

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

PG:72-18

Survey: (PG#72-9-18) Building Date: 1907

Building Name: W. Sidney and Portia Washington Pittman House

Location: 505 Eastern Avenue, Fairmount Heights, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Fair-Good/Inaccessible

Description:

The William Sidney and Portia Washington Pittman House is a two-and-one-half story front-gabled house, three bays by three. It stands on high ground overlooking the boundary between Prince George's County and the District of Columbia. Entrance is in the first bay of the main south(west) facade; this facade is sheltered by a one-story hip-roof porch with fluted aluminum columns (replacements for original Tuscan columns). The original German wood siding is covered with wide aluminum siding, white on the first story and pink on the second. The lines of the house are varied by large flush crossgables centered in the long east and west elevations, and a shallow one-story shed-roof addition on the east. To the rear of this addition is a one-story, two-bay-by-one-bay kitchen wing. Interior plan consists of four unequal spaces of which the southwest is a narrow stairhall. Doors and windows have multi-band molding with bullseye corner blocks, and there is a handsome Classical Revival style wood mantel set diagonally in the (northeast) dining room.

Significance:

The William Sidney and Portia Washington Pittman House is a noticeable landmark in the town of Fairmount Heights. It was designed as his family home by architect William Sidney Pittman, whose wife was Portia, daughter of Booker T. Washington. The Pittmans were among the earliest families to settle in Fairmount Heights, one of the first planned communities for blacks in the Washington, D. C., area. Pittman (1875-1958) attended Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, and then received a degree in Architectural and Mechanical Drawing from Drexel Institute in Philadelphia in 1900. He returned to Tuskegee to teach until 1905 at which time he opened his own architectural office in Washington D.C. In 1907 he married Portia, daughter of his former mentor, Booker T. Washington, and they moved into the house which he had designed in the new and developing suburb of Fairmount Heights. Much involved in the progress of this new community, Pittman established the Fairmount Heights Mutual Improvement Company. In 1907 he won a national competition for the design of the Negro Building at the National Tercentennial Exposition at Jamestown, Virginia. The Pittmans left the Washington area in 1913, and the house passed to Ellen Adams, who operated a boarding house and dance pavillion in the house and grounds. The house is typical of the suburban dwellings which were being built in the early years of this century; its greatest significance is the fact that it was designed by and the home of one of the area's first and most prominent black architects.

Acreage: 11570 sq. ft.

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Development Periods:

Industrial/Urban Dominance - AD 1870 - 1930

Historic Period Themes:

Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: building

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Functions and Uses: Domestic/Single Dwelling

Design Source: William Sidney Pittman, architect

Magi No.

DOE yes no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic William Sidney and Portia Washington Pittman House

and/or common Upshur House

2. Location

street & number 505 Eastern Avenue not for publication

city, town Fairmount Heights vicinity of congressional district 5

state MD county Prince George's

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Bernard Upshur

street & number 505 Eastern Avenue telephone no.:

city, town Fairmount Heights state and zip code MD 20743

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 4469

street & number 14735 Main Street folio 553

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Fairmount Heights Architectural Survey

date 1991 federal state county local

depository for survey records Prince George's County, Historic Pres Section, M-NCPPC

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

7. Description

Survey No. (PG#72-9-18)

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The William Sidney and Portia Washington Pittman House is a two-and-one-half story front-gabled house, three bays by three. It stands on a high piece of ground overlooking Eastern Avenue, the boundary between Prince George's County and the District of Columbia. The front lawn is bounded by a stone retaining wall at street level; concrete steps with an iron rail lead from the street level up to the entry porch.

Entrance to the house is in the first bay of the three-bay main south-(west) facade, through a door with upper glazing and single-pane transom below which is a continuous bead molding. There is a one-story hip-roof porch which shelters the entire main facade, and wraps halfway around the east elevation. The porch has a dentilled cornice, supported by slim fluted aluminum columns, replacements for the original Tuscan wood columns. The concrete porch floor replaces an original wood floor.

The original wooden German siding was covered with gray-and-black asphalt bricktex in the 1940s; this bricktex is now covered with wide aluminum, white on the first story and pink on the second. On the front gable, there are plain narrow vergeboards with a slight overhang, and a shallow crown molding; on the long sides, rafter ends are exposed beneath a plain narrow cornice. Windows are 2/2 double-hung-sash and full-length on the first story, smaller and modern 1/1 on the second. A small four-pane square window lights the apex of the front gable at loft level. There are no shutters. The long sides of the house are varied by large flush crossgables, centered in the east and west elevations. There is a one-story shed-roof three-by-one bay addition projecting from the long east side; its three side-by-side 2/2 windows light the dining room of the house. An entrance with a single-light transom leads from the northeast end of the wraparound porch into this dining room addition.

There are two large corbelled brick chimneys, one at the principal ridge of the roof, and another where the east crossgable meets the principal ridge.

To the rear (north) of the dining room addition, a one-story kitchen wing extends to the north; it is two bays by one. A small room has been built above this wing, with a rear staircase to provide access for roomers. Sheltering the west side of the kitchen wing was a one-story shed-roof porch; this porch has been partially enclosed, and only one turned post survives at the corner where the porch adjoins the main block.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

Survey No. (PG#72-9-18)

Description (continued)

Section 7 Page 2

Interior plan of the house consists of a small entry/stair hall which leads east into a side parlor; another parlor (library) is located behind the stairhall, and a dining room behind the side parlor. The closed-string stair rises along the west wall of the narrow stairhall; it has a turned newel and turned balusters. There is a closet beneath the staircase, accessible from the (rear) library. Doors and windows have multi-band molding with bullseye corner blocks. Floors have been replaced by narrow board; there are high baseboards with crown molding. A handsome Classical Revival style wood mantel frames the fireplace in the dining room, set diagonally in the southwest corner. The firebox is framed by fluted pilasters surmounted by a course of spherical beads; decorative swags and flowers are centered in the plain wide frieze. The mantel has been removed from the parlor fireplace which backed up to this dining room fireplace. To the left (west) of the parlor fireplace, a door originally led from the parlor into the library; this door has been closed.

The building rests on a brick foundation, presently covered with concrete. There is no basement. To the east of the house is a vacant lot where once stood the dance pavillion; a partially paved drive leads from Eastern Avenue toward the east side of the house.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/
			<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1907 **Builder/Architect** W. Sidney Pittman

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The William Sidney and Portia Washington Pittman House is a noticeable landmark on the boundary where Prince George's County adjoins the District of Columbia. It was designed as his family home by architect William Sidney Pittman, whose wife was Portia, daughter of Booker T. Washington. The Pittmans were among the earliest families to settle in Fairmount Heights, one of the first planned communities for blacks in the Washington, D. C., area.

The first section of Fairmount Heights was subdivided in 1900 by Robinson White and Allen Clark out of parts of several small Prince George's County farms on the eastern edge of Washington, D. C. This first and largest of the subdivisions was called Fairmount Heights; it made up the nucleus of what would one day constitute the town of Fairmount Heights. Five more subdivisions were platted between 1907 and 1923, but it was in the original subdivision, Fairmount Heights, that the earliest dwellings were constructed.

William Sidney Pittman was born in 1875 in Montgomery, Alabama, to an ex-slave woman and a prominent white man of that city. He entered Tuskegee Institute at age 17, and graduated in 1897 with training in architectural drawing. He continued his education at Drexel Institute in Philadelphia, graduating in 1900 with a degree in Architectural and Mechanical Drawing. In 1905, Pittman came to Washington, D. C., and opened his own architectural firm at 494 Louisiana Avenue, N. W. In the next year, he married Portia Washington, daughter of Booker T. Washington, founder of Tuskegee Institute. The young couple purchased four lots in the new community of Fairmount Heights; Sidney Pittman designed a house, and had it built, and he and his wife and moved into it in 1907.² The house, somewhat altered, now stands at 505 Eastern Avenue.

Both Portia and Sidney Pittman were to have a large influence in the growing town of Fairmount Heights. Portia Pittman became a well-known and popular recital pianist, and the visits of her famous father to Washington

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

Survey No (PG#72-9-18)

Section 8 Page 2

and Fairmount Heights were always greeted with much public enthusiasm. Sidney Pittman became a well established and respected architect, in 1907 winning a national competition to design the \$70,000 Negro Building at the National Tercentennial Exposition at Jamestown, Virginia.³ Pittman founded and served as president of the Fairmount Heights Mutual Improvement Company, which had as its purpose "to develop Fairmount Heights as a viable alternative to inner city ghetto living"; the Mutual Improvement Company was incorporated in 1908.⁴

One of the goals of the Mutual Improvement Company was "to purchase lots and erect thereon in Fairmount Heights, Maryland, a building to be used as a public hall for religious, charitable and other similar purposes." Accordingly, the Company purchased two lots, and erected a large hall which was to serve not only as a social hall, but as the location of the first Methodist services before the church was built, and as a classroom until the public school was completed. In 1911 Pittman was chosen to design this first school for black children in Fairmount Heights. The school opened in 1912, and operated until 1934 when a new eight-room brick school was built at the corner of Addison and Sheriff Roads. The original Pittman-designed school building has since that time been used as the Zion Apostolic Faith Church.⁵

Much of the early progress of the Fairmount Heights community was attributed, by the editor of the Washington Bee, to W. Sidney Pittman. In his article, "Fairmount Heights: A Thriving Colored Settlement . . . Containing Beautiful Homes, Built and Occupied Entirely by Colored People", Editor Calvin Chase cited the efforts of Sidney Pittman, and noted the "unparalleled speed that the colored citizens out there are making in building and beautifying their homes and their surroundings. . . . Most of the residents of Fairmount Heights are employees and business men of some sort in the city of Washington, and it is easy to see from the appearance of their beautiful homes just the class of people they are."⁶

The Pittmans lived in their house on the District Boulevard (now Eastern Avenue) until 1913, with Mrs. Pittman practicing and teaching as a concert pianist, and raising their two sons, William Sidney, Jr., and Booker Washington Pittman, and a daughter, Fannie, while Sidney carried on his successful architectural practice in the District of Columbia and remained an active leader in the growing community of Fairmount Heights. During these years Pittman designed a YMCA building and a public school in the District of Columbia, the new agricultural building at Tuskegee Institute, two buildings at the Kentucky Normal and Industrial School, and a large hotel in Norfolk, Virginia.

In 1913, the Pittmans moved from Fairmount Heights to Dallas, Texas, where Sidney Pittman had been commissioned to design the temple for the Knights of Pythias. Portia Pittman taught piano lessons in Dallas, and

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

PG:72-18
Survey No. (PG#72-9-18)
Section 8 Page 3

began teaching music in one of the local high schools. The Pittmans' marriage broke up in 1928; Portia Pittman returned to Tuskegee where she taught music for more than ten years, and then gave private piano lessons until her retirement in 1944. Sidney Pittman continued to practice architecture in Dallas until 1937, but devoted much of his time to publishing a weekly newspaper called Brotherhood Eyes. He became a very controversial individual in the black community of Dallas; he died there in 1958.

In 1913, when the Pitmanns left Fairmount Heights, they sold their house and four lots of land to Ellen Adams, who lived in and opened a boarding house in the Pittman house. She also developed and operated a dance and entertainment pavillion on the lot southeast of the house; this remained a popular entertainment center through the 1920s. The pavillion was demolished in the late 1930s, after the death of Ellen Adams. The house and lots passed to her descendants, who occupy the house to this day.

The Pittman House is representative of the modest vernacular house forms of the early twentieth century. Although it has no outstanding features, and has been significantly altered by the application of aluminum siding and the replacement of the original porch, it is still a noticeable landmark on the boundary between prince George's County and the District of Columbia. Its greatest significance, perhaps, is the fact that it was designed by and served as the home of one of the area's first and most prominent black architects.

1. Prince George's County Plat JWB#5:682; Prince George's County Tax Assessments, 1898-1908.
2. Washington Bee, 6 June 1908, 12 December 1908; Stewart, Ruth Ann, Portia: The Life of Portia Washington Pittman, the Daughter of Booker T. Washington, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1977; Prince George's County Deed #28:399; Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1905-1915.
3. Jackson, Giles B., and Davis, D. Webster, The Industrial History of the Negro Race of the United States, Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1971 (reprint of 1908)
4. Washington Bee, op.cit.; Prince George's County Incorporation Records JBB#1:134.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

Survey No. (PG#72-9-18)

Section 8 Page 4

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5. Washington Bee, op.cit., Prince George's County Incorporation Records JBB#1:134; Prince George's County Deeds #50:6; #208:273; Journal of the Board of County School Commissioners, Vol. II, 1903-1921
 6. Washington Bee, 12 December 1908.
 7. Stewart, Ruth Ann, op.cit., pp. 77-85.
 8. Stewart, Ruth Ann, op.cit., pp. 77-114.
 9. Prince George's County Deeds #108:111, #4469:553; Prince George's County Administration File #4617.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. (PG#72-9-18)

See Chain of Title
See Notes, Item #8

10. Geographical DataAcreage of nominated property ca. 11570 sq ft.Block 0, lots 17-20Quadrangle name Washington-EastQuadrangle scale 1:24,000UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared Byname/title Susan G. Pearl Research/Architectural Historianorganization Historic Preservation Commission date January 1992street & number c/o M-NCPPC telephone 301-952-3521city or town Upper Marlboro state MD

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

Circa 1906

P. G. #72~~A~~-18
W. S. Pittman house
505 Eastern Avenue, Fairmount Heights, Md.
Priv/Occ/Res/Good

The Pittman house is a two-and-one-half story gable-roofed frame building, set on a high lot overlooking Eastern Avenue, the boundary between Fairmount Heights (Prince George's County) and Washington, D.C. The three-bay south gable end faces the street, with entrance in the first bay. A one-story porch shelters the south facade and wraps halfway around the east facade. There is a tall cross-gable centered in each of the east and west facades.

The Pittman house is a significant black historic site because of its association with three nationally prominent black individuals: Booker T. Washington, Portia Washington Pittman, and particularly William Sidney Pittman.

Booker T. Washington, founder of Tuskegee Institute and the greatest organizer of black vocational education, was a frequent visitor to his daughter's home in Fairmount Heights. Portia Washington, an accomplished concert pianist and educator, had married W. Sidney Pittman in 1903. In that same year, Pittman, came to Washington, D.C. where he set up his own architectural firm. In 1906 he purchased four lots in Fairmount Heights, and designed and constructed the house on Eastern Avenue into which he and his wife moved in 1907. In that same year, Pittman won a national competition to design the Negro building at the National Tercentennial Exposition at Jamestown, Virginia. He went on to design the "colored" building of the Y.M.C.A., Garfield High School, and the Fairmount Heights Elementary School (see 72A-9). His architectural firm became the first black-owned business to be awarded a federal contract.

Because of Pittman's prominence in the Fairmount Heights community and as a Washington area architect, the house which he designed and lived in is a site significant to the black history of Prince George's County.

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic W. Sidney Pittman House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 505 Eastern Avenue _____ not for publication

city, town Fairmount Heights _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 5

state Maryland _____ county Prince George's

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Bernard Upshur

street & number _____ telephone no.: _____

city, town _____ state and zip code _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P. G. County Courthouse _____ liber 4469

street & number Main Street _____ folio 553

city, town Upper Marlboro _____ state Md.

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Survey No. P.G. 72A-18

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

The Pittman house is a two-and-one-half story gable-roofed frame building, set on a high lot overlooking Eastern Avenue, the boundary between Fairmount Heights (Prince George's County) and Washington, D. C. The three-bay south gable end faces the street, and entrance is in the first bay; the first floor windows are 2/2 full-length.

A one-story porch shelters the south facade of the house, and wraps halfway around the east facade. The porch cornice is decorated with dentils, and supported by pseudo-classical columns, some of which are missing.

There is a tall cross-gable centered in each of the east and west facades.

8. Significance

Survey No. P.G. 72A-18

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
			humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
			Black History

Specific dates 1906 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The house at 505 Eastern Avenue is particularly significant as a Black Historic Site in P. G. County because of its relationship to three nationally prominent individuals: Booker T. Washington, Portia Washington Pittman, and most importantly William Sidney Pittman.

Booker T. Washington, founder of Tuskegee Institute and the greatest organizer of Black vocational education and institutions, was the father of Portia Pittman. He was also a frequent visitor to the Fairmont Heights community. His daughter, Portia, was an accomplished concert pianist and educator. But of greater value to the historical significance of Fairmont Heights were the accomplishments of William Sidney Pittman.

In 1903, promptly after his marriage to Portia, William Pittman moved to Washington, D. C. with his new bride. There he set up his own architectural firm at 494 Louisiana Avenue in N. W. Washington.

In 1906, he purchased a lot in the community of Fairmont Heights, and in 1907 he and Portia moved into the house at 505 Eastern Avenue. The house was designed and constructed under the supervision of William Pittman. Along with other Black business associates in Washington, he organized and served as founding President of the "Fairmont Heights Improvement Co." It was his purpose, "to develop Fairmont Heights as a viable alternative to inner city ghetto living."¹ Pittman simultaneously organized and served as founding president of the Fairmount Heights Citizen's Committee.

While living in Fairmount Heights, Pittman's career as an architect flourished. In 1907, he won a national competition in which he was selected to design the \$70,000 Negro building at the National Tercentennial Exposition (See next page.)

at Jamestown, Va. His firm became the first Black-owned business to be awarded a Federal contract. He was also commissioned to design the "Colored" building of the Young Men's Christian Association (1907), Garfield High School (1908) and the first Fairmont Heights School (1911).

During his years at Fairmont Heights, he also served as President of Washington's Chapter of the National Negro Business League (an organization founded by his father-in-law).

Born in Montgomery, Alabama, William Pittman was the son of an ex-slave woman and a prominent white man of the city. At age 17, he entered Tuskegee Institute and graduated in 1897. with training in architectural drawing. With the financial assistance of Booker T. Washington, he continued his education at Drexel Institute in Philadelphia. He graduated in 1900 with a degree in Architectural and Mechanical Drawing.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G. 724-18

P. G. Co. Deeds #4469:553; #108:111; #28:399; #7:227.
 Memo by Ethel H. Jackson (9 August 1982) regarding Booker T. Washington at the Pittman House in 1911
 1) Stewart, Ruth A. Portia (1977) pp. 77-80
 The Washington Bee, Oct. 20, 1906; Aug. 8, 1908; Oct. 12, 1907

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A
 Zone Easting Northing

B
 Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl and Bianca P. Floyd

organization History Division, M-NCPPC date April 1983

street & number 4811 Riverdale Road telephone 779-2011

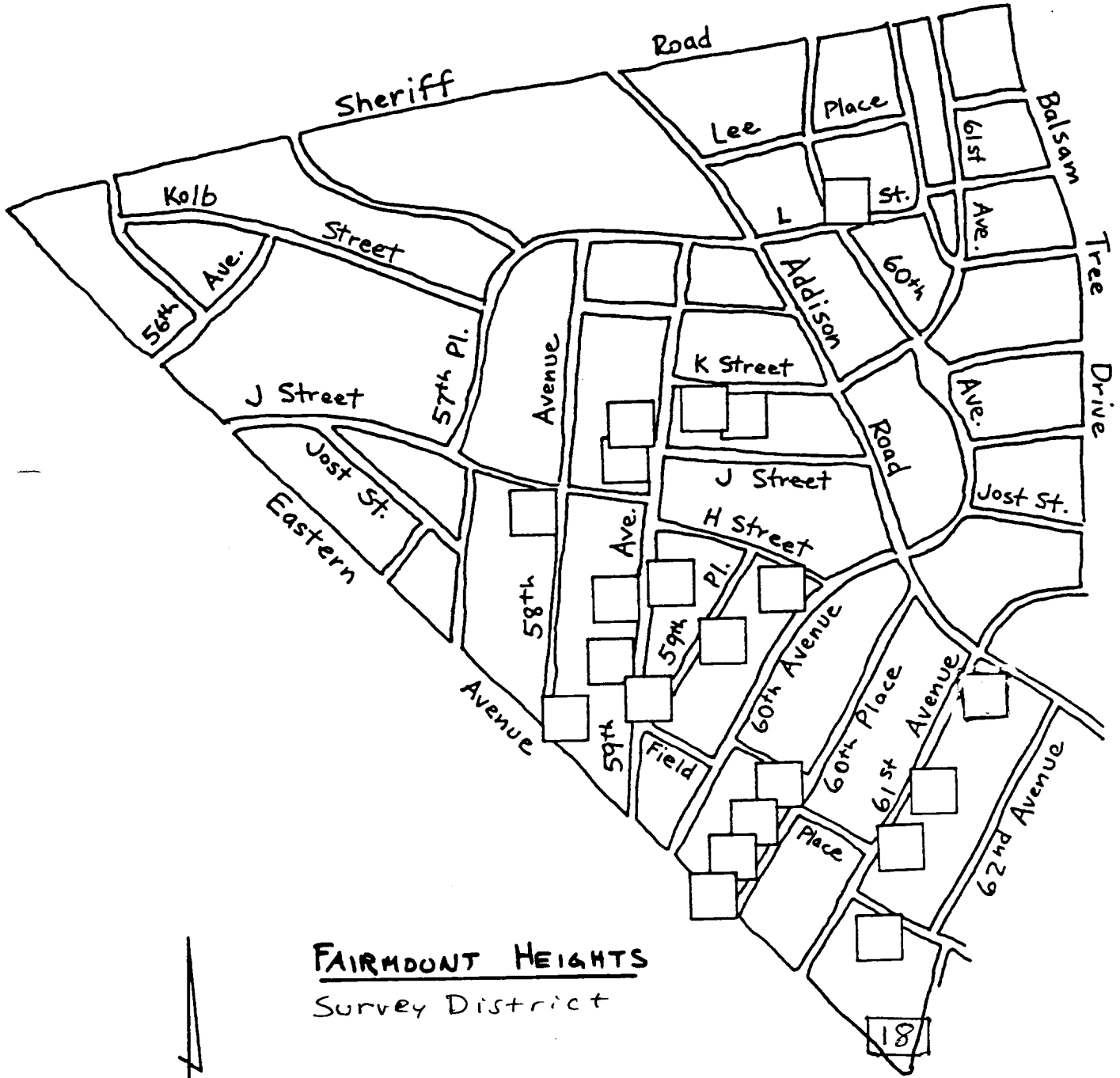
city or town Riverdale, state Maryland

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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
 Shaw House
 21 State Circle
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401
 (301) 269-2438

Town of Fairmount Heights



FAIRMOUNT HEIGHTS
Survey District





334 335 336 337
 55' 56' 57' 58'

38° 52' 30" 37° 52' 30"

76° 52' 30"

1 MILE
 7000 FEET
 KILOMETER

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
 Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
 Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -
 Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

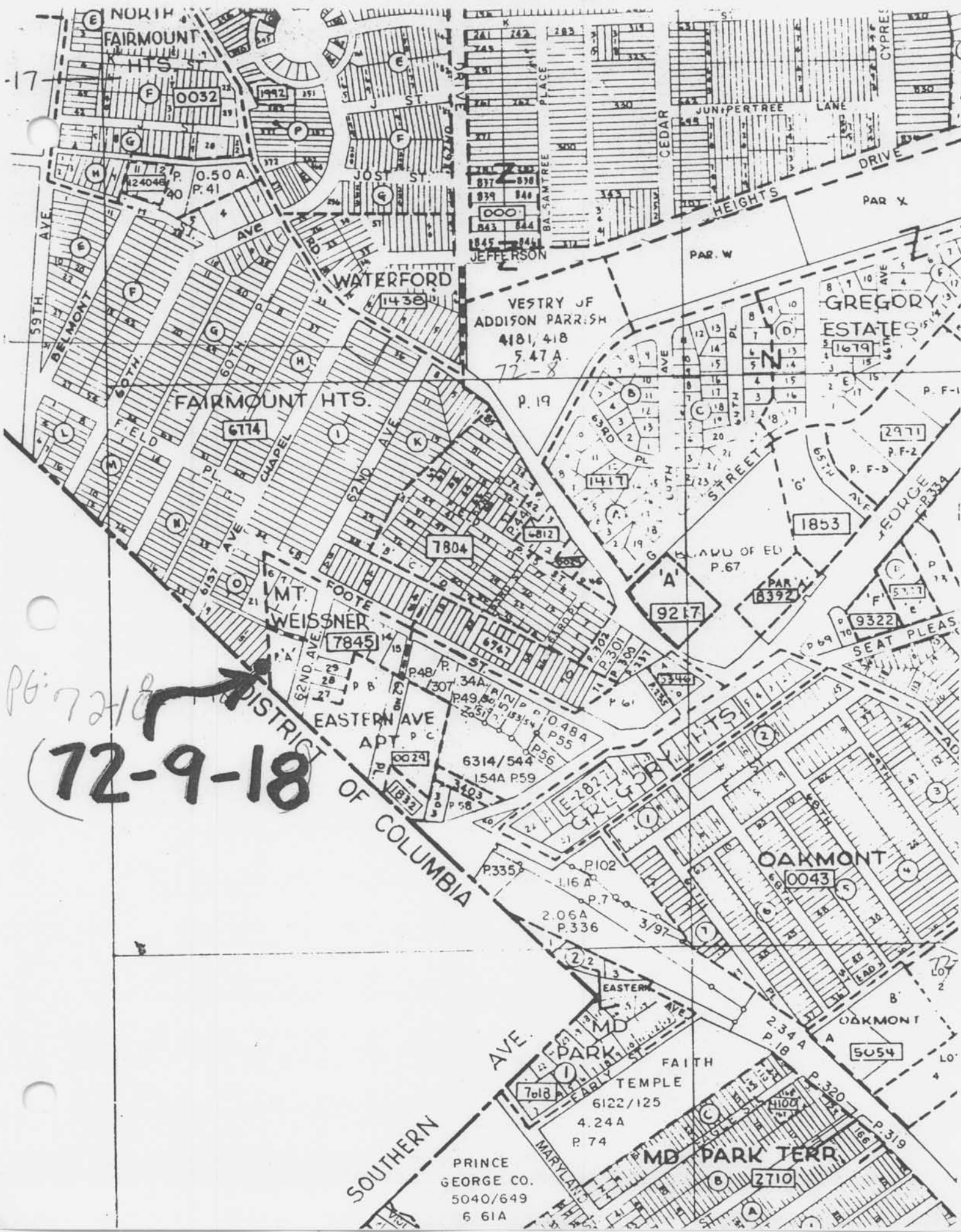
QUADRANGLE LOCATION
 MARYLAND

WASHINGTON EAST, D.C.—MD.
 N3852.5—W7652.5/7.5

1965
 PHOTOREVISED 1979
 AMS 5651 IV NW—SERIES V833

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map
 Boundary lines shown in purple compiled from latest information available from the controlling authority

UPPER MARLBORO
 5651 IV SE



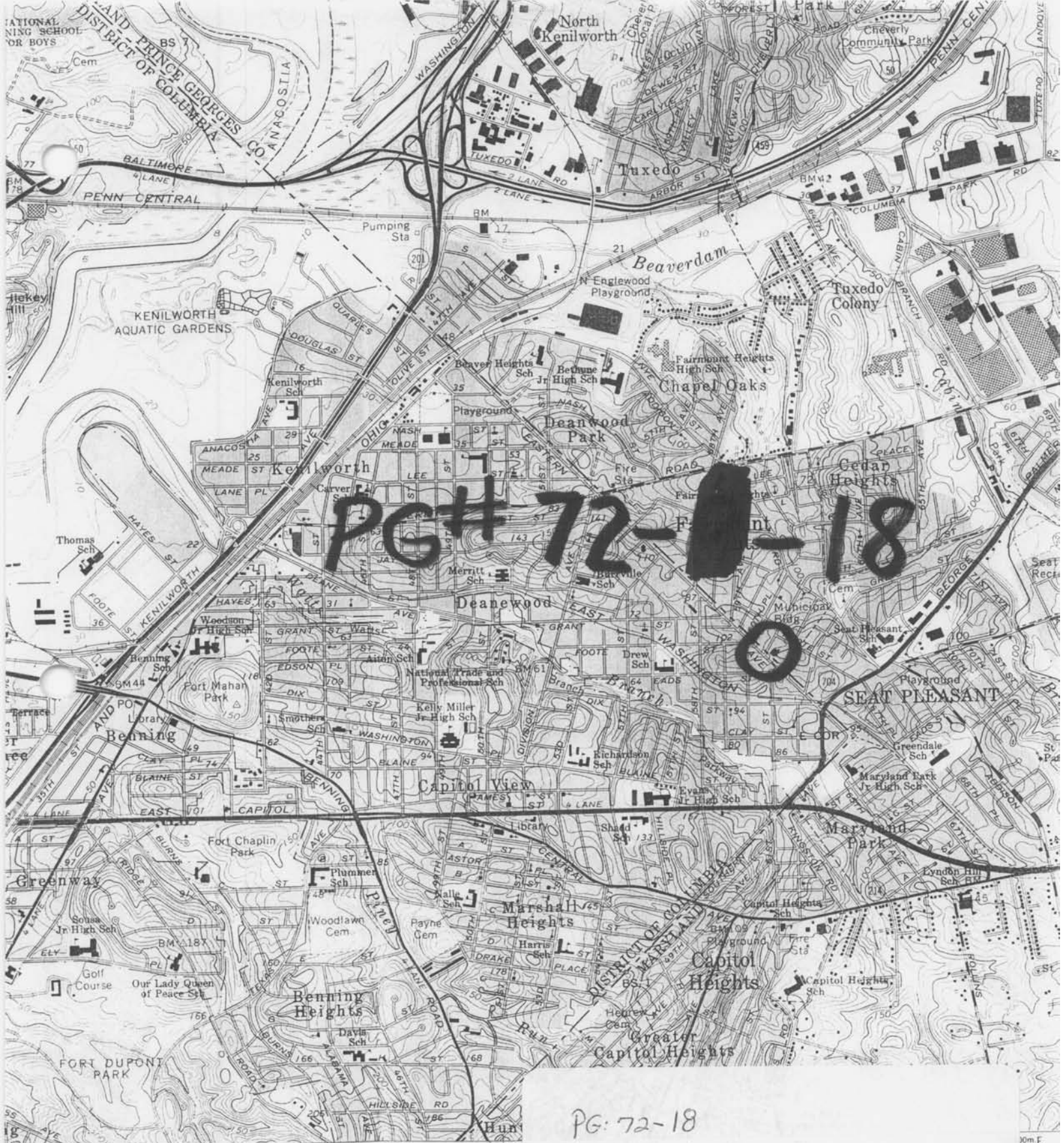
Pg: 72-18

72-9-18

VESTRY OF
ADDISON PARRISH
4181, 418
5.47 A.
72-8

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

PRINCE
GEORGE CO.
5040/649
6 61A



PG# 72-18

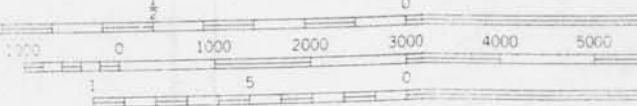


PG: 72-18

(PG# 72-9-18)

W.S. Pittman House
 Fairmount Heights
 Prince George's County
 Washington East Quadrangle

(ANACOSTIA)
 5661 IV SW
 SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
 DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
 SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
 THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2.9 FEET

MARYLAND



Pa. # 72-18

Pittman House
Princi Georgia Co. MD

Susan L. Pearl

January 1991

Southwest facade

303



Pg # 72-18

Pittman House
Prince George's Co. MD
Susan H. Porel
January 1991
SE $\frac{3}{4}$ elevation

1 of 3



PG: 72-18
(PG # 72-9-18)

W. Sidney Pittman House
Sacramento Heights, P. Gr. Co.
Susan H. Pearl
January 1991
Southwest facade



P. G. #72A-18

W. S. Pittman House
Prince George's County, Md.
Susan G. Pearl
April 1983
Southeast 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.



P. G. #72~~4~~-18

W. S. Pittman House
Prince George's County, Md.
Susan G. Pearl
April 1983
South elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.

P.G. # 72X-18



P. G. #72~~1~~-18

W. S. Pittman House
Prince George's County, Md.
Susan G. Pearl
April 1983
South Elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.