

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes   
no

Property Name: Worcester Highway Farm District Inventory Number: WO 571  
Address: Worcester Highway and Five Mile Branch Rd. Historic district:  yes  no  
City: Newark Vicinity Zip Code: 21841 County: Worcester  
USGS Quadrangle(s): Public Landing  
Property Owner: Multiple Tax Account ID Number: Multiple  
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): Multiple Tax Map Number: Multiple  
Project: Historic Structures Survey along US-113 Agency: Maryland SHA  
Agency Prepared By: Hardlines Design Company  
Preparer's Name: Roy Hampton Date Prepared: 6/26/2007

Documentation is presented in: Compliance Report and Historic Context for Proposed Highway Improvements-U.S. 113: Five Mile Branch Road to Massey Branch

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation:  Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_

Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible:  yes  no Listed:  yes  no

Site visit by MHT Staff  yes  no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: (Please attach map and photo)

The district description and significance statement will be found in the attached MIHP form.

NRHP Recommendation: Not eligible

Criterion A: The farm survey district's current land arrangement, and its use for growing feed crops like corn, is compatible with the mix of feed grain, fruit, vegetable, potato, and livestock farming that was prevalent in Worcester County from 1870 to 1957. However, alterations to most surviving pre-1957 farmhouses and addition of numerous large post-1957 metal chicken houses to the landscape makes it a fairly poor representation of nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century Worcester County farming. The district is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A.

Criterion B: No persons important in history are associated with the district, and it is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C: The district's farmhouses all represent common Worcester County building types, and many have been severely altered in the past thirty years. The district contains only a few small pre-1957 barns and farmstead buildings and now has large

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

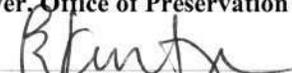
Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended   
Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

MHT Comments:

  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

5/20/08

Date

  
Reviewer, National Register Program

6/9/08

Date

200800591

numbers of recent prefabricated steel chicken houses. The district is not a good example of Worcester County's pre-1957 farmstead architecture and is recommended not eligible under Criterion C.

Criterion D: The district does not appear to hold any potential for information that could not be obtained through other sources or other farms in Worcester County, in terms of above-ground resources. Archaeological work was not part of this task order. The district is recommended as not eligible under Criterion D.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria:    A    B    C    D    Considerations:    A    B    C    D    E    F    G

MHT Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Name of Property:** Worcester Highway Farm District

**MIHP Number:** WO-571

**Location:** Worcester Highway

**Town / Vicinity:** Newark

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1870-1955

**Access:**  Public  Private

The Worcester Highway Farm District is located along Worcester Highway between Five Mile Branch Creek and Newark Road. The District is located in a rural setting dominated by flat terrain and private farms. The district contains seven farms of 25 acres or more, and two smaller five-acre mini-farms. All of these farms retain original farmhouses, and in some cases, barns, or other farmstead buildings. Interspersed with the farms are a series of small single-family dwellings. The farms are a reflection of the development of agriculture in the area, and most of the farmhouses date from the 1890-1930 era.

The district is recommended as not eligible for the NRPH due to lack of significance and integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Under Criterion A, the current land use is compatible with the land use during the 1870-1957 period. However, alteration to the farmhouses and addition of numerous large post-1957 metal chicken farming pole barns to the landscape makes it a fairly poor representation of 19th and early to mid-twentieth century farming in Worcester County. Under Criterion B, no persons important in history were associated with the district. Under Criterion C, the district's farmhouses all represent common Worcester County building types, and many have been severely altered in the past thirty years. The district contains few original pre-1957 barns and farmstead buildings, and now has large numbers of recent prefabricated chicken farming pole barns, so the district is not a good example of pre-1957 farmstead architecture in Worcester County.

Since its founding, agriculture has been and continues to be an important economic base for Worcester County. Aiding agriculture in the area were improvements in transportation which allowed agricultural products to be shipped easier and faster. One of the major economic developments in the survey district after World War II was the development of large scale factory-style chicken farming. By 1944, Worcester County was the number two chicken-producing county in the United States, with over 10 million birds raised.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WO-571

## 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic

other Worcester Highway Farm District

## 2. Location

street and number Worcester Hwy. between Five Mile Branch Rd. and Massey Branch     not for publication

city, town Newark   X   vicinity

county Worcester

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

name Multiple owners-See continuation sheet

street and number telephone

city, town state zip code

## 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Courthouse liber folio

city, town Snow Hill tax map tax parcel tax ID number

## 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- X   Other: Compliance Report and Historic Context for Proposed Highway Improvements-US 113: Five Mile Branch Road to Massey Branch

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
			Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>  X  </u> district	<u>   </u> public	<u>  X  </u> agriculture	<u>   </u> landscape	<u>   </u> buildings
<u>   </u> building(s)	<u>  X  </u> private	<u>   </u> commerce/trade	<u>   </u> recreation/culture	<u>  12  </u>
<u>   </u> structure	<u>   </u> both	<u>   </u> defense	<u>   </u> religion	<u>   0  </u> sites
<u>   </u> site		<u>  X  </u> domestic	<u>   </u> social	<u>   0  </u> structures
<u>   </u> object		<u>   </u> education	<u>  X  </u> transportation	<u>   0  </u> objects
		<u>   </u> funerary	<u>   </u> work in progress	<u>  12  </u> Total
		<u>   </u> government	<u>   </u> unknown	
		<u>   </u> health care	<u>  X  </u> vacant/not in use	
		<u>   </u> industry	<u>   </u> other:	
			<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>	
			<u>          1          </u>	

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## 7. Description

Inventory No. WO-571

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### Condition

excellent       deteriorated  
 good             ruins  
 fair                altered

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

The Worcester Highway Farm District is located along Worcester Highway between Five Mile Branch Creek to the southwest and Newark Road to the northeast, near the small town of Newark, Maryland. The District is located in a rural setting dominated by flat terrain, private farms and corn and soy bean fields. The district contains seven farms of 25 acres or more, and two smaller five-acre mini-farms. Most of the farms are between 45 and 250 acres in size. All of these farms retain original farmhouses, and in some cases, barns, or other farmstead buildings. Interspersed with the farms are a series of small single-family dwellings that appear to have housed local workers or retirees who had an acre or less of land. The farms are a reflection of the development of agriculture in the area, and most of the farmhouses date from the 1890-1930 era.

Most of the farmhouses in this survey district are examples of common architectural types for this county. Several of the houses are fairly intact in terms of the overall solid void relationships, but they have been altered by the application of replacement cladding, windows and additions that have completely altered the appearance of these structures. The buildings in the district represent a variety of building styles and types. A majority of the farm houses are either side-gable or gabled-ell house types, but one American four-square is also among the farm houses. Most of the farmhouses are vernacular but the Neo-Colonial style is displayed in buildings 6656 and 6869 Worcester Highway and the Queen Ann and East Lake styles are found in WO-464. The more recent buildings include a bungalow at 6719 Worcester Highway, Cape Cod cottages at 6583 and 6601 Worcester Highway, and a ranch house at 6641 Worcester Highway.

Overall, farm buildings at these farmsteads were not original or had been demolished and not replaced. One of the farms had minimal farmstead buildings and two had no such buildings, or what remained were only small garages. Three of the properties showed the influence of contract chicken farming of the last thirty years. The dominance of this type of farming in the project area has led to the demolition of older barns and farmstead buildings in favor of large metal pole barn-type chicken houses. These chicken barns are long, low metal structures that are specially designed to accommodate mass chicken farming.

### ***6369 Worcester Highway/US 113***

This farmstead consists of a wood frame American Foursquare two-story house (Photograph 1-3), a small garage, and 26.71 acres of farmland. No barns or other farmstead buildings were detected. The dwelling sits on a textured concrete block foundation, and features replacement aluminum siding and trim, an asphalt shingle roof, a mix of original wood and vinyl replacement windows, and a hipped front porch with wood Tuscan Doric columns.

State of Maryland real estate data for the property gives the construction date for the house as 1942. However, considering the American Foursquare format of the building and the use of stone-textured concrete block for the foundation, this date appears unlikely. A construction date for the house of about 1900-1915 seems more plausible. The house has a small 1950s era shed roof, one-story kitchen addition at rear. No house appears at

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## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WO-571

Name Worcester Highway Farm District  
**Continuation Sheet**

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this location on the 1877 Lake and Griffing Atlas, but a building does appear at this site on the 1901 USGS Snow Hill quad map.

### *6424 Worcester Highway/US 113*

This farmstead consists of an altered late nineteenth or early twentieth century farmhouse (Photograph 4 and 5), a series of metal chicken farming buildings that date from the last forty years (Photograph 6), and 235 acres of farmland. The house is a two-story side-gabled wood-frame structure which is an example of a common vernacular house type of the area. The house is vertical in proportion with fairly steeply pitched side-gabled roofs. The house features asbestos siding, an asphalt shingle roof, two-over-two wood double-hung windows and a shed roof porch that has received new supports. The house is currently vacant. The farmstead consists of open farmland and three large metal chicken houses of the type used in mass chicken farming.

A house appears on this site on the 1877 Lake Griffing Atlas, and is labeled "Jno P. Davis." The State of Maryland property record for the tract also refers to it as the Davis Farm. The date of construction of the house according to State of Maryland deed records is 1920, but this seems late, considering the physical features of the house. The side gabled form and two-over-two windows suggest a construction date of around 1870-1900. However, the house sits on a foundation reflecting two construction episodes. The older portion of the foundation is a series of footers, and these footers appear to be small cast stone blocks, some with a three-sided channel cast into them on one side. Probably sometime after 1940, the spaces between the footers were filled in with modern plain concrete block. The structure may be a ca. 1870-1877 house for which a new footer-type foundation was built in the early twentieth century, and then the foundation may have been further reinforced around the 1950s.

It is also interesting to note that State of Maryland deed information indicates that the property was transferred for \$0 in 1967, the grantor being Ralph L. Mason.<sup>1</sup> Mason was the founder of one of Worcester County's largest canneries, headquartered in Newark and with a major plant in Pocomoke City.<sup>2</sup> Mason also served in the Maryland Senate during the 1957-58 year. The property is owned today by members of the Mason family. However, it appears unlikely that a state senator and owner of a large cannery operation would have resided in such a modest farmhouse. Ralph L. Mason likely did not reside in the house, but rather rented it out as a tenant farm during his ownership.

The house is an example of one of the most common eastern shore farmhouse types. Small side gabled two-story wood frame farmhouses from the late nineteenth century are still fairly common in Worcester County. The house has also been altered with the application of asbestos siding and alterations to the porch. The house is not

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<sup>1</sup> Worcester County Courthouse, Deed Book FWH 224, Page 664.

<sup>2</sup> Paul B. Touart, *Along the Seaboard Side: The Architectural History of Worcester County, Maryland*, (Snow Hill: Worcester County Library, 1992), 167.

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part of an intact nineteenth or early twentieth century farmstead, but is paired with a set of metal chicken houses dating to the last thirty years.

### ***6621 Worcester Highway/US 113***

This farmstead consists of an altered wood frame turn-of-the-century farmhouse (Photograph 7 and 8), two small outbuildings, and three large metal chicken houses (Photograph 9) of the type dominant during the last forty years of mass chicken farming. The size of the existing farm tract is 72 acres. The house has a gabled ell format with the ell at the rear of the house. Cladding and trim are modern aluminum and windows are original two-over-two wood double-hung. The hipped roof front porch has been completely enclosed with aluminum siding and metal windows. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles. A one-story shed-roof addition at the rear of the house appears to date to ca. 1950. The only older outbuilding is a textured concrete block potting shed-type structure with a gabled roof.

The house is an example of one of the most common eastern shore farmhouse types, and it has been altered with the application of aluminum siding and trim, and the enclosure of the front porch. The house is not part of an intact nineteenth or early twentieth century farmstead, but is paired with a set of metal chicken houses dating to the last thirty years. The house does not appear on the 1877 Lake Griffing Atlas, but does appear on the 1901 USGS Snow Hill quad map. The two-over-two windows suggest a construction date of around 1880-1895. The State of Maryland real estate record for the house records its construction date as 1920, but this does not appear to be a reliable date based on historical information and the physical features of the house.

### ***6656 Worcester Highway/US 113***

This farmstead consists of a wood frame gabled ell farmhouse (Photograph 10 and 11) that has been heavily altered by large additions on the front and back of the building, and 46.89 acres of farmland. The additions to the house were designed in a somewhat thin Neo-Colonial style and appear to date from ca. 1955-1965. The additions include a gabled façade on the house's north wall, with a central door with a Colonial Revival style broken pediment, and a pedimented portico with thin aluminum columns and an aluminum siding-clad gabled pediment. A portion of the house's original side gabled roof can be seen on the house's east wall. The back of the house has several two-story shed roof additions, obscuring the form of the original house. The entire exterior is clad in aluminum siding and trim. All windows in the house are replacements dating from the 1955-1965 additions, or are recent double-hung vinyl windows. The farmstead buildings (Photograph 12) are overwhelmingly modern, and include several grain silos that appear to be nearly new, several large chicken houses typical of those used for modern contract farming in the area, and several large storage facilities, also of modern metal construction.

A house does not appear at this site on the 1877 Lake Griffing Atlas, or on the 1901 USGS Snow Hill quadrangle map. A building does appear in this general vicinity on a 1935 Maryland Geological Survey map of

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Worcester County. State of Maryland real estate records give the construction date of the house as 1930, which is consistent with information from the 1877, 1901 and 1935 maps.

#### *6815 Worcester Highway/US 113*

This property is an aluminum-clad gabled ell two-story house (Photograph 13 and 14) with a very small collection of farmstead buildings (Photograph 15), and 216.72 acres of farmland. The dwelling has a side gabled main roof with a two-story ell off of the back of the house. The cladding is asbestos siding, windows are one-over-one vinyl, and the roof is asphalt. The original wood trim including cornice and raking cornice are still exposed. The shed front porch roof structure appears original but has asphalt shingles for the roof covering, and the original porch posts have been removed in favor of a series of thin wood studs that serve as a framework for metal screening. The farmstead buildings are on the northwest side of the house. The farmstead buildings include a small terracotta block gable front barn, two corrugated metal sheds, and a concrete block garage.

The house does not appear on the 1877 Lake Griffing Atlas nor on the 1901 USGS Snow Hill quadrangle map. William Serman, current owner of the farmstead, indicated that the building was a sharecropper's residence built around 1917. State of Maryland real estate records for the property indicate that the house was built in 1915, which is generally consistent with the atlas maps and information from the current property owner.

#### *6869 Worcester Highway/U.S. 113*

This property consists of a heavily altered wood-frame gabled farmhouse (Photograph 16-18), two garages, and 135.05 acres of farmland. The house has been heavily altered in the last thirty years by an attempt to make the building appear to be a Neo-Colonial mansion. The original main block of the house is a two-story side gabled structure with an ell wing at the rear. The entire front of the house has been veneered in brick, and a portico has been added with four thin wood fluted Doric columns, wood pediment with dentils and an oval window in the pediment. The façade features vinyl windows and an arched doorway with fanlight and sidelights. A side gabled one-story wing was added to the east side of the house, likely at about the same time as the Neoclassical pediment was added. The house has two outbuildings, a concrete block storage building and a wood frame four-car garage, at the rear of the house. No farmstead buildings were observed at the site.

Two buildings appear on this land on the 1877 Lake Griffing Atlas with the name Wm. Bowen, but neither of the building locations appears to match the location of the current house. The same is true of the 1901 USGS Snow Hill quad map. State of Maryland real estate records indicate that the house at 6869 Worcester Highway was built in 1900, which seems consistent with the gabled ell form of the original portion of the house. The real estate record also referred to the building as Red House Farm. The property has been owned since 1961 by Sidney and Estelle Cropper.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Worcester County Courthouse, Deed Book FWH 145, Page 361.

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### ***8002 Bowen Road***

The house at 8002 Bowen Road is located on a 234-acre farm tract. The house is a two-story side-gabled dwelling with a steeply-pitched wall dormer in the center. Cladding and trim are aluminum, the front porch has been replaced, and the windows are modern synthetic replacements. On an 1877 atlas, a house appearing on this tract is labeled Samuel Bowen, but the house is much further southeast of Bowen Road than the current house. The 1901 USGS Snow Hill Quadrangle Map and the 1935 Maryland Geological Survey maps show a house in the same location as the 1877 atlas. The 1950 Maryland Geological Survey map shows the house in its current location. The Maryland real property database indicated that the tract was formerly owned by Elmer Bowen, but did not provide a construction date for the house. The house sits on a textured concrete block foundation that appears to date from ca. 1920-1940. With its Gothic Revival central dormer and side gabled format it is unlikely that the house was built anytime after about 1920. It appears that this house was moved to its current location between 1935 and 1949, and placed on a new foundation at that time.

### ***A.P Bowen House, South side of Newark Road, WO-464***

This farmstead, located along U.S. 113, is a Queen Anne/Eastlake-style gabled ell farmhouse (Photographs 19 and 20) with decorative bargeboard carving, fishscale shingles, and front double doors with carved decoration. Most of the original outbuildings for the property have disappeared. KCI completed an MIHP form in 1995, and SHA completed a DOE form for the house recommending that it was not eligible for the NRHP, with Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) concurrence. Today, the farmhouse is severely deteriorated, with holes in the roof in several locations, while a rear porch roof has completely deteriorated and is no longer in place. The carved wood front double doors visible in the 1995 KCI photos have been removed and the opening crudely boarded up. The house is in much poorer condition that it was at the time of the KCI survey; it has poorer integrity now and is in very poor physical condition.

### ***Residential Buildings in the Survey District***

In addition to the district's major farmsteads, the survey district also features several houses that do not have a significant quantity of farmland attached. These houses are generally single family non-farm dwellings, or dwellings with small plots of land that allow for small-scale experimentation in farming activities. The buildings include 6719 5 Mile Branch Road, (Photograph ?) a small one-story plain Craftsman bungalow with vinyl siding and trim, and built in 1930 according to State of Maryland real estate records. This house sits on a 5.06 acre lot and has no significant farmstead buildings. The house at 6641 Worcester Highway (Photograph ?) is a one-story brick ranch house with a large front picture window and an arched recessed porch. The date of construction for the house on State of Maryland real estate records is 1947, but it appears that the house may have been remodeled into its current brick ranch format in the 1960s or 1970s. The house at 6583 Worcester Highway (Photograph ?) is a side-gabled Cape Cod with vinyl siding and a mix of wood and vinyl windows, and a side gabled asphalt roof. Some areas of the house are clad in brick veneer. The house sits on 0.82 acres of land and the State of Maryland property records indicate a construction date of 1945. The house at 6601

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Worcester Highway (Photograph ?) is a one-story Cape Cod with a concrete block foundation, cross gabled asphalt roof, and vinyl siding and trim. The house sits on 5.45 acres of land, and State of Maryland real estate records indicate that the building was constructed in 1940.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. WO-571

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates Multiple

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

### Summary

The Worcester Highway Farm District is significant in the area of agriculture. The farmsteads contributing to the district provide a glimpse of the area's agricultural heritage. However, the district has a fairly low level of integrity due to alteration of original farmhouses, demolition of original barns and other farmstead buildings, and the construction of large new farm buildings. The overall period of significance for the district would be 1870-1957, covering the approximate date of the oldest farmhouses observed in the area, with 1957 being the 50-year cutoff date.

Some aspects of integrity for the district are fairly good including location, setting, feeling and association. The rural landforms are fairly well intact in terms of land use, with most of the area still used as farmland. The land is still largely open and most of the land is used for grain farming, with corn present as a prominent crop. Open farms have been encroached upon by single-family housing development in a few areas, but this is not a major factor in the area at this point. Some original farmhouses are still accompanied by clusters of deciduous trees originally planted for shade around the house.

The district is far weaker in terms of the integrity regarding design, materials, and workmanship of the farmstead buildings. Factors that hinder the district's ability to reflect the history of agriculture in this area from 1870-1957 are:

Alteration of farmhouses

Demolition of original barns and farmstead buildings

Construction of large post-1957 pole barns to support modern factory-type chicken farming

### Farmhouse alteration

Most of the farmhouses in the area have been altered, with two of them receiving façade alterations in the past thirty years that have transformed the appearance of the houses. All of the farmhouses in the area now have asbestos, aluminum, or vinyl siding and trim, and a large number have porch enclosures or large additions. In addition, at least one farmhouse in the district which is visible on recent USGS quad maps has been demolished, and one previously inventoried farmhouse (WO-464) is abandoned and has fallen into a ruined condition.

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Overall, the farmhouses of this district are a poor representation of rural farm architecture of the 1870-1957 period.

### *Demolition of farmstead buildings*

No major pre-1957 timber frame barns survive in the survey district. Remaining farm buildings from the pre-1957 era consist of a few small barns of wood or terracotta block construction, and small concrete block or frame vehicle sheds. Any timber or stud frame barns of major size in the district have been demolished. This loss has adversely affected the integrity of the district.

### *Construction of post-1957 pole barns*

The district has many examples of large metal pole barns, with some examples as much as 500 feet in length. Three of the large farms in the district have two to three of these structures. The buildings reflect the post-1957 factory farming history of the area, which is now largely dominated by factory-type farming of chickens for large corporations, most notably Tyson. These large, specialized pole barns do not reflect the scale and massing of earlier intact farmsteads in the area, which tend to have a large wood frame barn grouped with several smaller barns, vehicle sheds, and other small farmstead buildings. The buildings reflect the current industrial approach to chicken farming that has dominated in this area since about the 1970s. Overall, these pole barns are not conducive to the sense of historic feeling for the district for the 1870-1957 period.

Under Criterion A, the overall arrangement of land and its use for growing feed crops like corn today is compatible with the mix of feed grain, vegetable, and livestock farming which was prevalent in Worcester County during the 1870-1957 period. However, alteration to the farmhouses and addition of numerous large post-1957 metal chicken farming pole barns to the landscape makes it a fairly poor representation of 19th and early to mid-twentieth century farming in Worcester County. Under Criterion B, no persons important in history were associated with the district. Under Criterion C, the district's farmhouses all represent common Worcester County building types, and many have been severely altered in the past thirty years. The district contains few original pre-1957 barns and farmstead buildings, and now has large numbers of recent prefabricated chicken farming pole barns, so the district is not a good example of pre-1957 farmstead architecture in Worcester County.

### *Historic Context*

#### *Early Agricultural Development (1815-1865)*

Since its founding, agriculture has been and continues to be an important economic base for Worcester County. Single family farms like those in the Worcester Highway Farm District continue to be found throughout the county. In the first few decades of the nineteenth century, one of the main economic developments in the survey

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district was the transition in farming from subsistence crop farming to cash crop farming involving wheat and corn. Other agricultural products dominant in the area included potatoes, oats, and honey.<sup>4</sup>

Aiding agriculture in the area were improvements in transportation which allowed agricultural products to be shipped easier and faster. These improvements included improved roads and the construction of new public landings for shipping over the water. Improvements in nautical technology, especially the development of the steamboat, also made it easier to get agricultural products to a wide variety of markets.<sup>5</sup>

By the eve of the Civil War, the area had a successful agricultural economy. Regular steamboat service now offered quick travel between the eastern shore and urban centers like Baltimore, Washington D.C., Philadelphia, and Norfolk. However, railroads did not reach Worcester County until the 1870s. The Civil War caused some disruption in Worcester County, as some residents were loyal to the union while other supported the south. Union troops were stationed in Worcester County to prevent rebellion in the area, but fairly little damage was done to the area's farmsteads, mills, and industries. Markets in the large northern cities were still open to the farms and industries of the eastern shore, since Maryland remained in the union.<sup>6</sup>

Probably the largest change the war brought to the area was the elimination of slavery in Maryland in November 1864, which ended the use of slave labor that was still going on at some of the county's plantations. At the beginning of the Civil War, the slave population of Worcester County was 3,648, only slightly larger than the number of free blacks in the county, which was 3,571. After emancipation, some former slaves now joined existing free black communities, or formed new ones. However, many uneducated former slaves had little choice but to stay on the plantation and become sharecroppers or tenant farmers.<sup>7</sup>

### *Post-Civil War Development (1865-1900)*

As the 1860s progressed, the development of railroads began to reach into Worcester County. The Delaware Railroad had been completed to Salisbury in neighboring Somerset County before the Civil War, and this railroad had been extended to Somers Cove by 1866. A Salisbury to Berlin line was opened in May 1868. Planned lines connecting to Ocean City and Newark would not become operational until after 1870.<sup>8</sup> A rail line from Berlin to Newark was under construction by 1871, and had reached Newark and was being extended southward by March 1872. By late 1872 the line had reached Snow Hill, and by 1876 the railroad extended through Worcester County, connecting on the south with Franklin City, Virginia.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Touart, *Along the Seaboard Side*, 66.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 118.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 118-120.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 126.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WO-571

Name Worcester Highway Farm District  
**Continuation Sheet**

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The railroads had a major effect on the survey district's agricultural economy. Fruit and vegetables grown in Worcester County could now be rapidly shipped north to be sold in northern urban markets. Canneries were developed to package fruit and vegetables grown on the area's farms.<sup>10</sup> Many of the existing farmhouses and dwellings within the village of Newark were constructed after the railroad was established through the area. The railroad spurred growth since it made shipping goods out of the area easier, faster, and opened up new markets. It also made it easier to ship in mass produced goods for consumption, and also mass produced construction materials for building houses and other buildings.

According to 1866 and 1877 maps of Worcester County the area encompassed by the Worcester Highway Farm District was dominated by a few scattered family farms along what would become Worcester Highway. Many of the farms at the time were owned by members of the Jones, Davis, and Bowen families. A school located at the intersection of Worcester Highway and Five Mile Branch Road appears on the 1877 map.

### *Highways and Agricultural Development 1900-1945*

In the first four decades of the twentieth century, economic development progressed, but the survey district remained a mostly rural area dominated by farms of small to medium size. By the early twentieth century, corn, wheat, potatoes, peas, beans, tomatoes and fruit were the primary crops. Smaller crops of oats, rye, and buckwheat were also grown, and some farmers experimented with the re-introduction of tobacco. Livestock was also important, with the most important animals being hogs, sheep, and cows. Chickens were kept for egg production in the early twentieth century. The raising of chickens for mass public consumption of chicken meat did not become a major industry in the survey district until after World War II.<sup>11</sup>

After 1900, tomatoes were one of the dominant crops on the eastern shore. Many of the area's tomatoes were sent directly to market, but starting in the late nineteenth century, canning plants were developed. One of the largest cannery firms in the county was the Newark-based company started in 1920 by Ralph L. Mason. Mason's canning operation continued until the mid-1980s.<sup>12</sup> Local farmers also established a produce exchange for Somerset and Worcester County farmers. The exchange worked on behalf of the farmers to find them the best price for their produce in Baltimore and the other large urban markets, cutting out middlemen that had formerly eaten up much of the farmers' profits. The exchange was highly successful, and farmers also used it lobby local politicians and the Maryland state government.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 127-128.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 165-167.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 167.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 172-174.

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**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 4

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While railroads were the dominant land transportation force in Worcester County in the late nineteenth century, road improvements in the early twentieth century laid the groundwork for the ascendancy of the automobile. Local residents lobbied for paved roads and highways in the county during the 1904-1910 period, and some slow progress in road-building was made during that era. One major achievement was the construction of the Worcester Highway (now US 113) through the survey district from Berlin to the Delaware state line.<sup>14</sup> A road from Snow Hill to Berlin through Newark shows up on early 1866 and 1877 maps of the area, but it was not until sometime between 1935 and 1937 that the road was made a federal highway and labeled US 113. Originally the road went through Basket Switch, but sometime between 1902 and 1935 a Basket Switch bypass was constructed north of the original road. Other than this minor change the road remained the same through the survey district.

One of the most significant economic developments of the postwar era, and one that affects the project area today, had its origins in the 1900-1945 period. The production of broilers, or chickens raised to be eaten, had its origins in the 1920s. Local sources indicate that in 1923, farmwife Cecile Steele of Ocean View, Delaware, received 500 baby chicks from her hatchery supplier, by mistake. Steele raised the chicks and sold the mature chickens to a local buyer, who was able to sell them in northern urban markets. The success of Steele's endeavor led more farmers in the survey district to begin raising chickens for meat. By the mid-1930s, chicken production was a major industry on the Delmarva peninsula, with the area producing about two-thirds of the 34 million chickens raised in the United States at that time.<sup>15</sup> After World War II, Worcester County chicken farmers would adopt mass production methods and the industry would become a dominant economic force.

### *Post-World War II Development*

One of the major economic developments in the survey district after World War II was the development of large scale factory-style chicken farming. By 1944, Worcester County was the number two chicken-producing county in the United States, with over 10 million birds raised. The county retained its number two ranking in 1949, with production having climbed to 12 million chickens. With new industrial chicken production methods, Worcester County chicken production climbed to a peak of nearly 68 million in 1982.<sup>16</sup> Today all of the farms in the Worcester Highway Farm District participate in this factory-style chicken farming. In 2006, Maryland ranked eighth in the United States in number of chickens produced for meat, and Worcester County ranked the 23rd highest chicken producing county in the United States.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 179.

<sup>15</sup> Lowershore.net, "Delmarva Chicken Facts" [www.lowershore.net/chickens.htm](http://www.lowershore.net/chickens.htm) (accessed June 10, 2007).

<sup>16</sup> Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc, "Facts about Maryland's Broiler Chicken Industry." [Dpichicken.org/download/factmd2006.doc](http://Dpichicken.org/download/factmd2006.doc) (accessed June 10, 2007).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name Worcester Highway Farm District  
**Continuation Sheet**

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Many local farmers in the area operate under contract with large companies like Tyson. The chickens are supplied to the farmers as chicks and are then raised in long, narrow steel pole barns built especially for this purpose. Most of the barns are gabled one-story structures, fairly narrow in width but about 500' long. The majority of farms in the survey district contain these large steel structures for the factory-style production of chickens.

In the decades following World War II, limited residential development also made its way into the survey district. A few ranch houses were built along Worcester Highway in the 1950s and 1960s. But according to 1950 and 1966 maps, the houses were widely separated from one another. More recently, additional non-farm single family residences have been constructed in the project area along Worcester Highway. Another change to the area came in 1956 when construction started on a US 113 bypass around Newark which pulled highway traffic off of Newark Road through the center of Newark, and re-routed the traffic on a new two-lane road on the outskirts of the town's south side.<sup>18</sup> The bypass cut through the A. P. Bowen farm fields, but no other major impacts to the Worcester Highway Farm district were sustained.

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<sup>18</sup> Reginald Truitt and Millard Les Callette, *Worcester County, Maryland's Arcadia*. (Snow Hill, Maryland: Worcester County Historical Society, 1977), 96.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. WO-571

- Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. "Facts about Maryland's Broiler Chicken Industry." [Dpichicken.org/download/factmd2006.doc](http://Dpichicken.org/download/factmd2006.doc) (accessed June 10, 2007).
- Lowershore.net. "Delmarva Chicken Facts" [www.lowershore.net/chickens.htm](http://www.lowershore.net/chickens.htm) (accessed June 10, 2007).
- Touart, Paul B. *Along the Seaboard Side: The Architectural History of Worcester County, Maryland*. Snow Hill: Worcester County Library, 1992.
- Truitt, Reginald, and Millard Les Callette, *Worcester County, Maryland's Arcadia*. Snow Hill, Maryland: Worcester County Historical Society, 1977.
- Worcester County Courthouse, Deed Book FWH 145, Page 361, and Deed Book FWH 224, Page 664.

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## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 440 acres  
Acreage of historical setting N/A  
Quadrangle name Public Landing Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The Worcester Highway Farm District is located in Worcester County, Maryland southwest of the town of Newark. The boundary extends along Worcester Highway and is bounded by Map 48 parcels 25, 53, 19, 12, 15, and 3, and Map 49 parcels 63, 64, and 59.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Roy Hampton, Senior Architectural Historian and Heather Kenney, Architectural Historian		
organization	Hardlines Design Company	date	06/08/2007
street & number	4608 Indianola Ave.	telephone	614-784-8733
city or town	Columbus	state	OH

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WO-571

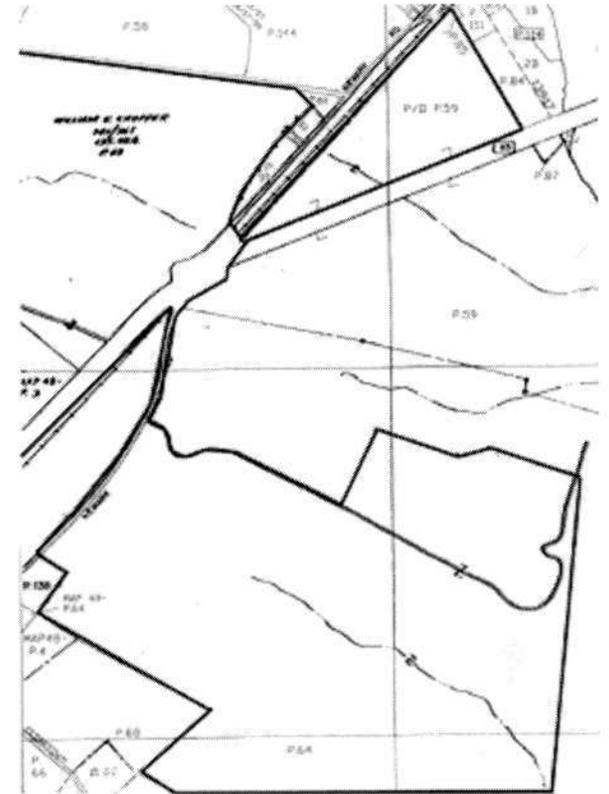
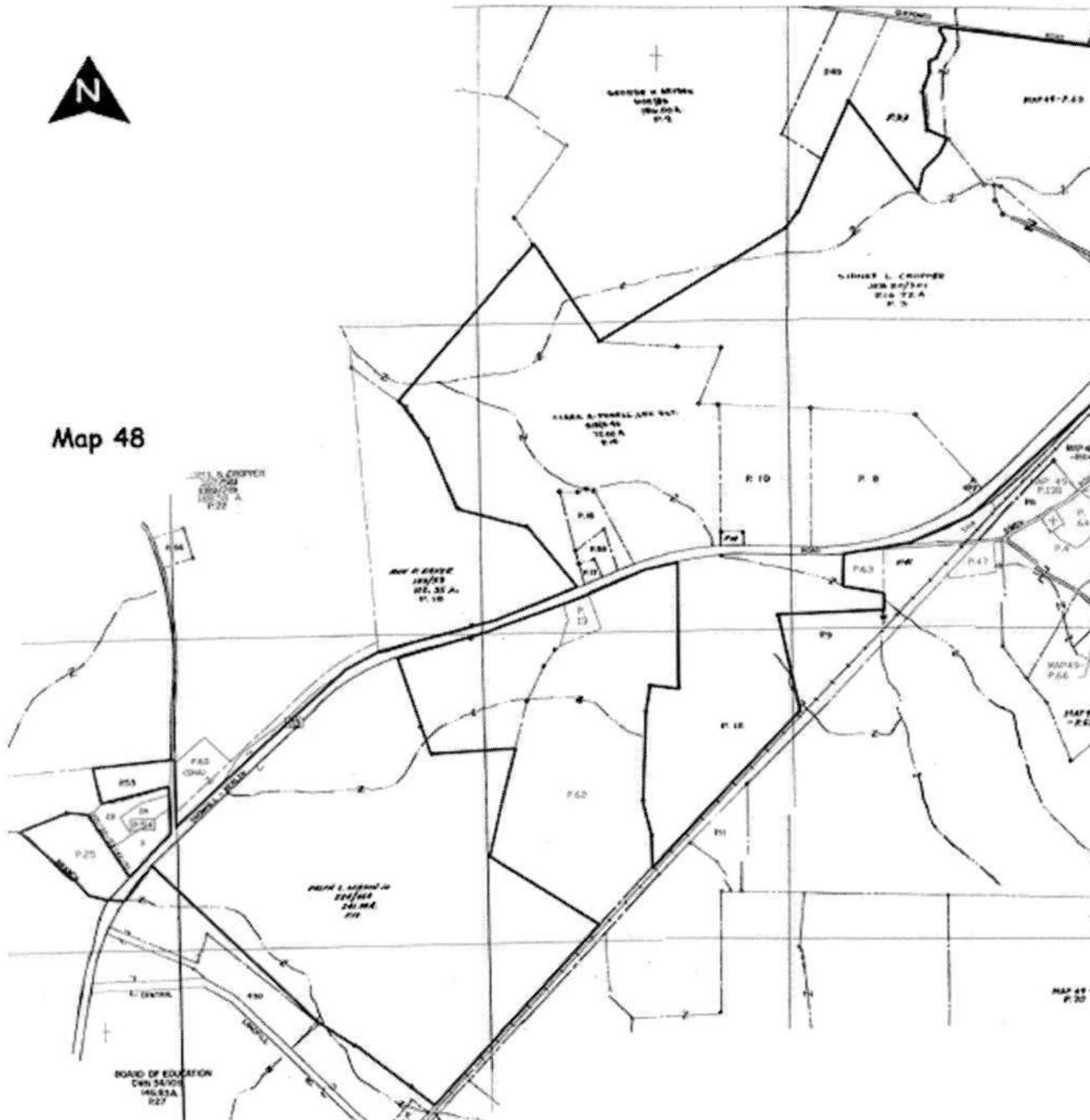
Name Worcester Highway Farm District  
**Continuation Sheet**

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Contributing Property	Tax Map	Tax Parcel	Tax ID Number	Property Owner's Name	Property Owner's Address
6719 Five Mile Branch Rd.	48	53	005996	Patricia Benak	7628 Public Landing Rd. Snow Hill, MD 21863
6369 Worcester Highway	48	25	003187	James & Dorothy Dryden	6369 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841
6424 Worcester Highway	48	19	003225	Ralph Mason, Nancy Bounds, C.M. Woods, & T.C. Mason	PO Box 100 Newark, MD 21841
6583 Worcester Highway	48	17	003330	Henry & Luvenia Spence	6583 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841
6601 Worcester Highway	48	16	003128	Paul & Maude Donoway	6601 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841
6621 Worcester Highway	48	15	003268	H. Watson & Betty Powell & Bonnie Lewis	6656 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841
6641 Worcester Highway	48	14	0031001	Ralph & Deborah Wooten	6641 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841
6656 Worcester Highway	48	12	003292	H. Watson Powell	6656 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841
6815 Worcester Highway	48	3	003047	William & Charlotte Serman	6815 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841
6869 Worcester Highway	49	63	003667	William Cropper & Mary Ellen Wells	6869 Worcester Highway Newark, MD 21841
8002 Bowen Rd.	49	64	004132	Joanne & Sarah Mason	PO Box 100 Newark, MD 21841
WO-464 Newark Rd.	49	59	004558	George C. Townsend	6510 Paige Court Snow Hill, MD 21863

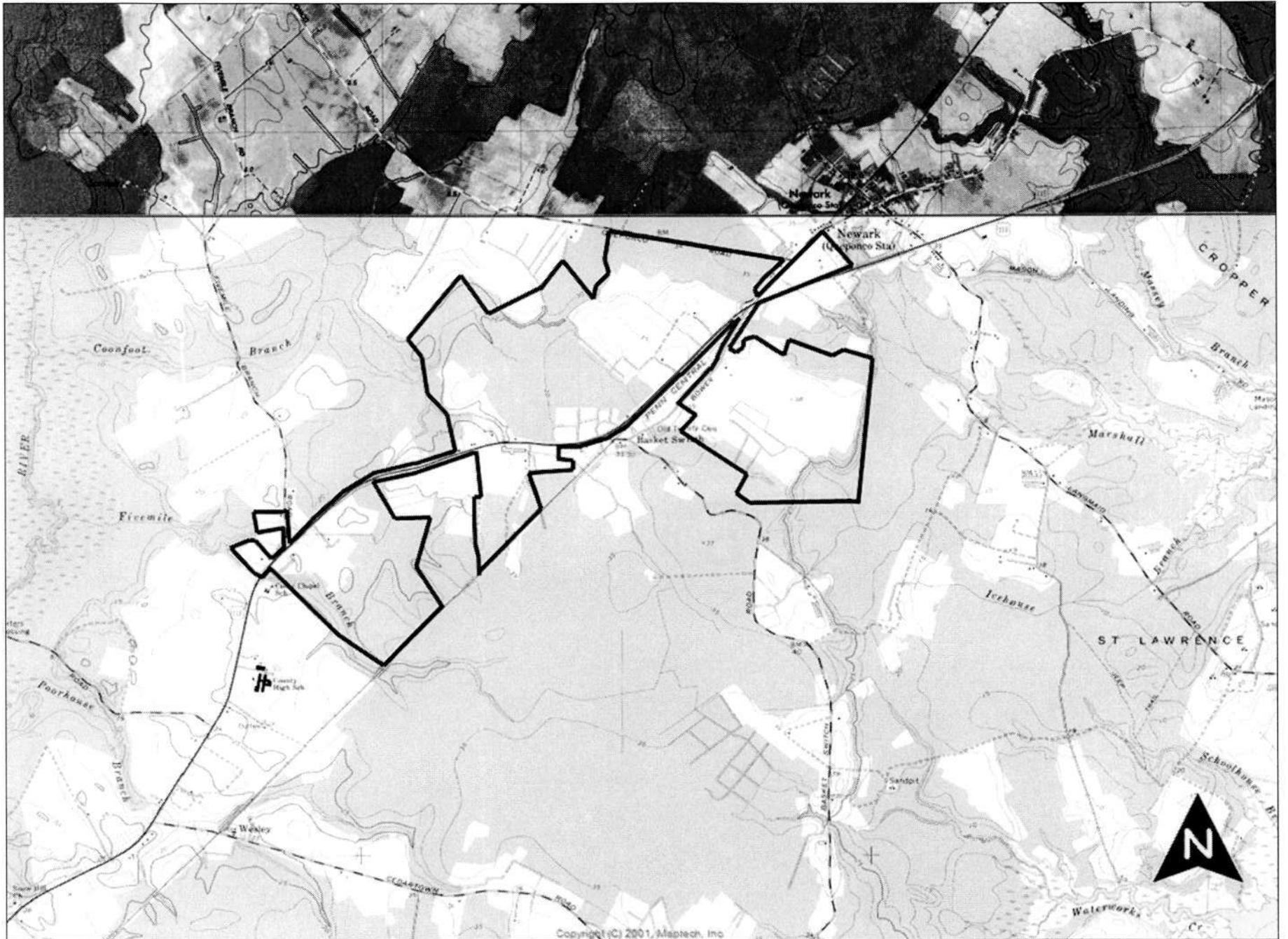


Map 48



Map 49

WO-571, Worcester Highway Farm District boundary, Newark vicinity, Worcester County, Resource Sketch Map-Tax Maps 48 and 49



WO-571, Worcester Highway Farm District boundary, Newark vicinity, Worcester County, Public Landing Quad



Inventory No. WO-571

6369 Worcester Highway Worcester Highway Farm District  
Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Southwest corner of house looking northeast.

#1 of 21



Inventory No. WO-571

6369 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

South side of house looking north.

#2 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6369 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Northwest corner of house looking southeast.

#3 of 21



Inventory Nos WO-571

6424 Worcester Highway, Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SH PO

Northwest corner of house looking southeast.

#4 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6424 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Southeast corner of house looking northwest.

#5 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6424 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Northeast corner of modern chicken barns looking southwest.

#6 of 21



Inventory No. WO-571

6621 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

M D SHPO

Southwest corner of house looking northeast.

# 7 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6621 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Henney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Northwest corner of house looking southeast.

#8 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6621 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Southeast corner of modern chicken barns looking northwest.

#9 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6656 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Northeast corner of house looking southwest.

#10 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6656 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Northwest corner of house looking southeast.

# 11 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6656 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Northwest corner of modern barns looking Southeast.

#12 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6615 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Southwest corner of house looking northeast.

#13 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6615 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Northeast corner of house looking southwest.

#14 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6815 Worcester Highway, Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

Southeast corner of barns looking northwest.

#15 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6869 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County; Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

South side of house looking north.

#16 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

0869 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHAD

Southeast corner of house looking northwest.

# 17 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

6869 Worcester Highway; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 20, 2007

MD SHPO

Northeast corner of barn and house looking southwest.

# 18 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

A. P. Bowen House; Worcester Highway Farm District  
Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

North side of house looking south.

#19 of 21



Inventory No. WO-571

A. P. Bowen House; Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

May 29, 2007

MD SHPO

West side of house looking east.

#20 of 21



Inventory No. WD-571

A. P. Bowen House, Worcester Highway Farm District

Worcester County, Maryland

Heather Kenney

MD SHPO

Southeast corner of house looking northwest.

# 21 of 21