

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SG - 856

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Marcus Hook Plank House
Other names/site number: NA
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 221 Market Street
City or town: Marcus Hook State: Pennsylvania County: Delaware
Not For Publication: NA Vicinity: NA

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national x statewide ___ local Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C x D

<u>Andrea McDonald</u>	<u>2/15/2017</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official/Title:	Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Patrick Andrews 4/10/2017

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

Private

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

Category of Property

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

RECREATION & CULTURE/museum

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7. Description

Architectural Classification: COLONIAL/Postmedieval English

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Walls (visible): stucco and vinyl siding

Foundation (visible): rubble stone; poured concrete

Roof (visible): asphalt shingle; metal standing-seam

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Marcus Hook Plank House is located at 221 Market Street in the Borough of Marcus Hook (Figures 1-2), on the southeast corner of the Market Street and Market Lane intersection. The original section or main block of the house, thought to have been built c.1730, is a side-gabled, one-and-a-half-story single-cell building constructed of sawn plank joined at the corners with full dovetail notching. There are currently two additions present: a rear lean-to addition of brick and frame on the east (rear) side, probably built by 1750, and a late-twentieth-century frame lean-to addition on the south side. The eighteenth-century sections of the building are now clad in Portland cement stucco, while the recent addition is clad in vinyl siding. The roof is covered with standing-seam metal (over the two historic sections) and asphalt shingle (over the recent addition). There are modern shed-roofed porches against both front and rear elevations. The interior of the original section is organized as a single cell in plan on all three levels, consisting of first floor, half-story garret, and fully-excavated cellar. This house is thus an example of the chambered hall house type, i.e., the hall-plan dwelling type that incorporates a half- or full-story second floor level. The land parcel on which the house stands is approximately two tenths (0.2) of an acre in extent. There is one other building on the lot, a non-contributing light-frame utility building erected in 2011 and in use as the artifact library, i.e., a support building for ongoing archeological investigations. Investigations conducted to date indicate that the parcel contains rich archeological deposits dating to at least the early eighteenth century (earlier than c.1730, as it is believed another earlier dwelling was at this location). Pre-Contact use of the land is also reflected in archeological deposits identified on the parcel. The property is considered a contributing archeological site with multiple features, including the house. Despite changes including the removal of prior additions and the presence of non-historic materials, the Plank House property retains the construction elements and archeological features necessary to convey significance in the areas of architecture and to better understand the settlement era of southeastern Pennsylvania.

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The setting for the Plank House

The Plank House is situated in the historic core of the three-century-old riverside town of Marcus Hook, approximately 800 feet from the present-day bank of the Delaware River, along the southeastern edge of Pennsylvania. The house stands on the east side of Market Street, the main north-south thoroughfare of the borough, which leads from the riverfront through the center of the downtown area, at its intersection with Market Lane. The borough contains areas of residential and commercial development; however it is also home to massive oil refinery complexes just blocks away from the Plank House. Near the Plank House is a municipal park, and the immediate area consists of relatively low-density residential parcels sprinkled near the riverfront and the head of Market Street. This comparatively open part of the borough, which occupies much of the area associated with the eighteenth-century village center of Marcus Hook, forms a roughly rectangular area approximately fifteen acres in extent. Mature trees line the streets, reinforcing the park-like feel to this section of the borough. The segment of Market Street in front of the Plank House is a broad boulevard comprising two one-way lanes separated by a broad grassy median about 25 feet in width that in the eighteenth century was the location of the public market. The residential area immediately surrounding the Plank House is flanked by extensive gas refinery complexes and industrialized riverfront, much larger in area than the low-density historic waterfront village area. About four blocks north on Market Street begins the more-densely built central downtown area of the borough, dominated by small-scale commercial properties but also including residential properties as well as limited park land.

The lot of land for the Plank House, documented in the current assessment as measuring 108 feet east-west by 92 feet north-south and thus about two tenths (0.2) acre in extent, consists mostly of grass-covered lawn apart from the building footprints, shaded by a few mature hardwood and evergreen trees clustered around the historic house. The lot occupies the southeast corner of Market Street and Market Lane, the side street adjoining the property on the north. The house is set back about 20 feet from Market Street and a similar distance from the side street. A wood post and placard sign is placed in the front (west) yard, by the front porch, identifying the property to the public. A berm extends along the edge of both streets so that the house stands atop a low knoll raising the dwelling's gradient at its perimeter to about four feet above the surface of the public roadway. Concrete walks extend from street's edge to the front (west) porch and to the rear (east) patio. A wood picket fence supported by posts and rails encloses a small portion of lawn space on the north side of the house, from the front porch to the sidewalk that leads from the back porch to the street. A short gravel rear driveway and a parking space are located behind the house. Across this drive from the house stands the artifact library (non-contributing) built in 2011. Measuring 24 feet by 12 feet, the artifact library is sited about 30 feet to the rear of the dwelling, by the east boundary of the lot.

The Plank House—exterior description

The original section or main block of the house, dated tentatively to c.1730 based on preliminary investigations, is a side-gabled, one-and-a-half-story building constructed of sawn planks joined at the corners with full dovetail notching and organized on a one-room plan. A one-story rear lean-to addition on the east side was evidently added early in the building's history, presumably

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by c.1750 (and possibly well before that date) and is constructed partly of brick masonry (Photo 3) and partly of timber frame, containing two small rooms. The newest portion of the building (Photo 2) is a c.1980 one-story lean-to frame addition containing two rooms plus a half-bath, and extends across the south elevation of the earlier sections. The original section of the building measures approximately 21 feet wide (north-south) by 18 feet deep (east-west) in plan. The rear addition is about 25 feet wide (north-south) by 14 feet deep, extending further north than that of the original section by about 4 feet (Photo 1). The modern lean-to addition extends fully across the length of the eighteenth-century building, making it about 32 feet long, and is about 16 feet wide. Shed-roofed porches, constructed in the late twentieth century, are positioned against both the front and rear walls, extending fully across their respective facades. The front porch has a frame platform about six inches in height and supporting wood floor boards, the floor of the rear porch is cement patio just above the ground surface.

The walls of the original house and the east or rear addition, both dating to the eighteenth century, are now clad in a coat of Portland cement stucco. The brick interior end chimney rising from the north wall of the main block is also coated with stucco. The triangular upper wall segments on the north and south sides of the east addition are clad in vinyl siding, as are the overall walls of the recent south lean-to addition, which is built of modern stud framing.

The building's fenestration, due in some measure to the alteration and enlargement of the house over the centuries, presents little in the way of observable pattern. The front façade of the original section is organized as three first-story bays. The openings are spaced unevenly at varying intervals, with the entry off-center toward the north and flanked by the windows. A single small gabled dormer, positioned immediately above the eaves, breaks the front roof slope. The dormer is positioned over the center and is thus skewed southward in relation to the entry beneath. The north elevation of the building presents a single window opening and this was cut in as an alteration, located on the rear addition toward the east end of the wall. On the rear (east) elevation of the historic addition, the three openings (including off-center entry) are placed to align fairly closely with those on the front, hence these openings too are spaced at uneven intervals. Due to the presence of the modern addition, the only opening visible on the south side of the eighteenth-century portion of the building is a garret window placed slightly off-center toward the west, and it is partially obscured by the shed roof of the addition. The modern south addition lacks its own exterior entries, instead presenting two windows located toward either end of the long south wall and one window placed centrally on either end wall of the addition. Throughout the building, the exterior doors are twentieth century wood replacements of earlier doors. The overall window sash is a combination of twentieth-century wood replacements and modern vinyl sash.

The Plank House—interior description

The plank structural components of the building are currently visible only from the interior of the house, due to removal of twentieth-century replacement finish plaster in multiple locations. The original section of the house is constructed of sawn planks of oak timber, measuring 3 to 3-½ inches in thickness and 11 to 12 inches in height, joined at the corners with full dovetail joints

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(Photos 4 and 5). The planks range up to 18 feet in length. The interstices between the planks are caulked with oakum, the tarred hemp fiber that was generally made from old nautical rope and traditionally used to caulk the seams in ship planking (Photo 6). Evidence indicates that the first floor of the original section was finished with plaster early on, perhaps as first built. The historic rear addition has north and south walls built of common bond brick masonry, and an east wall of timber frame.

The original section of the house's plan represents the one-and-a-half-story variant of the traditional house type known to scholars of early Anglo-American vernacular architecture as a hall-plan house or "chambered hall," that is, it consists of a single room on each floor, the room on the first floor being designated the "hall," the main living and working room in the dwelling, and that on the second or garret level being the "chamber." The chamber generally served as the master bedroom, but may have been the *only* bedroom, and in such a small dwelling (which might be home to a half-dozen or more individuals in the eighteenth century) this room typically provided space for additional living and working activities as well. The three levels of the original section (including the cellar) are linked by a winder staircase located in the northeast corner. The first-floor hall holds the main entry of the house as well as doorways in its east and south walls accessing the two additions, and has an intact fireplace on the north wall (Photo 9). This fireplace, bricked up at some date but now reopened, contains the structures of both the original broad and deep firebox and of a shallower Rumford-form fireplace probably representing an early-nineteenth-century modification, a common alteration in the greater Philadelphia region during the period. An open closet space on the west side of the fireplace was evidently formerly a doorway leading to an eighteenth-century north addition (as known from historic photographs) that was taken down in about the second quarter of the twentieth century. The hall also contains a boarded-over window opening on the south wall toward the west end. The inner face of the planking is nearly filled with diagonal and vertical "striping" marks left by the lath to which plaster was keyed, evidently at an early date and possibly as the original section was first built (see Photos 4 and 5). The winder stairway leading down to the cellar was also plastered, with the keying for the plaster on the north wall made by hacking up the inner face of the planking.

The chamber above holds a smaller fireplace on the north wall, embellished with a fielded panel surround and overmantel (Photo 10). A tall and relatively narrow original chimney cupboard occupies the space adjoining the fireplace on the east. This loft room has knee walls formed by the structural plank and an inclined garret ceiling (Photo 11); the common rafters forming the side-gable roof structure are joined with mortise and tenon joints pinned with trenails. The rafters measure about 3 inches by 4 inches in section, tapering toward the peak. On the east slope of the roof, an early covering of wood shingle carried by lath is intact, while on the west slope a covering of wide boards nailed directly to the rafters is in place. Modern rafters and roof covering now shelter these historic materials. Investigation has found that the intact original sheathing of the main block's south gable consists of horizontal plank fixed to the rafters and a pair of studs. A gabled dormer window on the west side of the chamber provides light along

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with a window on the south that is partially obscured by the shed roof of the addition on that side.

Below the original portion's first floor is a fully-excavated cellar room, with a ceiling height of about six feet. The foundation walls enclosing the cellar, as well as the relieving arch for the chimney positioned against the north wall, are built of random rubble stone masonry comprising pieces of undressed quartz and Wissahickon schist. The walls are parged and had been whitewashed at some date, although much of the stonework is now directly exposed. The intrados or underside of the relieving arch is faced with a segmental arch of brickwork (Photo 7). An evidently original stone-built bulkhead entry, holding a flight of stone steps, is situated in the west or front foundation wall near the south end of the wall. The east wall of the center holds a waist-height niche interrupting the stonework, this niche about 18 inches across, 12 inches in height, and 10 inches deep (Photo 8). The floor of the cellar is surfaced with poured concrete. The rear or east addition also has its brick and frame walls set on a foundation of random rubble stonework.

The one-story east or rear addition was evidently built early in the building's history in order to house the main kitchen space. A very early date for this addition relative to the construction of the original section, i.e., by c.1750, but probably a few years earlier, is indicated by the survival of the original eaves roofline and exterior wall treatment on the rear of the main block beneath the addition's shed roof (Photo 12). The common rafter roof structure of the original section retains the original rafter footing on false plate timbers supported by brackets, as well a segment of the beaded and beveled weatherboard siding with which the plank building was originally clad. Both the weatherboard cladding and the eaves corbeling of false plate and supporting brackets show practically no weathering effect, indicating that they were not exposed for long after construction of the original section was first completed. The brackets are tapered with a concave curvature forming a cove on their east face. The weatherboard is fastened with wrought-iron nails. The underside of the addition's historic roofing, consisting of rafters, lath and shingle, is also visible.

In the floor in the center of the north side of the addition, situated against the brick exterior wall, there is a patch of brickwork measuring about 18 inches by 3 feet in plan (Photo 13). Built of brick three courses deep and underpinned by stonework, this feature is evidently the remnant of the brick-built hearth in what had evidently been a large walk-in fireplace, possibly formerly extending fully across the addition's north wall. In the northeast corner of the addition is another surviving piece of apparent fireplace floor, about 3 feet by 4 feet, although this feature is composed of stonework. Both fireplace floor features are mortared masonry and extend downward into the ground for about 2 feet or nearly so. Most of the flooring in the addition has been removed as of the present time, in order to facilitate investigation in this area. The majority of the addition's west wall simply consists of the plank rear wall of the original section. However, the addition extends about 4 feet further north than the main block by means of a segment of brick wall. This brick masonry structure evidently formed the west end for the great kitchen fireplace. The brick segment of the west wall was later adapted to provide a flue to serve

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a stove, probably in the nineteenth century. At waist height and just to the right or east of the center of the north wall is an in-filled segmental arch of brick, originally measuring about two feet across, which had been the aperture for a beehive bakeoven situated on the outside of the house (Photo 14). The arch is now truncated at its east terminus as a result of alteration of the wall to insert a window. The existence of the oven is also known by the presence of an exterior footer uncovered in a preliminary investigation. The added window opening is placed roughly central to the east half of the wall. On the west side of the rear addition, a partially demolished segment of historic frame stud-and-board partition wall, about 6 feet long, extends from a location about 4 feet south of the doorway leading from the addition into the main block. The survival of this partition fragment indicates that the addition was divided into two rooms of unequal size, the smaller southerly room possibly intended for service as a pantry or some other secondary function.

The late-20th century addition on the south side of the house contains all-modern materials and finishes. This section was built to expand the living space in the small dwelling; it now provides office space for the Marcus Hook Preservation Society.

The property is fitted with modern service utilities via underground lines, including electric service, natural gas, water, and sewer.

Archeological features

The Plank House property was the subject of a series of limited archeological investigations, both interior and exterior to the building, from 2005 to 2011. Conducted by archeological professionals on a volunteer basis, these investigations were undertaken in order to reconnoiter the general potential of the property as a historic archeological site; to begin deciphering the physical history of the building and modifications made over the centuries; and to constructively exploit opportunities for exploration provided by ongoing work associated with the building's stabilization and use. These investigations included traditional excavation techniques and a limited reconnaissance via electromagnetic survey and application of ground penetrating radar (GPR). Combined with information gleaned from an early-twentieth-century photograph, the preliminary location has been found for two sequential additions extending from the north end of the original section (Photo 15).

The archeological investigations have so far identified several promising locations for further excavation, which considered overall suggest that a high proportion of the parcel of about two tenths acre holds the potential for significant archeological deposits. These specific locations include:

- the interior of the existing rear addition, only partially excavated to date;
- an exterior area to the north of the original section, where the second of the two sequential north additions formerly stood;

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- an area of preserved historic ground surface, of unknown extent and buried about 18 inches beneath the present gradient, located to the north of the original section (beyond the evident location of the two north additions; Photo 16); and
- a number of anomalies or features indicated by the ground penetrating radar application, including an unmortared brick walkway or possible segment of building floor located to the northeast of the house, an additional area of buried and preserved historic ground surface in that vicinity, and possible privies or other deep shaft features at various locations on the property.

In addition to privies or trash pits that may hold artifacts, and other cultural features that may lie hidden beneath the current gradient, further exploration offers the possibility of confirming the site of an even earlier dwelling, as well as the sites of outbuildings (such as a freestanding kitchen) that may have accompanied the principal dwelling in the early years. It is known from documentary evidence that a house had been built on the parcel by 1701. It appears probable that the extant building was an entirely new construction; the pre-1701 dwelling was presumably a less-substantially built structure that stood elsewhere on the lot, or conceivably was sited entirely within the footprint of the extant building. Investigations anticipated include both a Historic Structures Report study and intensive archeological survey of the parcel.

Integrity

The Marcus Hook Plank House property possesses the integrity necessary to demonstrate its significance. When considering the integrity of properties eligible under Criterion D, including archeological sites and buildings or structures valued for their information potential, less attention is given to the resource's general appearance (which would be more relevant under Criteria A, B, or C). Instead, integrity is based on the property's potential to provide information that can address important research questions about specific places, people, or trends.¹ It is also important to consider the rarity of the property type when assessing integrity. If other extant examples of a type are in an even more-altered state, it may be appropriate to accept a number of changes in the nominated resource, if sufficient character-defining features remain to convey significance.

Based on existing survey and research data, the Marcus Hook Plank House is believed to be a rare intact example of a European-American settlement era hall-plan sawn plank house in the Delaware Valley region. While the exterior of the house is covered in modern siding, evidence shows that the structural components of the house remain intact, and archeological features exist to support further study of the property's development and function. With a building of this early date (c.1730), any visible evidence of the building's original design, layout and appearance, or any fragmentary survival of original fabric, such as the few courses of original weatherboard sheltered by the rear addition's shed roof, serves as a positive manifestation of physical integrity.

For this particular property, the integrity aspects of location, design, materials, and workmanship are particularly relevant. The Plank House retains integrity of location, standing on the same site

¹ See NPS Bulletin 15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, for guidance on assessing the integrity of rare resources and properties eligible under Criterion D.

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on which it was constructed, which is crucial for the presence of the archeological features under and surrounding the building that support and enhance its significance.

The equally-important aspects of design, materials, and workmanship are found in the structural components of the house, and are evinced in surviving early-period fabric. The masonry, sawn plank, and timber components comprising the eighteenth-century building's foundation, walls, chimney structure, flooring support structures, and roof structure are surprisingly intact. Important components of the building's finishes survive in fragmentary form, and include the weatherboard at the top of the original section's rear wall, the wood shingle on its rear roof slope, and the portions of brick and stone hearth structures surviving in the rear addition; or exist in the form of the visible evidence of historic appearance, such as the witness marks for plaster and lath.

Considering the overall parcel as an archeological site consisting of features that include evidence of buildings, additions, or structures that are no longer standing, integrity of design, materials, and workmanship is manifested in the presence of foundation walls or footings for the two sequential north additions, as found in preliminary excavations, and in the evidence of subterranean remnants detected in the reconnaissance GPR survey. Initial investigations show these archeological features appear to have experienced minimal disturbance, and are believed to retain integrity.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance: Architecture; Settlement, Archeology (historic—non-aboriginal)

Period of Significance: c.1701 – c.1750

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person: N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary

The Marcus Hook Plank House property is being nominated under Criterion D due to the important information contained in both the house and associated archeological features, through which we can continue to study the early urban settlement of Marcus Hook, and early eighteenth century hall-plan house types featuring plank construction. The house's original section, dating to c.1730, exemplifies the hall-plan house type that was probably the most common type built for European-American inhabitants of the Delaware Valley in the early eighteenth century. The Plank House is also representative of full-dovetail corner-notched sawn-plank construction, a method believed to reflect a form of house construction employed at the upper end of the economic spectrum, generally associated with well-finished interiors and beaded-edge weatherboard-clad exteriors. This house is apparently one of the oldest surviving buildings in the historic river port town of Marcus Hook, which was laid out and initially built up in the late seventeenth century. (Further research may establish that it is the oldest.) The period of significance extends from c.1701, by which date a prior dwelling had been built upon the property, through c.1750, by which date the rear addition had evidently been constructed on the existing house. Archeological investigations to date have identified features and artifacts believed to pre-date the c.1730 house.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Borough of Marcus Hook

The community in which the Plank House is located, Marcus Hook, is one of the oldest urban settlements in Pennsylvania. The initial European settlers of this locale were Swedish and Finnish colonists of New Sweden who arrived in the 1640s and who referred to the place from early on by the name "Marikis Hook." The town is situated on a strip of riverside land extending along the west bank of the Delaware. The Swedes and their early competitors for supremacy in the Delaware Valley, the Dutch of the New Netherlands colony, regarded this location as of exceptional value in terms of settlement and strategy because at that time it was one of very few places on the lower reaches of the Delaware where stable and dry land directly adjoined the navigable river, as compared to the expanses of marshes and tidal flats that lined the river in other places. Following consolidation of the Delaware Valley region within the British imperial realm in 1674, the settlement of "Chichester Town" (the first official name for the village, given in 1682) evolved into a busy riverside port serving the needs of settlers in that part of the province. Streets and lots were laid out in the village core area in the late seventeenth century. In 1701, responding to a petition submitted in 1699 by the village's inhabitants, William Penn confirmed the arrangement of streets and conferred upon the community the privilege of holding a regular weekly market at a designated public market place on today's Market Street, directly in front of the Plank House property. The village was also designated the location for regular spring and autumn fairs, a privilege enjoyed by just a few towns in the province at that time. A 1708 document referred to the community as comprising approximately 100 dwellings. By the mid-eighteenth century Marcus Hook had become one of the Delaware River's most prominent

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shipbuilding towns, and remained so until the late nineteenth century, when the demand declined sharply for the smaller-scale sailing sloops and schooners used in coastal shipping.²

The maritime character of the village during the eighteenth century extended to a role as one of the first ports of call for vessels traveling to and from the major port of Philadelphia. Ships could obtain the services of local pilots at Marcus Hook who were knowledgeable regarding the river's shoals and tides. Second Street in the village was named Discord Lane by 1701 as shown on a plat of that date (see Figure 9), possibly a reference to the tendency for noisy revelry among mariners entertained at the public houses located on the street. Regional historians of the nineteenth-century recorded a local tradition that Marcus Hook was a haunt of pirates during the early eighteenth century, including the infamous Edward Tench or Teach, called "Blackbeard," who was said to have enjoyed the favors of a local Swedish woman named Margaret as his mistress. In August 1718, provincial Governor William Keith complained of the common knowledge that Blackbeard had been "lurking" on the Delaware and even in Philadelphia itself, as noted in the minutes of a Provincial Council meeting of that date. Marcus Hook had some prominence in the military campaigning of 1777-1778, during the War of Independence, when the British invaded the region and captured and held Philadelphia from September to June. The Delaware River provided the major means of supplying the British army in Philadelphia from New York and abroad; with the ship channel situated near the western bank in this stretch of the river American troops stationed in the village subjected the British crews to deadly harassing fire. As a consequence of this tactic, British naval vessels bombarded the village several times.³

The opening of the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad line through Marcus Hook in 1838 set the stage for expanded development and further population growth in the town, although such activity remained fairly limited for a lengthy initial phase. In the mid-nineteenth century, local people developed a thriving fishery trade, catching, preparing, and vending shad and herring. This business continued until the early twentieth century. In 1892, the Borough of Marcus Hook was incorporated, taking its territory from Lower Chichester Township. The same year saw the opening of the Bear Creek Refinery Company complex, processing oil piped into town from fields in western Pennsylvania, an event representing the inception of the industrial development that would transform the town. The combination of deep-water port facility and railroad access made Marcus Hook a highly suitable location for the petroleum refinery business. In 1901, the Sunoco Refinery took over and expanded the Bear Creek operation, and in 1910 the Union Petroleum Company (now Conoco-Phillips) also set up shop. Also in 1910, the American Viscose Company established a plant to make rayon, the first rayon facility in the United States and for a time the largest synthetic fiber plant in the world. The employment opportunities provided by these facilities pushed the population of Marcus Hook to its largest size ever in

² Joseph R. Blondino, "Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania: Toward the Preservation of a Significant Historical Landscape," in *Historical Archaeology of the Delaware Valley, 1600-1850*, ed. Richard Veit and David Orr (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2014), 75, 77; George Smith, *History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Henry B. Ashmead, 1862), 199, 205, 530-531; Borough of Marcus Hook, "Brief History of Marcus Hook," accessed online at http://www.marcushookboro.com/new_page_7.htm.

³ Blondino, 78; Henry Graham Ashmead, *History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts, 1884), 456-458; "Brief History of Marcus Hook."

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1920, when the borough was home to 5,324 inhabitants. Sustained industrial growth after 1920, taking over a great share of the town's land surface, combined with post-World War II suburbanization drove the borough's population downward, so that in 2010 it was recorded at 2,397 residents.⁴

Industrial development as well as the ongoing cycle of residential and commercial construction and replacement of existing building stock typical of most communities has caused the loss of a number of Marcus Hook's historic eighteenth-century properties. It is noteworthy, however, that the historic resource inventory maintained by the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office records that, in addition to the Plank House, at least seven standing buildings of attributed or estimated eighteenth-century date were present in the borough within recent years and probably all of these remain standing (as of mid-2016).⁵ Moreover, since 2004 growing public awareness of the Plank House has served as a touchstone for local historical and preservation interest. The Marcus Hook Preservation Society and other concerned residents have become engaged in a potentially transforming local movement for historic preservation and community revitalization.

Marcus Hook is important as one of Pennsylvania's earliest urban settlements. Publishing in 1972, historical geographer James T. Lemon identified Marcus Hook as one of just nine towns and villages that had been formally established in Pennsylvania before 1730.⁶ This importance is enhanced by the survival of eighteenth-century properties—as above-ground intact buildings and as subterranean remnants potentially revealing the proxemic patterns of building and structure arrangement and evidence of the lifeways of colonial-period river port town dwellers during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The riverside central village area may represent a veritable archeological park. The Plank House is all the more important as an intact early dwelling representing the historic legacy of this important colonial-period river port town.

History of the Marcus Hook Plank House

The dates of the original and early sections of the Plank House are based on deductions made from examination of the building's architectural stylistic and constructional character coupled with consideration of the archeological features within and immediately adjacent to the building. Experts who have studied the building to date include architectural historian Bernard L. Herman and historical archeologists David G. Orr and Joseph R. Blondino. They have posited the date for the construction of the original section at c.1730. The original section is a one-and-a-half-story hall-plan or single-cell dwelling that as first built evidently presented a well-finished interior with fully paneled fireplace walls and a plaster surface for other walls on the first and second floors. In particular, Herman indicated the design of the surviving fireplace paneling and of the second-floor fireplace (featuring a "step-back cove," i.e., a shallow recess on either flank just

⁴ Blondino, 75, 79 ; "Brief History of Marcus Hook."

⁵ Pennsylvania SHPO Cultural Resource nos. 016110, 016115, 016119, 016121, 016123, 016125, and 016128.

⁶ James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), Figure 33, pg 103.

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within the fireplace entry) as features consistent with dated regional houses from the 1720s and early 1730s.⁷

The date for the probable first addition made to the house, the north end wing of wood construction (no longer standing), was evidently 1737. This attribution is based on the existence of a Spanish two *reale* coin of that date which had been placed beneath a cornerstone of the added wing's foundation, in an act known to have been a traditional and apparently talismanic custom of construction artisans of the region, following northwestern European precedents. The absence of nails among the artifacts identified so far at the location suggests that the 1737 wing was also of joined plank or log construction. It is thought that what was probably the second addition erected, the mostly brick-built existing rear or east kitchen wing, was built sometime before 1750. Visible within the low attic level of this addition are the cornice and upper weatherboarding courses on the east side of the original section—these hidden original features lack evidence of weathering, indicating that the rear addition was erected within a relatively brief interval following the construction of the original section. The second wood addition to the north end wing (no longer standing) was probably put up around the turn of the twentieth century. It seems to have been somewhat more rudimentary in terms of construction technique, based on its less substantial foundation construction. The former existence of the two sequentially added sections extending from the north end of the original section is further known from postcard photographs taken during approximately the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries (Figures 6-8). It appears that the far northern end section was constructed quite late, at about the end of the 1800s. This interpretation is suggested by the absence of this section from what is apparently the oldest of the photos, probably made in the late nineteenth century, its seemingly slapdash quality of construction and exterior finish in comparison to the earlier sections as shown in the early-twentieth-century photos, and its lack of an integral chimney.⁸

The documentary record indicates that the extant house was not the first dwelling built on this lot. The older building may have been within the footprint of the current building, or may have stood quite close by the extant house, and possibly served for a period in an auxiliary role to its successor as an outkitchen building. Two documents from 1701, viz., the Proprietor's charter for the status of "Chichester Town"⁹ as a market town, which also identified the marketplace location and confirmed the layout of village streets, and an associated survey draft by surveyor John Taylor, refer to the Plank House lot as the property of Roger Jackson and to a dwelling on it as "the house now of Roger Jackson." The inclusion of the phraseology "now of" suggests that Jackson was not the first owner of the house. As of 1694, Roger Jackson was present at Marcus Hook, and may have already purchased the Plank House lot, as he was named in that year among the members of a jury to appraise a property on the Chichester Town riverfront.¹⁰

⁷ Blondino, 80; Bernard L. Herman, personal communication, February 4, 2016.

⁸ Blondino, 80, 82.

⁹ Chichester Town was the earlier name for Marcus Hook.

¹⁰ Blondino, 81; Smith, 530-531.

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As of August 2016, comprehensive documentary research on the history of the Plank House property has yet to be conducted. Roger Jackson, known to have owned the property in 1701, made his will in January 1711. The will was probated in November 1715. Jackson directed his executors to sell his Pennsylvania real estate, consisting of “my lots of land in and near Chichester and dwelling house and lots in Chester,” and to divide the proceeds “among such or so many of my relations in England as shall within seven years come over here.” Given the reference in the will to a primary dwelling for Jackson in the neighboring town of Chester in 1711, it is not clear whether or not he still owned the Plank House lot at his death or whether or not it had ever been his primary residence. In 2004, the property was acquired by Michael and Patricia Manerchia, who discovered the house’s architectural-historical character and importance. In 2010, Michael and Patricia conveyed the property to the Marcus Hook Preservation Society.¹¹

Since at least the late nineteenth century, local legend has held that the Plank House was the residence of the pirate Blackbeard¹²,s purported mistress, the Swedish woman named Margaret. This attribution appears not to deserve credence, at least not for the extant house on the parcel (as opposed to the lot of land and the earlier house) since the house now standing apparently dates to a decade or so *after* Blackbeard’s death at the hands of Lieutenant Maynard at Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina, on November 22, 1718. A less romantic element of local lore concerning the Plank House is the tradition that the added north wing had been known as “the counting house,” possibly reflecting a historic role as an office for a mercantile business.¹³

The limited historical documentation currently available for the property does not diminish the importance of the Plank House property’s association with early Marcus Hook or as a rare example of a well-finished and well-built hall-plan dwelling of the Delaware Valley settlement region. Although a number of extant dwellings from before 1740 have been identified in the Delaware Valley, such houses are far from common. Few surviving early hall-plan dwellings have been documented, although architectural historians posit that dwellings of this type were probably predominant among pre-1740 houses. Gabrielle Lanier and Bernard Herman assert that chambered hall dwellings, i.e., hall-plan houses of one-and-a-half- or full two-story height, were the most common house forms in the Delaware Valley throughout the eighteenth century, and continued to be common in the nineteenth although increasingly associated with relatively poor inhabitants due to the modest scale of these dwellings in comparison to new homes. They note that early examples built for prosperous families were constructed of brick or stone masonry or clad in weatherboard if a wooden structure, and contained heated rooms on both floors and elaborate finishes such as fully paneled fireplace walls. This description suits the original section of the Marcus Hook Plank House as it was evidently first built. Jack Michel, in an insightful study of material living standards and vernacular architecture in early Pennsylvania (1680-1740) drawn from comprehensive examination of early probate records in Penn’s province, concurs

¹¹ Research notes, collection of Marcus Hook Preservation Society; Will of Roger Jackson, Chester County Will A:27; Delaware County Deed 4691:2281.

¹² Edward Tench, or Teach—see page 13.

¹³ Blondino, 81-82; Ashmead, 457-458.

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that a large majority of Pennsylvanians in the early decades lived in dwellings of no more than three rooms, typically a chambered hall, perhaps with a shed addition.¹⁴

Houses present in Delaware County from before 1740 that have been listed in the National Register include the William Brinton 1704 House (a National Historic Landmark), the Caleb Pusey House in Upland, attributed as built in 1683, the property known as Flintlock in Haverford Township, circa 1725, the Morton Homestead in Prospect Park, probably built circa 1698 although subsequently much altered, and the Lower Swedish Cabin in Drexel Hill, thought to possibly date to 1650 or earlier.¹⁵ Of these early Delaware County examples, the Pusey House is the resource that most nearly compares to the Plank House. As first built the Pusey House represented the one-room or hall plan, though it was of the most rudimentary type consisting simply of one room with but a low unfinished loft accessed via hatchway and ladder, in other words it was not a chambered hall with staircase and second-floor fireplace as in the Plank House. (The Morton House may also have originated as a one-room house, but the physical evolution of that property remains somewhat unclear.)¹⁶

The relative scarcity of documented comparable properties may reflect tendencies associated with the hall-plan type, for one that early examples have tended not to survive because of their lack of suitability for modern middle-class lifeways, and for another that examples may sit unrecognized due to subsequent enlargement and/or alteration. As an exceptionally intact early specimen of a well-built and well-finished hall-plan house, the Marcus Hook Plank House is all the more historically important. In this regard, Bernard Herman has specifically cited the Plank House as virtually representing a Delaware Valley equivalent to Pear Valley, a well-known c.1740 frame hall-plan house in Northampton County, Virginia, that is a National Historic Landmark and that since its discovery in 1986 has served architectural historians as a template for early Chesapeake regional architecture. The NHL nomination states that,

Pear Valley is a rare survivor, and resonates as a representative example of the second generation of housing as it evolved in the early Chesapeake. Its small size combined with high quality craftsmanship exemplifies the character of many early planters' houses now long lost. . . . The survival of so many of Virginia's large, masonry houses that once belonged to her social and political elite obscures the former presence of the once ubiquitous one-room house in the landscape as represented by Pear Valley. Few of these houses are extant today despite the fact

¹⁴ Gabrielle M. Lanier and Bernard L. Herman, *Everyday Architecture of the Mid-Atlantic: Looking at Buildings and Landscapes* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 12-15; Lanier, *The Delaware Valley in the Early Republic: Architecture, Landscape, and Regional Identity* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005, 130-133); Jack Michel, "In a Manner and Fashion Suitable to Their Degree:" *A Preliminary Investigation of the Material Culture of Early Rural Pennsylvania*, Working Papers from the Regional Economic History Research Center, Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation (1981), 31-36.

¹⁵ "National Register Listings in Delaware County, Pennsylvania," Wikipedia, accessed online at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Register_of_Historic_Places_listings_in_Delaware_County,_Pennsylvania .

¹⁶ Sharon Hernes Silverman, "New Sweden and the New World: History Lessons from the Morton Homestead," *Pennsylvania Heritage* Vol. 25, No. 1 (Winter 1999); Michel, 7, 35, regarding the Pusey House.

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that many planters chose to build modest dwellings throughout the eighteenth century. . . . The one room or hall plan house accommodated a myriad of activities, including the rituals of sociability and refinement. Imagining where those rituals occurred without dedicated or articulated spaces, such as the dining room, is difficult, and it is this difficulty that highlights the importance of Pear Valley's survival.¹⁷

Comparing the Marcus Hook Plank House, Herman comments, "This is certainly a National Register eligible building—at the least at the state/regional level if not national given the rarity of its survival and the ways in which it preserves and reveals broad patterns of early British-American settlement history. I would rank it alongside Pear Valley, Northampton County, Virginia."¹⁸

Sawn Plank Construction in the Delaware Valley

The variant method of log building construction employing sawn planks joined at the corners with fully dovetailed corner notching, and the very narrow interstices between the planks caulked with oakum, was a technique used in the Delaware Valley by the late seventeenth century and possibly earlier. (Other variations of wood construction using planks can be found in other parts of Pennsylvania, as well, employing different techniques and methods. This nomination focuses on the construction approach used in the Marcus Hook Plank House.)

Bernard Herman found in examining tax assessment and orphans court records and other documents in New Castle County, Delaware (directly adjoining Pennsylvania's Delaware County), from the period 1760-1820 that dwellings built of timber evidently made up a large majority of houses during that period. Within the wooden subset, houses of log construction made up the majority, and within the overall body of log buildings, dovetail-cornered sawn-plank dwellings composed a relatively small and more highly valued group at the upper end of the economic spectrum. Sawn-plank dwellings with dovetail corner notching, with the planks hand-planed after sawing for a smoother surface, generally clad in beaded-edge weatherboard like the Marcus Hook Plank House, and boasting well-finished interiors, would have represented elite housing as of c.1730. As with the Marcus Hook example, the planks were usually about three inches in thickness and up to a foot in height. Since these houses were intended by their well-off owners to serve for an extended period, it appears they were almost always protected with exterior board cladding. Early timber houses of all construction methods have suffered a much higher rate of attrition than their brick or stone masonry counterparts, however, and sawn-plank houses are apparently extremely rare to survive.¹⁹

¹⁷ National Historic Landmark Nomination: *Pear Valley*, accessed online at <http://www.nps.gov/nhl/find/statelists/va/PearValley.pdf>.

¹⁸ Bernard L. Herman, personal communication, February 4, 2016.

¹⁹ Herman, *Architecture and Rural Life in Central Delaware, 1700-1900* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1987), 88-91.

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The near total absence of known comparable examples for a presumably once-common type makes this relatively intact house an important surviving specimen. Herman cites the Vandergrift-Biddle House in the Port Penn vicinity of New Castle County as a study example of “sawn-log construction at its finest;” however, this house was subsequently enlarged into a mansion house many times larger than its original single-cell, one-story, sawn-plank entity, and it does not retain any of its original cladding. According to architectural historian Janet Sheridan, a surveyor with deep experience on the vernacular architecture of the New Jersey segment of the Delaware Valley cultural landscape, several examples of eighteenth-century sawn-plank house construction have been discovered by architectural surveyors in New Jersey during the past half-century or so, but nearly all of these resources have either subsequently been demolished or are heavily altered. The sole comparable example surviving in New Jersey is the Swedish Cabin or Cedar Plank House that now stands on the grounds of the Hancock House in Hancock’s Bridge, New Jersey, a museum property. The Cedar Plank House was moved and reconstructed in 1931, renovated to provide public restrooms in the 1970s, and re-restored in the 1990s. Thought to have been erected about 1700, this building as first built was evidently very similar to the Marcus Hook Plank House’s original section, although the Hancock’s Bridge specimen is now moved, partially reconstructed and repeatedly manipulated. Based on current knowledge, the Marcus Hook Plank House appears to be the most intact specimen of this type of plank construction and hall-plan style identified in the region.²⁰

Examples of the full-dovetail-notched sawn-plank form of construction were evidently reasonably numerous during the eighteenth century, and this form was apparently positioned at the upper end of the spectrum of wooden building construction. The rarity of surviving houses today provides the Marcus Hook Plank House with an important role to play in the study of vernacular architecture of the early European-American settlement in the Delaware Valley.

Another variant of log construction in southeastern Pennsylvania employing sawn planks was that of post-and-plank construction, or *Blockständerbau* (log-post construction) as it was known in the eighteenth century to the German-speaking builders who were the primary practitioners of this method brought from their homeland. Examples of this method, generally found in the old backcountry region to the west and north of Philadelphia in counties such as Chester, Bucks, and Berks, are somewhat more common to survive, such as the Hunter-Kemp Inn in Oley Township, Berks, and the recently National Register-listed Wiley-Cloud House in Kennett Township, Chester. This method is actually considerably different from the dovetail-notched method, in that the planks are much thicker, generally five inches or more as compared to the three inches of the dovetail-notched type, and the method actually represents a hybrid of frame and log construction. Instead of being notched and joined at the corners of the walls, the planks are made with projecting tenons that fit into the building’s sturdy vertical posts via rabbets or

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 15-16, 89, 91; Historic American Buildings Survey: *Vandergrift-Biddle House*, accessed online at <https://www.loc.gov/item/de0322/>; Janet L. Sheridan, personal communication, February 3, 2016; Historic American Buildings Survey: *Cedar Plank House*, online at <https://www.loc.gov/item/nj0758/>; “The Massacre at Hancock’s Bridge,” website The History Girl!, online at <http://www.thehistorygirl.com/2013/02/the-massacre-at-hancocks-bridge.html>. The Vandergrift-Biddle House, listed on the National Register in 1978, is also known as the Christopher Vandegrift House.

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grooves extending up and down the sides of the posts. Examples are thus generally quite heavily built and are usually two-story buildings and relatively large by the standards of their time, sometimes built to serve as taverns. These *Blockständerbau* houses are not entirely appropriate comparables, as they appear to reflect different cultural traditions and present different construction methods.²¹

Marcus Hook Plank House: Information Potential

The Marcus Hook Plank House property is significant under Criterion D for the information it contains related to the early European settlement of the immediate area and vernacular house types and period construction methods. Continued study of the property will contribute greatly to our understanding of the social, cultural, and economic history of early European-American settlement in the Delaware Valley region.

A noteworthy aspect of the property is the dual or complementary nature of the important historical evidence it embodies, in that the standing building and associated archeological features mutually reinforce the areas of significance—architecture, historic archeology, and settlement. Essentially, the house itself can be considered a feature of the larger site.

Preliminary archeological investigations have indicated the presence of a wealth of material in, under, and around the house. The rear c.1750 addition of the house shelters below-grade archeological features that pre-date the addition. Other below-grade archeological evidence has been identified that relates to the earlier addition that once stood on the north side of the house. Bernard Herman asserted that,

Archeological work in this area [the rear addition] will reveal significant information about the physical and functional character of this part of the house. . . . The [north] wing . . . was pulled down in the twentieth century without any documentation. Again, archeology will enable us to clarify our preliminary understanding of this part of the dwelling. . . . Basically, the Marcus Hook Plank House with its shockingly high degree of integrity, early date, and well-preserved setting provides an unparalleled opportunity to add to our still fragmentary knowledge of early settlement in the Delaware Valley.²²

The existence of the deposited artifacts and evidence of land use they provide makes it likely that strong connections can be drawn between the architecture and the people who occupied this site. Sufficient investigation of the property has already been done to suggest that specific patterns and associations of material culture and human activities can be discerned. In addition to its nature as a rare surviving example of early-eighteenth-century Delaware Valley vernacular

²¹ National Register Nomination: *Wiley-Cloud House*, on file at Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office, Harrisburg.

²² Bernard L. Herman, memorandum re Marcus Hook Plank House c.2008, featured in Abbreviated Preservation Plan: *Marcus Hook Plank House*, prepared by Frens & Frens LLC Restoration Architects, West Chester, for the Marcus Hook Preservation Society, 2008.

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architecture, the Plank House also provides an excellent opportunity to examine the same period and geographical context archeologically. The property presents a rather serendipitous archeological opportunity in that there remains a standing building on the site, thus aiding the ability of the investigators to interpret subsurface features and associated artifacts and relate them to the dwelling itself.

The standing dwelling offers the potential to examine the daily character of life in a hall-plan dwelling and study the techniques employed to build a fully dovetail-notched sawn-plank building. The archeological site holds great potential to elucidate social, cultural, and economic lifeways in an early riverport town. The ground surface features identified to the north of the extant Plank House were “found to contain primarily artifacts dating no later than approximately the mid-eighteenth century,” as stated by archeologist Joseph R. Blondino, who explains that

Given the probability that the Plank House lot was occupied prior to the construction of the standing structure, this preserved surface represents our best chance to locate seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century deposits on the site. Future excavations farther from the house itself may reveal locations where this original surface has been minimally impacted by later occupations and activities.²³

The anomalies indicated in several other locations on the parcel by the preliminary geophysical survey of 2006 hold additional archeological potential. Some of these anomalies “appear to potentially be sized, shaped, and located consistent with expectations for privies or other deep-shaft features.” An initial investigation of one of the anomalies, consisting of excavation of two contiguous five-foot-square units, showed the anomaly to be a segment of unmortared brick pavement, probably representing either a walkway or a section of the flooring of a former building. The orientation of this resource appears to be skewed in relation to that of the Plank House, increasing the likelihood that it bears a relationship to some building that predated the extant house. Opening a third excavation unit at an adjacent location revealed another apparent buried “ground surface that [again] yielded many artifacts dating to the first half of the eighteenth century.” Considered overall, the preliminary archeological investigations have demonstrated that the property holds abundant potential to expand our knowledge of society in the Delaware Valley during the late seventeenth to mid-eighteenth centuries.²⁴

²³ Blondino, 83

²⁴ Blondino, 84-85.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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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 #
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

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Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: Marcus Hook Preservation Society, Marcus Hook, Delaware Co.

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than 1 acre (0.2acre)

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 18

Easting: 464704

Northing: 4407177

Verbal Boundary Description

The National Register boundary corresponds to current Delaware County tax parcel map number 24-09-072-000, as shown in Figure 2. This land parcel is rectangular in shape, measuring 92 feet (along Market Street) by 108 feet (along Market Lane), and is positioned at the southeast corner of the intersection of Market Street and Market Lane. The deed is recorded in book number 4691, page number 2281.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encloses land historically associated with the house and related archeological site. No known resources or features associated with the property have been excluded; if archeological features are identified in the future that are outside the current boundary, it may be appropriate to expand the boundary upon further investigation and assessment, based on significance and integrity of those features.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Philip E. Pendleton, with PA SHPO

organization: Philip E. Pendleton, Consulting Historian, for the Marcus Hook Preservation Society
street & number: 77 Park Street, Apt. D

city or town: Portland state: ME zip code: 04101

e-mail: pependle@windstream.net telephone: 610-858-2832

date: August, 2016-January, 2017

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photo Log

Name of Property: Marcus Hook Plank House City or Vicinity: Marcus Hook

County: Delaware State: Pennsylvania

Photographer: Philip E. Pendleton

Date Photographed: November 9, 2015 (Photos 15 and 16 taken November 2005)

- 1 Plank House, north and west elevations. View to SE.
- 2 Plank House, west and south elevations. View to NE.
- 3 Plank House, east and north elevations. View to south.
- 4 Interior, Original Section, 1st floor, SW corner. View to south.
- 5 Interior, Original Section, 1st floor, SW corner, detail of corner-notch joints. View to SW.
- 6 Interior, Original Section, 1st floor, east wall, detail of oakum chinking between planks. View E.
- 7 Interior, Original Section, cellar, north wall and relieving arch. View to NW.
- 8 Interior, Original Section, cellar, east wall and shelf niche. View to NE.
- 9 Interior, Original Section, 1st floor, north wall & fireplace. View to NW.
- 10 Interior, Original Section, garret, west and north walls with fireplace and dormer. View to NW.
- 11 Interior, Original Section, garret, south and east walls. View to SE.
- 12 Interior, segment at top of east wall of Original Section where original exterior wall and cornice fabric is preserved, concealed by East Addition ceiling. View to S.
- 13 Interior, East Addition, remnants of hearth floor structure. View to N.
- 14 Interior, East Addition, north wall, detail of remnant brick arch of bakeoven aperture. View to N.
- 15 Archeological site. Foundation walls for north additions. View to S.
- 16 Archeological site. Detail of northeast corner of excavation area to north of Original Section. View N.

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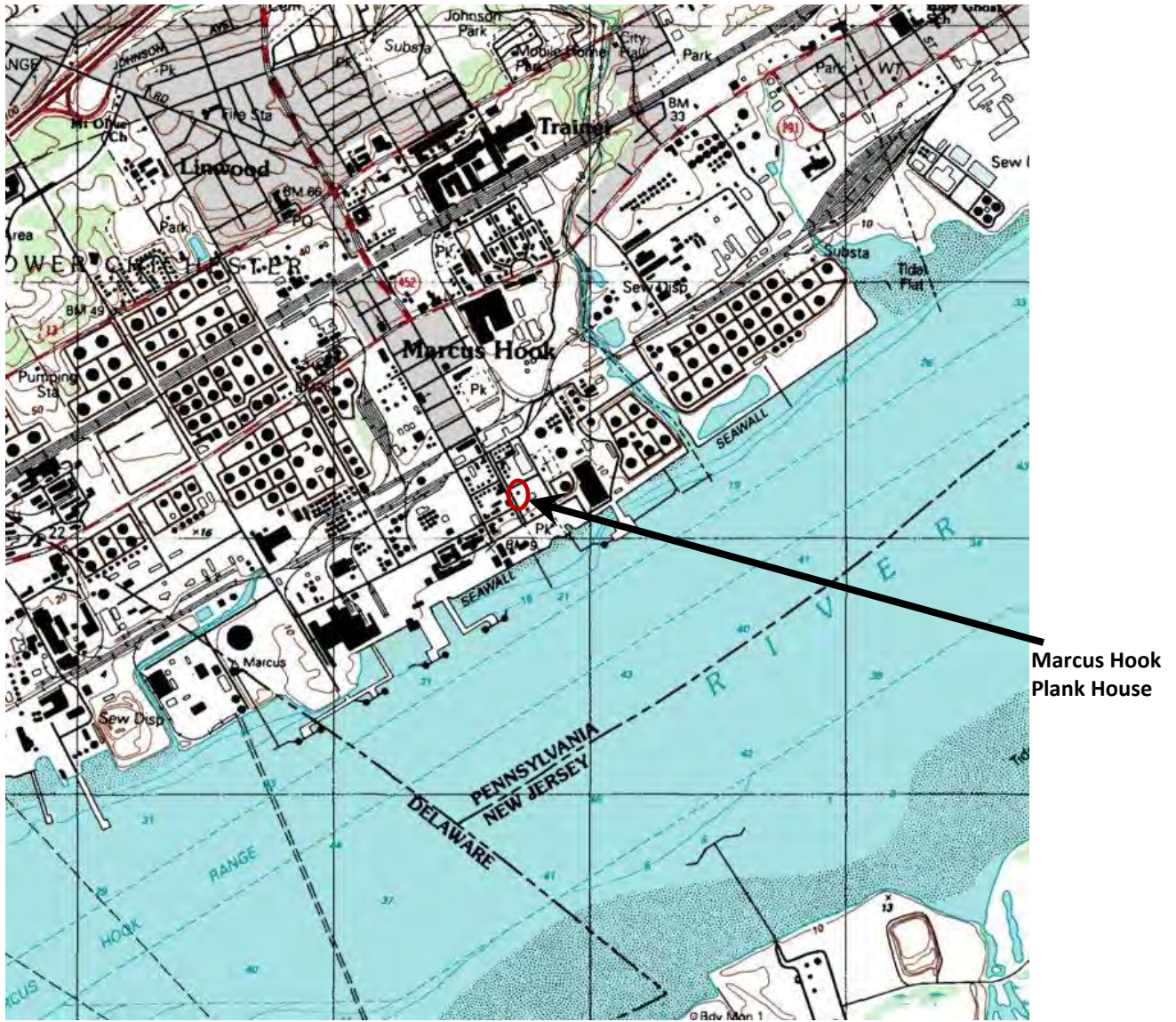


Figure 1: Location
Shown inside red oval (added).
Zone: 18 Easting: 464704 Northing: 4407177
Source: USGS *Marcus Hook* 7.5 minute quadrangle, 1995

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Figure 2: National Register Boundary
Shown by red dashed line.

Source: Delaware County tax parcel map, 2016
Lot dimensions 92x108ft; Map # 24-09-072; Deed Book/Page 4691/2281

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Figure 3: Site Plan & Exterior Photo Key
Showing locations of photos 1, 2, 3, 15 and 16
Source: Penn Pilot aerial view, circa 2013

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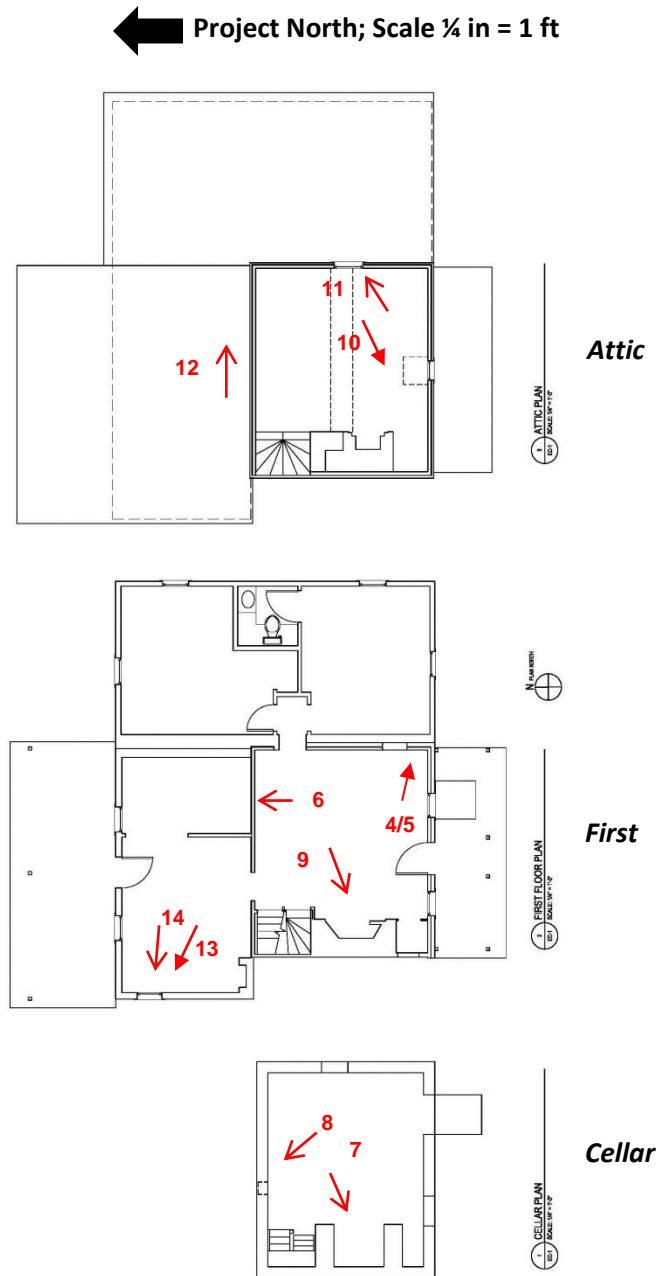


Figure 4: Floor Plans & Interior Photo Key
Attic (top), First floor (center), Cellar (bottom)
Showing location of photos 4-14

Source: Frens & Frens, Restoration Architects, *Abbreviated Preservation Plan*, 2008

Marcus Hook Plank House
 Name of Property

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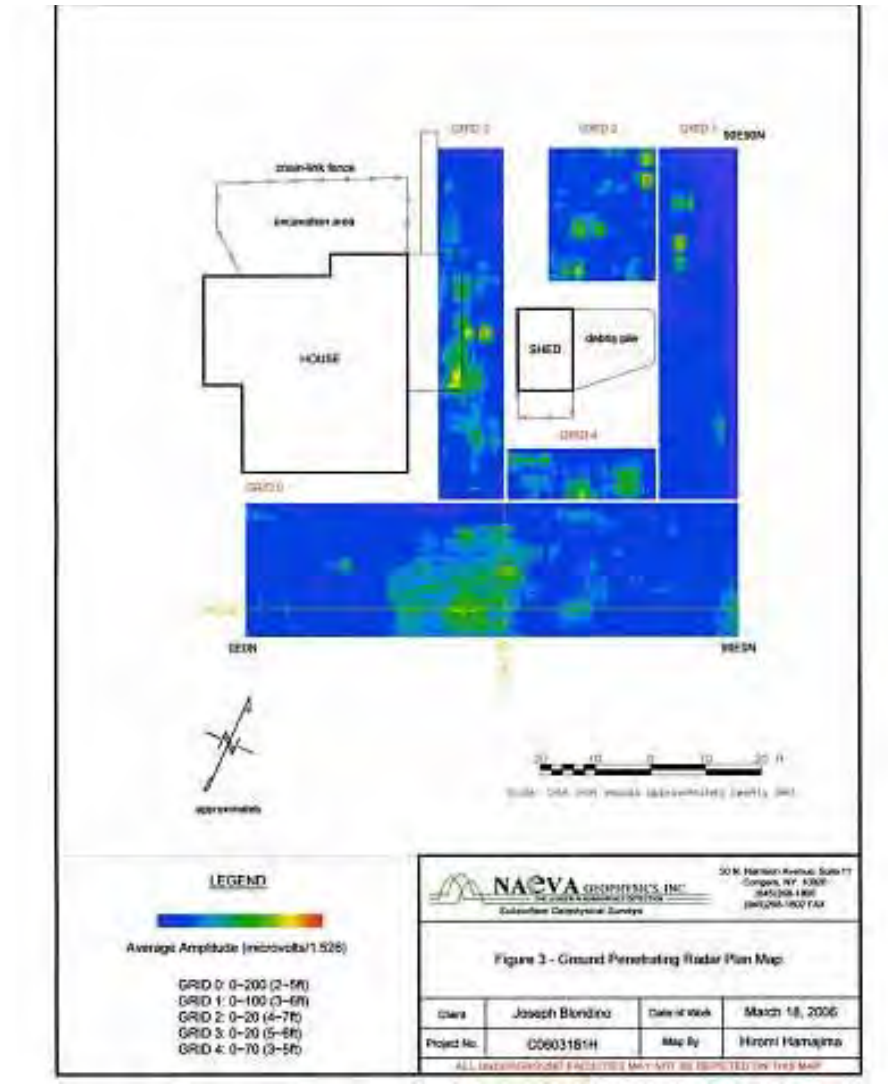


Figure 5: Plan of Ground Penetrating Radar Survey Results
 Source: Report by NAEVA Geophysics, 2006

Marcus Hook Plank House
Name of Property

Delaware County, PA
County and State



Figure 6: Historic photo, probably late 1800s, note presence of single added section to left.

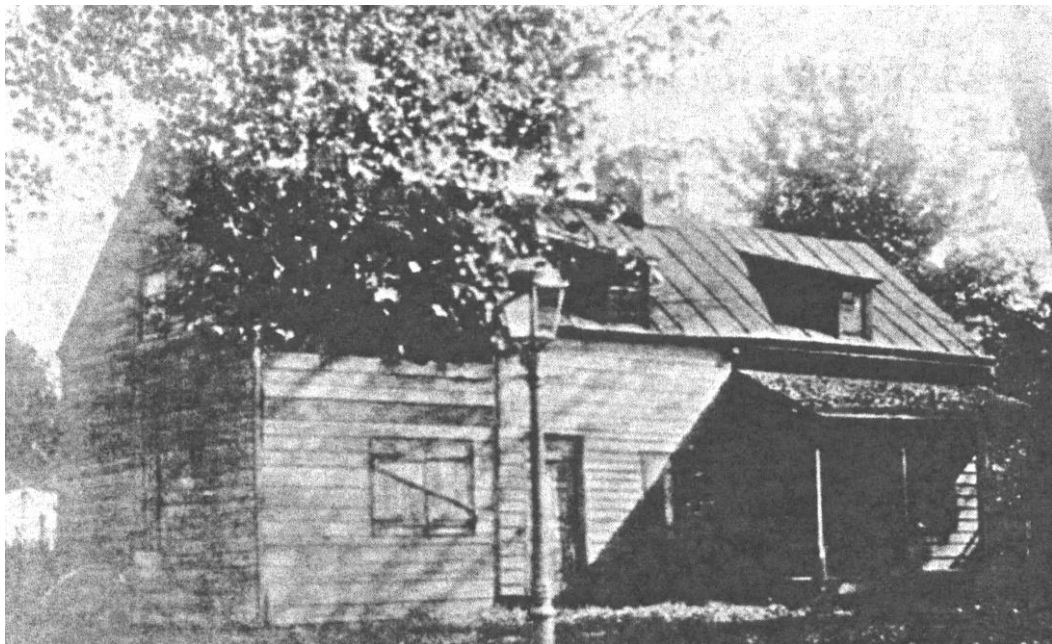


Figure 7: Historic photo, probably early 1900s, note presence of two added sections to left.

Historic Postcard Photographs
Source: Marcus Hook Preservation Society collection

Marcus Hook Plank House
Name of Property

Delaware County, PA
County and State



Figure 8: Historic photo, probably early 1900s, note presence of two added sections to left.

Historic Postcard Photograph
Source: Marcus Hook Preservation Society collection

Marcus Hook Plank House
Name of Property

Delaware County, PA
County and State

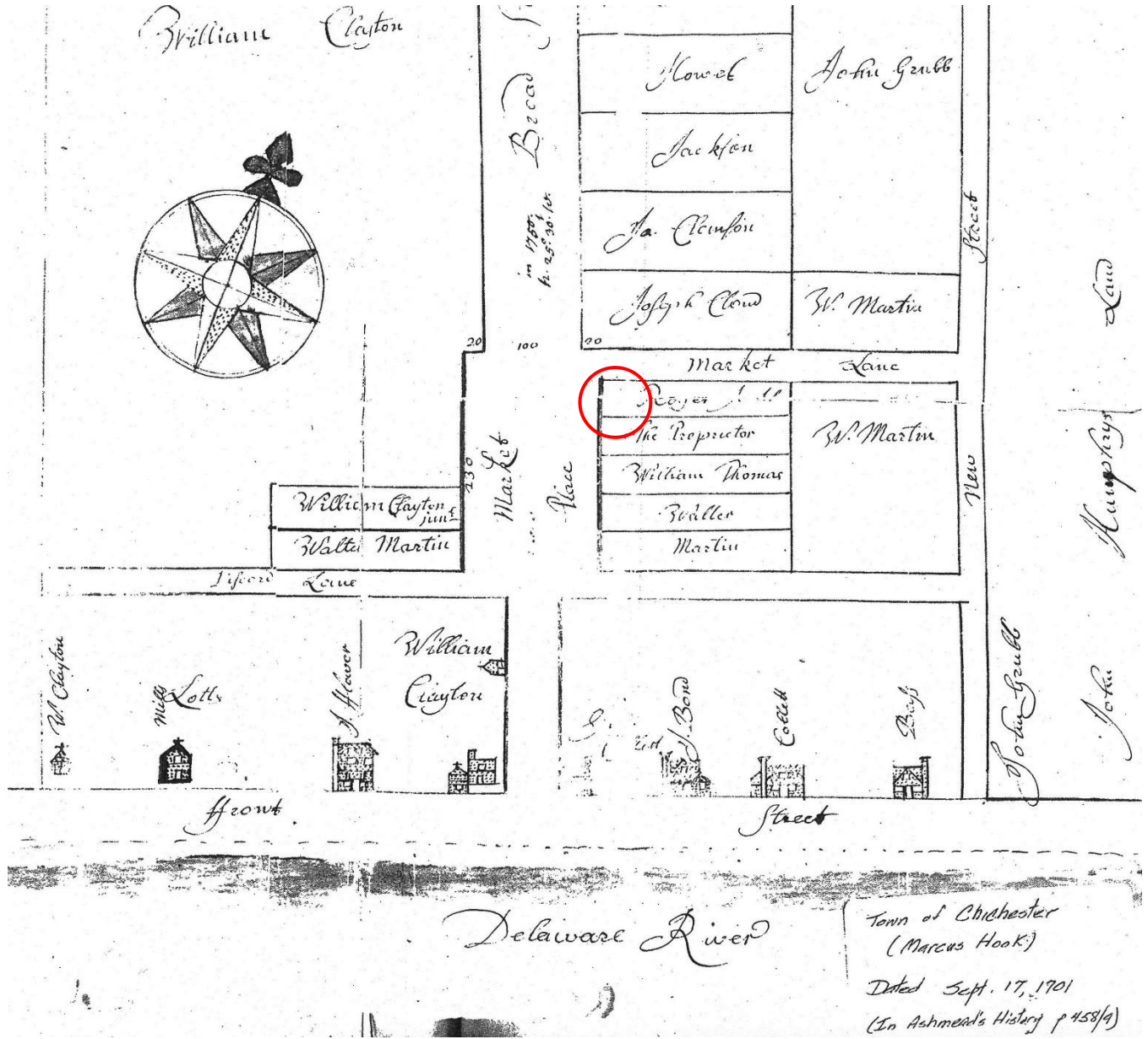


Figure 9: Survey Plat of Marcus Hook (Chichester), Street and Market Layout, 1701, by John Taylor; Showing approximate location of Plank House by (added) red circle. Source: Copy at Delaware County Historical Society (original at Historical Society of Pennsylvania)

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Figure 10: Detail from Atlas Map of Marcus Hook, 1934;
Plank House indicated by red circle.
Source: Franklin Survey Company, *Property Atlases of Chester
and Delaware Counties*, Vol. 5, Plate 14

Marcus Hook Plank House
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Photo 1: Plank House, north and west elevations.



Photo 2: Plank House, west and south elevations.

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Photo 3: Plank House, east and north elevations.



Photo 4: Interior, Original Section, 1st floor, SW corner.

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Photo 5: Interior, Original Section, 1st floor, SW corner, detail of corner-notch joints.



Photo 6: Interior, Original Section, 1st floor, east wall, detail of oakum chinking between planks.

Marcus Hook Plank House
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Photo 7: Interior, Original Section, cellar, north wall and relieving arch.



Photo 8: Interior, Original Section, cellar, east wall and shelf niche.

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Photo 9: Interior, Original Section, 1st floor, north wall and fireplace.



Photo 10: Interior, Original Section, garret, west and north walls with fireplace and dormer.

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Photo 11: Interior, Original Section, garret, south and east walls.



Photo 12: Interior, segment at top of east wall of Original Section where original exterior wall and cornice fabric is preserved, concealed by East Addition ceiling.

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Photo 13: Interior, East Addition, remnants of original hearth structure.



Photo 14: Interior, East Addition, north wall, detail of remnant brick arch of bakeoven aperture.

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Photo 15: Archeological site. Foundation walls for north additions.



Photo 16: Archeological site. Detail of northeast corner of excavation area to north of Original Section.





221

Plank House

Marion Park Preservation Society



























MARCUS HOOK
PLANK LOG HOUSE
36DE132

UNIT 9
NORTH PROFILE

11 NOV 05

18th century surface



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Marcus Hook Plank House

Multiple Name:

State & County: PENNSYLVANIA, Delaware

Date Received: 2/24/2017 Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: 4/10/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100000856

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 4/10/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept, National Register Criterion D

Reviewer Patrick Andrus Patrick Andrus Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218 Date 4/10/2017

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



Borough of Marcus Hook

September 12, 2016



April E. Frantz
National Register Reviewer/Eastern Region
Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 2nd Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Ms. Frantz:

We are writing to express the support of the Marcus Hook Mayor and Borough Council for the nomination of the Marcus Hook Plank House to the National Register of Historic Places.

Last year, the Marcus Hook Mayor and Borough Council by Resolution, designated the Plank House as a local historic landmark. This historic structure constitutes a continuing reminder of the role this house played in forming the early history of Marcus Hook and is a rare example of Finnish plank log house construction from the original period of Swedish settlement in Pennsylvania.

The Plank House, one of the oldest standing Plank Log Houses in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is called a Plank House because it is made with ship planks. There are no structural supports. It is one plank on another, joined at the corner with dovetails. Lathe was used on the interior, which consisted of wood strips that were hand hewn sticks used with plaster which was made of shells, lime and animal hair for texture.

The Marcus Hook Plank House is the last of the eighteenth century buildings which once formed Marcus Hook's old Market Square District, one of only three market districts chartered by William Penn. In 1701, William Penn granted a local market charter for the long open area of lower Market Street still visible today in Marcus Hook. It was one of the three such privileges granted by William Penn. The other two market districts chartered by William Penn were located in Chester and Philadelphia. The Marcus Hook Plank House is located at 221 Market Street and fronts on the area that was once occupied by the market house.

We believe that the Plank House meets the criteria to be considered for the National Historic Register of Historic Places. This important distinction will allow the Marcus Hook community to support and celebrate preservation efforts, keeping this historic site a part of the area's heritage for generations to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter in support for the nomination of the Marcus Hook Plank House to the National Register of Historic Places.

Very truly yours,

Gene Taylor
Mayor

Josephine M. Laird
Council President



September 15, 2016

April E. Frantz
National Register Reviewer / Eastern Region
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 2nd floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Ms. Frantz:

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this letter of support for the nomination of the Marcus Hook Plank House to the National Register of Historic Places. We are a nonprofit corporation with its sole purpose to foster the civic, educational, social and economic improvement of all Marcus Hook citizens. Within the broad statement of purpose of our organization is the goal to promote the preservation of the community's heritage.

The Plank House is the last of the eighteenth century buildings which once formed Marcus Hook's old Market Square District, one of only three market districts chartered by William Penn. In 1701, William Penn granted a local market charter for the long open area of lower Market Street still visible today in Marcus Hook. It was one of three such privileges granted by Penn – the other two located in Chester and Philadelphia. The Plank House is located at 221 Market Street and fronts on the area that was once occupied by the market house.

The Plank House was designated by the Marcus Hook Borough Council as a local historic landmark on June 1, 2015. This historic structure constitutes a continuing reminder of the role this house played in forming the early history of Marcus Hook and is a rare example of Finnish plank log house construction from the original period of Swedish settlement in Pennsylvania.

Located on the northern bank of the Delaware River 17 miles south of Philadelphia is Marcus Hook, one of the first settlements in America and the third oldest town in Pennsylvania. The Swedes arrived in 1638 and with them came the first Finnish immigrants to the New Sweden colony in North America. The area where Marcus Hook is today, was called Finland, or Lapland (which means region in Finnish). The English arrived in the 1680's.

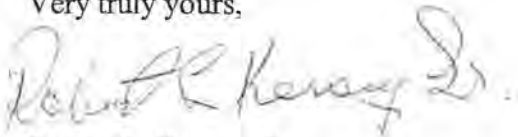
Our commitment and support of the efforts of the Marcus Hook Preservation Society to renovate the Plank House is evident by recent contributions to their restoration efforts. In 2011 the Marcus Hook Community Development Corporation donated \$5,000 to cover electrical work to advance security and safety of the structure. These funds were used to help stabilize and maintain this historic resource in Marcus Hook. This was followed by a \$6,000 contribution in 2015 earmarked for the purchase of custom-made cabinetry to house the Plank House collection of artifacts.

April E. Frantz
September 15, 2016
Page 2

We believe that the Plank House meets the criteria to be considered eligible for the National Historic Register of Historic Places. The structure is associated with the historic Market Square area and the British colonization of Pennsylvania. The house embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period and method of construction that is the only known example of such construction in Pennsylvania.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for the nomination of the Plank House in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania to the National Register of Historic Places. We are hopeful the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board concurs.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert L. Kersey, Sr.".

Robert L. Kersey, Sr.
Chairman



Pennsylvania
Historical & Museum
Commission



February 17, 2017

Stephanie Toothman, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service, US Department of Interior
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Toothman:

Enclosed please find four National Register nominations for your review. Included are signed first pages, CDs containing the true and correct copy of the nominations, and CDs with tif images. Copies of correspondence are enclosed as well. The nominations submitted are:

1. Harry C. Kahn & Son Warehouse, Philadelphia County
2. Highland Park Camp Meeting, Bucks County
3. Llanerch Public School, Delaware County
4. Marcus Hook Plank House, Delaware County

The proposed action for each nomination is listing in the National Register. Our staff and Historic Preservation Board members support these nominations. If you have any questions please contact April Frantz at 717-783-9922 or afrantz@pa.gov. Thank you for your consideration of these properties.

Sincerely,

Andrea L. MacDonald, Director
State Historic Preservation Office

enc.

Historic Preservation Services
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093
www.phmc.state.pa.us
The Commonwealth's Official History Agency