

LEONARD HOUSE - 118-120 High Street

118 and 120 High Street were originally one large frame house of about 20 rooms constructed in 1790, by Dr. and Mrs. William Robertson. In 1892, after changing ownership several times, the property was purchased by Capt. James C. Leonard, who operated the property as a hotel known as the "Leonard House". It was a convenient stopping place for travelers by steamboat and sailing vessels. In 1906, Capt. Leonard decided to discontinue the hotel. He split the house in half, moving what is now 118 High Street a distance of about 15 feet. Although 118 still retains the original woodwork on the interior, 120 was completely renovated around the turn of the century.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM  
for the  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Dorchester Arts Center  
AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Leonard House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
120 High Street  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Cambridge  
STATE: Maryland COUNTY: Dorchester

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	Arts Center	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
County Commissioners of Dorchester County  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN: STATE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Dorchester County Courthouse  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
206 High Street  
CITY OR TOWN: STATE:  
Cambridge Maryland 21613

Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #): Liber 151/Folio 497

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN: STATE:

**7. DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This building and the one next door, 118 High Street, were originally one large house of about 20 rooms that was constructed in 1790. The original appearance of the exterior is not known, however. In 1906 the house was split in half, and what is now 118 was moved a distance of about 15 feet. Although 118 High Street retains the original paneling and woodwork on the interior, 120 was apparently renovated around the same time the house was divided.

Although the exterior of the two houses are similar in appearance, there are differences. Both are two and one-half story frame houses with German siding, and a one story front porch. 120 High Street is a four bay structure with a gable roof with center gable. 118 High Street consists of three bays across the front but has a jerkin head roof. It is estimated the the front porch with hand carved railing was added in 1859. The craftsmanship of the porch on 120 High Street is not as fine as that of 118, however, and is apparently not the original. This porch, supported by turned posts and brackets, has a ballustrade and gallery with turned spindles. Corner brackets with tracery ornamentation support the gallery. The porch is further embellished by a row of dentils and a circle motif under the cornice of the porch. The center gable has a pointed arched window and is flanked by a gabled dormer on either side. On the south side of the building is a two story polygonal bay window. A wing has been added to the rear.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1790, 1906

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Abariginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planing
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	osophy	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	itarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

History:

The lot on which this building stands, originally running from High Street back to Cambridge Creek, was purchased in 1739 by Dr. William Murray and conveyed to his daughter, Margaret, wife of Edward Trippe. The property eventually passed to Henrietta Murray, wife of Dr. William Robertson, who had the house built in 1790.

This house and the one next door, 118 High Street, were originally one large house of about 20 rooms. After the death of Dr. and Mrs. Robertson, the property descended to their children. The property remained in the same family a total of 114 years, from 1739 until 1853, when it was sold to Lewis Ross. The next owner was William Thomas, and at his death in 1892, the property was purchased by Capt. James C. Leonard, who operated the property as a hotel, known as "The Leonard House". This became a well known stopping place for travelers by steamboat and sailing vessels. In 1906, Capt. Leonard decided to give up the hotel. He had half of the house, 118 High Street, moved a distance of about 15 feet. He and his family lived in that half until death. The other half, 120 High Street, was sold to Dorchester County in 1967 and is now occupied by the Dorchester Arts Center.

Significance:

Although altered in the 19th and 20th century, this is one of the older houses on High Street, dating to 1790. Once joined to the house next door, this is the most altered of the pair. In spite of renovation, the Leonard houses are still of architectural interest and contribute significantly to the historic character of High Street.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Col. Clement Sullivane, article reprinted in the  
Daily Banner, April 23, 1925

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreege Justification:

*(This area is currently blank for justification.)*

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Catherine L. Moore,

ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_ DATE 11/10/75

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Route 3, Box 32

CITY OR TOWN: Cambridge STATE Maryland

**12. State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)**

Significance of this property is:  
National  State  Local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

120 HIGH STREET  
CAMBRIDGE, MARYLAND

PLC 151/497

Add to Cathe Moore's material:

This house served as the residence of James C. Leonard, who purchased 118-120 High Street from the estate of William Thomas in 1894. Leonard divided the house into present day 118 and 120 High Street between 1894 and 1895. In 1911 Leonard conveyed a life estate in the house to his wife. Following her death the house was devised to their daughter Rebecca C. Leonard (later Ziegler). In 1967, she sold the property to the Dorchester County Commissioners. The house now serves as the headquarters for the Dorchester Arts Center.

Both this house and 118 High Street represent older houses that had been expanded and remodeled in the 1890's. Both reflect the prosperity of Cambridge in the late nineteenth century when both of their owners became wealthy in the oyster business.

Sources:

Dorchester County Courthouse, Cambridge, Maryland

Court Records.

Land Records.

Will Records.

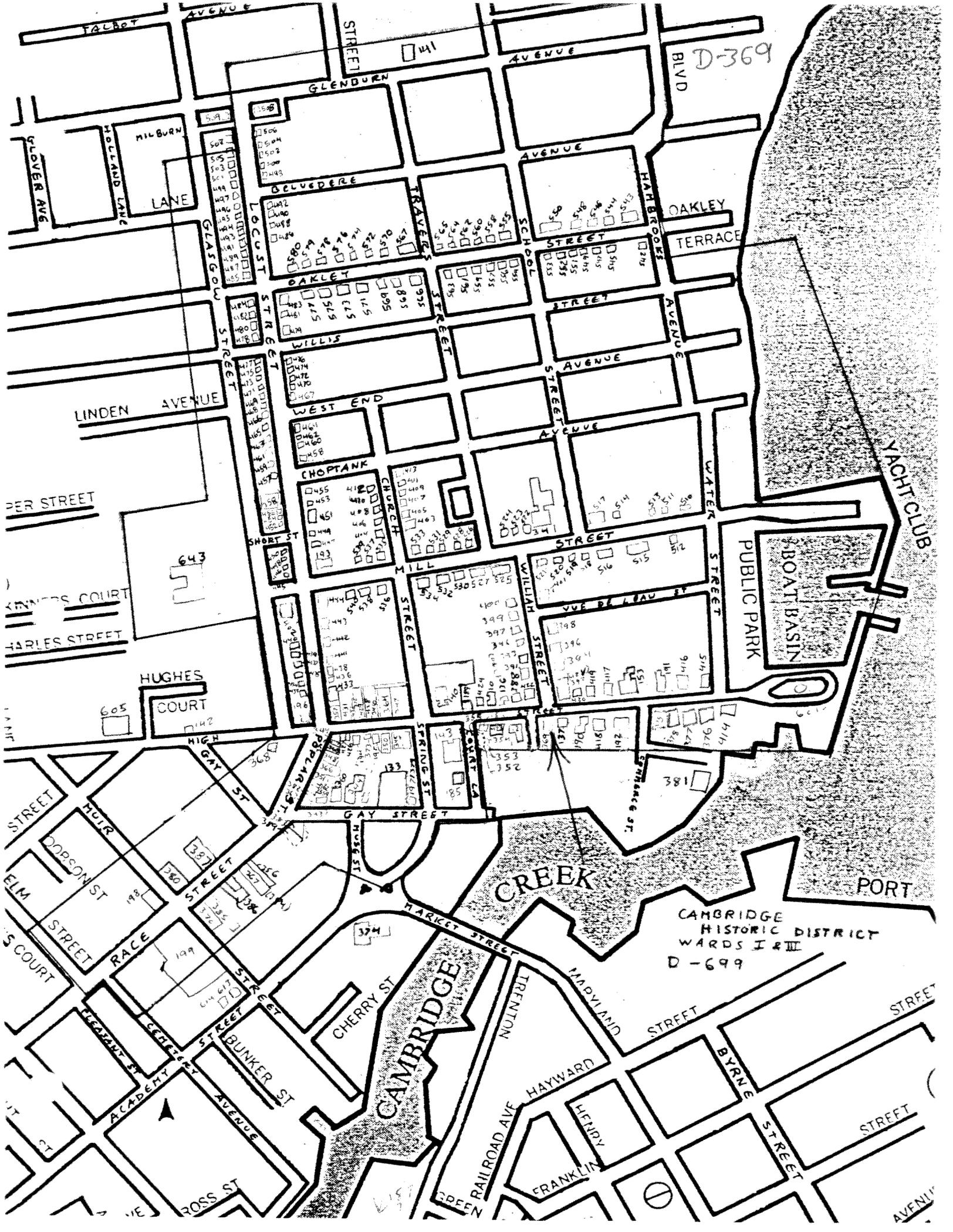
Dorchester County Office Building, Cambridge, Maryland

Assessment Records.

Research by:

Terrance Walbert

1976



D-369

BOAT BASIN  
PUBLIC PARK

YACHT CLUB

CREEK

PORT

CAMBRIDGE  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
WARDS I & III  
D-699

CAMBRIDGE

Map labels include: FALCHET AVENUE, GLOVER AVE, HOLLAND LANE, MILBURN LANE, GLASGOW STREET, LOCUST STREET, OAKLET STREET, WILLIS STREET, WEST END STREET, CHOPTANK STREET, CHURCH STREET, WILLIAM STREET, VUE DE LAUD ST, HUGHES COURT, HIGH GAY ST, HUR STREET, DOBSON ST, RACE STREET, BUNKER ST, ACADEMY ST, BOSS ST, CHERRY ST, HARRIET STREET, TRENTON STREET, HAYWARD STREET, HENRY STREET, FRANKLIN STREET, BYRNE STREET, HARBOR ST, OAKLEY TERRACE, WATER STREET, and PER STREET.



118-20 High St

Carroll Co

dist of property unknown

D-369

45%