PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

SURVEY NUMBER: PG76A-28
BUILDING NAME: Eugene Darcey House

LOCATION: 5301 Auth Road, Camp Springs, Maryland

BUILDING DATE: 1925

DESCRIPTION: This well kept Foursquare style house was built in 1925 by Eugene and Elsie Darcey on land they either purchased or received from Eugene's parents who farmed the considerable acreage they accumulated throughout the early twentieth century in numerous land acquisitions. Almost all of those acres are currently the locations of subdivision housing, plus school, office and religious complexes. The building is a Foursquare style dwelling: two and one-half stories tall with a simple square plan, low-pitched hipped roof and an off-center entrance with sidelights and transom.

SIGNIFICANCE: The Darcey House is a well kept 1925 Foursquare style frame dwelling located on a one acre remnant of the acreage accumulated and farmed by the original Darcey family in the area (Warren and Louise Darcey) and carried on by their descendents until the last forty years. The Foursquare house was popular in other suburban and rural area of America from the late 1890's to the 1920's. The Foursquare style was popularized by builder's magazines beginning in 1895 when drawings of this style were circulated. Companies such as Montgomery Ward and Sears Roebuck included foursquare variations among the designs for which they offered complete, pre-cut materials shipped for assembly. The Darcey house is a variant of the Woodland and Langston house kits which were provided by Sears Roebuck through it catalogue sales from 1916 through 1933. The Darcey House differs in that the dormer is much larger, the fenestration on the entrance façade simpler and the cornices are boxed. Nonetheless, the porch details are strikingly similar to the Woodland house kit.

PG76A-28
EUGENE DARCEY HOUSE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
CAMP SPRINGS, MARYLAND

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

GEOGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION: Western Shore

CHRONOLOGICAL/DEVELOPMENTAL PERIOD(s):

Industrial-Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Modern - 1930 to Present

PREHISTORIC/HISTORIC PERIOD THEME (s): Architecture, Agriculture

RESOURCE TYPE

CATEGORY: Buildings

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: Suburban

HISTORIC FUNCTION (s) AND USE (s):
Domestic/Residential/Dwelling
Domestic/Garage & Shed (Non-contributing)

KNOWN DESIGN SOURCE: Possibly Sears Roebuck Kit House

Survey No. PG76A-28

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Magi No.

DOE ___yes ___no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Eugene Darcey House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 5301 Auth Road ~~N/A~~ not for publication

city, town Camp Springs ___ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland 20746 county Prince Geiorge's

3. Classification

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

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

name Eugene and Elsie Darcey

street & number 5301 Auth Road telephone no.:

city, town Camp Springs state and zip code MD 20746

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Courthouse liber 2147

street & number folio 286

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title N/A

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. PG75A-28

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	X unaltered	X original site
X good	___ ruins	___ 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.

See Continuation Sheet 7.1

8. Significance

Survey No. PG76A-28

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
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
X 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates 1925 **Builder/Architect** Unknown (possibly from plan-- Sears Roebuck House Kit)

check: Applicable Criteria: __A __B __C __D
and/or
Applicable Exception: __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

Level of Significance: __national __state X local

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

Seee Continuation Sheet 8.1

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG76A-28

Land Records
Personal Communication with Ms. Arnonsen, Ms. Shirley Eppard, Mr. Ora McCammon, Mr. Aubrey Soper
See Continuation Sheet 9.1

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property ca. two acres

Quadrangle name Anacostia **Quadrangle scale** 1:24,000

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

N/A

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

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

organization MD SHA **date** June 11, 1997

street & number 707 N. Calvert St **telephone** 410-545-8561

city or town Baltimore **state** MD 21202

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

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

PS-2746

PG76A-28
EUGENE DARCEY HOUSE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

CONTINUATION SHEET 7.1
DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

This Foursquare house was built in 1925 by Eugene and Elsie Darcey on land they either purchased or received from Eugene's parents who farmed the considerable acreage they accumulated throughout the early twentieth century in numerous land acquisitions. Almost all of those acres are currently are the locations of subdivision housing, plus school, office and religious complexes. The building is a typcical Foursquare style dwelling: two and one-half stories tall with a simple square plan, low-pitched hipped roof and an off-center entrance with sidelights and transom. The north entrance bay is characterized by a formal entrance in the east bay, with a pyramidal-roofed dormer with paired windows in the forward slope of the roof. A full width porch is supported by tripartite chamfered post on rusticated concrete block plinths.

DESCRIPTION

This one-acre suburban property is the location of a 1925 Foursquare style frame dwelling, a garage and shed. It constitutes one of the few open spaces in the densely developed area north of I-495, east of MD 5 (Branch Avenue), west of Suitland Road, and south of Suitland Parkway. At the time of its construction the area was characterized by widely scattered agricultural properties which were utilized in part as truck farms, but mostly for subsistence living. These farms persisted, for the most part, until the late 1950'when housing developments, commercial and offices complexes and large church centers largely overwhelmed the area. These modern buildings were constructed on farmlands previously owned by the Auth, Soper, and Woods families, as well as the Darceys, and the related family, the Ammanns. This property is a small remnant of the considerable farmland accumulated by the parents of the current owner, Warren and Louise Darcey.

The Darcey House is reached via a long entrance drive extending south from Auth Road. A large office complex is located on the west side, St. Phillips School on the east and a large Mormon Church complex on the north. The south side is the location of a large subdivision constructed on former Darcey property.

The building is a Foursquare style dwelling: two and one-half stories tall with a simple square plan, low-pitched hipped roof and an off-center entrance with sidelight and transom. All of the fenestration is one-over-one sash. The north entrance bay is characterized by a formal entrance in the east bay, with a pyramidal-roofed dormer with paired windows in the forward slope of the roof. A full width porch is supported by tripartite chamfered post on rusticated concrete block plinths. These posts are decoratively treated with flanges at their junction with the cornice and cross bars. The cornice in turn has bed moldings and other rectilinear details.

The east elevation is characterized by six irregularly spaced windows and two small windows at the basement level. The south or rear elevation has been extended by a one story addition with windows of graduated size and tow doorways offset to the east, one with two doors. The west elevation breaks out of the plane with a semi-octagonal bay.

A brick garage, extended with a shed roofed addition, plus a free standings shed, is located to the north of the house.

PG76A-28
EUGENE DARCEY HOUSE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
CONTINUATION SHEET 8.1

SGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Darcey House is a 1925 Foursquare style dwelling which bears sticking similarity to a couple of kit houses marketed by Sears Roebuck Company in the early twentieth century. It is located on a one- acre remnant of the extensive Darcey farmlands which were developed as housing subdivisions, plus office and school complexes in the 1950's to the 1980's.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Eugene Darcey House has been analyzed within the contexts of national, state and local history as regards applicable National Register Criterion A (association with a significant event); Criterion B (association with a significant person); and Criterion C (the work of a master or of outstanding architectural merit). It has no known significant association with an important historical event, an important historical person, and, although a good example of the Foursquare style, is an unremarkable example of this very popular and widespread architetural house form, thus it would not meet the requirements of Criterion C. With no probable information potential due to its late construction date and the commerical development of much of the original acreage , it would not likely have any potential to meet the requirements of Criterion D for its information value.

The Darcey House is a well kept 1925 Foursquare style frame dwelling located on a one acre remnant of the acreage accumulated and farmed by the original Darcey family in the area (Warren and Louise Darcey) and carried on by their descendents until the last forty years. Surrounded by large religious or office complexes and subdivision housing adjacent to commercial enterprises such as car dealerships, it is significant for its evocation of an era which was largely agrarian in this northwestern section of Prince George's County until the mid-1950's.

The Foursquare house was popular in other suburban and rural area of America from the late 1890's to the 1920's. Its development was possibly a reaction against the ornate Queen Anne, Shingle and Eastlake styles of the late nineteenth century. It was not unlike the Colonial Revival style, embodied in the early works of McKim, Mead and White, which may have also been a reaction to architecturally exuberant and usually picturesque styles of the previous century. Both styles emphasized geometric form, but the foursquare style was pared down and severe as compared to the Colonial Revival style, with its Palladian windows, fanlights and ornamental bracketing. This style also shared the emphasis on low-pitched roofs with the Prairie style, originated about the same time as the foursquare style by Frank Lloyd Wright and fellow architects in the early decades of the twentieth century.

The Foursquare style was popularized by builder's magazines beginning in 1895 when drawings of this style were circulated. Companies such as Montgomery Ward and Sears Roebuck included foursquare variations among the designs for which they offered complete, pre-cut materials shipped for assembly.

The Darcey house is a variant of the Woodland and Langston house kits which were provided by Sears Roebuck through it catalogue sales from 1916 through 1933. The Darcey House differs in that the dormer is much larger, the fenestration on the entrance façade simpler and the cornices are boxed. Nonetheless, the porch details are strikingly similar to the Woodland house kit.

PG76A28
EUGENE DARCEY HOUSE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
CONTINUATION SHEET 8.2

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.

However, as the northern sections of the County were experiencing steady development, the western section of the county remained virtually undisturbed. Both the1861 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 fro 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 an a file office of the Public Roads Administration (Evening Sun, August 14, 1942).

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.

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).

PG76A-28
EUGENE DARCEY HOUSE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
CONTINUATION SHEET 8.4

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), currently housing the L and R Lawnmower, and 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.

PG76A28
EUGENE DARCEY HOUSE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

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CONTINUATION SHEET 9.1

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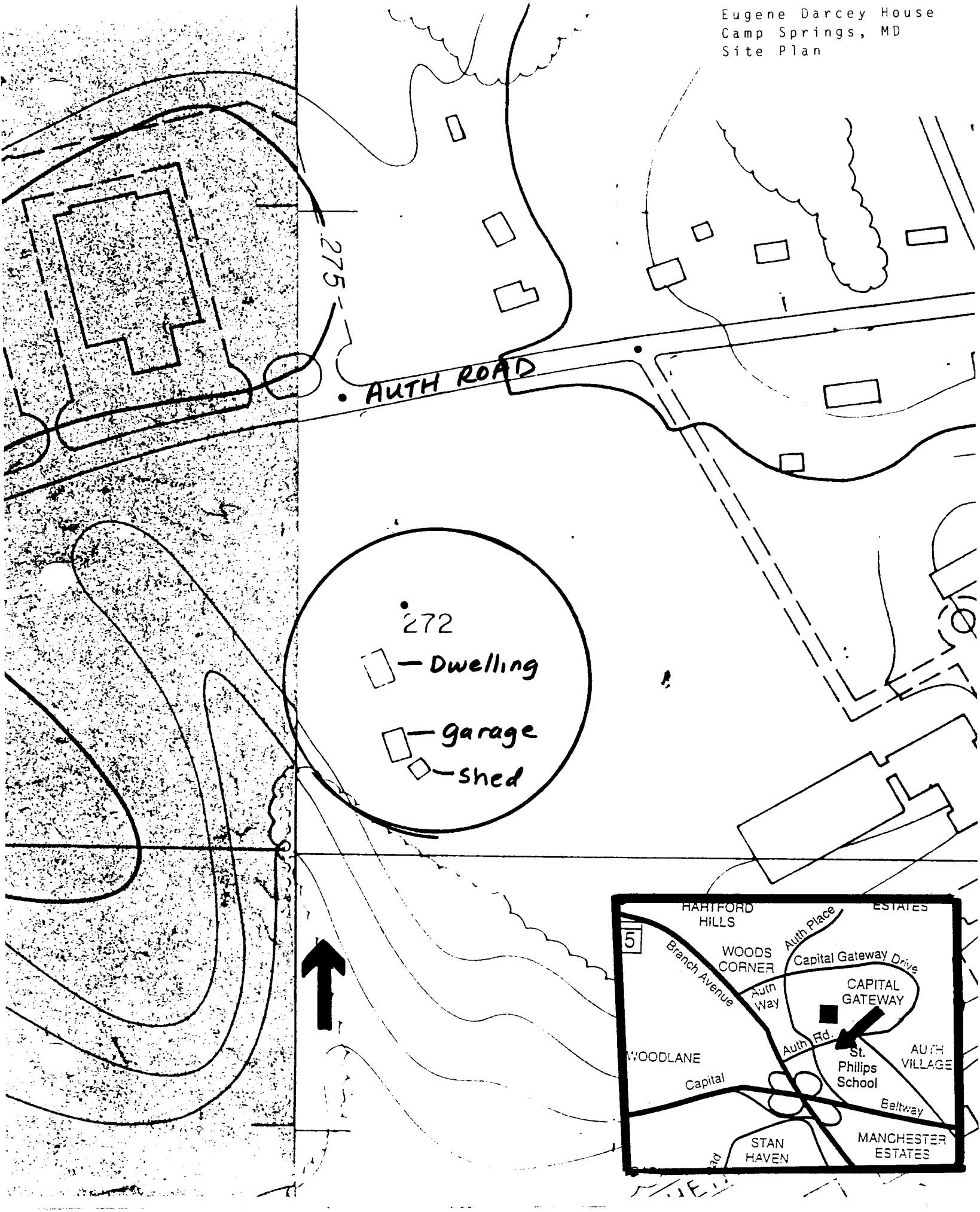
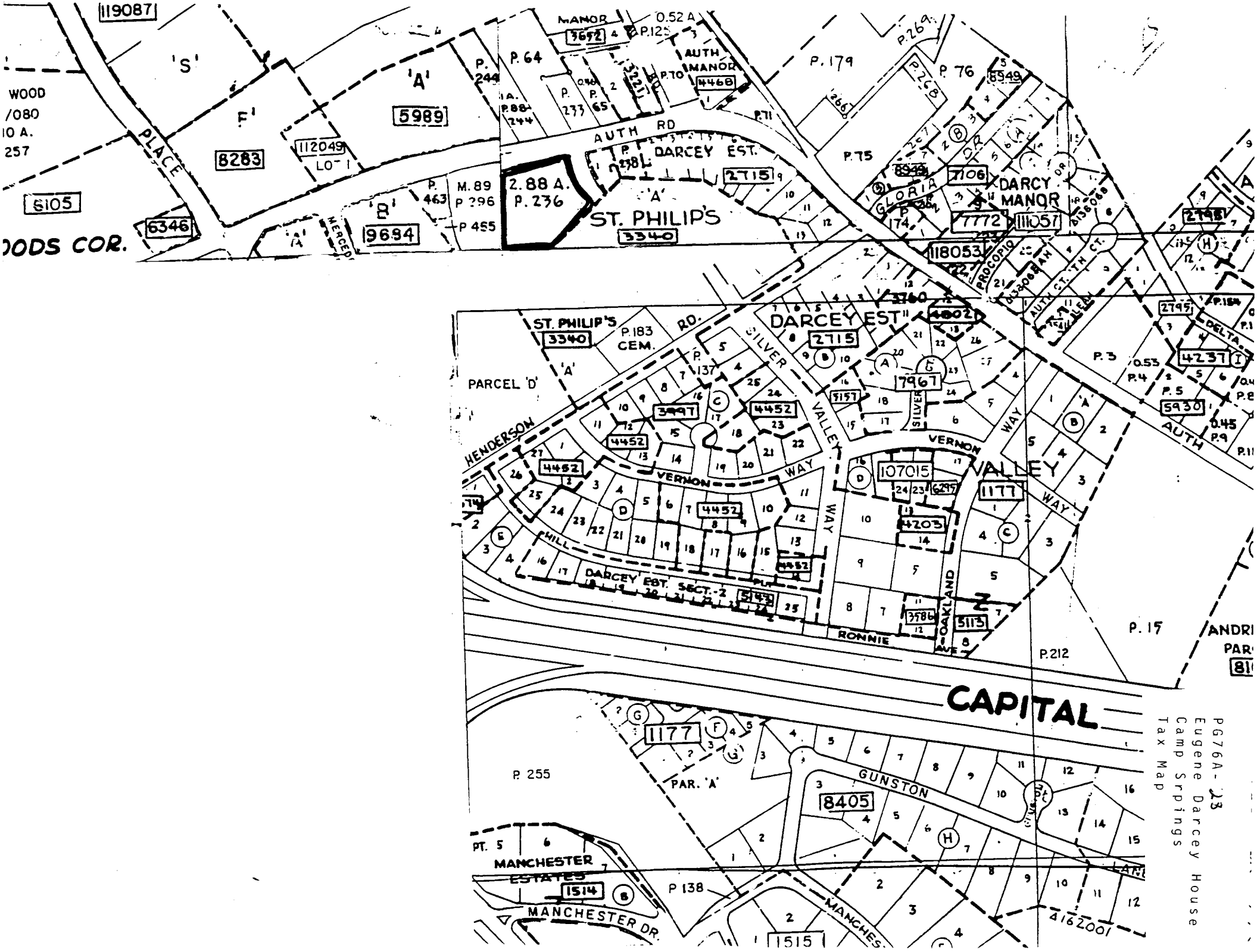
PG76A-18
Eugene Darcey House
Camp Springs, MD
Site Plan





PG76A-23
Eugene Darcey House
Camp Srpings
Tax Map

PG76A-28
Eugene Darcey House
Camp Springs
Location Map-Anacostia Quad

PG 76 A
Eugene Darcey House
Camp Springs

R Suffness MD State Hwy Adm
3/97

Dwelling, North Elevation

1/4

PG 76 A 7

Eugene Darcey, House
Camp Springs

P Suffrens and State Hwy Adm
3/97

Dwelling
North Elevation

2/7

PG 76 A

Eugene Darcey House

Camp Springs

R Suffren 3/97

Md State Highway Admin

Dwelling

West Elevation

3/7

PG 76A

Eugene Dorsey House
Camp Springs

R Suffren 3197
Md State Highway Admin

Dwelling

SW Corner

417

PG 76 A 2

Eugene Darcey Hom

Camp Springs

12 Suffner 3/97

Md State Highway Adm

Dwelling

SE Corner

5/7

PG76A 2

Eugene Darcey House

Camp Springs

R Suffner 3/97

Md State Highway Admin

Dwelling

NE Corner

6/7

PG 76A

Eugene Darcey House
Camp Springs

R Suffness 3/97
Md State Highway Admin

Garage NW Corner

7/7