

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form**



This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

 X New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: Historic and Architectural Resources, 1770-1941

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

- I. Pre-Suburban Development of Tenleytown, circa 1770-1890
- II. The Suburbanization of Tenleytown, 1890-1941
- III. Commercial Development of Tenleytown, 1770-1941
- IV. The Institutional Growth of Tenleytown, 1770-1936
- V. Fort Reno Reservoir, 1896-1928
- VI. Prehistoric Occupation of Tenleytown (9000bc-1700ac) through European Settlement

C. Form Prepared by

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city or town Washington, D.C. state zip code 20002

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

DAVID MALONEY, SHPO
Signature and title of certifying official

JULY 22, 2008
Date

DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Patrick Andrews 9/5/2008
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

	Page Numbers
E. Statement of Historic Contexts (If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	E-1 through E-36
F. Associated Property Types (Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	F-1 through F-15
G. Geographical Data	G-1
H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods (Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)	H-1 through H-2
I. Major Bibliographical References	I-1 through I-3

(List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 120 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Tenleytown's Architectural and Cultural Resources, Washington, D.C.
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PROJECT OUTLINE

MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING NAME

Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: Historic and Architectural Resources, circa 1770-1941

ASSOCIATED HISTORIC CONTEXTS

- I. Pre-Suburban Development of Tenleytown, circa 1770-1890
- II. The Suburbanization of Tenleytown, 1893-1941
- III. Commercial Development of Tenleytown, 1770-1941
- IV. The Institutional Growth of Tenleytown, 1770-1936
- V. Fort Reno Reservoir, 1896-1928

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Residential Buildings
 Estates
 The "Village" and "Rural" House
 The Suburban House
Building Clusters/Historic Districts
Institutional Buildings
 Religious Resources/Cemeteries
 Schools
 Other Institutional Buildings
Industrial/Commercial Buildings
Public Utilities Buildings
 Firehouses
 Telephone Exchanges
 Reservoir-related buildings (WASA)
 Telegraph
Objects
Archaeological Sites

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I. PRE-SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT OF TENLEYTOWN, 1770-1890

The Origins of Tenleytown:

The area known today as Tenleytown, in Washington, D.C. originated in the late eighteenth century with the establishment of John Tennally's Tavern at the juncture of two long-established routes: present-day Wisconsin Avenue and present-day River Road. Wisconsin Avenue¹, referred to interchangeably throughout its history as Frederick Road, Georgetown-Frederick Road, the Georgetown-Tenleytown Road, the Rockville Road, or the Rockville Pike, and the Rockville-Frederick Road, pre-dated European settlement of the area, and, after settlement, provided access between the rural Maryland countryside and the port at Georgetown. In 1797, a stagecoach operated weekly service over the well-traveled road, and in 1805, it became an official toll road, which was macadamized progressively between 1817 and 1840. River Road, cut and laid in the 1780s, led from Georgetown to Great Falls and beyond to the mouth of the Monocacy River. Established circa 1786 and surrounded by open farmland, Tennally's Tavern was likely the first business establishment above Georgetown.² Because of its strategic location at the juncture of these two roads, Tennallytown³ eventually grew into a small farming community that initially consisted of a collection of houses, a church, a school, and several business establishments, including the tavern and a blacksmith shop.

Prior to its establishment as Tennallytown, the area was part of a huge 3,124-acre tract of land granted by Charles Calvert in 1713 to James A. Stoddert and Colonel Thomas Addison. The tract was dubbed "Friendship," reputedly for the amicable relationship that existed between the two grantees.⁴ Over the course of the next several decades, "Friendship" was divided, inherited by, and sold to members of both the Stoddert and Addison families. In 1753, John Murdock, related by marriage to the Addison family, had inherited, along with his brother, over 1,200 acres of "Friendship," along with other large parcels. Around 1760, Murdock built a frame house on his land overlooking the Potomac River which he named

¹ In 1891, the road was officially re-named Wisconsin Avenue, though people continued to refer to it as Rockville Pike for many years to come.

² "John Tennely" was granted a license to run an ordinary from November 1789 until November 1791. However, it is likely that John Tennally came to Montgomery County from neighboring Prince George's County in the 1780s, soon after River Road was cleared, and was clearly there by 1786, when the first known reference to the area as Tennally Town was made (see footnote #4).

³ Disagreement about the spelling and pronunciation of the original designation of the crossroads village, Tennallytown, resulted in several variations on the name, including Tenallytown, Tenleytown, Tennellytown, and Tenley-Town. The local post office used Tennallytown until 1920, when the city post office decreed Tenleytown to be the correct spelling. "Tenleytown Crossroads," in Kathryn Schneider Smith, ed. *Washington at Home: An Illustrated History of Neighborhoods in the Nation's Capital*, (Windsor Press, 1988), p. 85. For the purposes of this report, the designation Tennallytown will be used in addressing the area's pre-1920s history; after that the document will use Tenleytown.

⁴ Judith Beck Helm. *Tenleytown, D.C.: Country Village into City Neighborhood*, Washington, D.C.: Tennally Press, 1981, reprinted 2000, p. 6.

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"Friendship." The house was the first substantial country house built near the area of Tennallytown.⁵ By 1780, Murdock had accumulated more land, amounting to 2,721 acres, making the tract one of the largest landholdings of the time in what was then Montgomery County, Maryland. During this period, Murdock lived in Georgetown, where he served as a commissioner, and operated his "Friendship" estate as a gentleman farmer. The 1783 personal property assessment records indicate that Murdock owned 49 slaves, 17 horses, and 50 cattle. It is likely that Murdock joined surrounding landowners in raising tobacco on his "Friendship" tract. From his land, wooden casks or "hogsheads" filled with tobacco, would have been rolled or pulled down the Frederick Road (today's Wisconsin Avenue) to the port at Georgetown and shipped overseas.

Tennally's Tavern

During the latter half of the 18th century, following the establishment of Georgetown, many taverns began to appear along the main thoroughfares leading to the port town. These taverns serviced the travelers and their horses heading from the outlying countryside to the tobacco inspection station and the growing commercial town at Georgetown. A 1791 survey made of River Road and platted in 1793, shows the adjacent Frederick Road, along with three taverns located along it: Tennally's Tavern (spelled Tenerleys) at the intersection of the new-cut River Road; Valdaniens just north of the District line, near present-day Oliver Street in Chevy Chase, Maryland; and Cofendaffers Tavern, south of today's Bradley Lane, in Chevy Chase, Maryland.⁶ In order to establish his own tavern, John Tennally leased the land from owner John Threlkeld (or Thriekeld), whose ancestors had purchased part of the northern tract of James Stoddert's "Friendship" in the mid-18th century. Although there are no remnants of the tavern building, a Threlkeld property boundary marker dated 1770 does survive and can be found covered with vegetation near 41st and Fessenden Streets. The boundary marker reads, "John Thriekeld, Beginning Aug 1770."⁷

By the time Washington was selected as the site of the federal city, John Tennally had already been operating his public tavern at the juncture of today's Wisconsin Avenue and River Road for several years.⁸ In 1786, the Presbyterian church of Maryland noted that "the church at Tenally Town was recorded as being without a pastor,"⁹ indicating the existence of the tavern, if not the emergence of a crossroads community. Sarah Tennally (John's sister) was likely the first to contribute to the sense of a developing community after she purchased a half-acre lot across from the tavern and built a two-story

⁵ The house, "Friendship" stood on a knoll southwest of today's Massachusetts Avenue on the grounds of the American University, and site of the Chancellor's House. Helm, p. 8.

⁶ The present-day locations of the taverns are noted in Helm, p. 19.

⁷ Paul Williams, Historic Resources Survey of Tenleytown, Washington, D.C., .17.

⁸ Helm, p. 7 and 19.

⁹ Helm, .19.

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frame structure on the site.¹⁰ A 1915 retrospective comments, "There were no other houses near here when the Tenleys built their small frame house. At last a few other families moved here; a store and a blacksmith shop were opened and the hamlet came to be called Tenleytown."¹¹

The crossroads community remained sparsely developed well into the 19th century. Other than the Murdock family at "Friendship," the only resident in the near vicinity was a Joseph Belt, nephew of the original owner of the large land grant, "Cheivy Chace," after which the suburb of Chevy Chase was named. Joseph Belt leased a 200-acre plantation from John Murdock, where he lived along with his wife and family. No remains of the Belt house in Tenleytown survive; however, the area's first substantial house, built of brick and known as The Rest was built in the early 1800s. Charles Jones, a large area landowner, built The Rest for his sister, Sarah Love, widow of Samuel Love. The Rest at 4343 39th Street is the oldest surviving building in Tenleytown, and although altered, is an architecturally and historically important landmark.

The early to mid-19th century brought several road improvements to the neighborhood. Although the Maryland Assembly had passed an act to build a toll road between Georgetown and Frederick in 1805, the work occurred progressively in segments over several decades. By 1825, the existing road segment between Georgetown and Tennallytown was macadamized, and a new road between the District line and Rockville was cut and laid. The final more direct section of the "Rockville Turnpike" from Tennallytown to the District line was not completed until 1840. At Tennallytown, the new toll road diverged westerly from the existing road, following present-day Wisconsin Avenue. The new toll road was designated the Rockville Turnpike, while the "old" Frederick road came to be called variously Belt or Brookville Road, since it passed through Belt family lands and connected up to the Brookville Road, a long segment of which still survives in present-day Chevy Chase, Maryland. Tollgates first appeared along the turnpike in 1829; the Tennallytown tollhouse, a white frame structure, was located near the intersection of the Rockville and River Roads.¹² Stagecoach lines ran daily over the toll road, while a mail route traveled over the road three times a week.

In addition to the turnpike, a narrow country lane, Grant Road¹³, emerged as an east-west connector road, providing access from rural areas east of the crossroads to Tennallytown. Another road from the east, Pierce Mill Road, led from Rock Creek to intersect the Rockville Road south of the Rest, where it connected with Little Falls or Loughboro Road heading west to the river. Murdock Mill road also went west from River Road, near Tennallytown to Murdock's Mill, located near present-day Dalecarlia

¹⁰ The Sarah Tennally house, located on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue, across the road from the tavern building on the west side, stood until the late 1950s when it was demolished for the Hechinger Company lumber yard. Helm, p. 21.

¹¹ J. Harry Shannon, *The Sunday Star*, January 3, 1915, as quoted in Helm, p.20, footnote 40.

¹² Helm speculates that the tollhouse may have been the old Tennally Tavern building, Helm, p. 34.

¹³ Although the road pre-existed the Civil War, the road was named Grant Road following the Civil War. Oral tradition holds that the road was likely named Grant Road for Ulysses S. Grant, who after becoming commander of the Army of the Potomac personally inspected the defenses of Washington.

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Reservoir. Most of these roads were obliterated as the city grew in the 20th century, but some fragments still exist. Parts of Belt Road extend north of Tenleytown towards Chevy Chase Circle, along with two tiny city parklets that were created where the old right-of-way cut across corners of the modern street grid. A few blocks of Grant Road still survive and are still lined with turn-of-the century frame farmhouses.

The growth of new roads and construction of the toll road clearly stimulated new developments around the crossroads. In 1839, John Mason, Jr. and Catherine Macomb Mason purchased a 55-acre tract of the larger "Friendship" property, on the west side of the Rockville Road, south of the intersection with River Road. The tract of land, noted as being "improved" in 1839 had been part of the estate of Clement Smith, former president of the Farmers and Merchants Bank in Georgetown who died that year. Around 1850, the Masons built a two-story stone dwelling (known today as Dunblane and still standing at 4340 Nebraska Avenue) that they used as a retreat from their principal Georgetown residence. In 1855, the property was acquired by Harry Woodward Blunt who, as a descendant of John "of Dunblane" Magruder of Prince George's County, named the estate Dunblane. The property was noted for an enormous oak tree, nicknamed the "Dunblane Oak," which is now part of the Buchanan estate at 4220 Nebraska Avenue, called Under Oak. In the 1880s, the name of the estate lent itself to a longstanding Dunblane fox hunt held on its grounds and the hills surrounding Tennallytown.¹⁴

In 1841, German immigrant William Heider bought 41 acres of land between the old Frederick Road and the newly paved toll road. Heider was the forerunner of a substantial influx of German immigrants following the German Revolution of 1848. These German immigrants came to the Tenallytown area throughout the next half-century establishing themselves as farmers, merchants, and other business owners.

In 1840, the Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, referred to locally as the Tenleytown Church, was erected. The small frame building located at the corner of River Road and Murdock Mill Road also served as a school. According to secondary sources, the school had 12 teachers, 60 "scholars," and 100 volumes in the library in 1855. The 1850 Census clearly reflects a rural economy in Tennallytown, with 57 farmers, 11 gardeners, 7 overseers, 6 wheelwrights, 6 millers, and 4 tavern keepers listed in the records. A high number of laborers (84) likely indicates that many residents were also engaged in the various trades required to build the city and its public buildings.¹⁵

Although still remote and sparsely inhabited up until the Civil War, the village of Tennallytown was beginning to grow, a trend that would increase following the War. At the start of the Civil War, as

¹⁴ Williams, p. 26.

¹⁵ Information on the 1850 Census was compiled by certified genealogist Margaret R. Amundson and presented in the Historic Resources Survey of Tenleytown, Washington, D.C., (Kelsey & Associates, Inc., for the Tenleytown Historical Society, in fulfillment of a grant by the D.C. Historic Preservation Office, 2003).

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illustrated on the Topographical Map of the District of Columbia by A. Boschke (published 1861), Tennallytown appears as a small crossroads community with a cluster of buildings located at the intersection of River Road and the Rockville Turnpike, as well as a range of buildings located south of the intersection along the Rockville Turnpike. The two estates, The Rest, noted by the name "Mrs. A. Lyles" on the map and Dunblane, opposite it by the name "Blunt," are south of the crossroads intersection and set back from the road, yet part of it. Both estates are surrounded by plantings and open land, and feature formal drives leading to the residences. Several other farms are located in the outlying region, still considered geographically to be part of Tennallytown.

The Civil War and Fort Reno:

With the construction of Fort Pennsylvania (later named Fort Reno) at Tennallytown during the Civil War, the small village gained prominence. In 1861, following the Union defeat at the first battle of Manassas, the need for a defensive system around Washington became apparent, and the construction of a series of 26 forts and supporting artillery batteries to block all approaches to the city began. Another 29 forts and eight batteries were eventually constructed in northern Virginia to defend the capital.¹⁶ A location near the highest natural elevation in Washington, just above the convergence of the Rockville, River, and Brookville Roads at Tennallytown (near present-day Alice Deal Junior High School), was selected as the site of one of the forts. Built by the 119th Pennsylvania Volunteers, Fort Pennsylvania was one of the first of the 26 forts constructed, being completed by September 1861. The earthwork fortifications contained a large L-shaped magazine, and eventually became the largest fort protecting the capital, with the heaviest artillery and largest garrison.¹⁷ In 1863, the fort was renamed Fort Reno following the death of Union Major General Jesse Lee Reno at the Battle of South Mountain.

At the same time that the rural landscape was being cleared for the construction of forts and the opening up of defensive views, a military road was laid to link the forts north of the city. This military road passed just south of Fort Pennsylvania. An 1864 map by Albert Boschke, titled *Partial Topographic Map of Washington, D.C., Arlington County, and Alexandria* shows the ring of military fortifications and the roads connecting them. The map also indicates that the then unnamed Grant Road leading east from Tennallytown became part of this ring road linking the forts. Oral tradition holds that the road was likely named Grant Road for Ulysses S. Grant who, after becoming commander of the Army of the Potomac personally, inspected the defenses

¹⁶ Helm, p. 45.

¹⁷ Helm, p. 48.

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of Washington.¹⁸ All pre-Civil War-era maps showing this section of Washington leave the road unnamed.¹⁹

During the Civil War, the military forts, camps and hospitals in Washington became havens for freedmen and escaped slaves ("contrabands"). In return for this protection, the "contrabands" would serve the soldiers in a variety of ways such as laborers, cooks, blacksmiths, and horse groomsmen. Like many of the forts, Fort Reno attracted a large settlement of African Americans that endured after the War. When the U.S. Army eventually returned the land on which Fort Reno had been constructed to its previous owner, many freed blacks were already well established there. In 1869, heirs of the original owner sold the land to two real estate speculators, Newall Onion and Alexander Butts, who platted it into a residential subdivision that they named Reno, or Reno City.²⁰

Reno City:

The Reno City subdivision extended from present-day Chesapeake Street on the south to Fessenden Street on the north, and from Belt Road on the west, to Howard Street on the east and included three blocks running east-west and five blocks running north-south. Wood frame houses arose to face the new-cut streets, originally named for Union generals, including Sheridan, DeRussy, Howard, Grant, Thomas, Kearney and Birney.²¹ Although racially diverse, many of the black residents living there eventually managed to purchase the lots on which they had already erected houses, thereby encouraging the progressive development of Reno as a predominantly African-American community. In the decades that followed, Reno evolved into an established working-class community, replete with its own churches, schools, and stores. Although immediately adjacent to it, Reno remained distinct from the village of Tenleytown.

Post Civil War Development:

After the Civil War, and despite the increase in population in the area due to Reno City, Tennallytown resumed its rural village existence.²² The remote and outlying area, though war-torn and depleted of nutrients, was devoted to the cultivation of crops and the grazing of cattle. Period trade magazines touted the cheap land to attract the small-scale and immigrant farmer to

¹⁸ Local legend also holds that the naming of the road may have reflected the road's use as a right-of-way to move military equipment and troops from fort to fort. Helm, p. 40.

¹⁹ The first known recollection of the name "Grant Road" appears on the 1870 "Map of the Roads in Washington County," by B.D. Carpenter. An earlier map, also by B.D. Carpenter and dated 1867, leaves the road unnamed, fairly definitively dating the naming of Grant Road to between 1867 and 1870.

²⁰ Helm, p. 67.

²¹ The streets were later renamed to conform with the city's alphabetical and numeric system.

²² Although Tenleytown remained a rural village, the subdivision and growth of Fort Reno increased the population in the area substantially.

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the region. Germans flocked to Tennallytown, operating dairies and opening businesses as butchers, tailors, and shoemakers.²³ As the economy grew, more people came, including Irish and Italian immigrants, and established themselves by building houses, stores and businesses.

The 1880 Census for Tennallytown identifies approximately 728 heads of household representing a wide variety of agricultural occupations ranging from dairyman, farmer, farm laborer, and butcher to gardener and blacksmith. Other common occupations included carpenter, laborer, cook, dressmaker, and servant. By the last decade of the 19th century, Tennallytown, though still a rural community, was thriving. For the most part, the residents worked in Tennallytown; however, a growing number of merchants, a few policemen, bankers, and school teachers, as identified in the census, indicates that Tennallytown was beginning to expand beyond the immediate rural community and perhaps opening itself up to outsiders.

The residents of post-Civil War Tennallytown built modest two-story frame houses that were clustered primarily along the east side of present-day Wisconsin Avenue, Belt Road, and the north and south sides of Grant Road. The majority of these 19th-century buildings are no longer extant; however, an intact and cohesive collection of mid- to late 19th-century and early 20th-century houses survives along the 4400 and 4500 blocks of Grant Road (included in the National Register-listed Grant Road Historic District), the 4400 block of Alton Place ("Robeyville"), and at 3701 Grant Road. Other individual examples, such as 3957 Fessenden Street, 4831 Nebraska Avenue, and 5013 Belt Road can still be found amongst the more recent mid-20th century suburban residences of Tenleytown.

Beyond the center of Tenleytown, the outlying area was largely farmland that remained so until the 1920s when the acreage was sold to land developers. Several late 19th-century farmhouses—two in the area referred to as Friendship Heights and one or two in American University Park—still stand.²⁴

²³ Helm, p. 71-72.

²⁴ At least two of these houses do not sit on their original sites. One was moved from Wisconsin Avenue to Ingomar Street and another was moved from Belt Road to Jenifer Street. The houses were likely moved when platted streets that traversed the houses were actually cut through and macadamized.

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II. THE SUBURBANIZATION OF TENLEYTOWN: 1890-1941

Streetcars and the Permanent Plan for Highways:

The post-Civil War and Reconstruction population boom in Washington brought with it a tremendous demand for housing. Until the advent of the electric streetcar, the housing boom was generally concentrated within the boundaries of the original city limits. However, with advances in transportation technology and the arrival of the electric streetcar in the 1880s, the formerly remote and rural landscapes of Washington County became ripe for development. The Georgetown and Tennallytown Railway Company—one of the pioneer electric lines in Washington—was chartered in 1888. When it opened in 1890 with four roundtrips daily, the streetcar route ran from M Street in Georgetown, through Tennallytown, to the District line (today's Western Avenue). The same year that the Georgetown and Tennallytown Railway Company began service, the Rock Creek Railway was underway, providing streetcar service along Connecticut Avenue extended from Calvert Street to the newly planned suburb of Chevy Chase, Maryland. In 1890, Massachusetts Avenue was extended from Boundary Street (Florida Avenue) northwest to the Tennallytown Road (renamed Wisconsin Avenue in 1891), opening up a third approach to the crossroads community.

Despite the arrival of the Georgetown and Tennallytown streetcar line, building speculation in the Tennallytown area progressed slowly. This was in part likely due to the fact that the regulation of subdivisions beyond the L'Enfant City had not yet been formalized by city planners and, as a result, there existed some uncertainty as to the future of development. Prior to 1888, the creation of subdivisions and streets in Washington County was largely unregulated. The presidentially appointed District of Columbia Board of Commissioners was charged with the grading, paving, and maintenance of city streets and any publicly dedicated "county" roads. In addition the Board was authorized to open and extend the city's streets and avenues out into the surrounding county when they found such action to be "conducive to public interest."²⁵ The Board, however, had no authority to regulate the subdivision of private real estate, or control the creation of new streets in the county. As a result, land speculators and developers carved up the land in random fashion, often in conformance with property lines, but bearing no particular relation to the city grid. When the Commissioners disapproved of how privately laid-out streets ran they would then attempt to decline responsibility for maintaining them. Congressional intervention into issues of subdivision and street extensions became increasingly common.

As the pace of subdivision increased during the 1880s and subdivisions (like Reno City) with irregular layouts began to compete with each other, restricting the logic and grandeur of Washington's plan, authorities recognized the need for regulation. In 1888, Congress approved An Act to Regulate the

²⁵ Michael Harrison, "The Evil of the Misfit Subdivisions," *Washington History Magazine*, Vol. 14, Number 1, Spring/Summer 2002, p. 34-35.

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Platting and Subdividing of all Land in the District. This act required that all subdivisions of land in the District conform to the "general plan of the City of Washington." Although no map existed showing a proposed street network for the area west of Rock Creek Park, rules enforced by the District of Columbia Board of Commissioners established minimum widths for streets, avenues, alleys, lots and squares.

Early Residential Subdivisions of Tennallytown:

Armesleigh Park:

With passage of the 1888 Act and the completion of the streetcar line, area landowners and speculators envisioned the potential for real estate developments in Tennallytown. In 1891, George A. Armes purchased part of the tract of land called "Friendship," surrounding The Rest, and subdivided it into lots, squares, and streets. Armes, a former Army major and nearby property owner²⁶ named his self-promoting subdivision Armesleigh Park. The proposed subdivision was platted, approved, and recorded in the District of Columbia Surveyor's Office in March 1891. The subdivision included 10 blocks bounded by four streets running east-west and two streets running north-south, in conformance with the "general plan" of the City. The east-west streets named Xenia, Austin, Yuma streets, and Lyles Place correspond with today's Warren, Windom, Yuma Streets and Alton Place; the north-south streets, 38th and 39th Streets, retain their original designations. Although Major Armes laid out the streets at his own expense, he made no provisions for the construction of houses, perhaps intending instead to sell lots unimproved.

By 1894, as indicated by the G.M. Hopkins Map, only a few of the lots within Armesleigh Park had been built upon, including several now-demolished buildings facing Wisconsin Avenue and the remodeled, but still extant Curran House at 4419 39th Street.²⁷ It was not until 1918, after the death of George Armes, that Harry and Samuel Kite purchased the property and began to develop Armesleigh Park in earnest with 14 different house types repeated throughout the neighborhood. Armesleigh Park survives as an intact and cohesive residential subdivision from the 1920s.

²⁶ George Armes' house, *Fairfield*, was located on Grant Road above the newly cut Connecticut Avenue.

²⁷ The Curran House was built for Bob Curran, the Master of the Fox Hounds at the Chevy Chase Club. The vernacular Victorian frame house with projecting gables and bays and a full-width front porch was remodeled in the 1960s and transformed into a porch-less and more regularized house reflecting Colonial Revival style massing.

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Mt. Airy:

In October 1892, Edward P. Burket and John Barry each recorded plats for a subdivision called Mt. Airy. Burkett's subdivision was located east of Wisconsin Avenue, bounded by Chesapeake, Belt, and Ellicott Streets. Barry's subdivision was west of Wisconsin and included blocks on Brandywine, River Road, and Chesapeake. recorded a plat for a subdivision he called Mt. Airy, located around the intersection of River Road, Wisconsin Avenue and Belt Road, on both the east and west sides of Wisconsin Avenue. As platted and approved, the subdivisions were divided into lots, alleys and streets, 90-feet wide.

The new subdivision appealed almost immediately to at least one speculative owner/builder team who constructed a row of 12 two-story frame dwellings at 4811-4833 41st Street, N.W.²⁸ By 1894, according to the G.M. Hopkins Map, a number of other houses, built singly, or in small groups, had joined the row within the Mt. Airy subdivision. Over the course of the next decade several other houses were built, making Mt. Airy one of the densest clusters of development in the Tenleytown area. Many of the early houses survive in the eastern section of Mt. Airy, contributing to a still-prevailing "village-like" feel in the neighborhood.²⁹ For the most part, these houses, found in particular along the 4800 block of 41st Street, and the 4000 and 4100 blocks of Ellicott Street are modest, two-story, two-bay frame dwellings, almost invariably with open front porches. These houses reflect a strong vernacular tradition in keeping with modest Italianate-style influences, such as bracketed cornices. One of the least altered examples and one that provides a truly palpable sense of the village past is the house at 4105 Ellicott Street. This house may have been built in 1893, by builder Charles Hurley, or may have been earlier and moved to the site by then. Another early, but much larger frame house occupies the corner of 41st and Davenport Streets.

On the west side of Wisconsin Avenue a few of the early houses survive, including 4117-4121 Brandywine Street and 4201 and 4207 River Road, though their context is more compromised by recent, larger-scale development. The two-story frame building at 4612-4614 Wisconsin Avenue is the sole-surviving building along what historically had the heaviest concentration of buildings in the early years of Mt. Airy's development.³⁰

²⁸ See D.C. Permit to Build #243 8/8/1893. The permit is for 12, two-story frame houses on 41st Street in the Mt. Airy & Friendship subdivision. No house numbers are given, but the permit clearly refers to the row of dwellings at 4811-4833 41st Street, as identified on historic maps. These modest frame dwellings were historically occupied by African Americans until 1973 when the realty company evicted the residents to renovate the houses. The frame houses were gutted and basically rebuilt with new brick facades, and then sold to white professionals. See "Progress to Displace Residents of Century-Old Black Enclave," *The Washington Post*, 12/8/1973; and Helm, p. 244-45.

²⁹ This sense of time and place is also still prevalent along the 4500 and 4600 blocks of Grant Road.

³⁰ It is likely that some of the structures identified on the 1894 Hopkins map, in particular those fronting Wisconsin Avenue, pre-dated the subdivision of Mt. Airy.

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The 1900 Census Records list only 9 heads-of-households in the subdivision of "Mount Airy," all of whom are white, working-class residents, including several dairymen, a farm hand, a house painter, a laborer, a policeman, and a teamster. However, the census also lists heads of household by streets, including 41st Street—several blocks of which are within the Mt. Airy subdivision. According to the records, 41st Street is more racially diverse, with working-class blacks and whites both occupying the street.³¹ The majority of the blacks on 41st Street are listed as servants or day laborers, while the white residents tended to hold more skilled jobs, such as carpenter, shopkeeper, policeman, and grocer.

Other than the clusters of development within the Mt. Airy subdivision, neither Armesleigh Park, nor Mt. Airy enjoyed wholesale successes in the early years. This was in part likely due to the working-class nature of the existing development that may have discouraged investors,³² but also due in part to the remaining uncertainty of the regulation of subdivision in Washington County. Despite passage of the 1888 Act, no map existed showing the proposed street network for the area west of Rock Creek Park. In addition, residents, business owners, developers and others criticized the Act, claiming that the "general plan" was an "interpretation in the spirit of L'Enfant that was liable to change each time the members of the Board and their assistants changed."³³

The Permanent Highway Plan:

In 1893, in response to the criticism, Congress passed an act creating what is known as the Permanent System of Highway Plan, or the Permanent Highway Plan. This act authorized the District Commissioners to create a highway system that extended the plan of Washington beyond the city limits. Congress specified that planning and mapping the new system would be done in sections over time. The area west of Rock Creek Park and north of Georgetown, including the area around Tennallytown, was designated Section 3. As the work on the maps for all sections progressed slowly, property values in the suburban areas fell. For several years, development was stalled. Finally, in 1897, the map for Section 3 was published in draft form, and in 1898 in final form. The plan was devised to ensure the conformity of the isolated subdivisions that were approved under the 1888 Act, but it also incorporated a

³¹ Longtime black residents of 41st Street still lived in the row of frame dwellings in the 4800 block in 1973-74 when they were forced out by the owners planning a major remodeling of the houses. See "Progress to Displace Residents of Century-Old Black Enclave," *The Washington Post*, December 8, 1973. The article includes a quote by Evelyn Masterson, whose likely ancestors Blanch Masterson, servant, and Daniel and Edward Masterson, day laborers, were listed as living on 41st Street in the 1900 census records.

³² Reno City and Mt. Airy were decidedly working class communities, and Reno City was heavily African American. Speculators were generally looking to create subdivisions that would appeal to the growing middle class population and may have shied away from what was still a strongly rural and working-class area.

³³ Michael Harrison, "The Evil of Misfit Subdivisions: Creating the Permanent System of Highways of the District of Columbia," p. 39.

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picturesque layout of streets, as conceptualized by the Olmsted Brothers. The resultant plan was a "combination of flat curves and direct lines" and the extensive use of long, curving blocks that conformed with the topography and natural terrain of the outlying region.

Around Tennallytown, the approved plan retained the already platted subdivisions of Mt. Airy and Armesleigh Park, but also included the extension of existing roads and the creation of new roads through the area. In particular, the plan shows the introduction of Tenley Circle, the curving Reno Road, the proposed extension of Nebraska Avenue east of the circle, and the creation of Albemarle Street on either side of Wisconsin Avenue. Both Nebraska Avenue and Albemarle Street cut through the platted subdivision of Armesleigh Park and across Grant Road, ultimately segmenting the Civil War-era road.

Some developers took immediate advantage of the Act, laying out American University Park (1896-97) and Asbury Park (1898) in the surrounding area (see below). In general, however, wholesale development of the land in the immediate vicinity of Tennallytown progressed slowly, along with the implementation of the Permanent Highway Plan.³⁴ This was due in large part to the fact that Tennallytown lacked the principal infrastructure that was then available within the city limits. Although Congress had acted to merge the City of Washington and Washington County (including Tennallytown) in 1895, this re-organization did not immediately improve municipal services. At the time of the passage of the Highway Act in 1898, Tennallytown area had neither water mains, nor sewer service, nor telephones, nor electricity.

Municipal Amenities:

Beginning with the 1900 construction of the firehouse on Wisconsin Avenue—a major public building designed by Municipal Architect Leon Dessez—other municipal amenities and services necessary to attract a residential population began to install themselves. A 1903 account of Tennallytown notes,

"At present there are two police officers assigned to Tenleytown, reporting by telephone each half hour to Central Headquarters from their sentry boxes...The police department is taking steps to furnish the village with a \$4,000.00 police sub-station which will be constructed according to the latest models. The town is equipped with a good system of electric lights. The water is excellent and real estate very reasonable in price.

...The District sewage system (1903) is being advanced along Wisconsin Avenue, and as soon as it reaches the village, building improvements will receive a great impetus...A machine shop, blacksmith shop and a boot and shoe repairing shop are also among Tenleytown's industries. A large restaurant provides refreshment for the passing guest. One of the most attractive fire-engine houses in the District is the new one in Tenleytown.

³⁴ Although some of the grid streets as established on the Permanent Highway Plan were laid by developers who platted subdivisions in the early 20th century, the major new avenues or extensions of avenues, including Albemarle Street, Nebraska Avenue and Tenley Circle were not cut through and surfaced until the early 1930s.

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...The religious life of the town is singularly strong in the comparatively small population, there are six churches, four white ones and two colored...³⁵

In addition, Tennallytown also had a post office (a postmaster had been in Tennallytown since 1846), the first reservoir and water tower at Fort Reno (1903) and two schools—the Tenley School (1882) for white students and the newly built Jesse Reno School (1903) for black students, a Masonic lodge, and other institutions (see Institutional Growth of Tenleytown and Fort Reno Reservoir). In 1908, the growing community also acquired its first telephone exchange,³⁶ the “Cleveland” exchange on Wisconsin Avenue, built by the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company, just north of the firehouse. Public telephones in “call boxes” were used to summon police and firefighters in emergencies. Most date to the early 1900s, but some pre-date that. The call boxes peaked in the 1920s and were phased out in the 1970s with the implementation of the 911 system. Several of these call boxes have been repaired and retrofitted to provide historical information on “old” Tenleytown.

Real Estate Marketing and the Proliferation of Subdivisions in and around Tenleytown:

Passage of the final 1897 Permanent Highway act, the fledgling municipal services and other amenities provided real estate agents the assurance and marketing draw they sought to promote the suburbanization of the area. In 1901, in an attempt to attract prospective homebuyers to the northwesterly reaches of Washington, a group of prominent businessmen published a booklet entitled, “Suburban Washington as a Place of Residence.” The promotional brochure extolled the benefits of the Tennallytown area, while also attempting to appeal to the pocketbook:

“At this place [River Road and Murdock Mill Road] the panorama of the valley is unfolded to you. The view to the west is bounded by the range of hills close up under the base of which runs Little Falls Branch...Looking down the valley, the eye passes the hills where shines the receiving reservoir and on to the hills that rise across the Potomac in Virginia. It is a pleasing prospect...”

“...land in this beautiful suburb may yet be purchased by the acre at prices no greater than must be paid for single building lots in a good location in the city—and here one can find a *well-lighted* (emphasis added) suburban street within 25 minutes ride of the White House, where one can erect thereon a handsome and commodious home.”³⁷

³⁵ “Tenleytown,” 1903. Unpublished paper in the vertical files of the Historical Society of Washington.

³⁶ In 1927, the original “Cleveland” exchange was enlarged, and then in 1932, replaced by the present Art Deco-style exchange building on the site.

³⁷ As quoted in Helm, p. 144-145.

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American University Park:

In the early 1890s, James L. Tait and Augustus B. Omwake subdivided a parcel of land west of River Road, the first of several real estate transactions that would come together as American University Park. In 1897, another large parcel was acquired from Samuel Burrows. That same year developers David Stone and J.D. Croissant published a promotional brochure, listing the advantages of the location and showing pictures of the houses then under construction. The earliest houses were large, usually built on multiple lots, mostly built of wood, some with turrets and other interesting flourishes. This subdivision, bounded by River Road, Massachusetts Avenue, and Western Avenue was some distance from the center of Tenleytown, so despite the introduction of Herdic bus service to the streetcar line, it was sparsely built until the WC and AN Miller Company developed it in the 1930s. The earlier "farmhouses" that were built remain today.

Asbury Park and "Robeyville"

In 1898, the District Investment Company subdivided "a lot in Murdock's subdivision of a part of Friendship" and called the subdivision Asbury Park. The subdivision included four sections of subdivided lots between Alton Place, formerly Lyles Place, and Murdock Mill Road. Likely in anticipation of American University, small-scale entrepreneurs such as the Robeys speculated on house construction in Asbury Park and other local subdivisions. A long-time Tenleytown family, the Robeys concentrated their efforts on the 4400 block of Alton Place (formerly Lyles Place), building a number of houses along this block in the early 20th century. The block is still referred to today as "Robeyville."

Colorado Heights:

In 1904, Senator Thomas M. Patterson of Colorado and Ernest M. Pease of Washington, D.C. responded to the call by platting the subdivision that they dubbed Colorado Heights. Located just east of Grant Road at its intersection with Nourse Road (now an alley running diagonally between Appleton and Brandywine streets) at an elevation of 375 feet, this small subdivision provided the first implementation of the Permanent Highway Plan. Brandywine and Chesapeake Streets were laid according to the required widths, as were 38th Street and a stretch of Reno Road. Lots within the new subdivision fronted Grant Road, 38th Street, Reno Road, and Chesapeake and Brandywine Streets, while public alleys bisected the large blocks. In addition to the laying and paving of streets and alleys, the owners planned for paved sidewalks with curbing, "fine" shade trees, Potomac water and electric lights. A newspaper article which reads more like promotional literature noted, "No section of the city offers so many and such strong attractions for a home, and it may be said that never again will land anywhere near Connecticut Avenue be sold as cheaply as this. This, with its high altitude offers a healthful location, an

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extensive view, refreshing coolness in summer, and a delightful combination of country attractions and city conveniences."³⁸

Likely still premature despite published expectations, Colorado Heights, like earlier subdivisions in Tenleytown never took off in its initial years of being platted.³⁹ It was not until the early 1920s, when the Warren Brothers bought a large number of the subdivided lots and began the construction of houses that Colorado Heights saw any residential development.

National Highlands

National Highlands, part of a parcel that had been owned by the Vogt (Voight) family, was platted in 1910 by Wilbur Bill. Located one block east of Wisconsin Avenue and close to the District line at Western Avenue, National Highlands occupied parts of Squares 1663, 1664, 1742, and 1743. Bill built his own house (razed) perhaps as a model for future development at the corner of 42nd and Military Road. As with other planned subdivisions in "old" Tenleytown, building in National Highlands did not really happen until the 1920s, despite the proximity of public transportation. The death of Wilbur Bill in 1916 and World War I perhaps contributed to the delay. Notable within the subdivisions are the row houses in the 5300 block of 41st Street, NW and the "Alhambra" Sears Catalog House at 4205 Military Road, NW.

Wisconsin Avenue Park:

In 1908, the Capital Realty Company followed suit by subdividing a tract of land into four new squares with lots and alleys that they called Wisconsin Avenue Park. The new subdivision was located north of Mt. Airy and south of Garrison Street with Belt Road as the eastern edge and 42nd Street as the western edge. The following year, the Capital Realty Company expanded Wisconsin Avenue Park four blocks north to include Harrison, Ingomar, and Jenifer Streets, advertising its Wisconsin Avenue Park lots at 10 cents per square foot.⁴⁰

The lots were principally laid with 30'-wide street frontages and 110' depths extending back to alleys. In November of 1908, the Capital Realty Company began construction of a house on a double, 60'-wide lot at 4110 Fessenden Street, likely as a model home for the community. Within the next couple of years, numerous houses had been built within Wisconsin Avenue Park, namely along the 4100 block of

³⁸ "Colorado Heights," *The Washington Post*, 4/17/1904 p. R4.

³⁹ Based upon historic maps, a single structure—the house at 4613 38th Street—stood mid-block between Brandywine and Chesapeake Streets, NW.

⁴⁰ The ad, found in the 1909 Masonic dedication program notes, "City sewer, city water, city gas. Price 10cents per square foot and up. Prices to be advanced when 50 lots are sold: only eleven left at these prices. Free certificates of title, no interest, easy terms." As quoted in Helm, p. 152.

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Fessenden Street. In addition, several houses were constructed along the 5000 block of 41st Street, N.W. Although the northern blocks of the subdivision were not built upon until the 1920s, the southern blocks of Wisconsin Avenue Park proved to be the most successful subdivision thus far attempted in Tenleytown.

Perna Family Houses:

Although the Perna family were not developers *per se* and did not plat any subdivisions, they were responsible for a number of houses in greater Tenleytown and are worthy of mention here. Frank Perna, Sr. and his brother, Louis, both of whom have been identified as stonemasons, stonecutters and contractors, emigrated from Italy in the 1890s. The brothers settled in Tenleytown, likely due to its proximity of quarries, including Soapstone and Rose Hill quarries located a short distance to the east across Connecticut Avenue, and others further out River Road. In any case, the family originally lived in a house on the site of present-day Friendship Animal Hospital, and built two large double houses on Chesapeake Street in 1908, as well as others. For a while, the corner of 42nd and Chesapeake Street was home to the Perna Stone Yard. While the Perna family was the dominant family business working with stone in Tenleytown, there were other (often Italian) stone builders. The Washington Cathedral, which began construction in 1906-07, likely attracted many of its stone workers to the neighborhood where they built houses in stone. Building permits and sometimes local history connect these individual builders to the Perna family.⁴¹

Inter-War Change in Tenleytown

With the slow implementation of the Permanent Highway Plan, Tenleytown remained very much a village through World War I. Despite the subdivisions of Armesleigh Park, Mt. Airy, Colorado Heights and Wisconsin Avenue Park that were meant to attract city dwellers, the crossroads continued to be a small farming community. In 1905, Tennallytown consisted of approximately 200 households and 1,000 residents, including local farmers, dairymen, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carpenters, painters, construction laborers, skilled tradesmen, merchants, policemen, streetcar motormen, and meat, poultry and grocery men.⁴² Few Tennallytown residents, in the latter days of the 19th century were employed by the government or worked in Washington or Georgetown.⁴³

For the most part, residents lived in the modest frame houses that were clustered along either side of Wisconsin Avenue near the intersection of River Road, along Grant and Belt Roads, and within the subdivision of Reno and the emerging development of Mt. Airy. By 1916, however, approximately 50

⁴¹ Mary E. Curry, "Tenleytown: Community Identity and Continuity through the Quarry and Stone Building Business," Unpublished research paper, American University, 1974.

⁴² Helm, p. 80.

⁴³ Helm, p. 80.

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new houses were built in Wisconsin Avenue Park alone, attracting a different type of resident, and foreshadowing the physical and demographic changes to come.

Indeed, as the post World War I population in Washington expanded, Tenleytown began to lose its identity as a working-class village distinct from the city. The development of upper-middle-class suburban subdivisions surrounding Tenleytown such as Chevy Chase and Cleveland Park, along with the development of Tenleytown's own platted subdivisions began to affect the physical appearance and demographics of "old" Tennallytown. In 1918, local developers Harry Kite and Samuel Kite, Jr. led the push for the suburbanization of Tenleytown. The Kites purchased the Armesleigh Park subdivision from the heirs of George Armes and began the wholesale construction of single-family houses intended for middle-class, white, professionals. The Kite Brothers offered 12 basic house styles, designed by two different architects, George T. Santmyers and Alexander Sonneman. Almost simultaneously, in the early 1920s, the Warren Brothers builders bought the subdivided Colorado Heights and within a few years had built all of the single-family residences that make up the two-block area today.

In addition to architect-designed and builder-erected houses, catalog or kit houses began to emerge in greater Tenleytown in the 1920s, simultaneous to the national trend. Though Sears & Roebuck is the company most commonly associated with the kit home, the Aladdin Company located in Bay City, Missouri was the first to offer, in 1906, kit homes with pre-cut numbered pieces. Sears had offered supplies and house plans since 1895, and in 1908 its Modern Homes division offered plans, materials and kits. A total of seven companies are known to have been in the catalog home business; in addition to Aladdin and Sears, they include Lewis, and Sterling in Bay City, MI, Harris, and Montgomery Ward in Chicago and Gordon-Van Tine in Davenport, IA. Rosemary Thornton, author of *The Houses That Sears Built: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Sears Catalogue Homes*, suggests that after WWI shortage of skilled labor combined with returning soldiers needing homes as well as arriving immigrants contributed to the success of kit homes. Each manufacturer offered a variety of models including bungalows, four squares and Dutch Colonials, sometimes only varying in small details from one company to another. There are several extant examples of kit/catalog houses in Tenleytown that retain their original integrity including the Sears "Alhambra" at 3920 Military Road, the Sears houses at 4308 Fessenden Street, NW, 5221 42nd Street, NW, 4602 Fessenden Street, NW, and 4623 Davenport Street, NW, as well as an Aladdin house at 4310 Fessenden Street, NW, all identified by building permits.

According to the 1930 Census records for Armesleigh Park, the residential composition of the subdivision fit the exact profile sought by the Kite Brothers. All of the residents were white, and almost all of the heads of households held white-collar jobs, many of them high-level government positions. Armesleigh Park was filled with lawyers, scientists and engineers from the Bureau of Standards, printers, Army and Naval officers, Navy Department personnel, dentists, doctors, real estate, insurance and retail executives to name a few. Most notably, only 27 of the adults living in Armesleigh Park were natives of the region. Most of them were newcomers from other east coast states, as well as from the

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south and west. These new residents lived in Tenleytown, but, unlike their predecessors, they commuted to desk jobs in the city.

As these residential subdivisions were developed, new streets were cut following the 1898 Permanent Highway Plan. It was not until the early 1930s, however, that major new avenues were laid. In 1931, Albemarle Street, which already ran from Connecticut Avenue to Reno Road, was extended west to Wisconsin Avenue, crossing over Grant Road. In 1934-35, Nebraska Avenue was extended from west of Wisconsin Avenue, across the avenue in a northeasterly direction, cutting across Grant Road, the newly laid Albemarle Street, and towards Reno Road and Connecticut Avenue. The intersection of Nebraska Avenue, Wisconsin Avenue and Yuma Street prompted the 1936 paving of Tenley Circle, originally called "The Wisconsin Avenue Circle."⁴⁴

The 1920s and 1930s saw other major developments in Tenleytown, that both responded and contributed to the former farming community's suburbanization, namely the growth and new construction of service infrastructure; area institutions, including churches; the development of area schools (Janney Elementary School, Alice Deal Junior High School and Wilson High School); the increase in commercial development and the introduction of retail chains; and the re-development of Reno City into a reservoir and park. (See Commercial Development of Tenleytown, 1791-1941; and 19th and 20th Century Institutional Growth of Tenleytown.)

Reno City

As new subdivisions were being developed around it, Reno City (still commonly called Fort Reno) persisted as a largely African American, self-sufficient, working-class community. Although the community had always been completely distinct from the village of Tenleytown, it had become a complete aberration to the suburban, white Washington neighborhood, and was a perceived threat to the area's middle-class stability. The last vestiges of the civil war fort were removed in 1899, and a water reservoir and associated water tower (1903) were built in its place to provide water to the increasing population of the city. At that time, only a few of Reno's residents were displaced and their homes demolished for this first phase of development, but it was a foreshadowing of what was to come: during the early 1930s, the federal government commenced the systematic demolition of Reno's buildings to create the Fort Reno Reservoir complex, Fort Drive, and the whites-only Alice Deal Junior High and Wilson High School. (See Institutional Development of Tenleytown.) Other than a segment of Howard Street which runs east of Deal Junior High, Jesse Reno School (1903) is the only surviving remnant of Reno City. The two-story masonry school building served African American students from kindergarten to 8th grade and was constructed to replace a wood frame school building located on Grant Road (razed several decades later).

⁴⁴ Helm, p. 195-196.

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Conclusion

By the 1930s, Reno City and Tenleytown as places on the map had both ceased to exist. In 1937, *Washington Post* reporter G. Harold Gray documented the area's transformation,

"Tenleytown was the nucleus of an extensive country road net which has since largely disappeared...The Georgetown-Rockville rd. (now Wisconsin avenue) and River rd. are the only old routes entering Tenleytown that have retained any importance today. The other trails have disappeared or become mere alleys as Washington has grown out to and completely surrounded the old town. In extending Washington's wide, straight streets through the community, many of the buildings were removed and its appearance changed almost beyond recognition."⁴⁵

⁴⁵ C. Harold Gray, "Washington, the Planned City, Is Really a Collection of Old Villages; Small Towns Swallowed as D.C. Grew," *The Washington Post*, May 30, 1937. As quoted in Helm, p. 176.

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III. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF TENLEYTOWN: 1770-1941

John Tennally's Tavern:

From the beginning, Tennallytown was founded upon commercial opportunity. Indeed, the very existence of Tennallytown as a place on the map derives from the strategic location of John Tennally's Tavern—the first business above Georgetown—at the intersection of the Frederick (Wisconsin Avenue) and River Roads. Beginning in the mid-18th century, planters carried, or rolled tobacco along these two routes in hogsheads to the region's official tobacco inspection station at the port in Georgetown. In 1774, twenty-three years after the founding of Georgetown (established, 1751), the Maryland Assembly ordered that major market routes, including the Frederick and River Roads, be improved, thus securing the future existence and local importance of the two roads.

The strategic intersection of the roads, some distance from Georgetown and a good stopping point for travelers coming from inland, was not lost on John Tennally.⁴⁶ In 1789, Tennally was granted a license in Montgomery County to run an ordinary, and by 1790, was operating a tavern on the west side of the Frederick Road, just north of the fork to River Road. In 1797, the first Georgetown-to-Frederick stagecoach line passed right by Tennally's Tavern, adding to the busy farm traffic.

Other than the tavern building—likely a frame structure with a stone or brick end chimney—the intersection included the residence of Sarah Tennally (John Tennally's sister) on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue, and a Presbyterian mission organized to serve the rural residents in the vicinity. It was the tavern, however, that clearly defined the intersection, and gave the village its name. Multiple references to the business establishment are made in deeds and newspaper notices through the 1790s. One such notice in the May 26, 1790 issue of the *Times and Patowmack Packet* of Georgetown reads,

“Lost between Georgetown and Montgomery Court House a dark mixed Surtout-coat with red lining...Any person finding the above mentioned surtout, and leaving it at Mr. John Tennally's tavern or this printing office, shall have Two Dollars Reward.”⁴⁷

Despite the tavern's existence as a local landmark, John Tennally apparently did not get wealthy from running the tavern, and by 1799, he had fallen into debt “due the State which I am unable to pay.”⁴⁸ Tennally died in 1800; however, his sister, Sarah, managed to purchase the half-acre where she lived and remained in Tennallytown for over 30 years. Indeed, there is some local speculation that it is the

⁴⁶ According to oral history, John Tennally was of English birth, but came to the region from Charles County, Maryland where he was a blacksmith by trade. See Helm, p. 20.

⁴⁷ As quoted in Helm, p. 19.

⁴⁸ In January 1799 John Tennally published a notice in the *Georgetown Centinel of Liberty* announcing his intention to petition the State to relieve him of his debt to the State. See Helm, 20.

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longtime resident Sarah Tennally, after whom the village earned its name, and not her brother, John. The Sarah Tennally house, illustrated in the *Evening Star*'s "Roadside Sketches" on August 15, 1891, was during her lifetime, a two-story, three-bay, side-passage, gable-roofed frame house. The house and a later addition were demolished in the late 1950s for Hechinger's lumberyard.

Following John Tennally's death, a Henry Riszner purchased ten acres of the large tract of land known as "Friendship" at the southwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and River Road. Here, Riszner operated a business, where he sold food, whiskey, brandy, and other spirits. This new business establishment, which also served as stagecoach stop, either occupied the Tennally's Tavern building or replaced it altogether. The expansion of Tennally's Tavern to include general merchandise likely attracted many of the area farming families and not just passersby en route to or from Georgetown.

Based upon the many newspaper references made to the tavern, it appears that the tavern and stagecoach stop had clearly become a social center for the larger rural community. However, the tavern does not appear to have itself, in the early years, prompted new businesses or permanent residency at the crossroads. This commercial and residential growth would come slowly, but progressively, beginning in the mid-late 19th century and continuing for the next 150 years.

The Growth of a Village and its Businesses

The first major step in that evolution began in the early 19th century with improvements to the old rolling roads. In 1805, the Maryland General Assembly had passed "An Act to incorporate a company to make a turnpike road from the District Line...to Fredericktown." This act—though slow to be implemented—enabled that busy stretch of road between Georgetown and Tennallytown to be widened and paved. The old Frederick-Georgetown Road was macadamized between 1817 and 1823; in 1829, tollgates first appeared on the newly paved road, including one at the intersection in Tennallytown, one in Bethesda, and another one near Garrett Park. The Tennally tollhouse, a white frame structure located on the west side of the Frederick Road, may have been the Tennally's Tavern building.

In 1815, James Riszner sold his tavern and 10 acres to a James Gannon, who ran an inn on the site for the next 15 years. At Gannon's death in 1833, his heirs advertised the business for sale by auction as "a valuable Tavern and premises, situated in Tennallytown." The highest bidder and purchaser of the property, Gottfried Conradt, a German immigrant, ran the tavern through the 1850s, when he then built a new three-story hotel/store on the site. This new three-story building, known as Conrad's Tavern, occupied the west side of Wisconsin Avenue until the 1930s, when it was torn down for the Sears & Roebuck store.

In the 1830s, Tenleytown got its first postmaster, a John O'Harry, who also was the local blacksmith. Although not at the center of the crossroads, several other blacksmiths operated nearby businesses.

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With the newly paved toll road, the stagecoach line, the tavern, a blacksmith shop⁴⁹, and Tennallytown's first postmaster, Tennallytown had matured into a small crossroads village, serving as the commercial and social center for the larger rural region. The 1830 census for Tenleytown lists 451 white households, eight slave families, and three free Negro families. Unlike the large estates that punctuated the rolling landscape above the port at Georgetown, however, the area around Tenleytown was fairly rugged and poor. In 1830, English writer Frances Trollope described this dichotomy as it then existed. The first paragraph is his description of the land above Georgetown, and the second of the neighboring farmers, likely in the vicinity of Tenleytown:

"The country rises into a beautiful line of hills behind Washington, which form a sort of undulating terrace on to Georgetown: this terrace is almost entirely occupied by a succession of gentlemen's seats..."

...The class of people the most unlike any existing in England, are those who, farming their own freehold estates, and often possessing several slaves, yet live with as few of the refinements, and I think I may say, with as few of the comforts of life, as the very poorest English peasant."⁵⁰

Although the population of Tenleytown continued to grow, especially after the Civil War, it still remained very much a small, rural village throughout the 19th century. A 1903 description of Tenleytown describes the village's self-sufficient existence:

"Tenleytown is a historic town. But it does not...live in the past and sleep in memories. The Tenleytown of today is a lively, busy village of nearly one thousand inhabitants, who are wide awake and contributing toward making theirs a model town...Tenleytown, as are few other suburbs, is sufficient unto itself...[The are] four prosperous grocery stores, a butcher shop...seldom to be found in neighboring suburbs; a dry goods and notions store,...and a yard where is sold flour, feed, coal, lumber, oil and paints."⁵¹

Of the four stores mentioned, only the feed store—that of John J. O'Day at the northeast corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Grant Road—still survives.⁵² O'Day's store (circa 1892), a small frame structure with an Italianate-style bracketed cornice, sold feed such as hay, grain and mixed feed, as well as a variety of general hardwares, and eventually groceries.

⁴⁹ The first blacksmith in Tennallytown may have been John Tennally himself, or a Jacob Colclazer, 20 years later. As early as 1830, John O'Harry was the village blacksmith, as well as the first postmaster. See Helm, p. 73-74.

⁵⁰ As quoted in Helm, p. 31.

⁵¹ "Tenleytown: A Seven-Hilled Citadel of Health," *The Washington Times*, May 26, 1903, as quoted in Helm, p. 114.

⁵² The store is located within the Grant Road Historic District.

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Not mentioned in this 1903 description were local cottage industries indicative of the rural economy that was Tenleytown, including the Riley slaughterhouse, located on Belt Road, south of today's Chesapeake Street; several poultry and game businesses in the neighborhood; and the truck farming or gardening industry that was the livelihood of many area residents. At Riley's Slaughterhouse, cattle and lamb were held in animal pens behind the slaughterhouse on the grounds of today's Wilson High School, but butchered inside in a large building and then lowered into a cold storage facility. The "home-dressed" butchered meat would then be taken to Center Market downtown. In 1922, Frank Riley closed the slaughterhouse, but continued to run a smaller butcher business out of the still extant stable behind his house at 4807 41st Street.

At least three Tenleytown residents including George Burrows of Grant Road raised chickens in their yards and took them "fresh-killed" daily to Riggs Market at on the 1400 block of P Street.⁵³ Similarly, local residents cultivated small plots of ground raising celery, turnips, parsley, horseradish and other crops that, once harvested, were taken to market for sale. Fruit trees were also planted in Tenleytown; in fact, the 1857 Boschke Map clearly indicates a fruit orchard surrounding the Magruder family property (the Rest).

Blacksmiths also continued to do brisk business in the village throughout the 19th and into the 20th centuries. Until automobiles began to replace carriages and the streetcars, blacksmiths were vital members of the community, offering horseshoeing, wheel wrighting and wagon building services, as well as general ironwork.

Post World War I Change

Following World War I as population began to increase in surrounding areas, business exploded in Tenleytown. Several more general stores and grocery stores, readily accessible via streetcar, opened along Wisconsin Avenue, catering to the growing population. The *Tenley*, a drygoods and notions store (later a pharmacy) and local area landmark stood at 4509 Wisconsin Avenue until it was torn down for the laying of Albemarle Street in 1931. Another neighborhood institution—the Loudoun Farms Dairy bottling outlet and later the Chevy Chase Dairy—still stands at 4515 Wisconsin Avenue (now a Guapo's Restaurant and favorite local gathering place).

During the 1920s, the entire east side of Wisconsin Avenue from Grant Road north to Chesapeake Street at Belt Road became increasingly commercial, albeit at a domestic scale. Several groups of commercial buildings were constructed during this period including the two-story craftsmen row in the 4900 block of 42nd Street/Wisconsin Avenue. Domestic in scale and feel, this row was built in 1923 by the Merchant's Realty and Investment Corporation and featured first floor storefronts and second-story

⁵³ Helm, p.112. City Directories of Riggs Market during the 1900s and through 1925 indicate that George Burrows occupied stall number 42 at Riggs Market.

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apartments. Other buildings actually built for residential purposes, such as the Tudor Revival-style buildings in the 4200 block of Wisconsin Avenue, eventually converted to commercial use, perpetuating the domestic nature of the commercial buildings of Tenleytown.

In 1927, Tenleytown residents got their first bank when the Farmer's and Merchant's Bank of Georgetown opened a branch at Wisconsin and Warren Streets.⁵⁴ The bank, along with a new telephone exchange building on Wisconsin Avenue, were clear indications that Tenleytown was shedding its small-town village roots.

Initially, the new commercial buildings were generally one and two-story structures befitting the village-like quality of existing Tenleytown. As the 20th century wore on, however, newer, larger commercial buildings replaced the small-scale ones, completely obliterating the rural roots of the former village. Illustrative of that transformation is the evolution of the old Tennallytown Inn. In 1918, the former tavern-cum-inn-cum restaurant became Tenleytown's first filling station, called the Hilltop Gas Station. Initially, the building remained intact as gasoline tanks were built in front of the former tavern, and the tavern itself served as a store, selling auto supplies. In 1930, however, a "fully equipped" multi-brand gas station was constructed on the northwest corner of Wisconsin and Albemarle, just south of the inn building, leaving the inn vacant and vulnerable. Not surprisingly, in 1939, as suburban change was sweeping through the former village, the inn was razed, along with the blacksmith shop. In 1940, owner Christian Heurich sold the property to Sears & Roebuck Company, sparking a major change in the character of local commerce.

The Rise of Retail Chains

The Sears & Roebuck store at 4500 Wisconsin Avenue was designed and built in 1940-41, typifying the company's large, ultra-modern stores meant to attract motorists outside of congested downtown areas. The proposed site in Tenleytown suited the company's criteria for a new store perfectly—it was commercially zoned (in part)⁵⁵, it was located at the intersection of two important routes leading to affluent residential suburbs, and it served as an important transportation hub.⁵⁶ Despite local opposition

⁵⁴ In 1928, Riggs Bank took over and the bank became Riggs' Friendship Branch. In 1959, Riggs built a new bank building on the site. The building, still standing, was designed by Petticord & Mills and reflects a mid-century modern aesthetic, including spare interior finishes.

⁵⁵ The parcel of land on which the tavern stood was already zoned commercial. At issue and the crux of the opponents fight, was a triangular parcel of land at the rear of the site that was to be rezoned commercial. For a thorough discussion of the history of the Sears & Roebuck building, see the National Register Nomination form (Art Deco Society, March 1993).

⁵⁶ By 1936, Tenley Circle at the intersection of Wisconsin and Nebraska Avenues and Yuma Street, became one of the busiest bus and streetcar connections in northwest Washington.

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to the proposed store,⁵⁷ Sears & Roebuck prevailed with their plans, ultimately constructing a modern, streamlined structure with novel rooftop parking and the highly acclaimed "windowless" sales area.

Around the same time that Sears moved into the neighborhood, supplanting the neighborhood's oldest landmark and former village's namesake, other chain stores began to displace smaller independent retail operations further eroding the village-like character of Tenleytown. In 1939, the grocery store chain, Giant Food erected its long brick supermarket on the site of two pairs of frame dwellings, and two years later, Kresge's 5 & 10 demolished several older dwellings for construction of its low-lying brick box. Also in 1939, People's Drug store opened next to the Masonic Hall in the 4400 block of Wisconsin Avenue; three years later, the pharmacy at Grant Road—a longtime fixture in the community—closed, unable to compete with People's. Many of these mid-20th-century chain stores have since been replaced with third-generation commercial/institutional buildings, built primarily in the last decades. Despite the major changes, and as noted above, a number of smaller-scale early 20th-century residential and commercial buildings continue to serve commercial purposes today and help preserve a sense of the neighborhood's more modest commercial past. In addition, certain mid-20th-century commercial buildings like the former Sears & Roebuck store and the Deco-inspired building at 4707 Wisconsin Avenue, NW (built with stores on first floor and apartments on second) illustrate later, mid-20th-century stylistic trends.

This commercial growth along Wisconsin Avenue in the inter-war years coincided with, and contributed to, a demise in Tenleytown as "village" and a rise in Tenleytown as part of the growing northwest Washington suburbs. Streets following the Permanent Plan of Highways established for this part of northwest Washington were being laid and paved, and entire streets of residential houses following typical inter-war suburban models were constructed. New businesses opening along the broad Wisconsin Avenue and catering to automobile traffic advertised themselves as being in "Friendship." The post office, which had been in existence since 1836 first as Tennallytown, and later as Tenleytown, eventually dropped the designation entirely, becoming instead "Friendship."

While reporting in *The Star* about the changing of the name from Tenleytown (or Tennallytown) to Friendship, John Claggett Proctor noted the loss:

"Incidentally, this is the passing of a very beautiful old name, which might well be regretted. Some argue that the word had too many Ls. The post office, however, did not feel that way about it, and for years used the old spelling Tennallytown until the controversy grew so warm that it dropped the name entirely and used the word Friendship."

⁵⁷ Local opposition was based upon safety and traffic concerns, as well as a fear that a large department store would destroy small business. This assumption did prove true—a lot of independent stores did close—but the Sears store also engendered new commercial growth as non-residents came to Tenleytown to shop at the department store. However the store is perceived, though, its erection unequivocally resulted in the end of a peaceful main street.

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For the longtime residents of Tenleytown, however, the loss was not just in name. By the mid- to late-20th century, Tenleytown was no longer a crossroads community with a commercial center catering to an outlying rural region. It was instead a major suburban community with intensive commercial use defining Wisconsin Avenue and attracting shoppers from all over the District and nearby Montgomery County, Maryland.

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IV. THE INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH OF TENLEYTOWN, 1770-1936

Institutional Beginnings:

From 1791 through the Civil War, the small village of Tenallytown clustered around John Tennally's tavern in predominantly rural surroundings. In these initial years, there was evidence, though, of a growing community, one that would require and support churches and other associated religious buildings, schools, a cemetery, fraternal organizations and other institutions.

Religion in Tenleytown:

The Methodists, the first known congregation to have established themselves in Tenleytown, founded their first church around 1832 in a private house. In 1840, the congregation built Mount Zion Methodist Church—the first of what would be four Methodist churches on the site located at the intersection of Murdock Mill and River Roads just west of Wisconsin Avenue. For decades this was the only church in the village and was referred to as the Tenleytown Church. Previously, worshipers had traveled to St. Albans Episcopal Church or further south to Georgetown. The present and fourth church on the site is Eldbrooke United Methodist Church, built in 1926 in the Spanish Revival style. Eldbrooke's membership through its 166 years of existence included many of the leading families of Tenleytown, such as the Harrys, Queens, Rileys, Robeys, Shoemakers and the Walthers, many of whom also established the Methodist Cemetery⁵⁸ in 1855 and, later, the Singleton Masonic Lodge.

In 1847, a Presbyterian Church was organized but it lasted only three years. That same year, Georgetown College built a retreat for its clergy and students on the present site of McLean Gardens. Just after the Civil War in 1866, St. Ann's Roman Catholic Parish was organized, named for Ann Green of Rosedale. Prior to the completion of the first church building in 1867, Catholics traveled to Holy Trinity Church in Georgetown. Three years later, St. Ann's School opened, although it was twenty years before the school would have a separate building. By that time, the first public school Tenley School (1882) was in operation and apparently putting pressure on St. Ann's enrollment. Between 1896 and 1905, likely due in part to the arrival of the public school, St. Ann's School closed temporarily. Despite the school's difficulties, the parish appeared to thrive. In 1892, a three-story stone rectory was built and in 1903 St. Ann's built a second church structure (the first church became auxiliary space for Tenley Public School).

⁵⁸ Despite its name and location adjacent to Eldbrooke Church, the Methodist Cemetery has always been operated independently, first by the original twelve organizers, then by their descendants who incorporated The Methodist Cemetery Association. The land for the cemetery was purchased from William D.C. Murdock and his wife who also made available the land for Eldbrooke Church. William Murdock was descended from John Murdock, owner of Friendship. In 2005 the Cemetery marked its 150th anniversary with a celebration and rededication.

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The year 1905 saw the reopening of St. Ann's School as well as the building of Immaculata Seminary and construction of the Convent of Bon Secours (listed in the DC. Inventory of Historic Sites and the National Register of Historic Places, 2004.)

The Convent of Bon Secours was erected in 1927-28 as the chapter house for the Washington, D.C. location of the Sisters of Bon Secours, an order dedicated to nursing in private homes. The Order, founded in France in 1824, spread to the United States in the 1880s, first establishing itself in Baltimore. The first nuns came to Washington during the typhoid epidemic of 1905 and provided much-needed service, particularly during the Spanish Flu pandemic after World War I. The convent first occupied the former rectory of the adjacent Saint Ann's Catholic Church, but in 1927 began construction of the present building on Yuma Street. As time went by, the Sisters found it increasingly difficult to meet financial obligations, and in 1966, were forced to sell. The former convent was first occupied by the French International School, then later by the all-girls Oakcrest School. It is currently owned by the Heights Foundation.

At the turn of the 20th century, Tenleytown was home to seven churches, four white and three black. None of the historically black churches survive. These included Rock Creek Baptist Church (1872, razed 1950s) located at the corner of Chesapeake and Nebraska, Mt. Asbury Methodist Episcopal, later St. Mark's (1888) at Fort Reno, and St. George's Episcopal mission (1899) whose second building was next to Reno School.

In addition to Eldbrooke and St. Ann's, the churches for whites were St. Albans mission, now St. Columba's and Mt. Tabor Baptist Church, now Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church. St. Columba's Episcopal Church at 42nd and Albemarle Streets started as a mission of St. Albans Church during the Reconstruction era. The current building (and the third church building on the site) was constructed in 1926.⁵⁹ When St. Columba's was first established and until the 1940s when 42nd Street was cut through to Albemarle, its cemetery connected the St. Columba's site to the Methodist Cemetery. The extension of 42nd Street resulted in the removal and re-interment of remains from both this cemetery and a corner of the Methodist Cemetery.

The Baptist denomination's first Tenleytown church, Mt. Tabor Baptist Church (1880), was located on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue north of Brandywine Street. By the 1920s, the congregation had outgrown the small church and commenced construction of a new church at 42nd and Fessenden Streets (site today of St. Mary's Armenian Church). However, the project was abandoned when the builders encountered difficulties during excavation due to the many underground streams in the area. When the opportunity to purchase land at Tenley Circle abutting Armesleigh Park arose, the congregation elected

⁵⁹ The exterior granite came from the Perna family quarry in Maryland. The stone from Perna quarries and the family's expertise in building with stone is still evident in Tenleytown.

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to move. The present Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church at Tenley Circle was constructed in 1955, with the addition of the southern wing in 1960. Baptist Church members have a close association, through a number of generations with the Masonic Lodge.

Though the Presbyterians' first effort to establish a Tenleytown presence in 1847 was unsuccessful, a full century later, in 1947, the Presbyterians did build a church on River Road on land that had been part of a farm owned by the locally prominent Burrows family. Later the National Presbyterian Church would occupy the site on Nebraska Avenue, formerly home to Washington Orphans Asylum/ Hillcrest Childrens' Center.

Tenleytown Schools:

When Tenleytown's first church, the Mt. Zion Methodist Episcopal Church was built in 1840, it also served as a school, similarly marking it as one of Tenleytown's first schools. Shortly, thereafter, in 1856, Congress sought approval from a majority of white taxpayers in Washington County (which included Tenleytown), for the establishment of free public schools for both black and white children. Although the proposal was rejected by taxpayers who didn't want to pay for it, Congress nonetheless in 1864, provided for the education of Washington County children.

Some sources refer to two schools on Grant Road that pre-dated the public schools; one, established possibly as early as 1818 stood near Broad Branch and another was located roughly where Murch Elementary is today on Reno Road. The latter was for white children from its inception. The former may have initially been for both black and white children.

In 1870, a school was established by St. Ann's Parish. For its first 20 years, it operated in the church, and in 1890 a two-story building was erected south of the church. Eight years earlier in 1882, the Tenley School, a two-story red brick building, had been built north of St. Ann's on the site of today's St. Ann's School. Tenleytown children who had been attending the Grant Road School for white children transferred to the Tenley School. In 1890, enrollment at the Tenley School was 88. An addition to the front of Tenley School (1896) doubled its size and by 1903, there were 350 children enrolled in grades 1-8. In the same year that Tenley School built its addition, St. Ann's School closed and remained closed until 1905.

Not long after the establishment of St. Ann's and Tenley Schools, in 1890, land was acquired for a Methodist university from a number of owners, including Achsah Davis whose father had acquired it from the Murdocks. The parcel, near Fort Gaines, was part of Addison's and Murdock's original Friendship grant, and included the Murdock home "Friendship," now the site of the AU Chancellor's house. In 1893, Congress granted a charter for the establishment of American University and in 1897 the university's first building, Hurst Hall, was built. In 1902 President Theodore Roosevelt laid the cornerstone for the second building, McKinley Hall, which was not completed for another 12 years. The

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university formally opened in 1914 and the College of Liberal Arts opened in 1925. While the original AU campus was located beyond the perceived boundaries of Tenleytown area, the university has impacted Tenleytown from the outset.

In 1903 Jesse Reno School (behind Alice Deal Junior High School), was built for black children on Howard Street in Reno City. Enrolling students from kindergarten through 8th grade, it had three or four rooms on the first floor and four more on the basement level. For high school, students went downtown. The construction of Reno School meant that black children in Reno City and the larger Tenleytown area would no longer have to travel to Broad Branch or Foxhall Road for an education. By the 1920s, however, there was pressure from the increasingly white and middle-class residents not only for more school buildings, but for the elimination of Reno City, which was perceived by many as a slum. The city began to acquire Reno properties and ultimately condemned those that owners refused to sell. As black residents of Reno City dispersed to other parts of the city, the enrollment at Reno School declined. By 1947 only 16 students remained. The school was closed in the early 1950s and once again, until desegregation, African-American pupils were obliged to go east of Rock Creek Park to school. The building was later used as a Civil Defense Office and in the 1980s was used briefly as a school for students with special needs (Rose School.) Although still standing, the school has been vacant and boarded up for the past few years.

In 1905, the year St. Ann's School reopened, Immaculata Seminary also opened with an enrollment of 18 students. Established as a select girls' school by the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary of the Woods at the request of Cardinal Gibbons, Immaculata welcomed both day and boarding students from elementary grades through junior college. Gloria Hunt, who lived with her mother at "Gloria Point" a now-demolished residence and former neighborhood landmark located at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and River Road, was a member of the first graduating class. Growing enrollment led to additions to the original building (called Marian Hall) in 1920 and again in 1956 when a gymnasium/auditorium, dormitory, and classrooms/dining hall were built. By 1960 the high school had become a day school. Despite the optimism generating additions to buildings, rooms in Marian Hall were leased to a Montessori school from 1971-76, and the junior college closed in 1978 and the property was sold to American University in 1986. Marian Hall now serves as a dormitory for American University students, while the 19th century Dunblane house also part of American University houses administrative offices.

In the second decade of the 20th century, Tenleytown had four elementary schools: two parochial, a public school for white children and a public school for black children; a parochial secondary school and junior college; a newly opened university. At the end of that decade, the Mount Vernon Seminary, a school for young ladies, moved from downtown to its new home on part of the old Grasslands estate, and remained there until 1942 when the Navy Department took it over.

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In the mid 1920s, the elementary school population was still growing; Tenley School was badly overcrowded and in poor physical condition. This resulted both in an increasing enrollment at St. Ann's of 150 students, and a community desire for a new elementary school. Built in 1925, Janney Elementary School was named for Bernard T. Janney, a much-admired supervising principal. Upon its opening, the school welcomed grades 3-8 from Tenley School; in the year following its opening, Janney had 518 students and just 3 years later there were 630 students.

The construction of Alice Deal Junior High School enabled 7th and 8th grade students to move to Deal, and as a result the K-2 classes that had remained at Tenley were able to move into the enlarged Janney School. Janney's first principal, Miss Pulizzi, is credited with providing space in the school for Tenleytown's first branch public library, which a year later found alternate space. Janney's playground was for its first quarter century the neighborhood's playground. In the early 1950s enrollment had reached 708 students. Though the enrollment is significantly lower today, the building continues to fulfill its original function. The site has been reduced from its original size as land was taken for the building of the Tenley Friendship library in the mid 1950s. And despite the lower enrollment, there are demountable classrooms to accommodate today's educational programs.

In 1928, the District Commissioners were authorized by the school board to acquire land for a junior high school. The site was adjacent to and just west of the Jesse Reno School at Reno City. The unwillingness of the property owners to sell led to condemnation proceedings. Construction began in 1930 and a year later, the three-story red brick and limestone Alice Deal School opened. Wings were added in 1935 and 1936, and in 1963-8 there was addition behind the gym. Municipal architect Arthur Harris who designed Janney Elementary was responsible for designing Deal as well. Alice Deal, after whom the school was named, was a member of the math faculty at McKinley Technical High School (McKinley Manual Training School.) She was a pioneer in the junior high school movement in Washington, DC and served as the principal of Columbia Junior High School. Located in close proximity to the highest geological elevation in the District of Columbia, Deal's tower provided an excellent vantage point for spotting planes during WWII, an activity undertaken both day and night.

At the same time Deal Junior High School was being built, land along Chesapeake Street and south to Albemarle (referred to as French's Woods for an early owner) was being acquired for a senior high school. Tenleytown high school students still were traveling into the city to Western, McKinley and other schools. Originally to be called Reno High School because of its proximity to the Fort, the school actually opened as Woodrow Wilson Senior High School in honor of the president. Wilson was designed in 1932 by the new Municipal Architect, Nathan Wyeth, to face Nebraska Avenue, overlooking an athletic field. Built to accommodate 1500 students, the three-story building Colonial Revival style building housed 61 classrooms and shops, and was flanked by a gym on one side and an auditorium on the other. It also had a rifle range, courts, locker rooms and a cafeteria. The school opened in 1935 for sophomores and juniors, with seniors added the following February, bringing the total number of students to 670. A pool, part of the initial plan, was added in 1978.

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In the 1960s the in-bound school population for Tenleytown schools declined, giving children from overcrowded schools in other areas of the city the opportunity to attend the much less crowded Tenleytown schools. Though the in-bound population has since recovered, especially at the elementary level, Tenleytown's three public schools still enroll a substantial number of out-of-bound students.

Other Institutional Organizations:

In addition to area churches and schools, other institutions, such as the William R. Singleton Masonic Lodge and the Washington City Orphan's Asylum established themselves in Tenleytown. The Masonic lodge was formed in 1901 when a group of Tenleytown men, members of the Free and Accepted Order of Masons petitioned the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia for a charter, which was issued May 8, 1901. Lodge No. 30 was named for William R. Singleton, the recently deceased secretary of the Grand Lodge. The original members who signed the charter for the lodge—Frankd Thomas, Isaac Shoemaker, Samuel O. Wendel, were also active in the Eldebrook Methodist Church or the Mount Tabor Baptist Church in Tenleytown.

The newly formed organization met for several years in the Tenleytown Hall, above a grocery store on Wisconsin Avenue. They soon purchased land on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue from Eli Riley, a member of the lodge, and built the still-standing lodge building at 1441 Wisconsin Avenue in 1908-09. The two-story building was constructed with space for business on the first story and meeting rooms above. The Friendship Post Office and a pharmacy occupied the street level for many years.

In 1926, the Singleton Lodge was remodeled and enlarged, completely changing the appearance of the building. A third story was added to the front, creating an irregular roof line that slopes to two stories in the rear. The brick exterior, recently renovated, was covered in stucco with Art Deco-style ornamentation.⁶⁰ The Singleton Lodge is a notable building along Tenleytown's main street.

The Washington City Orphans' Asylum/Hillcrest Children's Center (now part of the National Presbyterian Church complex) was originally founded in 1815 by Marcia Burns Van Ness to assist the children of soldiers killed or wounded in the War of 1812. The Asylum was first located on a lot on H Street between 9th and 10th Streets, N.W., moving, after the Civil War to a lot at 14th and S Streets. In 1927, a new and larger facility was built on a 13-acre tract in Tenleytown, just east of Mount Vernon Seminary. The design of the new facility, included a main building for offices and medical care, an auditorium and gymnasium, and residential cottages. The buildings, constructed of stone on the first story and half-timbering above, were designed by Appleton P. Clark in a deliberate, non-institutional manner. Since 1966, the buildings have been part of the National Presbyterian Church facility.⁶¹

⁶⁰ "The William R. Singleton Masonic Lodge," Elizabeth Breiseth, unpublished paper submitted for the course, "Historic Preservation Principles and Methods" under Richard Longstreth, George Washington University, December 2004.

⁶¹ Paul Williams, *Historic Resources Survey of Tenleytown*, 2003. *The City of Washington: An Illustrated History*, Junior League of Washington, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1977, p. 342.

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V. FORT RENO RESERVOIR IN TENLEYTOWN, 1896-1928

The Origins of Fort Reno Reservoir:

The Fort Reno Reservoir was planned to serve one of five service areas in Washington that were established in the late 19th century. The site of Fort Reno—the highest elevation of the city—was chosen not only to provide water to the growing population of the city, but also to provide the necessary pressure for those residential developments that were locating beyond the city's limits in areas of higher ground. Beginning in the 1890s and continuing through the 1920s, the District of Columbia purchased private lots within the Reno City subdivision (that had developed on the site of Fort Reno following the Civil War) for the reservoir facility. In 1896, following the 1893-94 purchase of land, the District of Columbia built the first water reservoir at Fort Reno. At that time, the last vestiges of the civil war fort were removed for construction of the reservoir, as were several houses within the largely African American working-class Reno City.⁶² In 1904, the District government purchased additional lots in Reno City for construction of a water tower (Elevated Tank 1) and associated watchman's house. The tower, a 60-foot-high brick structure with its attached Tudor Revival-style watchman's lodge, served as a major landmark in the city in the years before significant development obscured it from distant view. The tower and lodge were designed by the prominent architectural firm of Wood, Donn & Deming.

In 1910 and 1920, the District purchased additional lots in Reno City and built a new pumping station (1910) and a second lodge and attached garage (1904-1912). This lodge and attached garage were also designed by Wood, Donn & Deming and similarly reflect a Tudor Revival-style of architecture. In 1916, the original reservoir was covered with a roof and in 1928, a second water tower was added to the ensemble of reservoir buildings. This second tower (Elevated Tank 2), designed by the D.C. Municipal Architect, Albert A. Harris includes a 160,000-gallon tank. A large stone tower with a conical slate roof encases the actual tank, while a smaller attached tower, similarly with a conical slate roof, encloses a spiral stair that provides access to the water tank. That same year, the District also constructed a second reservoir—a 5.5 million gallon underground one built to accommodate the increased needs of placing Arlington, Virginia under service of this reservoir. In the 1950s, the original reservoir at Fort Reno was replaced with a 20-million-gallon clear water structure.

In 1997, proposed changes to the Fort Reno Reservoir triggered Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966. The resultant Determination of Eligibility found that five of the nine structures at the Fort Reno Reservoir complex are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic

⁶² In her book on Tenleytown, Judith Beck Helm, p.163, indicates that Reno City residents were displaced by this first phase of development. However, a Section 106 report on the Fort Reno Reservoir notes that the reservoir was constructed on Reno City lots that had never been developed. (Horne Engineering, "Determination of Eligibility and Determination of Effect Report: Fort Reno Reservoir, Washington, D.C.," October 1997, p. 7.)

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Places. These five structures include the Elevated Tank 1 and the Watchman's Lodge, the 1910 Pump Station, the 1904-1912 Lodge/Garage, Elevated Tank 2, and the 1928 Reservoir and ventilating houses.

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VI. Prehistoric Occupation (9000bc-1700ac) through Pre-Suburban Development of Tenleytown, ca. 1770-1890:

Prehistoric Land Use and Occupation - Archaeological Resources :

The Tenleytown area was an important economic and strategic location for Native Americans from approximately 14,000 years ago until the region was settled by Euro-Americans. Located nearby were Native American trails that linked the rivers with the uplands and beyond. Belt Road is located on the remains of one of these trails. The Potomac River in the falls area was used historically by Native American hunters, traders, and war parties, some from as far away as the Great Lakes and the Deep South. The river valleys provided access to fish and other resources, and corn and other crops were cultivated along the banks. The upland areas were the source of nuts, deer, and other game animals. Rock outcrops exposed in the steeply-sided stream beds, such as Klinge and Soapstone Valleys, and Broad Branch, provided raw materials for stone tool manufacture.

Currently, eight prehistoric and one dual component (historic and prehistoric) site have been identified in the Tenleytown area even though very few systematic archaeological surveys have been conducted there. Many of the identified sites were reported by avocational archaeologists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For a description of these sites, see Associated Property types in Section F of this document.

The Tenleytown neighborhood remains largely unsurveyed for archaeological resources with the exception of portions of Fort Reno Park. Most of the previously identified resources were done long ago, and their locations are only loosely known. However enough information on historic land use and patterns of behavior are known to indicate that the area has high general archaeological potential for both historic and prehistoric remains. Targeted investigations of specific locations utilizing GIS to identify favorable locations for archaeological remains that have not been destroyed by development would likely identify additional sites. This type of survey, successfully conducted on National Park Service lands associated with Rock Creek Park, identified 51 previously unrecorded archaeological sites on NPS property. While much of the Tenleytown area has been densely developed, it is likely that archaeological sites are preserved in parks, gardens, yards, and other areas that retain the original soil strata, either on the surface or buried under fill, pavement, or shallow foundations.

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F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Name of Property Type: Residential Buildings

Description:

As Tenleytown grew from a small crossroads community in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, to a thriving post-Civil War village, to a 20th-century suburb of the nation's capital, the single-family residential architecture of Tenleytown evolved dramatically. For the most part and based upon the surviving building stock, these single-family residences can be classified into three principal sub-types: 1) the estate; 2) the rural or village dwelling; and 3) the suburban house. The suburban dwelling form is by far the most heavily represented of the three sub-types, as the area's farmland during the early to mid-20th century was carved into residential subdivisions and built upon, following World War I, by speculative builders who were capitalizing on the allure of the suburbs. However, important clusters and scattered examples of rural and village dwellings—primarily modest two-story, two-bay frame buildings—still survive in Tenleytown, providing visual evidence of the neighborhood's independent, village past. Less visible (since they are set back on large lots and obscured from view by large trade trees), but nonetheless extant and indicative of the area's history, are its residential estates—constructed both before and during Tenleytown's transition from a rural community to a suburban neighborhood.

Name of Property Sub-type: Estates

Description:

Between Tenleytown's establishment in the late 18th century as a crossroads community *en route* to the port at Georgetown and its later inclusion into the District of Columbia as a residential neighborhood in the growing northwest section of the city, several estates were carved out of the formerly rural landscape. All these estates—whether from the 19th or 20th century—are reminders of the area's rural past and are an important characterization of Tenleytown today.

List of Estates:

<i>Property Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designation</i>
The Rest	4343 49 th Street	Early 1800s	DC Inventory
Dunblane	American University	ca. 1850	
Dumblane	4120 Warren Street, NW	1911-12	DC Inventory/NR
Under Oak	4220 Nebraska Avenue, NW	1924	

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Significance:

The Estate in Tenleytown is a significant property type that illustrates the rural legacy of this now urban neighborhood. The earliest estates are important remnants of the first period of growth in Tenleytown whose history is unique within the District of Columbia. The later estates are significant architectural expressions of their period, both designed by noted architects and built by established Washingtonians pursuing a semi-rural, suburban ideal. Historically, the estates provide important information on the social development of the Tenleytown community.

Registration Requirements:

The single-family dwelling sub-type "Estate" is eligible for listing under Criteria A, B and/or C. In order to qualify for registration, the dwelling should retain integrity of design and workmanship, and in particular, should retain original massing and character-defining details that evoke the individual building's period of construction and associated context. The properties must also retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association; however, leniency should be given to those examples (such as Dunblane) whose general setting may be affected by later developments, but whose existence is able, through feeling and association, to evoke a palpable sense of the past.

In the case that a property is eligible under Criterion A alterations to its original design should not make it ineligible for listing. However, the building must still be a physical embodiment of its type or period of construction.

Name of Subtype:

The Rural and Village Dwelling (1860-1915)

Description:

The Rural dwelling consists of the single-family detached house built beyond the center of Tenleytown, but within the village's rural environs. The Village dwelling includes single-family dwellings located within the heart of Tenleytown and generally representing two periods of residential development. The first phase of development occurred in the last quarter of the 19th century as Tenleytown grew into a village center that catered to the outlying rural community. While the outlying area was devoted to the cultivation of crops and the grazing of cattle, Tenleytown became home to small businessmen and merchants whose shops and small industries located at the crossroads community. These merchants and other workers built small frame residences, generally along the narrow side streets off of the main thoroughfares of present-day Wisconsin Avenue and River Road. Although many of these early village residences have been demolished, a cluster of

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them still survives along Grant Road in Tenleytown. This group of dwellings—all modest frame dwellings, generally with front facing gable ends—lines the narrow and curving Grant Road, a Civil War-era road that connected Tenleytown to areas east of Rock Creek. Together, this group of dwellings truly evokes the spirit of the village of Tenleytown that was separate and distinct from the city of Washington.

The second phase of the residential building that contributed to Tenleytown as a small village occurred in the last decade of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century. Several residential subdivisions were platted, but because of the still remote location of Tenleytown and perhaps its proximity to the largely African American and working-class Reno City, these early subdivisions were not initially built upon in a systematic manner (such as was occurring in other residential subdivisions). Instead, the houses that were built in the early subdivisions of Mt. Airy, Armesleigh Park, and Colorado Heights, followed the tradition of houses already standing in Tenleytown. These first houses to occupy newly laid lots were, like those along Grant Road, generally modest two-story, two- and three-bay frame structures (sometimes stuccoed). These dwelling forms have either sloped roofs with vernacular Italianate cornices, or front-facing gable ends, some with folk Victorian detailing such as scalloped shingles.

Further out, such as in American University Park, the rural house form tended to follow a somewhat more expansive model. Typically two or 2-1/2-stories in height, these houses often consisted of a principal wing and rear ell, with cross gable or hipped roofs, projecting side bays and wrap-around, or front porches.

Eventually, following World War I, these modest village and rural dwelling forms gave way to the more substantial middle-class dwelling forms. The smaller village residence can still be found, either in small clusters or independently, amongst the later brick residences. Similarly, the “rural” farmhouses as they are referred to today, are also interspersed among later suburban-type houses.

List of Rural/Village Dwelling Forms:

<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>
4800 block 41 st Street, NW	c. 1890s-1910s
4105 Ellicott Street	c. 1893
4201 River Road, NW	1909-11
4207 River Road, NW	1894-1902
4117-4121 Brandywine Street, NW	Pre-1894
4421-4425 Alton Place, NW	1907-1911
4424 Alton Place, NW	1908

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4428 Alton Place, NW	1902
4429 Alton Place, NW	1903
4437 Alton Place, NW	1904
4439 Alton Place, NW	1907
4443 Alton Place, NW	1904
Burrows House 4520 River Road, NW	1897
4601 47 th Street, NW	1897
4900 47 th Street, NW	1911
4619 48 th Street, NW	1897
4628 48 th Street, NW	1899
4716 48 th Street, NW	Ca. 1890
4513 49 th Street, NW	1897
4612 49 th Street, NW	1897
4716 Asbury Street, NW	1897
4941 Butterworth Place, NW	1897
4608 Davenport Street, NW	1902-04
4722 Davenport Street, NW	1900
4901 Ellicott Street, NW	1897
4701 Fessenden Street, NW	1897
4528 Fessenden Street, NW	1902-04
4540 Fessenden Street, NW	1900
3701 Grant Road, NW	1890s
3957 Fessenden Street, NW	1900
4831 Nebraska Avenue, NW	1900
4232 Ingomar Street, NW	c. 1890s
4220 Jenifer Street, NW	c. 1890s

Significance:

The single-family dwelling sub-type defined as rural and village dwelling is an important expression of a major phase of residential growth in Tenleytown. Until the early-to mid-20th century, Tenleytown was still very much a rural village, dependent upon the outlying agricultural economy and independent from the city. The surviving frame dwellings provide a visible reminder of this phase of growth in the history of Tenleytown.

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Registration Requirements:

The single-family dwelling sub-type, "Village" or "Rural" dwelling is eligible for listing under Criteria A and/or C. In order to qualify for registration, the dwelling type should retain integrity of design and workmanship, and in particular, should retain original massing and character-defining details that evoke the individual building's period of construction and associated context. The properties must also retain integrity of setting, feeling and association; however, leniency should be given to those examples whose general setting may be affected by later developments, but whose existence is able, through feeling and association, to evoke a palpable sense of the past. Similarly, because there is evidence indicating that some of the earliest "village" houses were moved in the later 19th and early 20th century, especially as new roads were laid according to the Permanent System of Highways, the "village" dwelling does not necessarily have to be on its original site in order to retain integrity.

Name of Sub-Type: **The Suburban House**

Description:

As the post-World War I population in Washington expanded and the need for housing increased, Tenleytown evolved from being a small, working-class village distinct from the city to a residential suburb in the northwest section of the city. In many cases, individuals purchased a single lot and built a house on it. More often, however, developers speculating on the physical and social transformation of Tenleytown, purchased groups of lots, or entire subdivisions that were platted in the early 20th-century but were minimally built upon. Hereon, they began the erection of new and more substantial dwellings, intended to attract middle-class professionals and city dwellers. Developers and builders constructed attached row houses and duplexes and occasionally two-story apartment houses, as well as freestanding dwellings, giving 20th-century Tenleytown both an urban neighborhood and suburban feel.

For the most part, the row house followed a standard 20th-century row house form of two-story height and two-bay width. The facades varied as flat-fronted façade, or with full-width front porch. Stylistically, the Tenleytown row house ranges from Craftsman-inspired to Colonial Revival to Modern. The Craftsmen style is characterized by overhanging roofs, exposed rafters and rough-fired common brick, well illustrated by the row of houses on the 5300 block of 41st Street. The Colonial Revival style row house is defined primarily by its red brick walls, symmetrical double-hung multi-pane windows and Colonial Revival-style door frames and trim. The Modern expression of the row house features reduced ornamentation, steel casement windows and planar wall facades. The style is

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best illustrated by a group of paired row houses located at the corner of Alton Place and 39th Street, built in 1946, and designed by noted modern designer, Joseph Abel of the firm Berle and Abel.

The "detached" dwelling tended to follow a standard, two-story, three-bay, central-passage, Georgian Revival-style form. However, other Colonial Revival-style dwellings are also well represented, as are Craftsmen bungalows, Tudor Revival-style houses, American four-squares, and more. Although the majority of these new suburban dwellings were of brick construction, there were still a sizeable number of frame dwellings being constructed. In particular, many of the houses built by the Kite Brothers in Armesleigh Park were frame dwellings, with gable end front facades. Perhaps recalling the earlier "village" dwellings in the area, this collection of buildings is quite distinctive, clearly distinguishing Armesleigh Park from other subdivisions.

In addition to these "model" homes, Tenleytown also has a limited number of houses that have been identified as Sears catalog houses, including the "Alhambra" house on Military Road and the "Conway" house on Fessenden Street.

Significance/Registration Criteria:

As a property sub-type, the suburban house in Tenleytown illustrates the evolution of Tenleytown from a village to a suburban neighborhood. However, the house as an individual dwelling is itself not adequate to represent this trend and must be part of a larger grouping (see Property Type: Residential Cluster/Historic District, below). The suburban house on its own, therefore, is eligible under Criteria B or C, but not Criterion A. The dwelling is eligible for listing under Criterion C only if it is representative of the work of a master architect or builder and/or is an exceptional example of its type or style of construction. The suburban dwelling is eligible under Criterion B if it is associated with a person or persons who have made important contributions to our history.

Name of Property Type: **Building Clusters/Historic District**

Description:

Much of the residential character of Tenleytown is due to the cohesive clustering of buildings that together may constitute an historic district. These clusters generally evolved from the wholesale development of certain streets and certain blocks by a single developer/builder/designer team. During the 1920s, the area's subdivisions, platted in the early 20th-century but minimally built upon, caught the attention of some of the city's most successful speculative developers. During the 1920s, these developers, namely the Kite Brothers in Armelseigh Park and the Warren Brothers in Colorado Heights, lured potential buyers to these subdivisions with architect-designed houses of quality

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construction. Ever mindful of economy-of-scale, these developers devised several models which they then repeated throughout their subdivisions. These models differed from developer to developer, bestowing, today, the platted subdivisions with their own cohesive, yet distinct architectural character.

In addition to the wholesale developments of the platted subdivisions, other local builders, entrepreneurs and speculators purchased already subdivided, or even un-subdivided parcels of land, upon which they then constructed groups of similarly designed houses. Numerous speculative builders/developers—both major players and small entrepreneurs—were building in Tenleytown during the first half of the 20th century.

List of Historic Districts/Building Clusters

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designation</i>
Grant Road Historic District	4400-4500 Grant Road, NW	1868-1908	DC/NR
Mount Airy	Brandywine, Ellicott, Belt, River	Platted 1892; c. 1892-1910	
Armesleigh Park	3800 block Albemarle, 3800 and 3900 blocks Alton Place and Yuma Street, part of the 3800 blocks of Windom Place and Warren Street and 38 th and 39 th Streets between Albemarle and Warren	Platted 1892; built 1919-1925	
	5300 Block 41 st Street, NW	1918	
Perna Duplexes	4112-4114 and 4116-4118 Chesapeake Street, N.W.	1908-09	

Significance/Registration Requirements:

The potential historic districts in Tenleytown are cohesive collections of principally residential buildings, though some commercial clusters are also represented. The groupings are significant as a physical manifestation of the maturation of Tenleytown from village to suburban neighborhood. The creation of building clusters/historic districts under this Multiple Property document allows for the inclusion of resources that are united historically and architecturally, but that individually may lack distinguishing characteristics of building type, style or method of construction. Although not

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necessarily eligible, certain cohesive clusters of buildings may be eligible as historic districts under this Multiple Property document. Such eligible districts should possess an intact concentration of resources that are associated with one or more of the developed historic contexts. Historic Districts may qualify for listing under Criterion A and/or C.

Name of Property Type: Institutional Buildings

Tenleytown's evolution from a small rural village clustered around John Tennally's tavern to a growing suburban community, engendered the rise of various institutional buildings, including most notably religious resources and educational buildings.

Property Sub-Type: Religious Resources/Cemeteries

Description:

Because Tenleytown was historically at a strategic crossroads of a rural area, the small community began, early on, to attract churches of different denominations. Architecturally, the religious resources of Tenleytown illustrate different stylistic preferences. For instance, Eldbrooke Church is executed in a Spanish Colonial Revival style that is unique in the city, while the Convent of Bon Secours provides an ecclesiastical expression of the Italian Renaissance villa.

List of Religious Resources:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designation</i>
Eldbrooke United Methodist Church	4100 River Road, NW	1926	DC
The Methodist Cemetery	Murdock Mill Road	1855	DC
St. Ann's Catholic Church, Rectory and School	4400 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1946	
Immaculata Seminary and Junior College (American University)	Nebraska Avenue at Tenley Circle	1904	
St. Columba's Episcopal Church	4201 Albemarle Street, NW	1926	
Convent of Bon Secours	4101 Yuma Street, NW	1927	DC/NR

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Significance/Registration Requirements:

The many religious buildings and cemeteries in Tenleytown contribute significantly to the area's built environment and its sense of history. More importantly, though, religious resources hold significance within their own religious-related contexts that goes above and beyond any associations with Tenleytown. For example, the Convent of Bon Secours (National Register listing 11/04) is notable as an excellent expression of a convent building and as the Washington, D.C. chapter house for the Sisters of Bon Secours. Other religious resources have their own histories that contribute not only to our understanding of Tenleytown, but to an understanding of their particular religious movement, denomination or affiliation.

Religious resources, including churches and other sanctuaries, religious schools and other religious institutions, church-related dwellings and cemeteries are eligible under National Register Criteria A and C and under Criterion Consideration A.

Property Sub-Type: Schools

Description:

Of the four extant school building complexes in Tenleytown, Reno School, Janney Elementary School, Alice Deal Junior High School and Wilson High School, the latter three are indicative of the red brick, Colonial Revival-style aesthetic that defines public school architecture in Washington, D.C. during the early to mid-20th century. Alternatively, Reno School, built in 1904 as a school for African Americans, is a smaller and more vernacular building that does not follow any standard form.

List of Schools:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designation</i>
Jesse Reno School	Howard Street, NW	1904	Pending DC
Janney Elementary School	4130 Albemarle Street, NW	1926	Pending DC
Alice Deal Junior High School	3815 Fort Drive, NW	1931	
Woodrow Wilson Senior High School	3950 Chesapeake Street, NW	1934-35	

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Significance/Registration Requirements:

The school buildings in Tenleytown contribute significantly to the area's built environment. In addition, these educational complexes hold city-wide significance as examples of the city's public school buildings and should thus be evaluated under the MPD Cover: *Public School Buildings in the District of Columbia, 1846-1946*. Schools in Tenleytown are eligible under National Register Criteria A and C.

Property Sub-Type: Other Institutional Buildings

Description/Significance/ Registration Requirements:

Tenleytown is home to institutions other than schools or religious buildings that may also qualify for listing under this property type. The institutional presence is indicative of the growing Tenleytown community and an important aspect of its architectural heritage. Like schools and religious buildings, other institutions may qualify for listing under Criteria A or C.

List of Other Institutions:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designation</i>
William R. Singleton Masonic Lodge	4441 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1926	
Washington City Orphan Asylum (National Presbyterian Church)	Corner of Nebraska Avenue and Van Ness Street, NW	1926-27	

Name of Property Type: Industrial/Commercial Buildings

Description:

The very existence of Tenleytown stems from the commercial enterprise of John Tennally's Tavern in the late 18th century. Tennally's Tavern encouraged the growth of the crossroads community as a commercial/industrial center of the larger rural area. Although no industrial or commercial buildings from this first period in Tenleytown's history survive, numerous other commercial buildings that represent the various phases of Tenleytown's evolution from a village center to a major automobile-centric shopping node.

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The earliest industries in Tenleytown were agrarian-based, or adjuncts to agriculture, such as mills, blacksmith shops, slaughter houses, feed stores and the like. The "Old Red Barn" on Belt Road (demolished after 1976) near Brandywine Street and the former butcher shop behind 4807 41st Street (no longer extant) were the rare agrarian-industrial survivors in Tenleytown until recent years.

More common, and yet still fragile, are Tenleytown's first stores. The earliest extant examples are modest two-story, flat-fronted frame or masonry buildings designed with show windows on the first floor and domestic living quarters above. O'Day's General Store/Scholls Pharmacy, at the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Grant Road, is the oldest known surviving store building. Built in the 1880s, the building's two-story, flat-fronted façade and Italianate cornice are indicative of the period. Several other similar buildings of the period located along Wisconsin Avenue and currently serving commercial purposes may or may not have been purpose-built structures.

Unlike more distinctly commercial buildings that were being built downtown during this period, the early 20th-century commercial buildings in Tenleytown were domestic, both stylistically and in terms of scale. Like their 19th-century predecessors, these stores featured first floor retail, while retaining the second-story living quarters. Based upon surviving examples, such as those along the 4900 block of 42nd Street and Wisconsin Avenue, these commercial buildings followed certain stylistic trends of the day, expressing Craftsmen and Colonial Revival tendencies.

As the 20th century wore on, newer, larger commercial buildings catering to a broader clientele began to replace the small-scale stores. Eventually, these, too, were replaced by more recent commercial/institutional building forms. The Sears & Roebuck store building, the Farmers and Merchants Bank building (later Riggs, now PNC Branch Bank), and the stores/apartment building at 4707 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W. represent the second-generation, 20th-century commercial building type in Tenleytown.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designation</i>
O'Day's Store	Corner Wisconsin Avenue and Grant Road, NW	Ca. 1868	Within Grant Road Historic District (DC/NR)
	4633 41 st Street	1916	
	4900 Wisconsin Avenue (west side)	1922	
	4900 block Wisconsin Avenue (east side) and 42 nd Street	1923	
	4625-31 41 st Street, NW	1924	
	4515-19 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1924	

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	4231-45 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1927	
Farmers and Mechanics Bank (PNC Bank)	4527 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1927	
PEPCO Substation	5210 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1940	
Sears Roebuck & Company	4500 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1941	DC/NR
	4707 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1937	

Significance/Registration Requirements:

Surviving commercial buildings within the period of significance contribute to an understanding of the evolving commercial history of Tenleytown. In many cases, and in particular in the late 19th and early 20th-centuries, commercial buildings were not purpose-built, but were residential buildings converted to commercial use. Under this cover document, purpose-built commercial buildings, as well as buildings that were converted to commercial use within the period of significance and that are defined by their commercial nature are eligible for listing. Commercial buildings are eligible for listing under Criteria A and C. In order to be eligible under Criterion A, the building must have been associated with a business or type of business that contributed to the commercial history of Tenleytown. In order to be eligible under Criterion C, the building must embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, style, or period of construction, or that represent the work of a master. Because the domestic quality of Tenleytown's early 20th-century commercial buildings is a defining characteristic, residential-cum-commercial buildings may be eligible for listing. In addition, because commercial uses have evolved over the years engendering certain alterations, the eligible building does not need to retain its original storefront. However, in case of significant exterior alterations, these alterations must have occurred within the period of significance.

Name of Property Type: **Public Utilities Buildings**

Description/Significance/Registration Requirements:

Like institutions, certain utilities and amenities emerged to service the growing community of Tenleytown. In some cases, such as the Western Union Telegraph Company tower, the resource served an even broader audience. This tower, sited near the highest natural elevation in D.C., was built in 1947 in a distinctive art moderne style, to serve as part of a Washington-Pittsburgh-New York radio relay triangle. Other public utilities buildings in Tenleytown include the Western Bus Garage, the C&P Telephone exchange, the telephone call boxes, and the firehouse. In addition to

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providing necessary services to the growing Tenleytown, these buildings hold city-wide significance as examples of their particular building type. The Western Bus Garage is eligible for listing in the National Register under the MPD Cover: *Streetcar and Bus Related Resources in Washington, D.C., 1864-1964*, while the C&P Telephone Exchange is eligible under the MPD Cover: *Telephone Related Resources in Washington, D.C. 1877-1950*, and the firehouse is eligible under the MPD *Firehouses in the District of Columbia*.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designation</i>
Tenleytown Firehouse/Engine Co. 20	4300 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1900	DC
C&P Telephone Exchange Telephone Call Boxes	4628 Wisconsin Avenue, NW	1926	
Fort Reno Reservoir Tank #1/Watchman's Lodge Pump House Lodge and Garage Tank #2 and Ventilating Houses	Donaldson Street, NW – Fort Reno	1904 1910 1910-12 1928	
Western Union Telegraph Company	4623 41 st Street	1947	NR, Pending DC
Western Avenue Bus Garage	5230 Wisconsin Avenue	1934	Pending DC

Name of Property Type: Objects

Description/Significance/Registration Requirements:

Tenleytown retains several street objects that are relics of the past and contribute to a sense of history in the area. These include telephone "call boxes," the 18th century Threlkeld boundary marker, and two stone markers from 1932 erected by the Garden Club of America to mark the entry into the District of Columbia from Montgomery County, Maryland. These markers, referred to as the Garden Club of America Markers, are eligible for listing under the MPD Cover: *Garden Club Markers of America in the District of Columbia, 1932-1933*.

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<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designation</i>
Threlkeld Boundary marker	Near 41 st and Fessenden Streets, NW	1870	
Hitching Post	Corner Brandywine Street and 43 rd Place	c. 1890s	
Telephone Call Boxes	Various locations	Ca. 1920	
Garden Club of America Entrance Markers	Wisconsin and Western Avenues	1933	Pending DC, NR

Name of Property Type: Archaeological Resources

Description/Significance/Registration:

Property Subtype: Prehistoric Archaeological Resources

Currently, eight prehistoric and one dual component (historic and prehistoric) site have been identified in the Tenleytown area even though very few systematic archaeological surveys have been conducted there. Many of the identified sites were reported by avocational archaeologists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The prehistoric sites include two, or possibly four soapstone quarries first used during the Terminal Archaic period, ca. 2200 to 1200 BC. The most famous one, Rose Hill Quarry 51NE005, was investigated by W.H. Holmes of the Bureau of American Ethnology in the U.S. National Museum, now the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Institution. Soapstone, or steatite, is a soft mineral used for bowls, netsinkers, pipes, beads, and other utilitarian objects. It was easily carved using stone tools. At Rose Hill Quarry Holmes (1897) documented the production sequence of large bowls whose use predates the introduction of ceramic (pottery) vessels in the region. Located where Soapstone Creek is crossed by Connecticut Ave., this important site was destroyed by modern construction. The other quarries have not been subjected to scientific investigations and they have not been accurately located.

A cache of stone tools was found at the Tenleytown site, 51NW037 and is now in the Smithsonian Institution collections. A cache is a group of artifacts that were deposited together as a unit. Some caches are raw materials stored for future use, some are partially finished tools (blanks), while others are made of religious or ritual artifacts. The Tenleytown cache consists of at least 59 large rhyolite biface blanks that measure from 14 to 21 cm in length. Rhyolite is a stone that is not locally available – the closest source is over 70 km distant in the mountains of Maryland. The cache was

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plowed up on the farm of Joseph Collins in 1906. The large size of the blanks and their shape make it likely they were performs for Susquehanna-type broadspears which were used during the Terminal Archaic (Krakker and Rosenthal 2008). Smithsonian personnel are working with the DC HPO to relocate Collins' farm so the site – if it has not been destroyed- can be investigated.

The Fort Reno Park site, 51NW074, has both historic and prehistoric archaeological components. The historic occupation is the former location of the town of Reno City, a post-Civil War African American community that was forcibly evacuated and razed to create the park in the 1930s-1940s. While the superstructures of the houses were burned, subsurface remains are present. The former streets are visible during periods of drought when the grass covering the roadbed areas dies more quickly than grass over the surrounding areas. The prehistoric component was identified in 1982 when a surface collection was made along the western access road to the reservoir. The horizontal limits for each component have not been systematically defined.

Property Subtype: Historic/ Industrial Archaeological Resources

Tenleytown's growth from scattered farms and plantations to a crossroads village, then to a suburban community has left a variety of potential historic archaeological sites that have not been the subject of archaeological investigations. Systematic surveys in the region have resulted in identification of farmsteads, tenanat farms, country houses, taverns, cemeteries, barns, mills, and other resources that would be expected in Tenleytown. Potential remains include the site of Tennally's Tavern, whose exact location is only roughly known. Although much of the Civil War-era Fort Reno was destroyed during construction of the Fort Reno reservoir and park, no effort has yet been expended to identify if any portion of the fort and related earthworks are still present. The remains of Reno City, part of the Fort Reno Park site, mentioned above, are considered potentially eligible for the National Register. Additional investigations are required to identify which lots are likely to contain deposits that have not been disturbed by subsequent development of park facilities. The Jesse Reno School building, constructed in 1903 is the only surviving building from Reno City. The school's grounds have a high potential for archaeological resources relating to early 20th century segregated education of African American children. The Fort Reno Reservoir complex's buildings are already eligible for listing on the NRHP. The reservoir and associated machinery may also be eligible as an industrial archaeology site related to the technological development of infrastructure that was necessary to support the District's growing population and industries.

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G. Geographical Data

The geographical boundaries for this Multiple Property document consist of the greater Tenleytown area of Washington, D.C. and roughly correspond with an area historically covered by the Tenleytown Post Office. (The Tenleytown Post Office was the first post office north of Georgetown. In 1883 an intervening post office was opened at St. Albans.) This irregularly shaped area is today roughly bounded by Western Avenue (the DC/Maryland line) running in a northeast/southwest direction, from the northeast side of Military Road to the east side of Massachusetts Avenue. On the east, the boundary runs along the northeast side of Military to the west side of 41st Street to the north side of Fessenden Street where it jogs further east to the west side of 34th Street/Reno Road Yuma Street. At Yuma, the boundary moves west one block to 37th Street, then south to Windom Place to 38th Street, south on 38th Street to Warren Street, west to 39th Street, south to Van Ness Street. The southern boundary runs west along the north side of Van Ness Street, jogs further south around the Washington City Orphans' Asylum and reconnects with Nebraska Avenue west to the east side of Massachusetts Avenue north to Western Avenue

As the more agricultural areas of old Tenleytown gave way to suburban subdivision, these areas acquired new names, such as American University Park, Armesleigh Park, etc. In the 1920s and 1930s 'Friendship' was increasingly substituted for 'Tenleytown.' Though the Tenleytown name was valued by many residents, its variable spellings led the post office to name its new facility at Wisconsin Avenue and Upton Street the Friendship Post Office. The Tenleytown name returned to prominence with the opening of the Metro station at Wisconsin and Albemarle Streets and today applies to the very central part of old Tenleytown.

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H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The multiple property listing of historic and architectural resources in greater Tenleytown is an outgrowth the 2003 historic resources survey, completed with a grant from the D.C. Historic Preservation Office, of 800 plus buildings in what is today considered Tenleytown, as well as ongoing research of the greater Tenleytown area by the Tenleytown Historical Society. A multi-property nomination was one of the recommendations of the 2003 Survey. The 2003 Historic Resources Survey and research into specific areas and sites all began with general research into the area, including a review of published books and articles, maps, building permits, census records, city directories, and other primary source materials.

All buildings located within the Historic Resources Survey boundaries were researched. Based upon the findings, seventeen sites were identified as candidates for historic designation. Of those, three (Convent of Bon Secours, Dumblane, Western Union Telegraph Building) have since been listed in the National Register. Applications are pending for two others; Eldbrooke United Methodist Church, The Methodist Cemetery.

The size of the 2003 grant limited the scope of the Survey to Tenleytown to the area thought of today as Tenleytown. The 'greater' Tenleytown of the 19th century included largely agricultural land that as it was developed came to be known by other names - American University Park, Friendship Heights - and the significant built reminders of greater Tenleytown are fewer and more scattered. Transportation improvements along today's Wisconsin Avenue, including a trolley line extending north to a terminus on Wisconsin Avenue between Harrison and Jenifer Streets led to increased development.

In 2003, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E awarded the Tenleytown Historical a grant for a photographic survey of American University Park, Friendship Heights and Tenleytown. These houses included the early American University Park homes, the "village" homes of Robeyville, and representative houses through the greater Tenleytown area, especially in Friendship Heights and American University Park. The Tenleytown Historical Society did building permit research on the homes photographed for the ANC Survey as well reviewing subdivision plats, maps, and archival resources.

Independent of specific grant funding, Tenleytown Historical Society continues to research the built environment in greater Tenleytown. Tenleytown Historical Society

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has researched and prepared a nomination for the Western Bus Garage in Friendship Heights. Research on early 20th century apartments on Harrison Street, clearly a response to the need for housing near the trolley terminus, and farmhouses, moved from their original locations as streets were improved or cut through, as well as older commercial buildings, is ongoing. Friendship Heights and American University Park because of their early rural character provide fewer examples of the built environment than one finds in what was the village of Tenleytown. Nevertheless they were very much a part of the Tenleytown community.

The Multiple Property document was prepared based upon the general research and the more specific building research. Several National Register nomination forms were prepared in association with this multiple property document.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: COVER DOCUMENTATION

MULTIPLE Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: 1770-1941, MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WASHINGTON, DISTRICT of COLUMBIA

DATE RECEIVED: 07/23/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 09/05/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 64501018

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	NEW MPS:	Y	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 9/5/08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER

DISCIPLINE

Phone

Date

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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

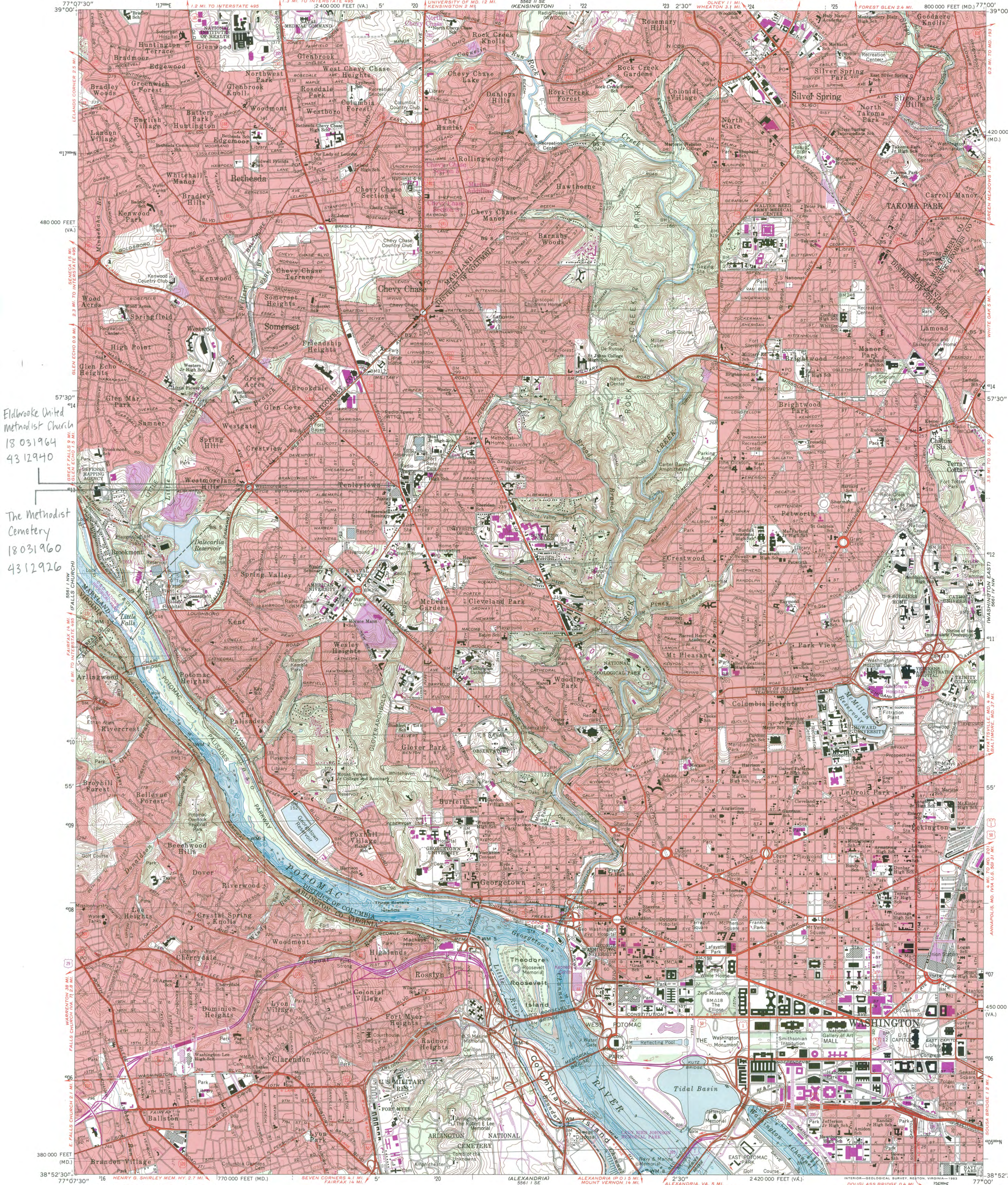
Eldbrooke United Methodist Church
The Methodist Cemetery
UTMs

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

WASHINGTON WEST QUADRANGLE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA-MARYLAND-VIRGINIA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES
(TOPOGRAPHIC-BATHYMETRIC)

Eldbrooke United
Methodist Church
18 031964
43 12940

The Methodist
Cemetery
18 031960
43 12926



CONVERSION
SCALES

Feet Meters



Feet Meters

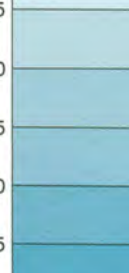
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To convert feet to meters
multiply by 3048

To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

Exposed at low tide

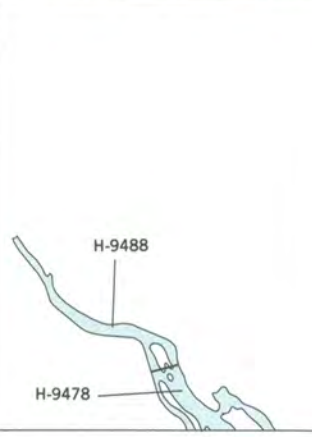
DEPTH GRADIENT



Maximum depth

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
and the National Ocean Service
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, NPS, and WSSC
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken
1955. Field checked 1956. Revised 1965.
Bathymetry compiled by the National Ocean Service from tide-coordinated
hydrographic surveys. This information is not intended for navigational
purposes.
Mean low water (dotted) line and mean high water (heavy solid) line
compiled by NOS from tide-coordinated aerial photographs. Apparent
shoreline (outer edge of vegetation) shown by light solid line.
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Maryland coordinate
system, and Virginia coordinate system, north zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the
projection lines 8 meters south and 26 meters west as shown by
dashed corner ticks.
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown.
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National
or State reservations shown on this map.
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with
Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs taken
1981 and other sources. This information not field checked.
Map dated 1983.
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas.

NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY INDEX



HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY
INFORMATION

Survey Number	Survey Date	Survey Scale	Survey Line spacing (Nautical Miles)
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H-9488	1976	1:5,000	01-05

SCALE 1:24 000

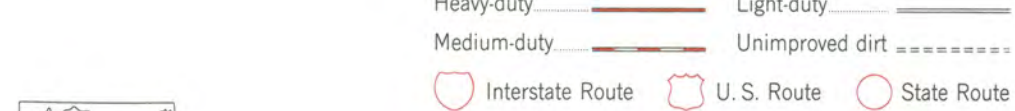


CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET

NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
BATHYMETRIC CONTOUR INTERVAL 1 METER WITH SUPPLEMENTARY
0.5 METER CONTOURS-DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 0.4 METER

BASE MAP COMPILES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
BATHYMETRIC SURVEY DATA COMPILES WITH INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC
ORGANIZATION (IHO) SPECIAL PUBLICATION 44 ACCURACY STANDARDS
AND/OR STANDARDS USED AT THE DATE OF THE SURVEY
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20852
AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES, CHARLOTTEVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION



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

WASHINGTON WEST, D.C.-MD.-VA.
38077-H1-TB-024

1985
PHOTOREVISED 1983
BATHYMETRY ADDED 1982
DMA 5561 1 NE-SERIES V853

UTM GRID AND 1983 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

QUADRANGLE LOCATION



WASHINGTON WEST, D.C.-MD.-VA.

38077-H1-TB-024

1985

PHOTOREVISED 1983

BATHYMETRY ADDED 1982

DMA 5561 1 NE-SERIES V853

UTM GRID AND 1983 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

QUADRANGLE LOCATION