MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

NR Eligible: yes ___
no ___

Property Name: St. Luke M. E. Church Inventory Number: HO-756

Address: 350 River Road City: Sykesville Zip Code: 21084

County: Howard USGS Topographic Map: Sykesville

Owner: St. Luke Methodist Episcopal Church

Tax Parcel Number: 12 Tax Map Number: 4 Tax Account ID Number: 03-301397

Project: MD 32 Bridge 13046 Dualization Agency: SHA

Site visit by MHT Staff: ___no ___yes Name: _____ Date: _____

Eligibility recommended ___ Eligibility **not** recommended X

Criteria: ___A ___B ___C ___D Considerations: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G ___None

Is the property located within a historic district? X no ___yes Name of district: _____

Is district listed? ___no ___yes Determined eligible? ___no ___yes District Inventory Number: _____

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: MHT Inventory files

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

St. Luke M. E. Church was built on the south side of the Patapsco River, on the Howard County portion of Sykesville after St. Paul United Methodist Church moved in 1887 to its present location on the north side of the river and gave the land to the black congregation (Healan Barrow, Sykesville, Past and Present, Greenberg Publishing Co. Sykesville, 1987, page 55). Built in 1898, St. Luke Church has traditionally housed a black congregation, according to Sykesville (Bill Hall, Arcadia Press, Charleston, SC, 2001, p. 27). There is a graveyard to the north of it on a rise with a predominance of family names such as Dorsey, Young, Green, Norris, and Johnson. According to Sykesville, Past and Present (Barrow), the Norris family had been a mainstay of the church for three generations.

The original part of the structure, designed in a restrained Gothic Revival style, is a small, gable end, asbestos shingle-clad, frame structure that is oriented to the south and located on the east side of MD 32. With a traditional nave form, the eastern side of the building has regular fenestration of four-over-four, clear-glass sash, with traceried round arches. The entrance is located in the south facing gable end, with a simple round window centered over the double door centered in the vinyl-clad frame, shed-roof, one-story addition approximating the traditional narthex form of the basilican form. Simple lancet windows are located to either side of the cross gabled, centered entry. A simple open belfry surmounts the roof apex near the gable end.

In 1943, during the tenure of Reverend Roscoe Williams, pastor of the White Rock United Methodist Church Rock (and in the same circuit as St. Luke) St. Luke was renovated and expanded (see Dedication Brochure of the White Rock U. M. Church, October 19, 1997, Historical Society of Carroll County vertical files). It is assumed that this renovation accounts for the expansion of the sanctuary to the west with building of the perpendicular stuccoed wing, with a battlemented tower in the southwest angle of

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Eligibility recommended ___ **Eligibility not recommended** X

Criteria: ___A ___B ___C ___D **Considerations:** ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G ___None

Comments:

Andrew Lewis 01/31/02

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services **Date**

2/19/02

Reviewer, NR program **Date**

200104395

the original church and the wing, with an entrance accommodating wheelchairs. Although the interior of the building could not be accessed, from photographs appearing in Sykesville (Hall) it is clear that the interior of the building was heavily altered, and original finishes replaced by modern materials when the sanctuary was expanded into the addition on the west. With this expansion to the side it has lost an important focus and component of the original basilican form.

The church lacks particular architectural or historical significance or distinction and therefore would not meet the National Register criterion C. It lacks integrity in that there have been substantive changes to the building, destroying elements giving it cohesion and character as a small Gothic Revival Church. In addition, there are other churches typically associated with black congregations within the general environs that better illustrate the patterns of worship and evolution of like congregations. Despite its association with the establishment of black houses of worship, (and thus possible eligibility under Criteria A, or B) its lack of integrity disqualifies it for inclusion in the National Register. The likelihood that it would yield significant archeological associations has not been established, thus the likelihood that it would meet the requirements of Criterion D for listing in the National Register cannot be established at this time.

History of Sykesville

St. Luke is located on land associated with the original town of Sykesville, located on the south side of the western branch of the Patapsco River in which was then Anne Arundel County. Following the Johnstown Flood of 1868 the town was rebuilt on the higher ground of the north bank in Carroll County. St Luke M. E. Church was built on this site in what later became the Howard County portion of Sykesville after St. Paul Untied Methodist Church moved in 1887 to its present location on the north side of the Patapsco River and gave the land to the black congregation.

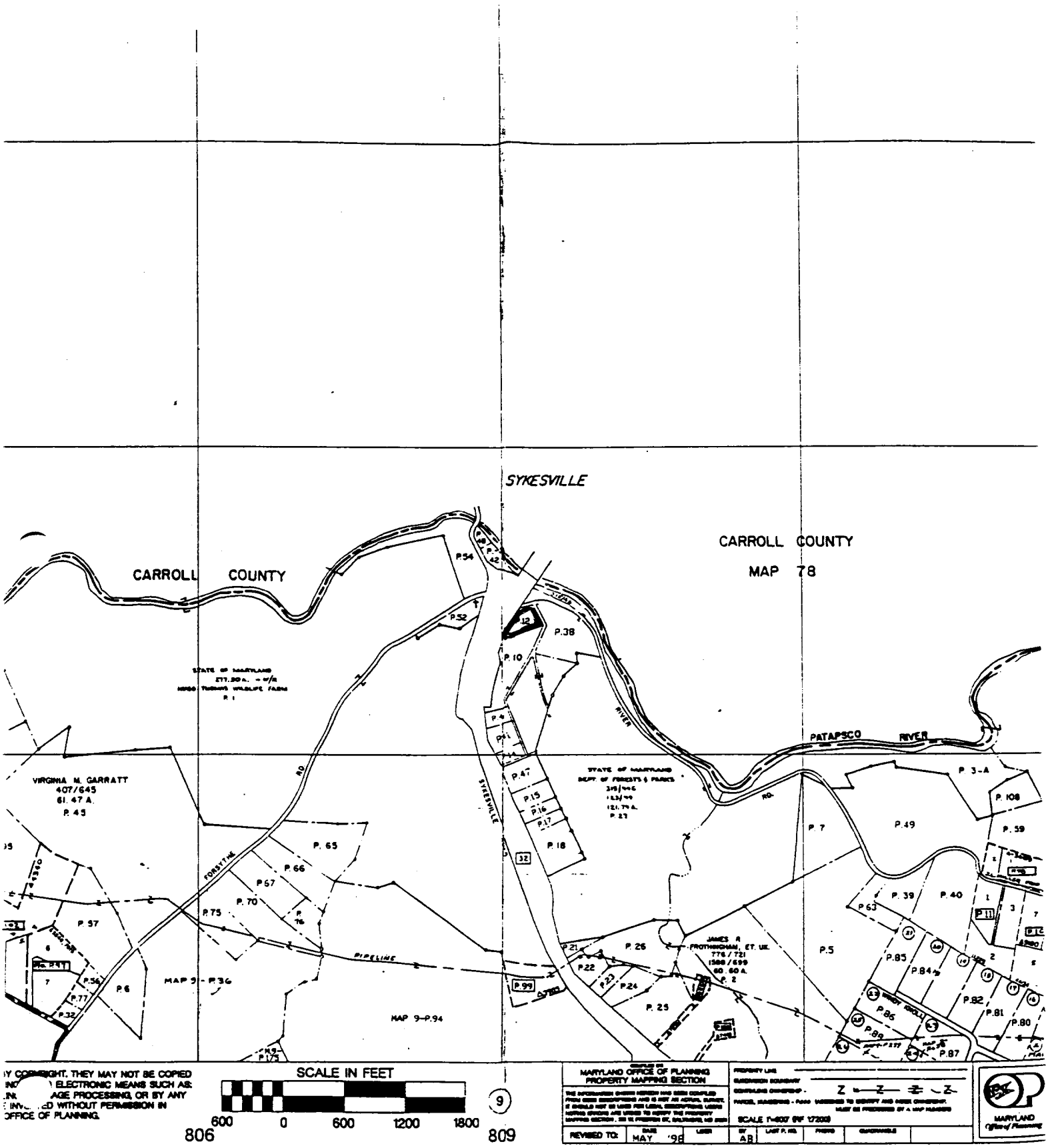
This land on which Sykesville was established was originally part of Baltimore County, but became part of Carroll County in 1837. Howard County, south of the river, was formed in 1851. In the early 19th century the area was sparsely populated with only a handful of homes and mills scattered along this part the Patapsco River Valley. In the late 1820's the landscape changed as James Sykes came to the area and began to purchase land, bringing development to the area, aided by the connection to the B&O Railroad, which began service between Baltimore and Ellicott City on the main line in 1830. A year later it was extended through Sykesville to the Frederick Junction. By 1851, when the horse-drawn railroad came through, Sykes had made substantial improvements to an old grist and sawmill on the south side of the river and had built a stone hotel to accommodate rail passengers. The hotel soon became a destination for Baltimorians. Sykes established Howard Cotton Factory along with ore mining sites and the Elba Furnace just downstream from the mill.

Sykesville came to be recognized as "an important center of commerce an transportation for south Carroll County" by the 1870's. The mill and village flourished until the nationwide Panic of 1857 and the economic hardship experienced by many businesses. Sykes was forced to close the Howard Cotton Factory.

The residents of Sykesville had barely recovered from this and the Civil War, during which the Confederate Army raided Sykesville, when disaster struck in the form of the Johnstown Flood of 1868, which essentially washed away the town. The factory, hotel, iron furnace and dozens of homes were destroyed or left in ruins.

Prepared by: Rita M. Suffness Date Prepared: September 18, 2001

HO-756
St. Luke M. E. Church
Sykesville, MD
Tax Map



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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

HO-756
St. Luke M. E. Church
Sykesville, MD
Sykesville, Quadrangle

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Sept 2007

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St. Luke M.E. Church

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St. Luke M. E. Church

Sykesville, MD

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