

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

100-1027-518
SEP 15 1984
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Continuation sheet

Item number N-6186

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CENTREVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT: DESCRIPTION

The Centreville Historic District is located approximately seven miles northwest of Wilmington. It consists of fifteen properties located within a one-block area at the intersection of the Kennett Pike (Route 52) and Owls Nest/Twaddell Mill Road. The district is surrounded by open fields, meadows, pastures and low-density suburban development that only minimally disturbs its rural setting. The buildings range in date from 1820, when James Delaplaine built his home (N-1142), to 1920, when the frame residence (N-5827) adjacent to the Odd Fellows Hall was erected. They represent varied styles including Federal, Greek Revival and Second Empire. Six are constructed of stone, six are frame and three are built of brick. They are generally two-story with a gable roof and often combine residential and commercial functions. All but two of the buildings--the R. T. Carey House (N-5285) and the Rev. D. W. Moore House (N-1149), which face south--are oriented toward the Kennett Pike. Considered as a whole, the buildings in the district exhibit a high degree of cohesiveness and integrity with their similar scale, proportions and orientation. Only two buildings have been affected by substantial modification. These are the stone dwelling (N-1147) with modern additions to each gable end and the Mrs. Wiggins House (N-5826) with a modern rear addition. In both cases, these alterations respect the original construction so that potential adverse effect has been minimized. As a group, the buildings that comprise the Centreville Historic District provide a remarkably consistent image of the village during its nineteenth century development.

That development by 1830 included several buildings clustered tightly around the crossroads. One of these was the fine brick residence and store erected about 1820 by James Delaplaine. Another residence built by Dr. Joseph H. Chandler (N-1379) on the east side of the Pike at what is now Center Meeting Road had been constructed about 1830. The village continued to spread out from the crossroads, particularly north of the crossroads on both sides of the Kennett Pike. Centreville developed in this way throughout the nineteenth century. Most of the buildings in the area north of the crossroads were constructed around the middle of the century. Buildings representative of this trend include the Nichols House (N-1145), the M. J. Furey House (N-1146), the R. T. Carey House (N-5285), the two adjacent stone dwellings (N-1147 and N-1148), the Rev. D. W. Moore House (N-1149) and the Mrs. R. Todd House (N-5830). Between the years 1850 and 1870, this area was most affected by the loss of buildings on the east side of the Pike. However, except for the loss of several buildings which were never replaced and the demolition of the A. S. Smith Hotel on the northeast corner of the crossroads which was replaced by Connors Store (N-1377) around 1900, this area above the crossroads is substantially intact representing a period of time from 1870 to the present.

The area below the crossroads has changed more appreciably since the middle of the nineteenth century. Between 1850 and 1870, several buildings were erected on the west side of the Pike across from the Dr. Joseph H. Chandler House. In the 1880's, the Second Empire style Chandler-Dixon House (N-1143) replaced one of these. Others south of the Chandler-Dixon House were replaced in the second quarter of this century, and are not included in the historic district. The area on the east side of the Pike was little altered from 1850 to 1870. In 1876, the Odd Fellows Hall (N-5828) was

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CENTREVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT: DESCRIPTION

erected adjacent to the Mrs. R. Todd Hotel. There were then no substantial changes in appearance in this part of the village until the second decade of the twentieth century when the frame cross gabled, double house (N-5827) was constructed adjacent to the Odd Fellows Hall on the south. This was followed in the 1920's by the demolition of the Mrs. R. Todd Hotel which had stood on the southeast corner of the crossroads since the 1820's. This is now the Canby Grove Park (N-5829). Between the frame double house (N-5827) and the Dr. Joseph H. Chandler House (N-1379) stands a modern residence that is not included in the nomination.

Within the district, buildings that contribute to its historic significance were built between 1820 and 1920. Two buildings within the district, both post-1950 residences, do not contribute to Centreville's historic significance. These are No. 9 and No. 12.

Justification of Boundaries

The district boundaries correspond closely to the limits of the village as represented by the attached Atlas of the State of Delaware, D. G. Beers, 1868. The north and south boundaries were drawn to reflect the limits of historical development as a nineteenth century commercial, crossroads village and the beginning of modern suburbia. The district centers on the crossroads itself and radiates to include the surviving concentration of historic resources in proximity to the crossroads. The northern boundary on the east side of Route 52 divides the mid-nineteenth century Mrs. R. Todd House from a 1970's bank building. Continuing north one encounters twentieth century suburban development. The northern boundary west of Route 52 is determined by the north property line of Buckley's Tavern. North of this line is a c. 1930's residence now utilized as a charter bus company office and depot. The southern boundary of the district on the west side of Route 52 corresponds to the southern property line of the Chandler-Dixon House and separates this c. 1880 residence from two c. 1920 houses that were built to replace nineteenth century dwellings. The southern boundary is determined by the southern property line of the Dr. Joseph H. Chandler House along Center Meeting Road. South of this road modern suburban development begins.

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PROPERTY OWNERS LIST: Centreville Historic District - N-6186

1. Nichols House - N-1145

The Wind Rose Company
P.O. Box 4100
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

2. M. J. Furey House - N-1146

The Wind Rose Company
P.O. Box 4100
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

3. R. T. Carey House - N-5285

The Wind Rose Company
P.O. Box 4100
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

4. Stone Dwelling - N-1147

William F. and Margaret M. Butler, Jr.
60 Selborne Drive
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

5. Stone Dwelling - N-1148

William F. and Margaret M. Butler, Jr.
60 Selborne Drive
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

6. Rev. D. W. Moore House - N-1149

Spar Hill Realty Company
1060 DuPont Building
Wilmington, Delaware 19801

7. James Delaplaine House - N-1142

John S. and Alice R. Edinger
5722 Kennett Pike
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

8. Mrs. Wiggins House - N-5826

Donald R. Knox
P.O. Box 3968
Greenville, Delaware 19807

9. Modern Residence

Barry W. Thomas
5718 Kennett Pike
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

10. Chandler-Dixon House - N-1143

Marian T. Frederick
10 Owls Nest Road
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

11. Dr. Joseph H. Chandler House - N-1379

David C. and Lydia R. Boyer
5701 Kennett Pike
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

12. Modern Residence

Nancy L. Lickle
c/o Daniel C. Lickle
P.O. Box 131
Montchanin, Delaware 19710

13. Frame Dwelling - N-5827

Centreville Lodge 37 IOOF
5725 Kennett Pike
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

14. Odd Fellows Hall - N-5828

Centreville Lodge 37 LOOF
5725 Kennett Pike
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

15. Canby Grove Park - N-5829

City of Wilmington - Mayor & Park Board
1000 King Street
Wilmington, Delaware 19801

16. Connor's Store - N-1377

Carroll M. Carpenter
600 Center Mill Road
Wilmington, Delaware 19807

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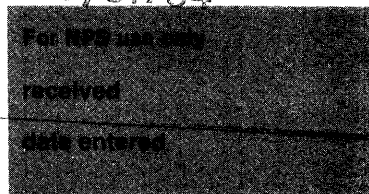
PROPERTY OWNERS LIST: Centreville Historic District - N-6186

17. Mrs. R. Todd House - N-5830

Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Witsil
5807 Kennett Pike
Wilmington, Delaware 19801

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CENTREVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT: PROPERTY INVENTORY

1. Nichols House (N-1145) - 5812 Kennett Pike - Mid-nineteenth century, two and one-half story, five-bay, frame structure with gable dormers and full wooden front porch with shed roof.
2. M. J. Furey House (N-1146) - 5810 Kennett Pike - Mid-nineteenth century, two and one-half story, three-bay stuccoed stone structure with a three-bay, hipped roof, wooden porch supported by four Doric piers.
3. R. T. Carey House (N-5285) - 5808 Kennett Pike - Mid-nineteenth century, two-story, three-bay Greek Revival frame structure with real ell, late nineteenth century full front porch with shed roof. Greek Revival details include giant Doric pilasters on each end of the main block. The facade entrance is composed of Doric pilasters supporting a rectangular transom and a full entablature.
4. Stone Dwelling (N-1147) - 5804 Kennett Pike - Mid-nineteenth century, two and one-half story, four-bay stone/stuccoed structure with modern two and one-half story addition on the north side and one and one-half story addition on the south.
5. Stone Dwelling (N-1148) - 5802 Kennett Pike - A saltbox with cross gable. Two and one-half story, three-bay, stuccoed stone structure with cut shingles in the cross gable and a shed roof hood with shaped wooden brackets and supporting rafters covers the off-centered facade entrance.
6. Rev. D. W. Moore House (N-1149) - 5800 Kennett Pike - Mid-nineteenth century, two and one-half story, four-bay cross-gabled frame structure with a cross-gabled wing and full front porch with decorative wooden scroll work and brackets. The two-story bay is a later addition.
7. James Delaplaine House (N-1142) - 5722 Kennett Pike - This two and one-half story, five-bay brick structure, with Flemish bond facade was built circa 1820. Constructed originally as both a store and residence, the facade contains a pair of doors--the smaller on axis, the larger to the left. Each is surmounted by a fan light and surrounded by moulded trim with bull's eye corner blocks.
8. Mrs. Wiggins House (N-5826) - 5720 Kennett Pike - Mid-nineteenth century, two and one-half story, four-bay frame (now aluminum siding); through the addition of a contemporary wing, the structure has been adaptively reused as an office building.
9. Modern Intrusion - Brick ranch with a Georgian style portico.
10. Chandler-Dixon House (N-1143) - 5714-5716 Kennett Pike - Second Empire, c. 1880, three-story frame structure with slate mansard roof. Details include giant Doric pilasters on each end of main block surmounted by an entablature with dentils.
11. Dr. Joseph H. Chandler House (N-1379) - Corner of Kennett Pike and Centre Meeting Road c. 1830 - Two and one-half story, four-bay rectangular structure built of local field stone with fan-shaped attic windows and third-story windows one-half

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the size of first and second. The Centreville Hall (N-1379a) now utilized as a garage, is a small one-room stuccoed stone structure, which is located on this parcel.

12. Modern Intrusion - 5718 Kennett Pike - 1950's Cape Cod style structure.
13. 5721-5723 Kennett Pike (N-5827) - Two and one-half story, four-bay double house with cross gable, built c. 1910-1920 by a local builder, Henry McCullough.
14. Odd Fellows Hall (N-5828) - 5725 Kennett Pike - Built in 1876, three-story five-bay brick structure, overhanging eave with large, shaped brackets. Full front, hip-roofed porch supported by wooden piers with scroll brackets.
15. Canby Grove Park (N-5829) - Corner of Twaddell Mill and Kennett Pike - Given to the Village of Centreville by Pierre duPont to be used as a park in 1926. Formerly the site of Mrs. R. Todd's Hotel.
16. Connor's Store (N-1377) - North corner of Twaddell Mill Road and Route 52 - Two and one-half story, five-bay brick structure with hipped roof porch on three sides, built in 1900. Gable roof with two gable dormers, two display windows constructed of a plain and turned wooden framework supported by shaped and incised wooden brackets.
17. Mrs. R. Todd House (N-5830) - 5807 Kennett Pike - Built between 1848 and 1868 - Two and one-half story, five-bay stuccoed stone structure with three gable dormer windows and small one-bay entrance portico with paired colonettes. Also on this property is a carriage house (N-5830a) adapted for commercial office space and a modern shed.

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CENTREVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Centreville Historic District is significant to the architectural and commercial history of New Castle County in that it represents a well-preserved example of the small rural villages which once typified settlement in New Castle County in the nineteenth century. Centreville began like Middletown (NR 10/78) as a crossroads "line town"--a single row of buildings set along a roadway. Unlike Middletown, where the original crossroads plan has been largely obscured by a subsequently overlaid grid system, Centreville exists today much as it did at the zenith of its prosperity in the nineteenth century. The historic resources of Centreville, built between the years 1800 and 1920 in a variety of vernacular and formal academic styles, provide perhaps the best surviving example of the nineteenth century, commercial and agricultural village in northern New Castle County. They are therefore significant under criterion C for National Register eligibility as they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. Because many of these resources were built or occupied by members of the prominent Chandler, Delaplaine and Carpenter families, they are also significant under criterion B, for their association with persons significant to the local past.

The importance of the Kennett Turnpike to the prosperity of Centreville cannot be underestimated. It was one of the principal routes for the grain, produce and live-stock from southeastern Pennsylvania to flow to the mills and ships at Wilmington. Centreville grew to serve this traffic of carters and drivers with taverns, hotels and shops; and at the same time it developed as a rural, agricultural village.

Several families dominated Centreville during the nineteenth century. Three in particular, the Chandlers, Delaplaines and Carpenters, were responsible for either erecting or owning a number of buildings in the village. Of the three earliest structures dating from the period 1800-1830, two were owned by the Chandlers, a family of physicians. Both the Joseph Chandler House (c. 1800, N-1144) which is located just north of the district, and the Dr. Joseph H. Chandler House (c. 1830, N-1379) were office/residences, and were built of native field stone. The earlier Chandler House, now stuccoed, is Georgian in architectural style, and the Joseph H. Chandler House, while retaining the symmetry of the Georgian style, has softened the rigidity of that style by introducing fan-shaped attic windows, a decorative, brick cornice and smaller, but proportionally-balanced third story window. These elements are indicative of the Greek Revival style of architecture.

The third structure (N-1142) owned and built c. 1820 by the merchant, James Delaplaine, had a dual purpose like the Chandler properties. Built of brick, this residence/store combines elements from the Georgian and Federal architectural styles.

The Carpenter family came to Centreville from Pennsylvania in 1837. James Lancaster Carpenter, who possibly began as an inn keeper, then became a gentleman farmer, built an imposing three-story Italianate villa, c. 1840, perched about the Kennett Turnpike with a commanding view of the surrounding cultivated fields. Today, it stands just outside of the district's southeast boundary. Unique in this area, the villa reflects the

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owner's knowledge of architectural styles current during the 1840's.

Also dating from the decade of the 1840's is the Centreville Hall. Built in 1842 as a meeting hall for area residents, this small, one-roomed, stuccoed-stone structure is located behind and to the north of the Dr. Joseph H. Chandler residence and is today utilized as a garage.

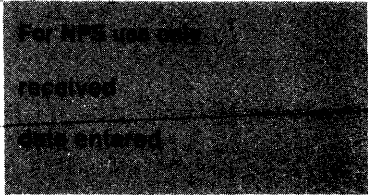
The majority of structures in the Centreville Historic District date from the mid-nineteenth century. Of the three architectural styles represented, the first is the vernacular, two and one-half story, three or four-bay structure constructed of either stone, which may be stuccoed, or frame. The stone dwelling at 5804 Kennett Pike (N-1147), the M. J. Furey House (N-1146), the Nichols House (N-1145) and Mrs. Wiggins House (N-5826) are representative of this group, and were either constructed originally as tenant houses associated with small business or as individual residences. The exception is Mrs. Todd's residence. Proprietress of one of Centreville's three hotels (now demolished), Mrs. Todd built a sturdy, stuccoed-stone, Georgian-style structure fronting the Kennett Turnpike, two doors north of her hotel. Varying only in size and materials, Mrs. Todd's house reflects the basic style of the James Delaplaine residence and store located on the opposite side of the turnpike. The frame carriage house for this property still exists, and has been adaptively reused as a realtor's office.

The second mid-century architectural style represented in Centreville is Andrew Jackson Downing's picturesque, cross-gabled country cottage as illustrated by the Rev. D. W. Moore House (N-1149) and Plain and Fancy (N-1148). These two structures, originally owned by the Delaplaine or Chandler families, were used as rental properties. In particular, the Rev. D. W. Moore House was the residence of the pastor of the Lower Brandywine Presbyterian Church. Later renovations to this house included the octagon-shaped, two-story bay, and the elaborate bracketed side porch.

The third style, a Greek Revival style, is represented by the R. T. Carey House (N-5835) where the classical motifs of the Doric order are used on a small scale. Used on a vernacular cottage, this classical idiom adds a charm and warmth that is lacking when used on larger scaled structures.

Two public buildings built in Centreville during the last half of the nineteenth century attest to the educational and recreational needs of the village's inhabitants. The Mt. Airy No. 27 School (N-5831) located at the entrance to Selborne Drive, north of the Centreville Historic District, was built in 1863. Used until 1932, this one-room, one-teacher school house passed into oblivion when the larger school districts were created in the twentieth century. The building has subsequently been converted into a private residence, but still retains, from the exterior, its image of the rural, one-room school house.

In 1876, the Odd Fellows Building (N-5828) was constructed by members and citizens of the neighborhood. This building, a utilitarian, three-story, dual-purpose brick



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building, played an important role in the community as it provided facilities on the second floor for community and fraternal meetings and activities. Shops were located on the first floor.

The remaining buildings in Centreville date from 1880 to 1920 when Centreville entered another phase of its development. By this time the importance of shipping via the Turnpike had been usurped by the railroads which offered much quicker service than the antiquated farm wagons. The number of businesses began to dwindle, and the area began to take on a more rural character. Hotels and inns were no longer in demand and consequently went out of business and were often demolished. Only a butcher shop and a country store remained as Centreville entered the twentieth century.

Dating from this later period is the Chandler-Dixon House (N-1143), typical of the Second Empire style. The only mansard roofed structure in Centreville, this three-story building has architectural details in the classical mode. Purchased in 1900 by the Frederick's, the family butchering business was located behind the house in structures recently converted into small shops.

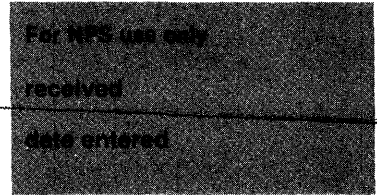
Connor's Store and Residence (N-1377), built on the site of A. S. Smith's Hotel, was constructed by Mr. Connor in 1900. This dual purpose building became by 1920 the center of village life. The post office was located here, and Mr. Connor carried an incredible variety of delicacies for the residents of the large estates that had settled nearby.

Opposite the Chandler-Dixon House and next to the Odd Fellows Building is the latest structure in the district. Built in 1920, this double house with cross gable completes the variety of architectural styles that are found in Centreville.

Once numerous small communities similar to Centreville dotted the countryside in northern New Castle County. Many of these have disappeared (i.e., Brackenville, Milltown) or have been grossly altered as a result of suburban expansion and development (i.e., Hockessin). Even a surviving hamlet like Montchanin (NR 6/78), once a busy shipping center for the duPont gunpowder mills, has emerged as a suburban residential community. While Montchanin has retained its architectural identity and character, the changes in its economic structure have been substantial. Centreville, on the other hand, as defined by the historic district boundaries, survives as a prosperous commercial center with associated and often combined residential elements. The survival of so many stylistically varied structures that directly relate to its nineteenth century commercial prosperity, gives the Centreville district a character and feeling only rarely encountered elsewhere in northern New Castle County.

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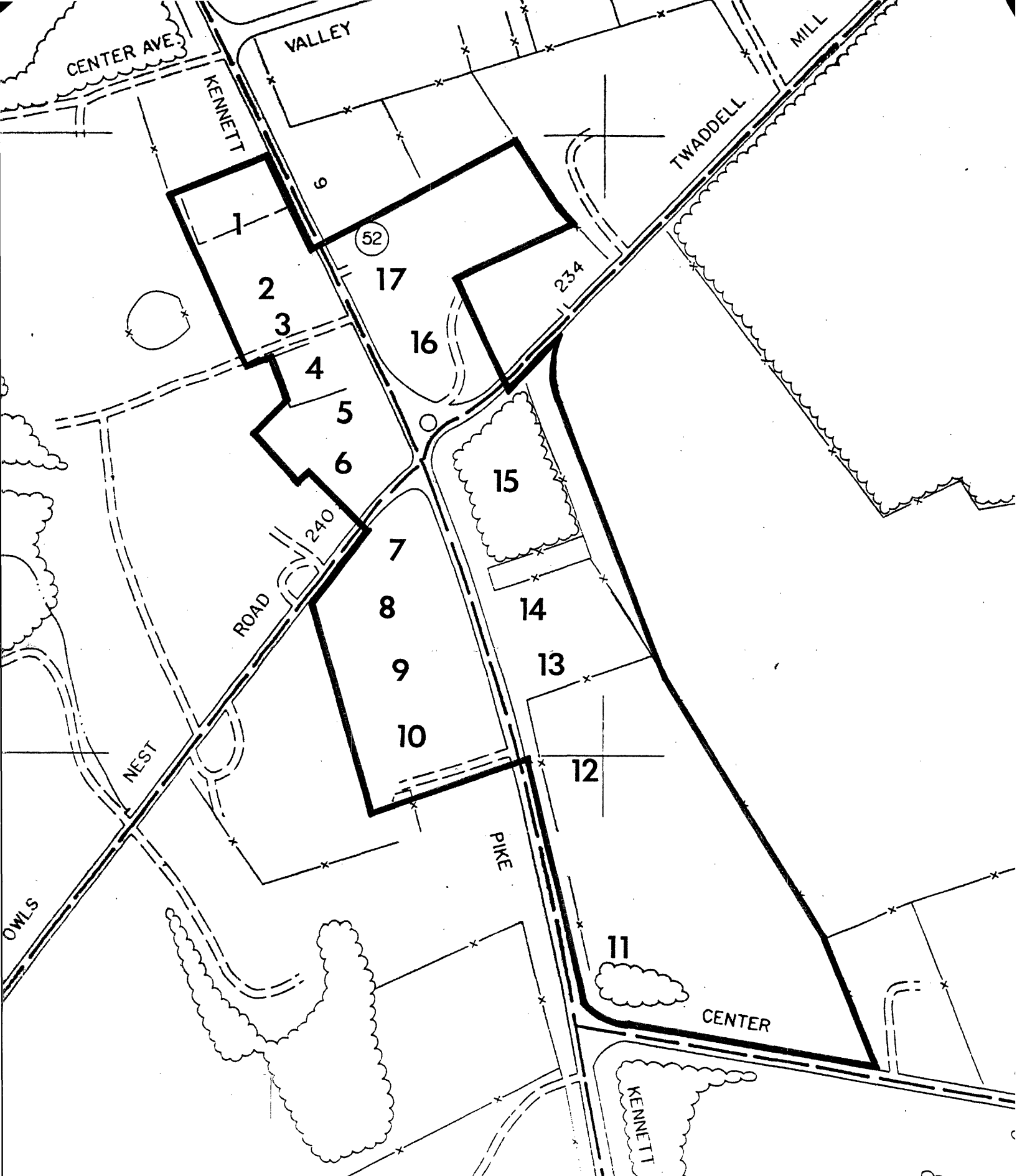
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CENTREVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT: VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The southern boundary of the Centreville Historic District starts at the north-eastern corner of the intersection of the Kennett Pike (Route 52) and Center Meeting Road. From this point it runs east 480 feet along the northern edge of Center Meeting Road and then proceeds northwest 223 feet. Then it continues northwest along the rear property line of 5719 Kennett Pike; and 191 feet along the rear property line of 5721-5723 Kennett Pike; then proceeds along the rear property line of Canby Grove Park to Twaddell Mill Road. It then proceeds southwest 120 feet along the southern edge of Twaddell Mill Road. Then it crosses Twaddell Mill Road and continues 169 feet along the rear property line of Connor's Store, turns northeast 207 feet along the southern property line of the Mrs. R. Todd House then follows the east and north property lines of the Mrs. R. Todd House to the Kennett Pike. It continues across the Kennett Pike and follows the western edge of the Kennett Pike northwest for 176 feet and then turns west along the north property line of the Nichols House. Then it turns southeast and runs parallel to the Kennett Pike for 307 feet; then it runs east 40 feet, south 71 feet and southwest 87 feet along the rear property line of the Rev. D. W. Moore House. It then proceeds southeast 118 feet; northeast 30 feet and then again southeast 106 feet to Owls Nest Road. It crosses Owls Nest Road and continues southwest along the south edge of Owls Nest Road for 160 feet then turns south 320 feet and east 280 feet to the east edge of Kennett Pike. It then proceeds south along the eastern edge of the Kennett Pike for 440 feet to the point of origin. The boundary of the Centreville Historic District is shown as the red line on the accompanying map entitled "Sketch Map, Centreville Historic District, 11/16/81" and drawn at a scale of 200 feet to the inch. The enclosed area comprises approximately 15.5 acres.



SKETCH MAP

Centreville Historic District

NEW CASTLE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

DATE : 11/16/81

SCALE: 1:200±

