HO-812, House
6754 Athol Avenue, Elkridge
Howard County
Ca. 1940
Private

CAPSULE SUMMARY

This single story gable front and wing cottage is constructed entirely of stone and was built around the late 1930's. It is a good example, in excellent condition, of the smaller scale suburban dwellings that were built in Harwood Park during the first half of the 20th century. The house faces south on the north side of Athol Avenue on the northwest corner of Athol and Woodburn Avenue. It shows some Tudor influences in the stone construction and arched doorway. A large addition has been made to the west side of the structure.

The house at 6754 Athol Avenue is significant under criteria A and C in the areas of architecture and community planning. Architecturally, the house is representative of the modest, one story cottages built in the 1940's and 1950's that came to dominate Harwood Park. The house is also significant because of its location in the Harwood Park subdivision, one of the earlier subdivisions in Howard County, and a representative example of the type of affordable subdivisions laid out along railroad lines in close proximity to big cities all over the United States.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HO-812

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	House
other	

2. Location

street and number	6754 Athol Avenue	___	not for publication
city, town	Elkridge	___	vicinity
county	Howard		

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

name	Augusta Drunheiser				
street and number	6754 Athol Avenue			telephone	
city, town	Elkridge	state	MD	zip code	21075

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Howard County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	Map 38, P873		
city, town	Ellicott City	liber	5080	folio	657

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
___ Other _____

6. Classification

Category
___ district
X building(s)
___ structure
___ site
___ object

Ownership
___ public
X private
___ both

Current Function
___ agriculture
___ commerce/trade
___ defense
X domestic
___ education
___ funerary
___ government
___ health care
___ industry
___ landscape
___ recreation/culture
___ religion
___ social
___ transportation
___ work in progress
___ unknown
___ vacant/not in use
___ other: _____

Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	___	buildings
___	___	sites
___	___	structures
___	___	objects
1	0	Total

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
0

7. Description

Inventory No. HO-812

Condition

X	excellent	___	deteriorated
___	good	___	ruins
___	fair	___	altered

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

This single story gable front and wing cottage is constructed entirely of stone and was built around the late 1930's. It is a good example, in excellent condition, of the smaller scale suburban dwellings that were built in Harwood Park during the first half of the 20th century. The house faces south on the north side of Athol Avenue on the northwest corner of Athol and Woodburn Avenue. It shows some Tudor influences in the stone construction and arched doorway. A large addition has been made to the west side of the structure.

The front (south) façade features a central entry in an arched opening. The wood batten door is also arched to fit the opening, as is the wood frame screen door. Stone steps rise to a stone stoop in front of the entryway; there is no roof over the stoop. To the left of the front door, in the gable front section of the original front façade, is a large metal casement window. A matching window is located to the right of the front door. Asbestos shingles are found in the low-pitched front gable.

The east side façade features two large metal casement windows, like those on the front façade, on the first story. Two 1/1 double hung wood windows are found in the gable and two more windows are found at the basement level. Like the front gable, this one is also clad in asbestos shingles.

The rear (north) façade of the house features a door in the center of the first story flanked by two more large metal casement windows, one on either side. A small entry portico shelters the door, and the stone stoop is accessed by stone steps.

The original west side façade of the house is concealed behind the large addition. The one story addition is on a cinderblock foundation and is raised to create a carport beneath it. The addition has an asbestos and wood shingle exterior and a combination of 1/1 wood and vinyl windows.

Both the original portion of the house and the addition have asphalt shingle roofs and one interior brick stovepipe chimney pierces the roof of the original section. Simple wood cornice trim is found on the both the front and rear facades of the original dwelling.

8. Significance

Inventory No. HO-812

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

Specific dates ca. 1940 **Architect/Builder** unknown

Construction dates ca. 1940

Evaluation for:

__ National Register __ Maryland Register X 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 reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The house at 6754 Athol Avenue is significant under criteria A and C in the areas of architecture and community planning. Architecturally, the house is representative of the modest, one story cottages built in the 1940's and 1950's that came to dominate Harwood Park. The house is also significant because of its location in the Harwood Park subdivision, one of the earlier subdivisions in Howard County, and a representative example of the type of affordable subdivisions laid out along railroad lines in close proximity to big cities all over the United States.

The Harwood Park subdivision is located in Elkridge bounded by Route 1 on the north, the railroad on the south, and recent industrial parks on the east and west. The historic settlement of Elkridge Landing is located approximately 2 miles to the east along Route 1. Harwood Park was one of several early subdivisions in Howard County platted in the 1890's as part of the expanding wave of suburbanization across the country.

The suburban movement in community planning in the United States traces its roots back to the mid-19th century and the Romantic landscape movement. The suburban ideal consisted of substantial single family houses located on large lots on curvilinear streets in park-like settings. The two developments widely recognized as the prototypes are Llewellyn Park (1857) in New Jersey and Riverside (1869) west of Chicago in Illinois. This ideal appealed greatly to the middle class and inspired an aspiration for semi-rural living away from the noise, crime, and filth of the fast-growing cities, but still close enough to them for commuting purposes. Ease of commuting was the key to early suburban success. As transportation became more advanced and travel became easier and faster, the suburbs moved further and further away from the cities. The earliest suburbs were served by horse-drawn cars and the railroad, then came the electric streetcar, and finally, by the 1920's, the automobile. (1)

The suburban ideal in its highest form was beyond the financial means of most of the middle class and certainly all of the working class, but savvy developers found ways to create more affordable subdivisions while still appealing to the ideal of better living. These affordable developments usually relied on a rectilinear plan in lieu of the curving streets and park-like setting touted by the idealists, and the houses were smaller, though still detached single family dwellings, and located closer together on narrow lots. (2) Advances in building technology also made single-family houses increasingly affordable. Architecturally, the balloon framing method made domestic construction faster and cheaper, and mass produced decorative details popularized by pattern books and turned out in quantity by saw mills across the nation, lent many of the late 19th century developments a similar flavor. The increasing use of the railroad to transport both raw and dimensioned lumber, as well as the finished stock of doors, window sash, porch supports, and decorative brackets contributed to the suburban boom.

Suburban development continued at a steady pace across the nation during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The proximity of various locales to booming cities and transportation routes determined the rate of suburban growth in those areas. The rise of the automobile during the 1920's made the construction of new suburbs away from the railroads a viable possibility and the population

continued to settle further and further away from the city centers. The big boom in suburban development across the country came post-World War II when the massive numbers of returning soldiers created a seemingly insatiable demand for the independence and middle class status associated with home ownership. Architecturally, the trend in the affordable subdivisions was towards increasingly modest houses built on a small scale with minimal decoration. Particularly during the Depression of the 1930's, the minimal trend helped to keep home ownership affordable for a larger portion of the population. Likewise, post-war subdivisions also exhibit mostly minimal cottages and ranchers affordable for returning soldiers and their young families. (3)

The subdivision of Harwood Park, originally called simply Har-wood, was platted in 1893 on 125 acres of land owned by the Kyne family. Har-wood was one of many suburbs laid out along important transportation routes in the late 19th century; in Howard County, the small subdivision of Anderson, down near Hanover on the Howard County side of the tracks, was laid out beside the railroad around 1871 and the subdivision of North Laurel, located, as the name suggests, just north of Laurel, was platted in 1891. (4) In Har-wood, more than 1000 individual lots were laid out by the Boston Land Improvement Company in the subdivision named for two of the company's owners, William Harmon and Charles Wood. The appeal of the subdivision was certainly its location on the railroad line running into Baltimore. There was a stop on the railroad in the Har-wood development; it is unknown if a proper station was ever built, but the stop was apparently located at the end of Beechfield Avenue. Residents of the neighborhood could commute to both Baltimore and Washington D.C. with ease on the train. (5) In addition, the Washington Turnpike, the major thoroughfare that would become Route 1 in the 1930's, was located on the northern edge of the development, providing residents with easy access to not one but two major transportation routes of the day.

Like many early subdivisions, deed covenants were used to restrict the types of development that could occur in Har-wood, and an 1894 deed states "owners shall not permit to be erected on any part of the assigned ground, or any part thereof, any tavern, saloon, tannery, slaughter house, skin dressing, glue, soap, candle or starch manufacturing establishment, or any other building for offensive purpose or occupation." (6) In addition, houses built in Har-wood had to cost at least $800. Har-wood was clearly conceived as one of the affordable suburbs mentioned above intended to make the suburban ideal available to a wider portion of the middle class. The rectilinear plan of the streets and numerous small, narrow lots are good indicators of the clientele the developers were hoping to attract. It is unknown how many lots were actually sold and developed during the first decade of the subdivision's existence. There are certainly some dwellings still standing that date to the 1890's, but today a vast majority date to the 1940's and 1950's. According to an elderly resident, there were only around 15 homes built in Har-wood by 1912, and by 1925 only 5 houses were located along all of Athol Avenue. (7) For the first 50 years of its life then, the neighborhood of Har-wood must have retained a very rural feel. The railroad faded from prominence as a mode of transportation during the early 20th century with the development of the automobile and automobile suburbs away from the railroads became increasingly popular. It is notable that the houses constructed in Har-wood became increasingly modest during the early 20th century. There are less than 10 two-story Folk Victorian dwellings in all of Har-wood; those houses constructed in the 20's and 30's were more often minimal one story bungalows or cottages. The upper middle class, those more likely to build large houses in the Victorian or Colonial Revival styles, was obviously looking elsewhere. But Har-wood certainly came into its own during the post-war years of suburban development and the modest cottages and ranchers of this period dominate the landscape. The name of the neighborhood was changed to Harwood Park by 1940.

The house at 6754 Athol Avenue is a good example of the modest, one story cottages that filled in the landscape of Harwood Park in the 1940's and 1950's. This house is notable for its muted Tudor influences, all stone construction, and excellent condition. Its gable front and wing style and central entry are evocative of the traditional late 19th century form, while its modest single-story size indicates it was built to suit a very different 20th century buyer.

1. David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN: HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL SUBURBS

(National Park Service, 2002).

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. For information on Anderson see Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties forms HO-786, HO-787, HO-792, HO-793, and HO-794. For information on North Laurel see form HO-799.

5. All information on the history of Harwood Park is from the Harwood Park Neighborhood Improvement Association website (http://www.geocities.com/harwoodparkelkridge), History section, prepared by Betsy McMillion. A hard copy of this section is filed in the Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning with the inventory forms, behind HO-808.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. HO-812

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 0.25

Acreage of historical setting uknown

Quadrangle name Relay

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 900-903 in the Harwood Park subdivision. It is unknown if there were originally more lots associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Kristin Hill, Historic Sites Surveyor		
organization	Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning	date	12/9/03
street and number	3430 Howard County Courthouse	telephone	410-313-4335
city or town	Ellicott City	state MD	zip code 21043

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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name House
Continuation Sheet
Number 9 Page 1

Ames, David L. and Linda Flint McClelland, NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN: HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL SUBURBS (National Park Service, 2002).

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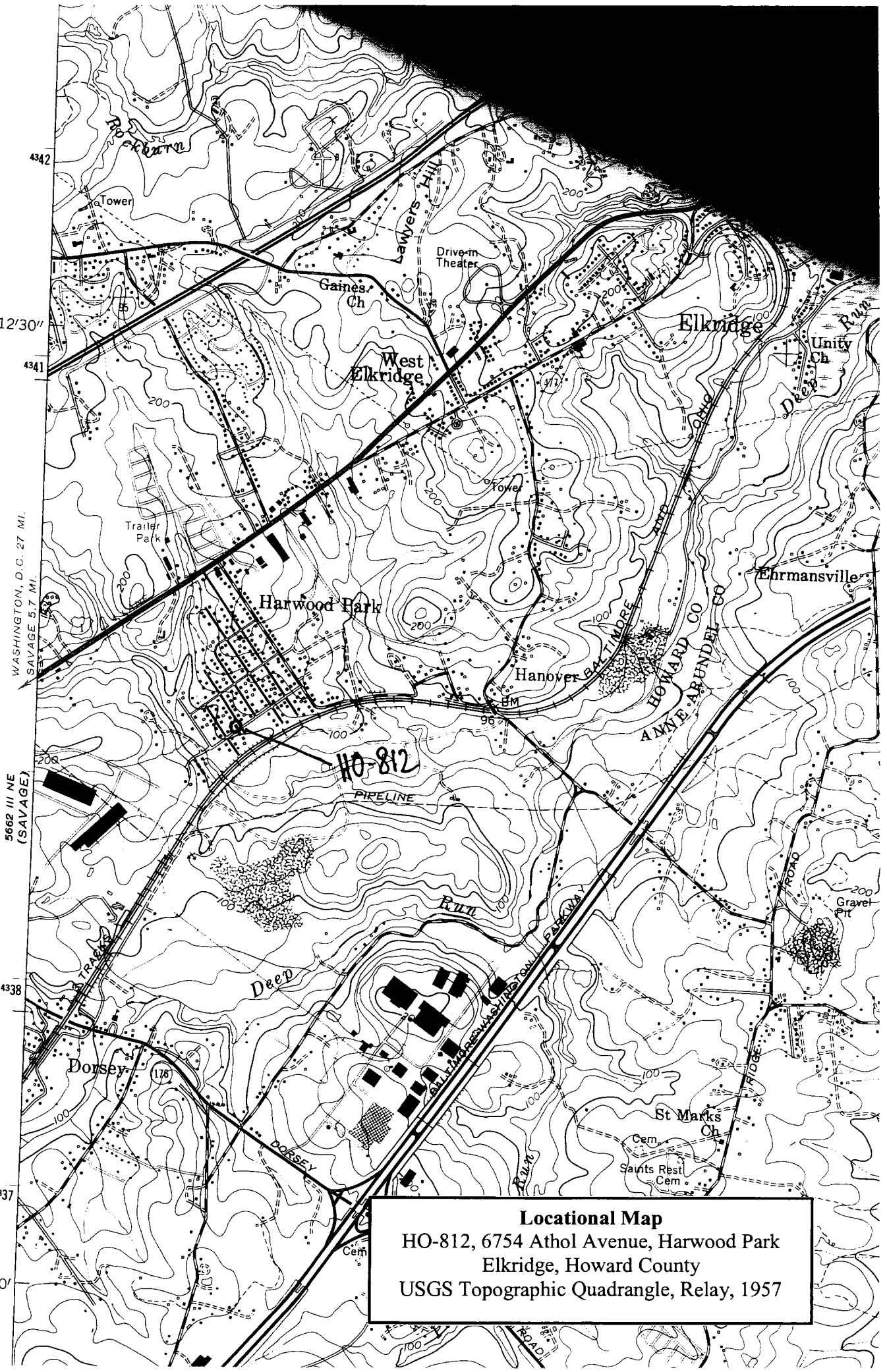
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties forms HO-786, HO-787, HO-792, HO-793, HO-794 and HO-799.



Locational Map
HO-812, 6754 Athol Avenue, Harwood Park
Elkridge, Howard County
USGS Topographic Quadrangle, Relay, 1957

HO-812, House
6754 Athol Avenue, Harwood Park
Elkridge, Howard County, Maryland
Kristin Hill, 12/03
Negative at MDSHPO
South (front) elevation
1/6

17 21+01 NNNNN 174

Ho-812, House
6754 Athol Avenue, Harwood Park
Elkridge, Howard County, Maryland
Kristin Hill, 12/03
Negative at MDSHPO
South elevation
2/6

18 21+01 NNNNN 174

HO 812, House
6754 Athol Avenue, Harwood Park
Elkridge, Howard County, Maryland
Kristin Hill, 12/03
Negative at MDSHPO
SW elevation
3/6

HO-812, House
6754 Athol Avenue, Harwood Park
Elkridge, Howard County, Maryland
Kristin Hill, 12/03
Negative at MDSHPO
SW elevation
4/6

HO-812, House
6754 Athol Avenue, Harwood Park
Elkridge, Howard County, Maryland
Kristin Hill, 12/93
Negative at MDSHPO
East elevation
5/6

HO-812, House
6754 Athol Avenue, Harwood Park
Elkridge, Howard County, Maryland
Kristin Hill, 12/03
Negative at MDSHPO
North elevation

6/6