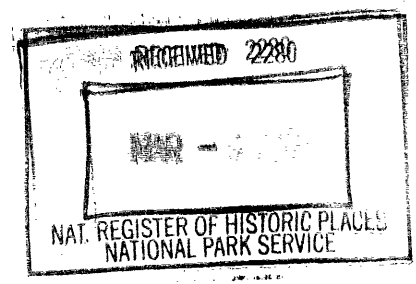


NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018



United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and sub-categories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Hickman Row

other names/site number "The Row", CRS# N14989

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 1-117 Hickman Road not for publication \_\_\_ city or town Claymont vicinity x state Delaware code DE county New Castle code 03 zip code 19703

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets x does not meet \_\_\_ the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally x statewide \_\_\_ locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*John D. Larrivoe, Deputy SAPO* 3/8/06  
Signature of certifying official Date

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs and State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
    \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- \_\_\_ determined eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_ National Register  
    \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- \_\_\_ determined not eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_ National Register
- \_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain):

*Patricia Andrews*      6/16/2006  
Signature of Keeper      Date  
   of Action

=====

#### 5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- \_\_\_ public-local
- \_\_\_ public-State
- \_\_\_ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- \_\_\_ building(s)
- district
- \_\_\_ site
- \_\_\_ structure
- \_\_\_ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
24	3	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
25	3	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

=====

## 6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling  
Secondary Structure Garage

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling  
Secondary Structure Garage

=====

## 7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

20<sup>th</sup> Century Masonry Vernacular

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>masonry</u>
roof	<u>not visible</u>
walls	<u>bonded brick</u>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

**8. Statement of Significance**

=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage: Black  
Architecture  
Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance  
c. 1919-1962

Significant Dates  
c.1919- date of initial construction

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
n/a

Cultural Affiliation n/a

Architect/Builder  
unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

=====

## 10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property approximately 2.5 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing

18 461906 4407205

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====  
**11. Form Prepared By**  
=====

name/title Robin Bodo, Historian organization Delaware State Historic Preservation Office  
date February 18, 2005 street & number 21 The Green, Suite A telephone 302-739-5685  
city or town Dover state DE zip code 19901

=====  
**Additional Documentation**  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

- Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
**Property Owner**  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

=====  
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Physical Description**

Hickman Row is located on the northeast side of Hickman Road, between the intersection of Naaman's Road and the Delaware/Pennsylvania state boundary on a rolling lot that reflects its placement in Delaware's Piedmont zone. The historic resource consists of two blocks of row houses constructed by the Worth Steel Corporation c. 1919 to house their African American workforce.

The row houses were identical in design but have been modified since 1962-3 when the buildings were sold to individuals by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation. They appear to be of load bearing masonry construction, with seven course bonded brick exterior walls. To accommodate the rolling terrain, the row houses were built into the side of a small hill offering a three story façade to the street and a two story rear elevation. The row houses were built in groups of four units each, with larger load bearing walls between them and evident as parapet divisions at the roof line. The roofs are either flat or with a low pitch not visible from the street. The façade detailing groups the row houses in pairs with corbelled and dentiled cornice that displays a corbelled brick medallion flanking each set. The unit entrances are set next to each other with a single set of steps up from the street and concrete path to the front doors. The end walls of the rows are blank. The rear elevations present a two story image with three steps up into the centrally placed door on the first floor. The rear door is flanked by windows and has a small shed roofed hood. Each house has approximately 1350 square feet with three bedrooms and one bathroom. The yards are generally small and open planted with grass and small planting beds. Specimen trees survive in some front yards. The lots are generally 16 feet wide and 195 feet deep, with end units having the largest lots at up to .35 acre. The circulation system includes the road that is placed between the blocks of row houses and provides access to the rear of the properties.

**Inventory (CRS# N14989)**

- .001 1 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800023, end row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; replaced full-width, enclosed front porch; regular fenestration composed of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills; aluminum awnings at all windows and front door. Southeast (side) elevation is brick and has no openings. Parged block retaining wall next to sidewalk, grass lawn with foundation plantings. (c)
- .002 3 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800022, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; open, 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch with 4x4 wood posts and dividers evident of former screen enclosure; regular fenestration is composed of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. (c)
- .003 5 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800021, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with jalousie windows

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above a brick panel; regular fenestration is composed of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Concrete steps with single concrete path for both 5 & 7(c)

- .004 7 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800020, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with vinyl siding and vinyl windows; regular fenestration is composed of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. (c)
- .005 9 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800032, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with vinyl siding and awning windows; regular fenestration is composed of original 6/6 wood dhs windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Poured concrete steps with single path flaring out to access both 9 & 11.(c)
- .006 11 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800019, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with vinyl siding and a vertical paned horizontally sliding window; regular fenestration consists of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. (c)
- .007 13 Hickman Road, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800031, c. 1919, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; open, 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch with 4x4 wood posts and dividers evident of former screen enclosure and standard lattice skirting used to enclose lower section; regular fenestration composed of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Brickwork under the porch roof has been repointed with contrasting white mortar and wider joints than on the rest of the building. Concrete blocks placed at sidewalk edge and across the lawn area as erosion control. (c)
- .008 15 Hickman Road, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800018, c. 1919, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with scored plywood siding and vinyl casement windows; regular fenestration consists of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills occur across the facade. (c)
- .009 17 Hickman Road, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800017, c. 1919, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with vinyl siding and vinyl windows; regular fenestration consists of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. (c)



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- .010 19 Hickman Road, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800016, c. 1919, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with vinyl siding and a large fixed picture window; regular fenestration consists of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills; displays modern shutters flanking the windows. (c)
- .011 21 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800028, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; open, 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed, screened-in front porch with 4x4 wood posts and 2x4 dividers to attach the screen; paneled, single leaf wood front door; regular fenestrations consists of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. The brick façade wall under the porch roof appears to have been painted white. Poured concrete steps with single path flaring out to access both 21 & 23. Plantings at sidewalk level behind a concrete retaining wall (c)
- .012 23 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800015, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with vinyl siding and awning windows; regular fenestration composed of original 6/6 wood dhs windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Brick retaining wall repaired with concrete block parallels the sidewalk with a planting bed behind. (c)
- .013 25 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800014, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with aluminum siding and awning windows; regular fenestration composed of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Poured concrete steps with single path flaring out to access both 25 & 27. Low parged retaining wall provides a cheek for the steps to the sidewalk to access the building. (c)
- .014a 27 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800013, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with vinyl siding and vinyl windows which have green awnings sheltering them; regular fenestration composed of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Brick retaining wall outlines the front property boundary while wrought iron fencing delineates the northwest property boundary and lines the sidewalk to the entrance of the house. (c)
- .014b 27 Hickman Road, Rear Garage, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800013, built into the hill behind the row of dwellings a c. 1965 concrete block garage with a gable roof structure appears to be placed behind 27 Hickman Road. It is evaluated as non-contributing due to its construction after the period of significance. (nc)

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- .015 29 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800012, one of two row houses with identical treatment, 3 story, 2 bays each, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide per side, wood, shed roofed front porch is enclosed with vinyl siding and vinyl windows; regular fenestration consists of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. The single set of steps follow a concrete sidewalk wide enough to access both units. Landscape timbers compose the low retaining wall in front of 29. The rear elevation of this unit is completely parged. (c)
- .016a 31 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800012, one of two row houses with identical treatment, 3 story, 2 bays each, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide per side, wood, shed roofed front porch is enclosed with vinyl siding and vinyl windows; regular fenestration consists of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. The single set of steps follow a concrete sidewalk wide enough to access both units. Railroad ties form the retaining wall. The brick end wall and rear elevation are completely parged. (c)
- .016b 31 Hickman Road, shed, c. 1980, gambrel roof shed made of T-111 siding placed near the rear of the side elevation. The shed was built after the period of significance. (nc)
- .017 103 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800011, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800012, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; open, 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch with 4x4 wood posts and exposed rafter ends; 6 panel single leaf door under porch roof; regular fenestration is composed of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Landscape features include a specimen tree and a retaining wall composed of a single course of vertically placed decorative block. (c)
- .018 105 Hickman Road, c.1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800010, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; open, 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch with 4x4 wood posts and a plywood kick plate; regular fenestration is composed of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. The single set of steps follow a concrete sidewalk wide enough to access both 103 & 105. (c)
- .019 107 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800009, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; paneled, single leaf wood front door; screened in front porch with shed roof; regular fenestration consists of 1/1 replacement windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Rear elevation displays full width replacement front porch with shed roof, unpainted and weathered vertical board siding on rear wall covering window openings. c. 1980.

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- .020 109 Hickman Road, c. 1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800008, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, screened in shed roofed front porch; regular fenestration composed of original 6/6 wood dhs windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Brick retaining wall and large tree compose landscaping. (c)
- .021 111 Hickman Road, c.1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800007, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, front porch removed; regular fenestration composed of two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills; door and window openings boarded up. (c)
- .022 113 Hickman Road, c.1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800006, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, front porch removed; regular fenestration composed of two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills; door and window openings boarded up. (c)
- .023a 115 Hickman Road, c.1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800005; row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with vinyl siding and awning windows; regular fenestration is composed of original 6/6 wood dhs windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Poured concrete steps with single path flaring out to access both 115 & 117, and no retaining walls.(c)
- .023b 115 Hickman Road, c. 1965, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800005; concrete block garage with flat roof. Constructed after the period of significance. (nc)
- .024 117 Hickman Road, c.1919, NCCO Tax Parcel 0604800004, row house, 3 story, 2 bay, 7 course common bond brick exterior walls, flat or low pitched roof, corbelled and dentiled cornice with a decorative brick detail bracketing pairs of units; original 1 ½ bay wide, wood, shed roofed front porch enclosed with vinyl siding and awning windows; regular fenestration is composed of original 6/6 wood dhs windows with two course, jack arch, brick lintels and rowlock sills. Poured concrete steps with single path flaring out to access both 115 & 117, and no retaining walls. (c)
- .025 Circulation System- a gravel driveway between the two sections of row houses provides access to the rear of the properties, including parking spaces, rear yards, and surviving outbuildings. An old road bed appears to divide the rear in half. It accessed the site of the State Line School (non-extant), the c. 1925 du Pont era school that was constructed to serve the African American families in the Claymont vicinity. A poured concrete sidewalk parallels Hickman Road, with the small front yards, provides buffering from the street. (c)

Total Resources:

24 contributing buildings; 3 noncontributing buildings; 1 contributing structure

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### Statement of Significance

Located north of the unincorporated New Castle County community of Claymont, near the state boundary line with Pennsylvania, Hickman Row is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C at the state level of significance with areas of significance being architecture, ethnic heritage: black, and community planning and development. Hickman Row is a collection of 24 row houses divided into two blocks, with 16 units in the southern group and 8 units in the northern section. Important for its association with the Worth Steel Corporation as segregated worker housing for its African American workforce, Hickman Row is also architecturally significant as an alternative available to house workers what appears to be urban model in a rural setting, when its design features were as well stated in professional literature as housing for "low wage workers" as the community planning and development of larger developments for higher wage workers and company managers. The period of significance for Hickman Row spans the years from its construction in 1919 to the individual sale of the buildings in 1962. Once the properties at Hickman Row were sold to private individuals, segregation was no longer enforceable by an outside entity. The sense of community forged during the time of enforced segregation continued into the later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, families remaining in the row houses or building new homes in the vicinity of the historic row. Hickman Row has continued to be occupied by African American families to the present.

### Background

#### Housing Industrial Workers

The industrial expansion of Brandywine Hundred, north of Wilmington, was part of a national trend in the development of heavy industry. As these large employers moved to locations outside of cities, some industrialists saw it to their benefit to provide a living environment closer to the plant to keep skilled workers and unskilled workers close at hand. The issue of industrial worker housing was explored extensively in the *Architectural Forum*, a journal catering to architects. In 1918, *the Forum* devoted a series of articles to the topic by Charles C. May, who explored different aspects of the issue of worker housing using the work of various architects and landscape architects to illustrate his ideas. He described the benefits of providing housing to the "employers of labor:"

. . . the influence of the environment upon the individual worker is a vital element in his efficiency, and in the aggregate becomes a factor of considerable weight in the balance between success and failure; . . . the failure of private initiative to provide industrial housing adequate in either quantity or quality must be accepted as a definite conclusion, and that big business would do well therefore to include in its

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apartment buildings built by the company became the nucleus of the expanding 20<sup>th</sup> African American community. The Fairbanks-Morse Company hired J. D. Stevenson of the Tuskegee Institute to establish a segregated YMCA to serve the Flats community. At the same time, Fairbanks-Morse also built a housing complex for European American workers.<sup>7</sup> Called Eclipse Park, after the type of engine made by the company, the community was designed by George B. Post, an architect who practiced primarily in the northeastern United States with some commissions in the Midwest.<sup>8</sup>

### Worth Steel

As with many communities outside existing industrial cities, like Beloit, Wisconsin, the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was a time of transition and population explosion for the Claymont area. Placed between the industrial centers of Wilmington to the south and Philadelphia to the north, the area was attractive to manufacturing companies to build plants in the area. Like the Fairbanks-Morse Company, the promise of housing was used to attract workers. The General Chemical Company Delaware Works plant was constructed in 1912 and they commissioned John Nolen, the previously noted landscape architect from Cambridge, Massachusetts to design Overlook Colony<sup>9</sup> in Claymont. In 1914, the National Aniline Company opened a plant and constructed Aniline Village (extant) along Ridge Road north of Claymont for their workforce. Companies in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, just over the Pennsylvania state line also were creating worker housing villages. The Worth brothers joined this burgeoning industrial center and chose to provide housing for their work force as well.

Founded in 1881 in Coatesville, Pennsylvania by John Sharpless Worth and William Penn Worth, the Worth family had been in the steel manufacturing business since the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup> The brothers inherited the family business, after the death of their father, Sheshbazzar Bentley Worth. The elder Worth had worked in the steel industry since 1848 and had partnered with Hugh E. Steele in the purchase of Tri Delphia Iron Works in Coatesville, Pennsylvania, in 1852. After building the business into one of the largest iron plate plants in Coatesville, the Worth family sold the Pennsylvania business in 1915, and looked for a site to

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> "George B. Post and Sons," *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings* on March 9, 2005 at [www.philadelphiabuildings.org](http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org). Eclipse Park is not listed on the National Register and evaluated by the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office as not retaining sufficient integrity to be listed in 1983.

<sup>9</sup> Overlook Colony was never completed to John Nolen's specifications. H. Errol Coffin, an architect from New York City, designed the few buildings constructed. What was constructed in 1914 still survives and retains sufficient architectural integrity to be eligible for listing on the National Register.

<sup>10</sup> History of the Worth Steel Company was taken from the National Register nomination for the Worthland Historic District, by Roxanna Cummings, Daniel J. Uncles and Rebecca J. Sheppard of the University of Delaware Center for Historic Architecture and Design, June 2003.

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establish a steel mill along the Delaware River. J. S. and W. P. Worth, along with two of W. P. Worth's sons, began assembling 600 contiguous acres of land in predominately agricultural use in the Claymont vicinity along the Delaware River in 1916. The Worth Steel Company was formed in 1917 and the first finished steel plates were coming off the line by May 1918.

Worker housing was seen as a necessity in the formerly agricultural setting of Claymont and scarcity of labor and materials helped drive the housing strategies employed by the Worth Steel Company. The Worthland community and Hickman Row were placed at opposite ends of the original 600 acre purchase, with the European American community to the south and the African American community at the north end. Housing was treated as a benefit of employment. The monthly rent was set at a subsidized rate by the company. This practice was in line with what other companies were doing. Charles May, in his first article on the topic of industrial housing concluded, ". . . since the manufacturer's primary job is turning out goods, not putting up and getting rid of houses, the employer must not look for profits on his housing program comparable to a speculative builder. His own returns must be and can be anticipated in other directions- directly, through stabilizing his forces and eliminating the exorbitant waste of hiring and firing, and indirectly over a long period, through increased efficiency, health and morale of the workers."<sup>11</sup>

With the death of J. S. Worth in 1922 and W. P. Worth in 1923, W. P.'s sons took over the management of the plant. Edward H. Worth and William A. Worth were experienced in the steel industry, having worked in the Coatesville plant and having some involvement in the beginnings of the Claymont plant. The two men led the company through a period of steady growth and subsequently through the tough years of the Depression in the 1920s and 1930s. While many of Worth's competitors and customers filed bankruptcies, the Worth brothers effectively managed the business until finances leveled off in 1936. As proof of successful policies, in a year when the United States steel industry lost thousands of dollars, Worth Steel declared a small profit in 1938. By 1951, Worth Steel Company was ranked 25<sup>th</sup> largest steel company in the country.

Among the more notable products manufactured by Worth Steel were steel plates for U. S. Navy ships. Unfortunately, the steel process utilized by Worth to manufacture those plates eventually proved unsatisfactory for the increasingly larger ships and the Navy was forced to deal with other vendors during World War II. However, Worth Steel continued its success and growth in its other markets. According to company records, Worth Steel manufactured materials for customers across the United States, Canada and Mexico, South America, and to several European countries.<sup>12</sup> The Worth family sold the company in 1952 to

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<sup>11</sup> Charles C. May, "Some Aspects of Industrial Housing," p.11.

<sup>12</sup> Worthland National Register Nomination, 2003. Worth Steel Company, "Memorandum for 1925-1926 for the State and City Manual of Delaware," July, 1925, Worth Steel papers, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

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the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation, along with the two worker housing neighborhoods.<sup>13</sup> Colorado Fuel and Iron continued to rent the housing to its workers. It wasn't until 1962-3 that all the company-owned properties in these communities were sold on the open market.

### **Worth Steel Worker Housing**

The name of the architect for the Worth Steel worker housing is not known, and it is supposed that the designer came from the staff of the Worth Steel Company. With the emphasis on the topic of industrial worker housing by the *Architectural Forum*, and other trade journals, information on current practices and designs was readily available. The town planning concepts of noted landscape architect John Nolen was under construction nearby at Overlook Colony in Claymont. With the housing for Worth Steel employees completed in time to be enumerated on the 1919 Brandywine Hundred property tax evaluation, it is clear that many of the practices described in the *Architectural Forum* and evident in the work of John Nolen, were put into practice in the execution of the Worth Steel worker housing developments.

Recognizing the need for housing and other amenities to attract employees, the Worth Steel Company chose different housing strategies based on the race of the prospective employee, which may be in part what John Nolen referred to in this article as "custom."<sup>14</sup> For white workers, they developed Worthland<sup>15</sup>, a typical industrial company town of residential, commercial, and other buildings to attract their labor force. The main Worth Steel office building was placed on the part of the property that addressed Philadelphia Pike. The Worthland housing development was placed away from the main traffic artery uphill and behind the office building. This development supplied 156 housing units for the company's white employees, both blue collar and white collar workers.<sup>16</sup> The housing in this community was segregated by status in the company which was reflected in house size and single family versus multiple family dwellings. Amenities included automobile garages, either stalls for the duplex dwelling or individual buildings at the rear of the larger lots of the single family houses. Worth Steel provided an athletic club, a reservoir and pump house, an elementary school, volunteer fire department, and restaurant.

### **Housing for African American Workers**

At the same time, and in contrast, a group of row houses was developed to house the African American

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<sup>13</sup> Worth, Chapter Four, p. 1-20.

<sup>14</sup> John Nolen, "The Essential Principles of Industrial Village Development." *Architectural Forum*, Vol. 24, #4, April 1919. pp.99

<sup>15</sup> The majority of the worker housing at Worthland survives. The larger manager's houses and other amenities were demolished for the construction of Interstate 495. Worthland is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 2006.

<sup>16</sup> Worth Thesis, Chapter Three, p. 12.

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workers at Worth Steel. The buildings were designed as standard brick row houses and directly addressed the street, but the lots were large enough to contain rear garden plots cultivated by the residents. No amenities were planned into the development of Hickman Row, but in 1920, the Worth Steel Company donated adjacent land to the State of Delaware for the construction of the State Line School, a racially segregated elementary school for the children of the workers and other African American families in Claymont. The school could be accessed from the road that bisected the two blocks of row houses that comprise Hickman Row. It wasn't until 1948 that Worth Steel Company provided the community with its final amenity, the Hickman Road Church and community center. This building housed the Union Baptist Church until 1963 when the church was sold by the company and the congregation moved into Wilmington. Placed on the west side of Hickman Road, across from the row houses, the church still survives but no longer retains sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing in the National Register, either individually or as part of this collection.

Information espoused in the *Architectural Forum's* issue of April 1918 found its way into the houses at Hickman Row as well as at Worthland. In the article "Methods of Economy in Housing Construction" author Charles A. Whittemore recommends a practical approach to the choice of building materials: "Careful selection does not necessarily mean selection of the grades of material as it refers to the kind of material most easily available. . . Brick makes an excellent outside wall, either used structurally or as a veneer on a wood frame. It has this advantage over almost any other material, - that low priced bricks can be made to present a pleasing appearance and once laid, the maintenance cost is at an end."<sup>17</sup> He also makes assumptions about the aspirations and habits of the people who will be living in these dwellings: "After the standardization of materials has been effected, so far as the plans are concerned, a vital necessity is the elimination of useless and unnecessary rooms. . . because these units are not essential, they may be easily eliminated in a development which . . . is to provide houses for a class of workmen who have not previously been accustomed to the comforts and conveniences which even such a type of development will offer." Closets were eliminated. Kitchen cabinets took the place of butler's pantries to minimize space in the plan and thereby reduce costs. "Inasmuch as the class of occupants in these houses, as a rule will be those who have been more accustomed to the tenement house and less desirable living conditions, it is advisable to eliminate to as great an extent as possible all interior and exterior woodwork that can be readily damaged."<sup>18</sup>

In the surviving records of the Worth Steel Company, no specific name is ascribed to the worker housing complex on Hickman Road. Company documents refer to "colored housing" but no specific identification of where these dwellings were or what the community was named. Also providing no clue to community

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<sup>17</sup> Charles A. Whittemore, "Methods of Economy in Housing Construction." *Architectural Forum*, Vol 14, #4, April 1918. pp. 124-128.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. 127



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identity was the elementary school built by the school building campaign of Pierre S. duPont uphill from the community, which was called the State Line School. Hickman Row was most likely applied by the African Americans who lived there as the name they preferred for their community, perhaps ironically. In the context *African American Settlement Patterns on the Upper Peninsula Zone of Delaware 1730-1940+/-*, Bradley Skelcher identified the term "Row" as a common suffix to the names of rural African American communities.

Scattered on the landscape were settlement rows where tenant farmers and farm laborers lived such as Sopher's Row near Magnolia, Sudler's Row in Blackiston Forest, and Jackson Street Row in Frederica. These were tenant farm settlements located on the edges of larger town. In these rows, residents clustered their houses along dirt roads near adjacent farmlands. Often, these were in sight of the landowner's house. Local lore claims that farm owners made these arrangements to keep a watchful eye on the tenants.<sup>19</sup>

In 1996, current and former residents of Hickman Row had a reunion and the resulting press offered interviews and memories of former residents. The memories of those interviewed reflected a close knit community that grew closer to protect themselves from the prejudice faced from the outside world. The article referred to Hickman Row residents, Merle Anderson and Spencer Robinson, who were among the African American students to integrate Claymont High School on Green Street in 1952.<sup>20</sup> Barbara Byrd Henry, one of those interviewed who grew up on The Row, provided information about the interior of the houses, the landscaping, and use of the grounds:

"My cousin said, 'you can tell a woman wasn't there when he designed it. There weren't any closets, but they were good brick homes.' On the hillside behind the homes were gardens." Residents planted vegetables for canning, made pear and crab apple preserves, which they shared with one another, and they kept pigs. Henry remembers brisk fall days when the pigs were slaughtered, and the pork skins, scrapple and sausage that was cured for the winter. "The only thing we had

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<sup>19</sup> Bradley Skelcher, *African American Settlement Patterns on the Upper Peninsula Zone of Delaware, 1730-1940+/-*. Unpublished manuscript. 1995. p. 102

<sup>20</sup> The Claymont Public School was integrated as part of the *Belton v. Gebhardt* Delaware Superior Court case decided by Judge Collins Seitz who ruled in favor of immediate integration on September 4, 1952. This case and *Bulah v. Gebhardt* involving the integration of the elementary schools in Hockessin, Delaware, were appealed to the United States Supreme Court by the Attorney General of the State of Delaware, and were decided as part of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision that ended racial segregation in public schools across the country.

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to go to town for was sugar- things like that."<sup>21</sup>

**Architectural Integrity**

The row houses in the Hickman Row Historic District have been changed since the end of the period of significance. The exterior changes are generally limited to window and porch changes on the front and rear elevations. Despite these alterations, the district retains sufficient integrity to convey the significance of the historic district. The solid masonry construction with simple brick details survives intact, preserving the essential basis for the significance of these properties. The interiors were not accessible during the preparation of the nomination. It is anticipated that they have been changed extensively over time, reflecting the tastes of owners who had the freedom to make changes once the properties were in private ownership. The surviving physical fabric of the Hickman Row Historic District retains sufficient integrity to reflect the architectural, community planning and development, and ethnic history of this community.

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<sup>21</sup> Hardy, Lawrence. "The Row' Remembered." Wilmington News Journal. August 10, 1996 p.A1. [From the research collection of Cristina V. Radu.]

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**Comprehensive Planning**

Zone: Coastal  
Time Period: 1880-1940+/-: Urbanization and Early Suburbanization  
Themes: Settlement Patterns and Demographic Change  
Industry  
Property Type: African American Settlement, Segregated Residential District  
Worker Housing

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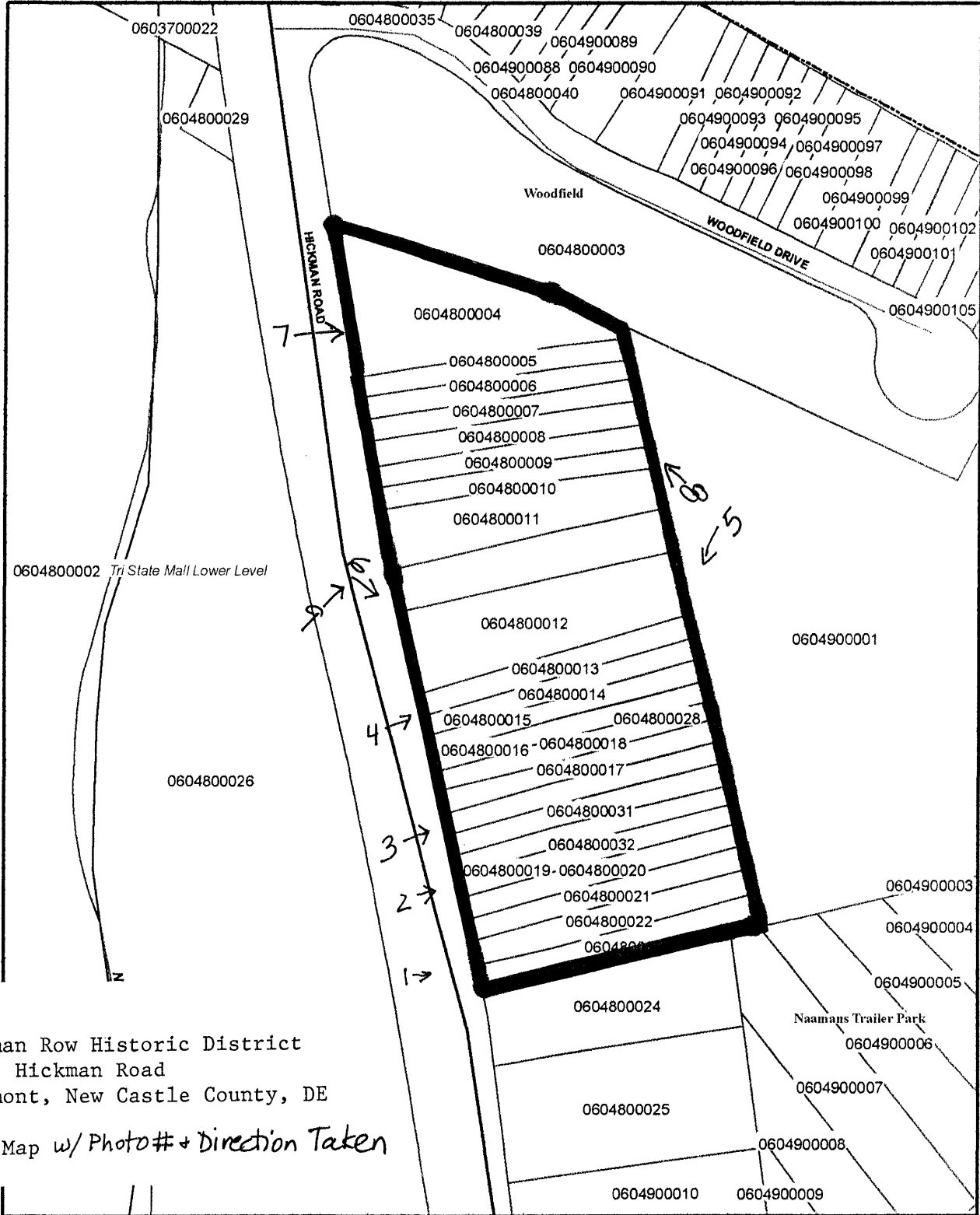
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# State of Delaware



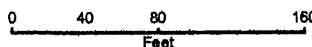
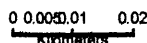
Hickman Row Historic District  
1-117 Hickman Road  
Claymont, New Castle County, DE

Site Map w/ Photo# + Direction Taken

Data on map are based on Delaware framework data layers. The Delaware DataMIL is jointly operated by the Delaware Geological Survey (DGS) and Delaware Department of Technology and Information (DTI)

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Scale 1:1,200



Magnetic Declination  
Approx. 11 miles

DataMIL Mini Map

