

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG: 75A-007

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Forestville School

other

2. Location

street and number 3101 Ritchie Road __ not for publication

city, town Forestville __ vicinity

county Prince George's

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

name W. L. Meekins, Inc.

street and number 3101 Ritchie Road telephone

city, town Forestville state MD zip code 20747-4434

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 3703 folio 35

city, town Upper Marlboro tax map 81 tax parcel 190 tax ID number 06 0642132

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
- Other: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Planning Department

6. Classification

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

7. Description

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Condition

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.

The Forestville School is located at 3101 Ritchie Road in Forestville, Maryland. The one-story, three-bay building was constructed in 1922 on a 1.28-acre triangular parcel. The sloping lot is marked by mature trees and shrubs. The Forestville School is situated to the north of a large, circular gravel parking lot.

SCHOOL

The Forestville School was constructed in 1922 with a square, one-story plan that has been augmented by the construction of multiple rear additions in the late 1920s and 1930s, and alterations to the original front portico c. 1975 by the current owner, W.L. Meekins. The one-story building is set on a high rough-faced concrete foundation and features a partially exposed basement level. The wood-frame structure is clad with weatherboard siding and features corner boards. An interior brick chimney pierces the northern slope of the building. The side-gabled roof is covered in asphalt shingles and features wide overhanging eaves as well as eave brackets.

The façade (south elevation) features a slightly projecting central bay. Also located in the central bay is a full-height portico. The one-bay portico is supported by six fluted Tuscan columns set on a concrete floor. The front-gabled portico is covered with asphalt shingles and features a denticulated cornice and a tympanum clad with weatherboard siding. A small wood plaque reading, "W. L. Meekins, Inc.," is located at the bottom of the tympanum, along the entablature. Concrete steps lead up to a double-leaf paneled wood door, which has a seven-light transom and a square-edged wood surround. The transom lights have been painted. Fenestration consists of multiple-light fixed windows basement windows, all of which have their lights painted. The easternmost bay of the basement has been enclosed with concrete block. Fenestration on the first story consists of elongated 6/6 windows with square-edged wood surrounds.

The east (side) elevation features two paired four-light fixed basement windows with painted lights. Fenestration on the first story consists of one 6/6 window flanked to the north by three paired 6/6 windows. The windows feature square-edge wood surrounds. A large vent of wood is located in the gable end and features a square-edge wood surround. Concrete steps lead down to a single-leaf metal door in the northern bay of the basement.

The west (side) elevation is fenestrated by three multiple-light basement windows with painted lights. The basement windows feature large concrete sills. The first story is fenestrated by a 6/6 window located in the southern bay. The window features a square-edged wood surround. A large vent with a square-edge wood surround is located in the gable end.

The rear of the Forestville School was not accessible due to the proximity of the building to the property line. Access to the property north of the building was not permitted.

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There are two additions on the north (rear) elevation of the main block. These additions are large and double the overall size of the building. The additions, based on their form and materials, appear to have been constructed c. 1930. The two additions, one to the west and one to the east, are set on a high rough-faced concrete-block foundation. The weatherboard cladding and corner boards are consistent with that found on the main block. The front-gabled roofs are covered with asphalt shingles and feature overhanging eaves.

The west (side) elevation of the northwest addition was the only accessible elevation. Fenestration consists of four 6/6 windows placed on the basement level. The windows feature plain wood surrounds but no lintels. A fifth window opening in the southern bay has been covered with plywood. Located in the northern bay is a single-leaf metal door. The first story of elevation is fenestrated by three casement windows with trellis muntins featuring square-edged wood surrounds. Based on visual evidence, it is possible that there are a total of five window openings on the first story. Plywood is located above and between the three extant windows suggesting that window openings between the extant windows have been covered up.

The east (side) elevation of the northeast addition was the only accessible elevation. An original, single-leaf, paneled wood door is located in the southern bay and features a tall two-light fixed transom. The door is accessed by concrete steps. Flanking the door to the north are six 9/9 windows. The southernmost window has a lower sash that has been replaced with plywood. To the north, the next window features painted lights in the lower sash. The central window has an upper sash that has been replaced by plywood to support an air-conditioning unit and a lower sash with painted lights. The three northernmost windows have painted lights in the lower sash.

The interior of the Forestville School was not accessible at the time of the 2007 on-site survey.

INTEGRITY

The Forestville School maintains a low level of integrity. The building's integrity of materials and workmanship have been compromised by the replacement and covering of multiple windows with wood and the replacement of the original front portico. The building's integrity of design has been affected, but not compromised by the two rear additions. These additions were constructed soon after the construction of the Forestville School and are complimentary to the architectural elements found on the main block. However, the replacement portico has affected the structure's integrity of design as it introduced a high style element to an otherwise Greek Revival-style vernacular building. The building maintains its integrity of location, feeling, and setting on a small two-lane road in Forestville, Maryland, next to the Vestry of Epiphany Protestant and Episcopal Church and cemetery. The Forestville School maintains minimal integrity of association as the building no longer functions as a school.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" 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	1922	Architect/Builder	R. E. Thomas
Construction dates	1922, c. 1924, 1933		

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.)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Forestville School was constructed in 1922 at 3101 Ritchie Road in the unincorporated community of Forestville, Maryland, on property that had been the site of a schoolhouse before the establishment of the Board of County School Commissioners in 1865. Since its construction, the building, with several additions, has been adapted to serve a variety of uses, including a school, church, and office. The Forestville School does not retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance as an early-twentieth-century schoolhouse constructed in Prince George's County.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The Forestville School is located in the unincorporated community of Forestville, Maryland, in western Prince George's County. A large part of what is now Forestville was owned by David and Lowenia Sommers prior to the Civil War (1861 to 1865) and known first as Magruder's Plains, later as Long Old Field. Long Old Fields appears on *Martenet's 1861 Map of Prince George's County* along the route from Washington, D.C. to Upper Marlboro, Maryland. This route, known as the Marlboro Turnpike or Old Stage Road, had a toll gate located at Forestville.¹ The small community supported several residences, a saw mill, post office, churches, and a blacksmith shop. This area did not experience the population growth seen in other areas of the county until World War II (1941 to 1945) because of a lack of sufficient transportation routes. Growth did accelerate in Forestville during the 1960s, thanks in large part to the completion of the Capital Beltway in 1964.

The Forestville School is sited on a parcel of land that supported a school before the establishment in 1865 of the Board of County School Commissioners. The original school was rebuilt in the 1880s, as were most of the earliest school buildings in Prince George's County.² The second school on the property was typical of the

¹ The Forestville Citizens Association, "Forestville, A Bicentennial Look At Its Past," Prince George's County Planning Department Files.

² Susan Pearl, "Forestville School," (PG: 75A-7) Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form (1984), 8:1.

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plain, wood-frame one-room schoolhouses of the period and appears on *Hopkins' 1878 Atlas*.³ Situated between the Methodist and Episcopal Churches, the school accommodated approximately 50 pupils at an average cost of \$18.00 a year per child.⁴ By 1922, the Board of Education (which superseded the Board of County School Commissioners) decided to replace the old Forestville School, and in April of that year, a building committee was appointed. By the fall of 1923, the school opened.⁵ As early as 1924, an additional room was constructed on the Forestville School and, in 1933, two more rooms were added on the north (rear) elevation. The construction of additions to the newly built school reflects the growing number of children in Forestville, although development was slower here than elsewhere in the county in the first half of the twentieth century.

The Forestville School was closed in 1942 when a new brick school was constructed to the south. For three years, the building was used for storage by the Board of Education.⁶ The building was conveyed to the Epiphany Church in 1945, which owned the adjacent property to the west.⁷ The church used the building until 1961, when they conveyed it to another religious group, Evangel Assembly, Inc.⁸ It is not known to what extent, or if at all, the religious groups altered the interior of the building. Evangel Assembly conveyed the property in 1969 to the current owners, W. L. Meekins, Inc., surveyors.⁹ The former school now serves as offices.

³ G.M. Hopkins, *Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, Including the County of Prince George Maryland* (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, C.E., 1878).

⁴ The Forestville Citizens Association, "Forestville, A Bicentennial Look At Its Past," Prince George's County Planning Department Files.

⁵ Susan Pearl, "Forestville School," (PG: 75A-7) Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form (1984), 8:1.

⁶ Susan Pearl, "Forestville School," (PG: 75A-7) Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form (1984), 8:1.

⁷ Board of Education to Epiphany Church, Prince George's County, Equity 14403

⁸ Epiphany Church to Evangel Assembly, Inc, Prince George's County Land Records, 2526:107.

⁹ Evangel Assembly to W. L. Meekins, Inc., Prince George's County Land Records, WWW 3703:35

9. Major Bibliographical References

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- Hopkins, G.M. Prince George's County, from Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, C.E., 1878.
- Martenet, Simon J. Martenet's Map of Prince George's County, Maryland. Baltimore: Simon J. Martenet, 1861.
- Pearl, Susan G. "Forestville School" (PG: 75A-7), Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form, 1984. Prince George's County Land Records.
- Virta, Alan. *Prince George's County, A Pictorial History*. Virginia Beach: The Donning Company/Publishers, 1991.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of surveyed property	<u>1.165</u>	
Acreeage of historical setting	<u>1.165</u>	
Quadrangle name	<u>Anacostia</u>	Quadrangle scale: <u>1:24,000</u>

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Forestville School is located on a 1.165-acre parcel in the town of Forestville, Maryland. The property is bordered by Ritchie Road to the south and east. The west boundary is formed by a stand of mature trees running north-south. The north boundary consists of a stand of mature trees running east-west located adjacent to the building. The Forestville School is historically associated with Parcel 81 as noted on Tax Map 190.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Paul Weishar, Architectural Historian		
organization	EHT Traceries, Inc	date	February 2008
street & number	1121 Fifth Street, NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

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

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CHAIN OF TITLE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY LAND RECORDS

Equity 14403
December 1945

Board of Education, plaintiff, vs. Vestry of Epiphany Parish, defendant: Defendant agreed to purchase 1.28-acre school lot, paid deposit but refused balance, because plaintiff is unable to give good deed. Since there is no instrument of record conveying said 1.28 acre lot to plaintiff, the Court of Equity must validate deed. Court takes testimony that said parcel has been school lot since 1880s, and declares deed good executed from Board of Education to The Vestry of Epiphany Parish.

Deed 2526:107
January 19, 1961

Epiphany Parish to Evangel Assembly, Inc.

Deed WWW 3703:35
March 28, 1969

Evangel Assembly, Inc. to W. L. Meekins, Inc.

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Photo: Forestville School, view of the façade (south elevation), looking north. (November 2007)

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Photo: Forestville School, view of the east (side) elevation, looking west. (November 2007)

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Photo: Forestville School, view of the west (side) elevation, looking northeast. (November 2007)

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Photo: Forestville School, view of the west (side) elevation, looking east. (November 2007)

