

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) Property Detail Report

K-523

Judefind Farm, site

Inventory Number: K-523

Property Name: Judefind Farm, site

Address Eastern Neck Island Road (MD 445)

Town Rock Hall

Zip Code _____

USGS Quadrangle(s) Langford Creek

Digitized in GIS Yes

Number of polygons 1

designation in GIS K-523

Mapped on mylar T

Detail map code _____

Within NR district F

Within survey district F

Materials in vertical file _____

Other moved

Additional Designations:

National Register

Preservation Easement

Determinations of Eligibility

Contributing Resource Determinations of Eligibility

Related Inventory Numbers

color slides. The Trust does not have copies of Phase II survey materials since it did not participate in funding and local funding was sufficient to provide only the work as described above, which is held by the sponsors.

When Christopher Weeks was in Chestertown a year or so ago, he met with a number of us who are interested in the ultimate publication of the complete Kent County Historic Sites Survey. He indicated that the Trust probably would find copies of the Phase II survey to be suitable for deposit at the Trust. (In devising our field sheets we were mindful of the Trust survey form.) However, as we here already knew, to be in a form worthy of deposit the field sheets need to be typed, and, of course, copies need to be made of the photographs and incidental supplementary material. He also indicated that the Trust probably could arrange to have this done although we have heard no further from him about it. The funding would seem to be the critical question; local funding for this purpose does not seem to be available.

This rather long recital of background information, coupled with the need from time to time for the Trust to comment on proposed projects involving federal funding, does point up, I think, the urgent need for our Phase II materials to be incorporated into the Trust's holdings. We hope that the Trust now will be spurred to arrange for typing and copying of visual materials. While trying not to appear to be blowing my own horn, I am probably the logical person to type for the Trust the entire set of written Phase II materials. Aside from being able to read my own writing and that of Marsha Fritz, the other surveyor, I am familiar with the proper names and terminology used, the methods employed, and the work in general, and in case of a question can easily contact the other surveyor. Should the Trust wish to type these forms in its own offices, it would have to Xerox the whole set, an additional expense, and then work from those. However the Trust might decide to proceed with this, it will require an expenditure for typing time and materials. Please let us here in Kent County know whether or not you are interested in acquiring these materials and how you might like to proceed. In the interim, if you have a request for an impact statement for projects in the western third of the county, you might call Marsha Fritz or me for information.

→ Now, as to the matter of the Rock Hall elderly housing project more specifically: This site has been assigned a survey number, K-523, and the name Judefind Farm. Although I was the surveyor, I do not have the written materials at hand since I gave them to Marsha Fritz last week for her review before we submit them to the Historical Society, which funded our last 68 sites, of which this was one. Therefore, I shall have to write from memory and what notes I retained. I do want to get this letter off to you today since the housing grant proposal may still be pending (I hope).

The house on the property is in two parts, a story-and-a-half section appearing to date from the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and a later two-story section probably built in the early twentieth century. The two-story section is of no particular significance except as an illustration of how an earlier building was added to, and the entire structure is in somewhat deteriorated condition although it is still being used as a residence. In my opinion the 1½ story section can and

should be rehabilitated; removal of the two-story section is probably desirable if the earlier section can be saved and incorporated into the housing project. Indeed, several months ago I talked with Norman Davidson, Director of the Upper Shore Housing Corporation, who prepared the grant proposal initially (when it was rejected by HUD) as well as the current one. He realized the possible value of at least part of the structure, is personally inclined to favor historical preservation, and wanted to know my opinion. I told him I thought the early section could and should be saved, that the cost probably would not be stupendous since it is not a large building, and that he ought to think about uses for it within the project context. The first story is hall-and-parlor in plan and very likely could be used for a social center, an activity center, and/or an office. Certainly this house could be used as a take-off point for the form of the housing units to be built, producing an entire project in sympathy with it and a kind of design which suits the Rock Hall area and its conservative, traditional population. However, I understand that very likely the design of Chestertown's Morgne Village, built several years ago by Upper Shore Aging, is to be followed. Despite dissimilarities, this design probably would be sympathetic to the early farmhouse though it could be better. Apparently the first, rejected project proposal provided for demolition only of the entire structure (budgeted for \$3,000). Both he and I agreed that this time around that should be avoided if possible, though where the money to deal with this house will come from is a good question. Moving the house may be a possibility; I do not know how it in its present location fits into their site plan.

Another possible use we toyed with for the early building is to use it for a visitors' center for Rock Hall. It is at the entrance to Rock Hall proper, prominently located on the Chestertown-Rock Hall Road, and is ideally located for such purpose. Certainly worth noting is that it is probably the oldest surviving structure within the present corporate limits of Rock Hall. A built-in volunteer corps to operate a visitor center would live in adjacent elderly housing. Rock Hall may profit from such a center since it is increasingly a tourist attraction. Perhaps there is a possibility of some rehabilitation funding from the Town of Rock Hall although I have not discussed this with any government officials from Rock Hall, for which P. J. Elbourn is the mayor.

Following are some of the significant features of the story-and-a-half section: ✓

1. Plan is hall-and-parlor, with entry doors (one at least with 3-light transom) both sides opposite each other into the "hall." Porch is on south side, away from the road (which is a 20th century road). The south side may originally have been the main, approach side though it is not now.
2. There are no outbuildings of significance; what there might have been may have been demolished when the new road to the north was built.
3. Original house was probably three bays wide; a fourth bay on the south side seems to have been added. First-story windows had 9-over-6 lights. Muntins have been removed and single-light glass installed, but the sash of at least several windows appear to be original.

4. Roof is steep gable, with two 6/6 gable-roofed dormers in each slope; the form, despite this house's apparent late date for such a form, is typical of many early Kent County houses.

5. The corner (or, remotely, ladder) stair of the "hall," now the kitchen has been removed. The stair to the second story is now a straight-run stair in the two-story, 20th-century section. I can't remember if the "parlor" also had a stair (where there is now a closet); I think so.

6. Both first-story rooms were heated with fireplaces. The entire fireplace/mantel of the parlor has been covered and hence was not viewed. The hall/kitchen fireplace opening has been closed and a stove is in use. The mantle is tall and plain, a sort of vernacular Greek Revival sort sometimes seen in Kent County. This fireplace has a low fireback, of brick, of the sort seen here in the early nineteenth century.

7. It is quite possible, though I was unable to confirm it, that at least part, if not all, of this early section is of planked log construction. I had some suspicion of this while trying to peer under the sheet asphalt siding overlying the horizontal weatherboarding under it. My feeling is that such planked-log construction is probably confined to the west gable end although it is quite possible that the east gable end, which abuts the added two-story section, is similar; it could not be viewed. I spoke with one of the current owners of the house, who grew up there in the 1940's and 1950's. I asked him if he knew anything about how the end wall was constructed. He said he'd helped his father repair siding many years ago but had trouble describing verbally what he saw. I then asked him (he's a boat builder) if he could draw what he saw, and what he drew was a planked log dovetailed at the corner, probably into a corner post. Surviving houses of planked log construction are quite rare in Kent County, and this one appears to be unusual in that the entire structure probably is not of that construction.

8. There is a crawl space which I viewed as best I could. Due to deterioration and debris, I could not determine for certain whether the two long sides are supported by piers or whether there was originally a continuous brick foundation.

I did a partial title search for the property because I was curious and because I was hopeful that it might turn up useful information about the age of the structure and the nature of the farm. The search was partial because title searches were really excluded from our contract with the Historical Society and because I hit a snag (involving a law suit and trustee's sale) and simply could not spend any more volunteer time on the work.

Briefly, though, this is what I found: In 1860 the trustee, as required by the Circuit Court sitting as the Court of Equity, sold the property pursuant to an order of 1857 to John A. Hersch. Jacob Stevens appears to have been the previous owner, though I never did find when he acquired the property. John A. Hersch was a German Jew, a carpenter who landed in Boston and then proceeded to Baltimore, where he was said to have built several houses on Federal Hill. He came to Kent County about 1856. Some of his descendants live in Kent County; I have spoken with

K-523
 Judefini Farm
 (original location)
 Lake, Griffling, & Stevenson
 Atlas, 1877

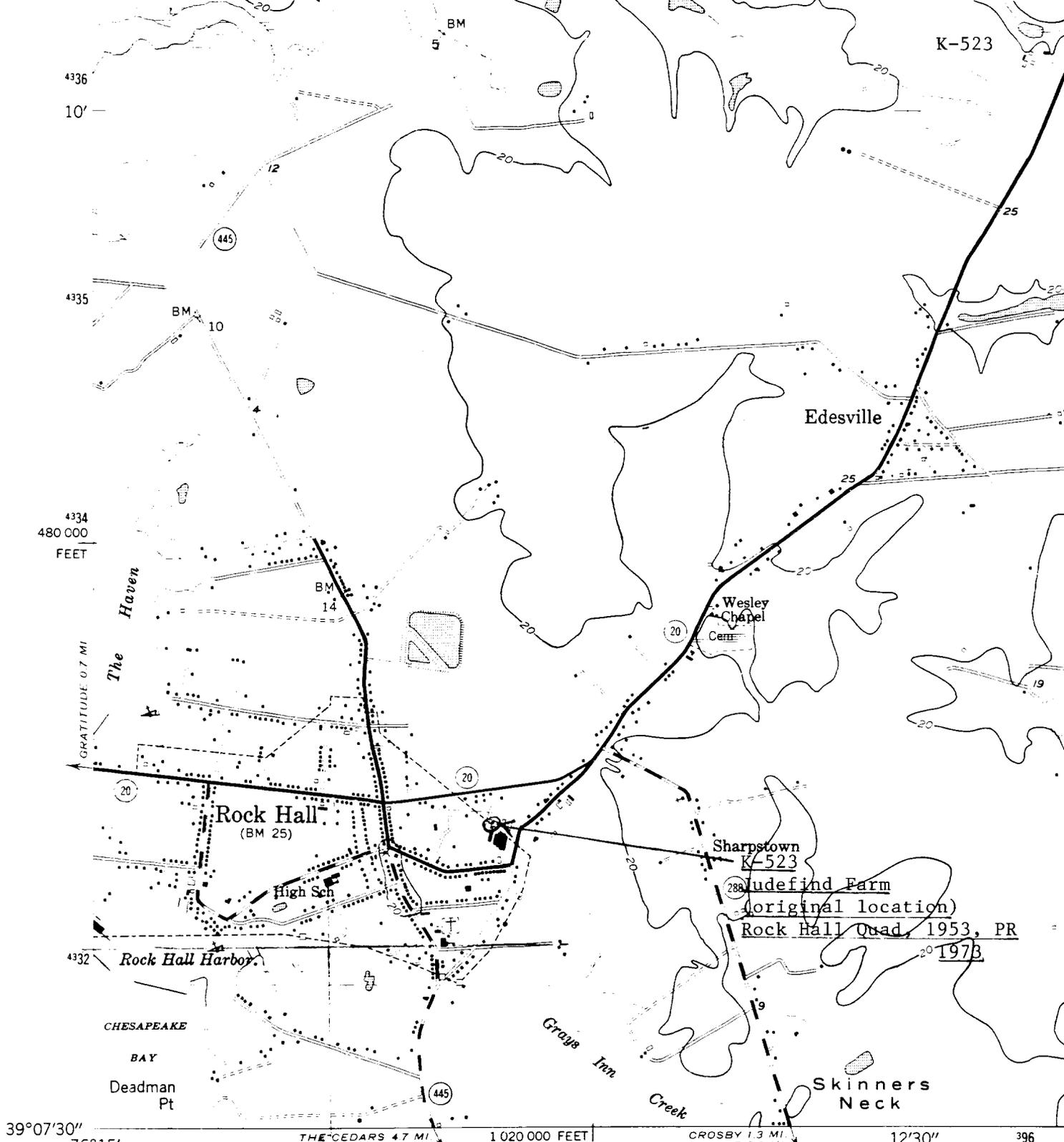


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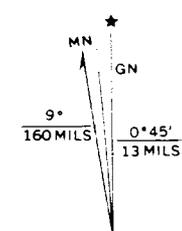
Mapped by the Army Map Service
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE

Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs. Topography by plane-table surveys
 Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1953
 Hydrography from USC&GS charts 548 and 549, dated 1944

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked

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UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

