

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Anacostia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>				
	Zone	Easting	Northing		

B	<input type="text"/>				
	Zone	Easting	Northing		

C	<input type="text"/>				
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

D	<input type="text"/>				
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

E	<input type="text"/>				
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

F	<input type="text"/>				
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

G	<input type="text"/>				
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

H	<input type="text"/>				
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Verbal boundary description and justification

N/A

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

state	code	county	code
state	N/A	code	county

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rita M. Suffness, Leader, Cultural Resources Group

organization SHA date June 22, 1997

street & number 707 N. Calvert St telephone 410 5458561

city or town Baltimore state MD21202

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~~

DHCP/DHCD
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
100 COMMUNION ST
CROFTON, MD 21114

PG76A25
L and R Lawnmower
Temple Hills, Maryland

Description
Continuation Sheet 7.1

Description Summary: The L and R Lawnmower structure is a sprawling, one-story structure which has brick facing and raised parapet on the east entrance elevation. This elevation, with two main entrances as a result of its internal division by the Paraters, is divided into a three bay section on the south (two industrial metal sash windows on either side of a center door) and a three part window between principal and secondary doors in the north half of the structure. It was operated for twenty years or so by Pat Henry as a convenience store and a sandwich carryout.

Description: The L and R Lawnmower property is a small parcel at the intersection of Old Branch Avenue (precursor of MD 5 which is 10-15 feet to the east) and I-495. This medium sized concrete block structure was constructed by G. Parater as a store in ca. 1945. It was operated for twenty years or so by Pat Henry as a convenience store and a sandwich carryout. It was one of only two such enterprises in the largely rural and agricultural area centered on Wood's Corner at the intersection of Auth Road and Branch Avenue (now Old Branch Avenue, supplanted by MD 5). According to long time residences another store, operated by Earl Batt, was located on the east side of MD 5, and a seasonal fruit stand was operated by the Wood family. All of these businesses were obliterated by I-495 construction, the re-location of Branch Avenue, and the rapid commercial development of the area. This concrete block structure was subdivided into two when Pat Henry closed his business ca. 1960.

The structure is a sprawling, one-story structure which has brick facing and raised parapet on the east entrance elevation. This elevation, with two main entrances as a result of its internal division by the Paraters, is divided into a three bay section on the south (two industrial metal sash windows on either side of a center door) and a three part window between principal and secondary doors in the north half of the structure.

The side elevations (north and side) are characterized by seven-level stepped parapets surmounted by a concrete coping. A large metal ventilator is located in the north wall.

On the rear, or west elevations, the internal divisions are clear, each defined by raised parapet walls. Various sections of the rear have been extended with flat roofed sections.

PG76A25

**L and R Lawnmower
Temple Hills, Maryland**

**Continuation Sheet 8.1
Statement of Significance**

This dilapidated and poorly maintained concrete block structure is the only extant commercial structure which predates the rapid and thorough transformation of the largely agricultural area of Wood's Corner into densely developed corridor which occurred in the last few decades. Rented by Pat Henry for the operation of a modest grocery store and carry-out, it was closed ca. 1960 when the proprietor closed the business and re-opened further south in Prince George's County.

Historic and Geographic Context: This property is located on the western side of Prince George's county abutting the District of Columbia. A suburb of Washington, D.C. the area is characterized by densely built-up residential neighborhoods crossed by several main arterial roadways lines with commercial strip malls. Before the 1950's this area of Prince George's County was generally rural and agricultural with few small crossroads settlements. The only crossroads within the area which developed an identity was "Wood's Corner," named for a fruit stand, no longer extant, operated in the twentieth century by the Wood family. It serviced the few farms and the very small population that existed prior to 1950 near the intersection of MD 5 (Branch Ave) and Auth Road, an area currently overwhelmed by commercial development, especially mammoth automobile dealerships. Although some suburban development had taken place on the fringes of this area in the 1940's, it was not until the cessation of World War II that widespread development and suburbanization began in this area of Prince George's County.

Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Suburbanization of Prince George's County

The earliest suburbs of Prince George's County date to the late nineteenth century and are located in the northern section of the County. After the Civil War, Washington took on a "boom town" atmosphere and in a tight housing market, Washington residents began to look outside the District for housing. The initial growth occurred in the previously settled towns along the B & O Railroad north of the district, there the new residents could enjoy the established local amenities (Virta 1984:190). These towns included Hyattsville, Bladensburg and Beltsville. Other developments were constructed more specifically as railroad suburbs. These places included Riverdale Park, Berwyn and Berwyn Heights, College Park and Takoma Park, all constructed in the late 1800's.

PG 76A25

**L and R Lawnmower
Temple Hills, Maryland**

**Continuation Sheet 8.2
Statement of Significance**

However, as the northern sections of the County were experiencing steady development, the western section of the county remained virtually undisturbed. Both the 1861 Simon Martenet Map and the 1878 Hopkins Atlas of the "Spaulding District" show a sparsely settled area with small settlements around Suitland, Silver and Camp Springs outside of the area in which this site is located. The 1955 USGS map (Anacostia Quadrangle) shows that the area was still primarily agricultural as late as the 1940's. The development of the area did not begin until the early 1950's, with the bulk of it occurring within the last two decades, when the growth was intense. There are a number of factors that contributed to this massive development of the rural countryside in the county, including the expansion of the Federal Government in the 1940's, the overall development of roads and bridges linking the areas to Washington, and the movement of Federal government agencies and facilities to the new suburbs.

The increase in the Federal work force began in the 1930's with the initiation of the New Deal and continued through World War II and on into the 1950's. This explosive expansion was attended by a rise in land values and property taxes, which again sent the Washingtonians into the suburbs in search of affordable housing. What distinguished this expansion from the late nineteenth century suburban development was its spread into previously undeveloped area, principally into western Prince George's County. This was made possible by the automobile; the automobile allowed for development away from the railroad lines, which had limited the earlier nineteenth century developments. In addition, road improvements throughout the county as well as bridge improvement over the Potomac provided easy access to the District and made a daily commute into the district a possibility.

Plentiful land at low cost motivated the Federal government to locate offices in the suburbs as well. The Suitland Federal Center opened in 1941 on the north side of Silver Hill Road. The complex was constructed on 285 acres of land and was built to house up to three thousand employees of the Federal Bureau of the Census, Navy Hydrographic Office and a file office of the Public Roads Administration (Evening Sun, August 14, 1942).

PG-76A25

**L and R Lawnmower
Temple Hills, Maryland**

**Continuation Sheet 8.3
Statement of Significance**

Another major development in the area was the construction of Andrew's Air Force Base near Camp Springs. Building began in 1941 on approximately 4000 acres of farm and open land. A few years later the Suitland Parkway was constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers to provide safe and rapid access to the air base from Washington. Carrying traffic south and west of Suitland, the parkway also provided better access for Washington commuters to the growing neighborhoods on either side of the road. These factors drew commuters and developers out to this section of Prince George's County bordered by Suitland Parkway on the north, MD 5 on the west, I-495 on the south and Suitland Road on the east. The result was the rapid construction of speculative housing and new neighborhoods. Some of the housing was constructed around the core of older settlements and some represented completely new developments.

Development in the Study Area

The only village in the immediate vicinity of the historic site that pre-dates 1950 is Morningside, however, it was only extended to the west side of Suitland Road in the 1960's and 1970's with the construction of subdivisions known as Andrews Estates, Skyline, Skyline Hills and Tournament Court. The original portion of Morningside, located on the east side of Suitland Road, was built over a number of years beginning in 1938-39 by developer Morgan Wayson and his brother-in-law Randolph Hopkins. The original subdivision contained approximately 500 homes and most were two-story Cape Cod style cottages on the east side of Suitland road. It housed veterans of World War II and their families, plus workers in the Federal Center in Suitland, its close neighbor (Prince George's County Magazine, 1983: 55). Most of the development of Morningside took place in the 1950's after it was incorporated in 1949.

With the construction of the Andrews Air Force Base and the improvement to MD 5 (Branch Avenue) in the 1950's, the Camp Springs area, which is also outside of the study area, witnessed the construction of several suburban developments. One development was Middleton Valley, located off Old Branch Avenue, on the fringes of the western edge of the project area. This development was created after old farmland belonging to the Middleton family was subdivided and made into a residential suburb. Additional subdivisions developed in the last few decades in the vicinity of the old Middleton property are Broadview and Stan Haven.

~~PG~~ 76A25

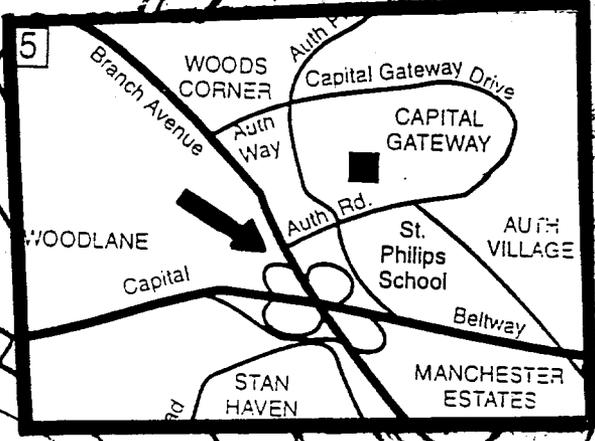
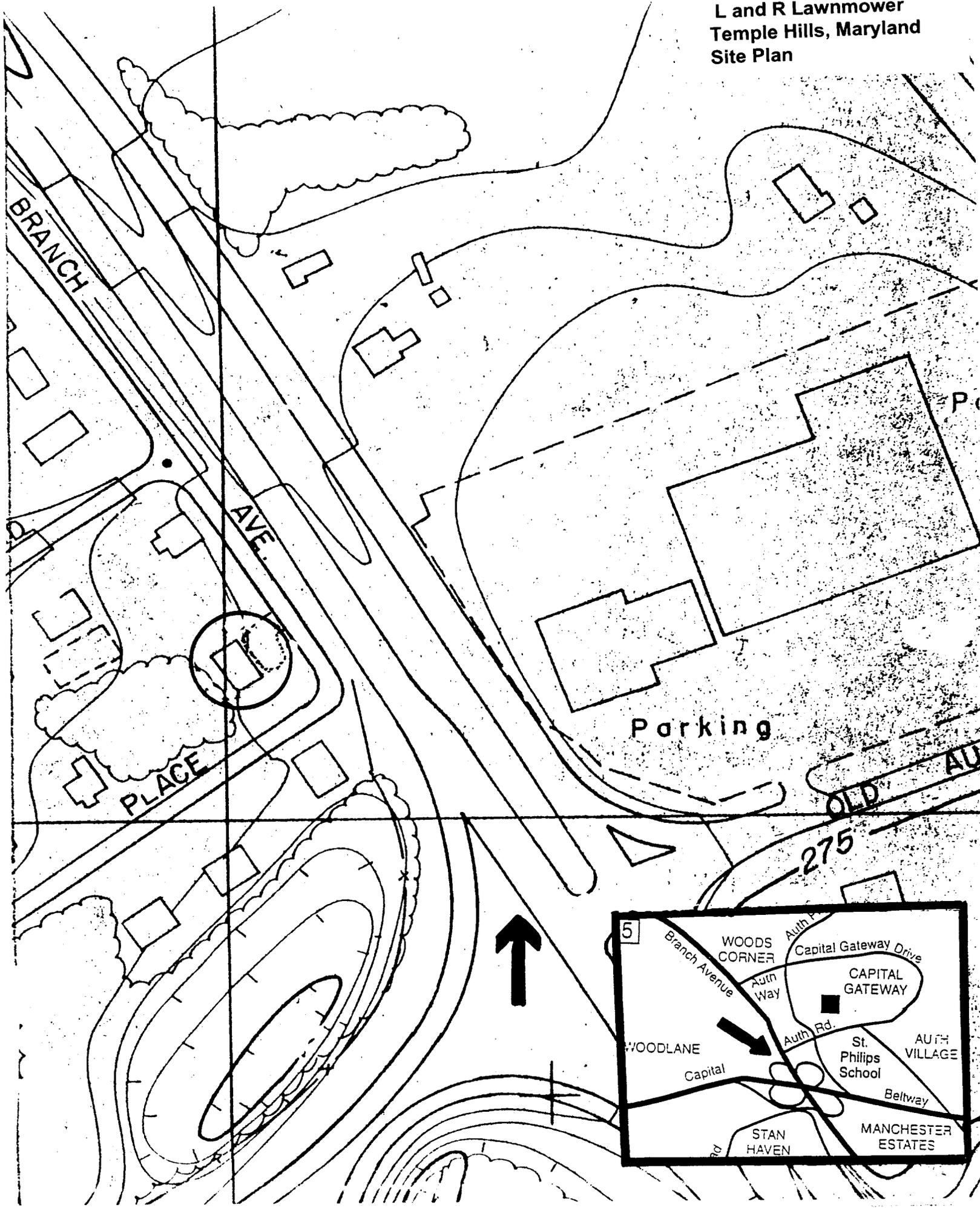
**L and R Lawnmower
Temple Hills, Maryland**

**Continuation Sheet 8.4
Statement of Significance**

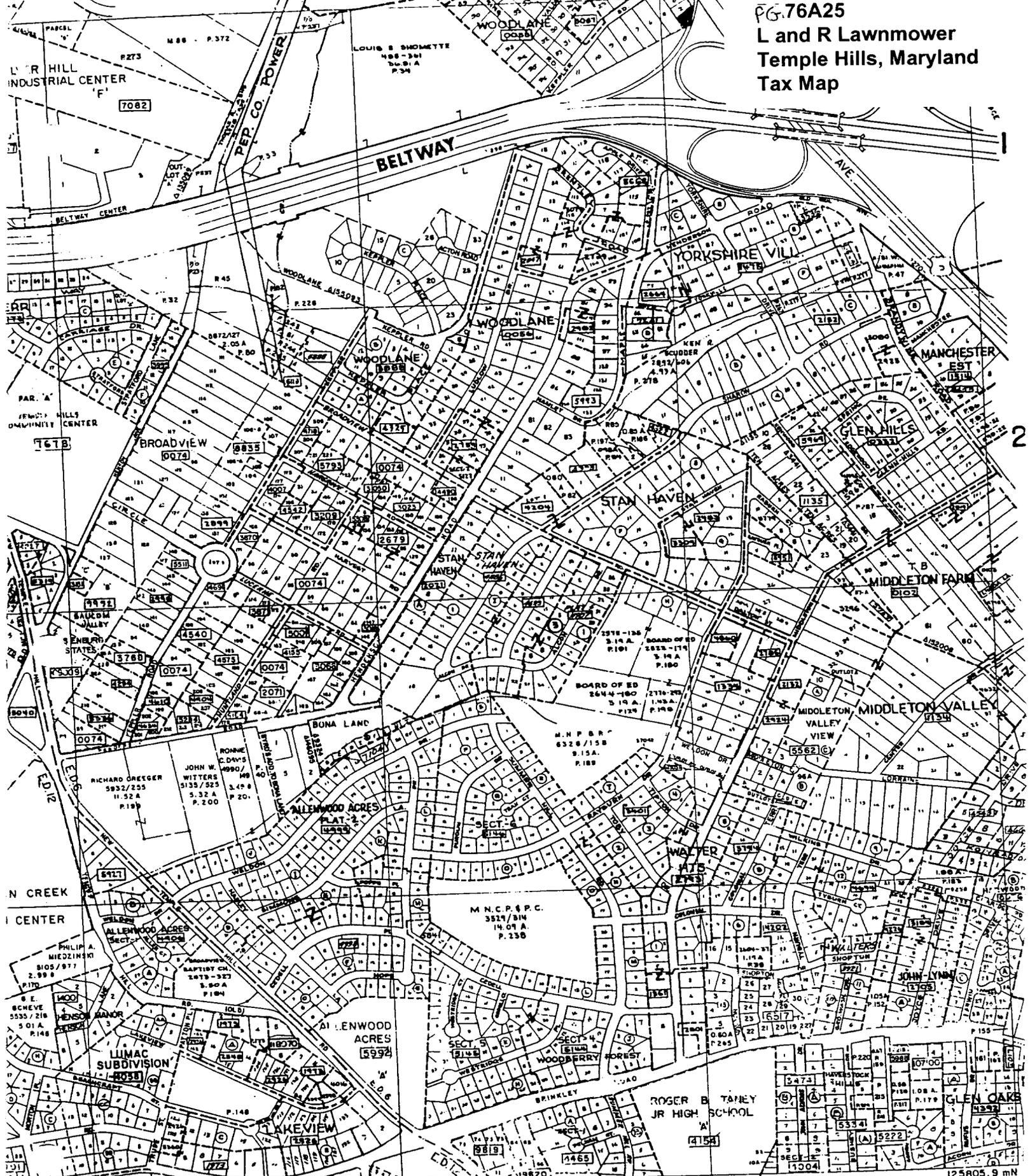
In the project study area some of the agricultural properties owned by the Auth, Darcey, Soper, Thornton and Wood families survived until fairly recently, as the subdivision and development of the farms did not begin until the 1950's. Of the twelve historic structures remaining in the project area, seven date to the first quarter of the twentieth century. These are: Thornton-Wood Farmstead (PG76A24), Milstead House (PG76A27), John and Marie Darcey Houses (PGA7631), Anthony Soper House (PG76A34), Eugene Darcey House (PG76A32), John Mulloy House (PG76A29), and the Roland Darcey Houses (PG76A32). Five properties date to the second quarter of the twentieth century. These are: Ammann House (PG76A33), Holmes House (PG76A30), Knox House (PG76A26), L. and R. Lawnmower (PG76A25) and the Marescalco House (PG76A21).

The development of Auth Village by the Darcey (and the related Ammann) families in the 1950's started the rush to subdivide by other families, resulting in developments like Manchester Estates, Darcey Manor, Darcey Estates, Andrews Village, Andrews Manor and Woodlane, which were constructed since 1950 on the farmland previously owned by these families and utilized primarily for truck farming. Long time families in the area report that Auth Road was a dirt lane, called Epiphany Lane, until well into the sixth decade of the twentieth century. Its intersection with the predecessor (Old Branch Avenue) of MD 5 was known as Wood's Corner for the fruit stand and farm owned by the Woods (and Soper) families. Across from it on the west side of Old Branch Avenue was Pat's Carryout and Restaurant (PG76A25) which was discontinued in the 1960's. The history of the study area exemplifies the history of rapid suburbanization, a process that has affected both the function and appearance of the region. In less than fifty years, the area went from a rural, agricultural region of Prince George's County to a modern, bedroom suburb or Washington, D.C. This suburbanization continues at breakneck speed today.

PG-76A25
L and R Lawnmower
Temple Hills, Maryland
Site Plan

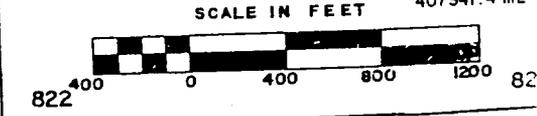


PG. 76A25
L and R Lawnmower
Temple Hills, Maryland
Tax Map



DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION
MAP DIVISION
REVISOR: FEB. 94 '9385 W.R.

PROPERTY LINE
SUB-DIVISION BOUNDARY
CONTINUING OWNERSHIP - Z 1E - Z 2E
PARCEL NUMBER - P 349 (ASSIGNED TO IDENTIFY AND RECORD OWNERSHIP - MUST BE PRECEDED BY MAP NUMBER)
SCALE: 1" = 100'



PG 76A25
L and R Lawnmower
Temple Hills, Maryland
Location Map
Anacostia Quadrangle



7
SERVICING
ALL BRANDS

Complete line of parts

• BRIGGS & STRATTON • LAIRD BAY
• MTD • JACOBSEN
• TECHNICAL • KOHLER
• TORO • WARD
• SEARS • HILTI

ENTRANCE
VERY LEFT
AT THE LIGHT

4901



1/27/57

Lowland

Trampin

12 5/10 5/10

11/10 10/10

E + W

at

Poulan

sales service

LELAWNMOWER

SALES & SERVICE 423-3947

SERVICING

ALL BRANDS



PG A25

David R. Lawrence

Temple, C. Hills

R. Giff -

Proj. Date: 10/10/00

East 3/10/00 -

2/5



19A25

LA. R. Langston

Temple Hill

Ruffness
MP State Hwy
Ad.

NE Corner

3/5



10-10-15

Land & Commission
Tennessee

Ruffin 5/97

omb state Hwy
Admin

Re Elevation

415



PG76A25

Card R Lawson

Temple Hills

Ruffner 5/97

Md State Hwy Admin

NW Corner

5/5