

THE TOWN OF
HERNDON,
VIRGINIA



1987
HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY
SUMMARY REPORT

PREPARED BY
FRAZIER ASSOCIATES
AND
THE HERNDON PLANNING DEPARTMENT

TOWN OF HERNDON, VIRGINIA
1987 HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY

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ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY APPROACH, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROACH

In October of 1987 the Town of Herndon contracted with Frazier Associates of Staunton, Virginia to conduct a reconnaissance level architectural survey of historic properties within the town limits of 4.23 square miles (2719.39 acres) under a grant from the Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks. The original survey strategy was to survey all properties within the current town limits that appeared to have been constructed prior to 1940. The only property that had already been surveyed and nominated to the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places was the Herndon Depot (VDHL 29-212, and 235-1). The Herndon Planning Department estimated that 200 to 250 buildings would need to be surveyed. 204 contributing and 41 noncontributing buildings were surveyed for a total of 245 surveyed properties.

This survey included background historical research, the completion of the 245 brief survey forms of Herndon properties with photographs, additional historical information from members of the Herndon Historical Society, labeled town maps on which each property's inventory number was cross referenced with a map location, and a numerical list and an alphabetical list of the properties. The original forms, maps, and photographs are on file in the archives in the Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks. The negatives are on file in the Virginia State Library. A copy of the forms, and another set of photographs and maps are on file in the Herndon Planning Department office. In addition, a copy of the forms and photographs are on file at the offices of the Herndon Historical Society.

The past president of the Herndon Historical Society gave the surveyors a half-day walking tour to orient them to the community. The surveyors then reviewed historical materials and background information about Herndon's history and development in the Herndon Planning Department offices, the offices of the Herndon Historical Society, the Herndon Library, and the U.S. Library of Congress. This information included historic maps, personal histories, historic photograph collections, general historical reference publications, and a previous architectural survey conducted by Virginia Polytechnic Institute students in 1977. The surveyors also reviewed preservation priorities developed by a standing preservation committee of the

Herndon Historical Society and discussed the survey project at a general meeting of the Historical Society's membership.

Working with a special committee from the Herndon Historical Society, the surveyors then developed a list of all known historical resources and publications about Herndon. The special committee reviewed each item on this bibliography for photographs of and information about surveyed properties. This material was recorded on applicable survey forms.

The surveyors met with representatives of the Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks to tour Herndon and make preliminary recommendations on a potential historic district for the community. At the conclusion of the project the surveyors gave slide presentations on establishing a general community preservation program as well as specific survey findings and recommendations to the Herndon Historical Society, the Herndon Planning Commission, and the Herndon Town Council. Interviews were also given to two local newspapers to explain the project in greater detail for the general public.

FINDINGS

Findings indicate that of the 245 properties surveyed, 204 or eighty-three percent are contributing to the historic character of the community. 41 or seventeen percent are noncontributing buildings. 193 or seventy-nine percent of the buildings are houses showing the overwhelming residential nature of Herndon's historic resources. Seventeen percent are commercial structures and the remaining four percent are split between industrial and institutional buildings. All of the buildings were constructed between 1855 and 1940 but the majority were built from 1890 to 1920. Most of Herndon's historic resources are vernacular structures and most of the surveyed properties are of frame construction with weatherboard siding.

Herndon's compact commercial core is mainly composed of brick structures that post date the downtown fire of 1917 which destroyed nearly twenty buildings. Most of the commercial buildings are simple vernacular brick one-or-two-story, flat-roofed structures with little ornamentation. The board-and-batten Herndon Depot (VDHL 29-212, and 235-1) which survived the fire and dates from 1855 is the focal point of the downtown area. It is located on the town green next to the Town Hall (VDHL 235-2), a brick Colonial Revival structure that dates from 1939. Other prominent commercial buildings include

the three-story Italianate-styled frame building at 773-775 Station Street (VDHL 235-66), and Nachmans Department Store at 718 Lynn Street (VDHL 235-154). This business is original to the building and its facade has been covered with an aluminum mesh screen, but it retains an original upper-story balcony underneath. The former National Bank of Herndon building is a brick two-story Classical Revival structure with a pediment containing the construction date of 1910 (VDHL 235-69).

The 5 and Dime Cafe, located on the corner of Station and Pine streets, is in the former A&P grocery store built in the 1920s with its brick pilasters and hipped roof with wide overhang (VDHL 235-152). Across the street are several Victorian vernacular frame residences converted to professional use as well as an optometrist's office built at the turn of the century by Dr. Detweiler, a general practitioner (VDHL 235-145). This one-story frame building was built as a doctor's office and retains much of its original fabric including a cross-gable metal roof with fish scale shingles and decorative vents in the gable. There are two vacant former feed/grain warehouses located at the end of Center Street (VDHL 235-156 and 235-242) that are long, rectangular, frame structures dating from the agricultural era of Herndon. These buildings are in poor condition and are very likely threatened by future downtown development.

In the municipal parking lot off of Station Alley is a unique small vernacular concrete structure which housed the gas generating equipment for the town's streetlights (VDHL 235-71). The building was constructed in 1907 and contains an interesting roofline with a classical gable form with a kick at each end. There is a similar gas generating outbuilding behind the Queen Anne residence at 825 Elden Street (VDHL 235-30).

Outside of the downtown core is one other interesting commercial building, 709-711 Dranesville Road (VDHL 235-110). This two-story, flat-roofed, frame structure dates from the turn of the century and contains two storefronts and retains its original pressed metal ceiling. Nearby is the Chestnut Grove Cemetery with a small caretaker's shed (VDHL 235-116) that exhibits vernacular Carpenter Gothic details. It is clad in German siding, has carved rafter ends, and contains a decorative bargeboard with a pendant.

The majority of Herndon's historic resources are residential buildings that date from the 1890s to the 1920s. Major residential streets in the recommended

historic district include Elden, Grace, Monroe, and Spring streets.

Architectural styles are typical of the period: vernacular I-houses with front porches, Queen Anne, American Foursquare, Bungalow and Colonial Revival. The most prominent I-house is "Edwardstone" or the Braedy House, which is located at 920 Vine Street (VDHL 235-213). This two-story, gable-roofed, three-bay dwelling was built in the 1870s by Isaiah Bready, Herndon's first mayor. Sited on an expansive lawn, this imposing stone residence is constructed of a native dark gray stone which was quarried at the nearby Darlington Quarry. Loudoun Hall or the Paine House, 744 Dranesville Road (VDHL 235-112), is another I-house which dates from the late nineteenth century, although its rear ell is reputed to be of log construction and dates from the late eighteenth century. This three-bay, two-story, gable-roofed frame dwelling has clapboard siding, two-over-two sash, and stone end chimneys.

There are a variety of Queen Anne-styled residences scattered throughout Herndon's older neighborhoods and several of the more elaborately designed examples are located on Elden Street including the Benjamin Detweiler House, 825 Elden Street (VDHL 235-30). This two-story frame structure has a wraparound porch, a complex roof with a conical bay on the facade, as well as decorative brackets and a pierced bargeboard. This dwelling, which was built in 1890, is sited on a prominent corner lot with a large board-and-batten barn to the rear of the house and the previously noted gas generating outbuilding. Another similar Queen Anne-styled house is located at 630 Oak Street (VDHL 235-187) and contains two front porches separated by an octagonal tower. This two-story, three-bay residence dates from the turn of the century and is covered with asbestos shingles. A smaller scale Queen Anne residence at 1010 Grant Street is a pre-fabricated Sears and Roebuck house dating from 1910 (VDHL 235-240). This one-and-one-half-story dwelling with its cantilevered turret and stained glass Palladian-styled window is more commonly seen in cities on the west coast than in a Virginia small town.

Another Sears and Roebuck house is an American Foursquare-styled residence built in 1927 and located at 647 Spring Street (VDHL 235-51). This simple frame, two-story dwelling has a one-story front porch supported by stuccoed pedestals. A more elaborate example of the American Foursquare is the brick residence at 810 Elden Street (VDHL 235-12). This four-bay, two-story house has a front porch with Doric half columns supported by brick pedestals. Its one-over-one sash are capped by stone lintels and rest on stone sills. The frame house at 743 Florence Place (VDHL 235-197) is a typical

American Foursquare with its four bays, two stories, and metal hipped roof. Its one-story porch has Doric columns and turned balusters.

There are numerous Bungalow-styled houses in Herndon and many are located on Elden Street. A relatively unaltered example is the brick and shingle dwelling at 835 Herndon Street (VDHL 235-31) which has a front porch with Doric columns and has been enclosed with screens. 839 Elden Street is another example of an original bungalow (VDHL 235-32). Its frame construction is covered with wood shingles and rests on a brick foundation. The gable roof has incorporated a shed-roofed front porch supported by Doric columns. An excellent example of a Craftsman-styled bungalow is the shingled one-and-one-half-story dwelling at 1101 Grant Street (VDHL 235-199). It has triangular roof braces, three-over-one sash windows, and shingle clad porch supports. A similar Craftsman-styled bungalow is the house at 908 Elden Street (VDHL 235-21). It is also clad in brown shingles, has triangular porch braces, and is reputed to be another Sears and Roebuck pre-fabricated house. A documented Sears and Roebuck Craftsman-styled bungalow is the green shingled example located at 652 Jefferson Street (VDHL 235-163). Its gable roof has a wide overhang and triangular decorative brackets. The exterior walls have decorative Stick-style framing and the entire house is extremely well preserved.

Two of the most prominent examples of the Colonial Revival style are located on Elden Street: 904 Elden Street (VDHL 235-20) is a two-story, five-bay, brick residence set back on a generous lot. Its front porch consists of two Doric columns supporting a small pediment. The house has a porte-cochere on the south elevation that is supported by Doric columns resting on brick pedestals; The Daniel Detweiler House at 821 Elden Street (VDHL 235-28) is executed in the Dutch Colonial Revival style and was built in 1927. It has dressed coursed stone rubble walls at the first level and is capped with weatherboard siding above. The gambrel roof is one ^{of} several in Herndon. The house has nine-over-nine sash with stone jack arches on the first floor and six-over-six sash on the second level. The front door is capped with a bracketed and arched hood. Another fine example of this style is The Oaks located at 1000 Monroe Street (VDHL 235-131). Constructed in 1924, it is a three-bay, two-story, gable-roofed residence that is clad in weatherboards. Its one-story entrance portico is supported by pairs of Roman Doric columns. Its windows are six-over-six sash and the second-floor central window contains one-over-one sidelights. Its large lot contains mature oak trees, a gazebo, and

a footbridge over a small stream.

There are few traces left of the era when Herndon and the surrounding area were well known for their dairy farming activities. One property at 651 Spring Street contains remnants of a dairy farm and was built between 1900 and 1910. The Bicksler House (VDHL 235-50) is a two-story frame dwelling clad in German siding. It has a cross gable metal roof and an "L" plan. It is sited on a large lot with open fields in the rear and the property still retains the original barn and chicken house.

Herndon, like most small towns, has several examples of one-of-a-kind style of residential architecture. The house at 650 School Street (VDHL 235-212) is the town's only example of a vernacular interpretation of the French Second Empire style with its distinctive mansard roof. The dwelling at 810 Monroe Street (VDHL 235-129) is a unique mixture of Spanish Colonial Revival and a Craftsman cottage with its red terra cotta block construction and contrasting white quoins and lintels, as well as its hip-roofed, arched loggia supported by square, tapering, stuccoed pedestals. There is also an interesting example of the small English Cottage style at 930 Elden Street (VDHL 235-36). It was constructed in the 1930s of terra cotta blocks with a brick arched entrance surrounded by decorative plaster panels. The distinctive clipped gable roof is supported by large brackets. The garage and former chicken house are the same vintage and materials as the house.

Several of Herndon's early churches have been demolished and many of those that remain have found new uses or changed denominations. The Methodist Episcopal Church North, located at the corner of Elden and Center streets, was used by the American Legion before becoming the Church of Jesus Christ (VDHL 235-10). Built in 1872, this one-story, frame, gable-roofed structure retains its Gothic-arched windows, but has been covered with aluminum siding. The Methodist Episcopal Church South, located at 655 Spring Street (VDHL 235-48), was built in the Gothic Revival style, circa 1915. This white brick structure has a metal gable roof and a bell tower with a pyramidal metal roof and finial. Its pointed-arched windows are capped with arched and corbelled brick lintels. The rear educational wing was built in the International style in the 1950s. The entire facility is now home for the Community Christian Church.

The Masonic Lodge #264 now meets in the vernacular, Gothic-styled, frame church on the corner of Elden and Grace streets (VDHL 235-18) which used to be known as St. Timothy's Church. This frame building, built in the 1880s, has been covered with aluminum siding, but its east corner bell tower retains its original wood shingles. The double entry doors are crowned by a pointed-arched, stained glass transom. The First Catholic Church at 718 Pine Street (VDHL 235-150) has been adapted for the offices of Merrill Lynch Realty. This Gothic Revival-styled church was constructed in 1925 of coursed stone rubble from the local Darlington Quarry. Its verticality is emphasized by its raised basement, pointed-arched openings, and its steeply pitched roof. The only church with its original denomination is the First Baptist Church which is located at 681 Elden Street (VDHL 235-39). Like the First Catholic Church, this structure was built of stone from the local Darlington Quarry. It was erected in 1900 in the Gothic Revival style like so many other Herndon churches, and it contains pointed-arched windows and stone buttresses. In 1986 the church was expanded by the rebuilding of the east wall and the extension of the bell tower in matching stone.

Two of Herndon's early schools survive today as residences. The LeVine House at 725 Center Street (VDHL 235-206) was one of the town's first public schools and was built in the 1870s. This five-bay, one-and-one-half-story, frame building with its steeply pitched gable roof and central gable has seen some alterations since its days as a school. The Herndon Female Seminary at 763 Grace Street (VDHL 235-178) was built in the 1880s and later was known as the Castleman School Building. It is a frame, Victorian vernacular structure with a cross gable metal roof, decorative front porch, and bay windows. Numerous additions and porch enclosures have altered the building over the years.

Some of Herndon's historic resources are threatened by various forces which include development pressures on residential sites located along commercial corridors and on older smaller commercial structures within the downtown core area. Some residential streets and certain large lots within the survey area may be subject to additional dwellings under current zoning. This new residential construction could alter the traditional spacing and setbacks of the existing historic dwellings. Small frame outbuildings such as sheds, barns, and carriage houses, many dating from the turn of the century, are threatened by neglect. Many of the historic residences are suffering from incompatible remodelings which compromise the historic integrity of the buildings.

Removing front porches, adding aluminum siding over original building fabric, and replacing historic roofing materials with asphalt shingles are three of the most common problems occurring during these remodelings.

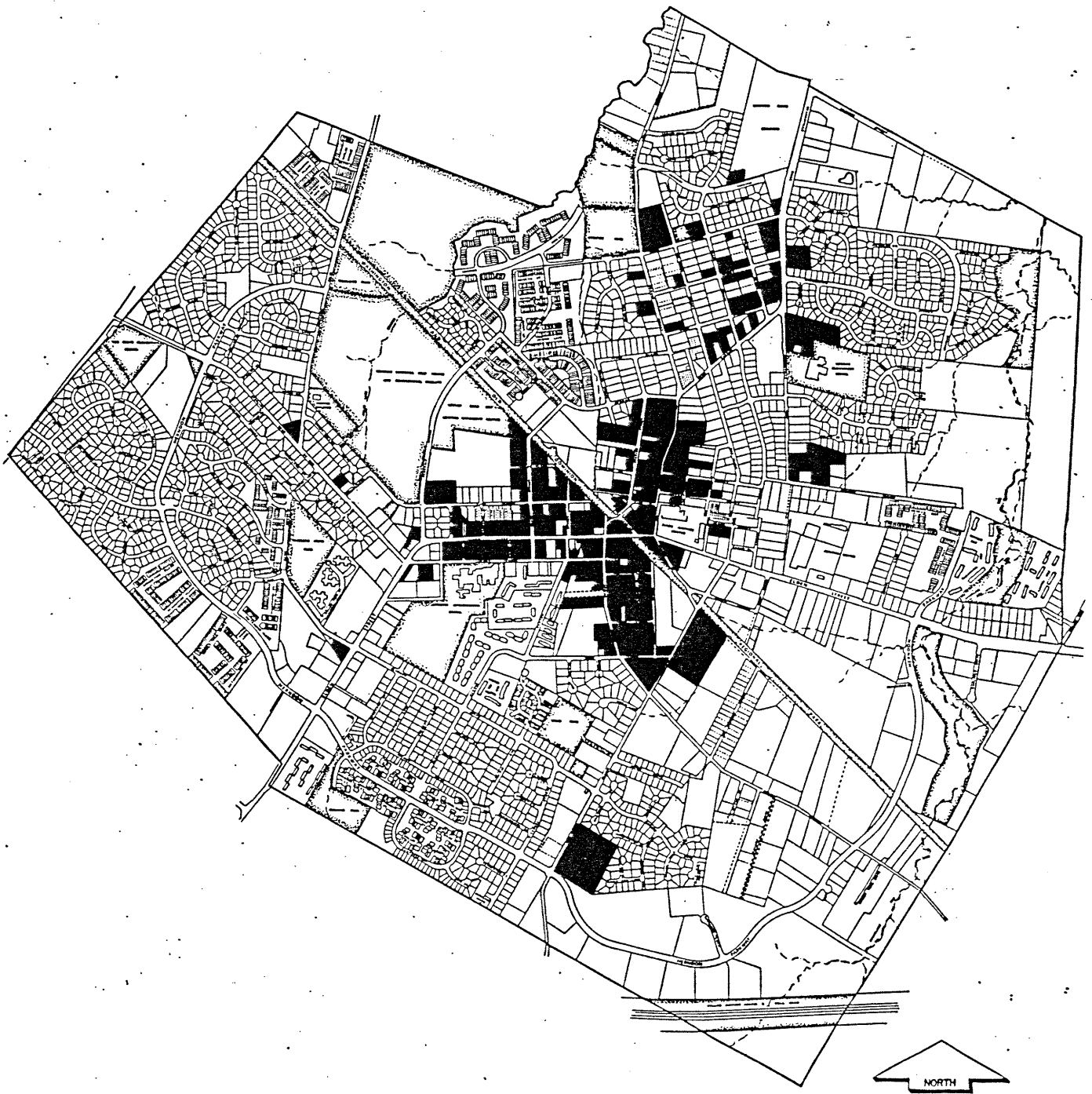
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for nominations to the state and federal historic registers include a historic district that in general would include contiguous sections of Elden, Main Drive, School, Locust, Grace, Center, Spring, Nash, Van Buren, Wood, Pearl, Oak, Florence Place, Monroe, Station, Lynn, Pine, Jefferson, Madison, Quincy, and Jackson streets as drawn on a map in the Planning Department. This area contains approximately 205 properties of which 56 or twenty-seven percent are either empty lots or are noncontributing buildings that do not contribute to the historic character of the district. The remaining 40 surveyed properties are located on Dranesville Road or on scattered sites throughout the rest of the town limits. Much of this recommended district relates to the town boundaries of the G. M. Hopkins' 1878 Map of Herndon P.O.

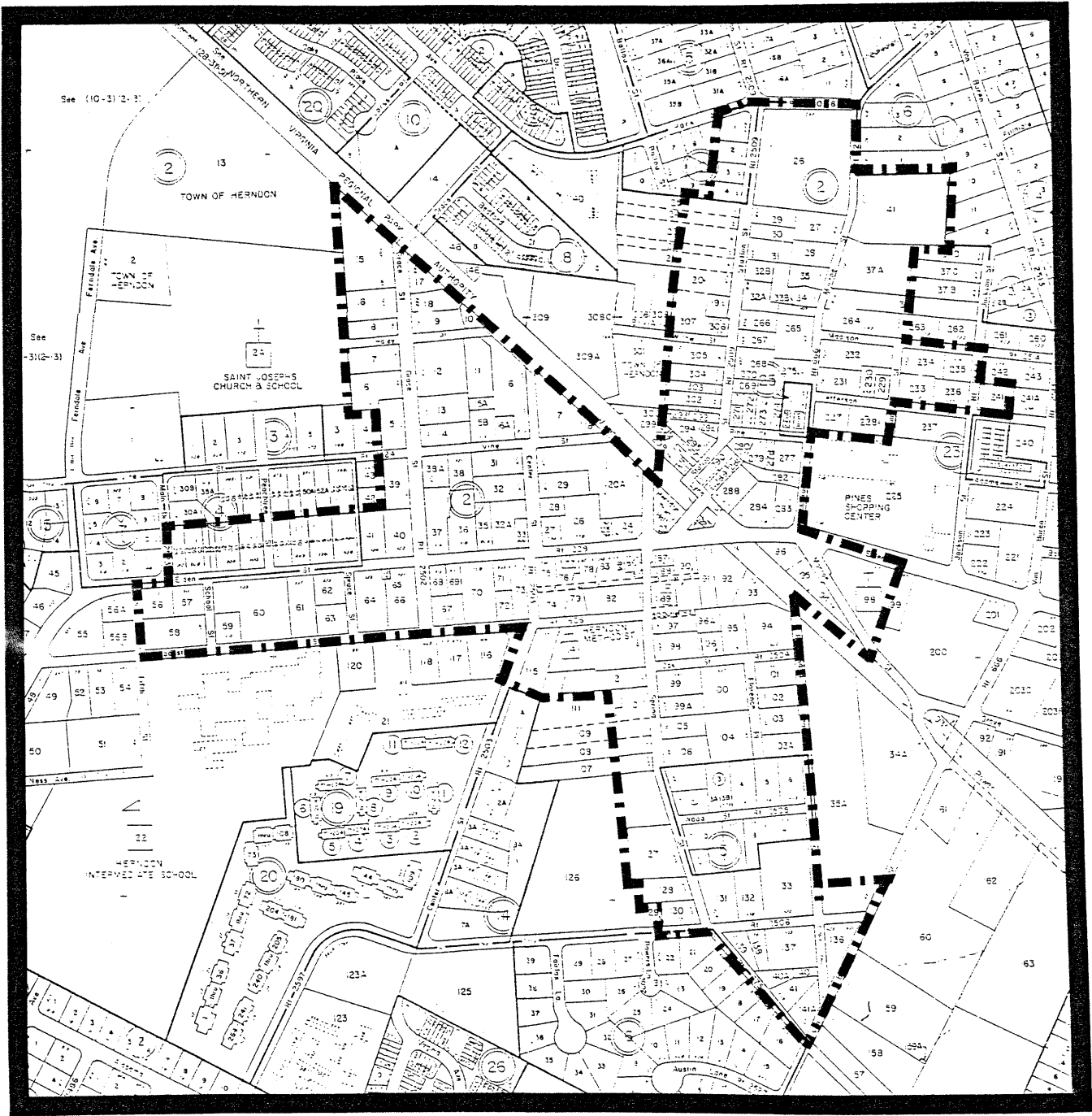
Herndon's historic preservation ordinance should be activated and revised to allow the designation of this district for local regulation and protection. In addition, any local properties that were surveyed but are located outside of the historic district can be designated as local landmarks under the present ordinance. Local zoning regulations should be reviewed to insure that they are encouraging the retention of the surveyed historic properties instead of demolition because of inappropriate zoning categories that allow more intense development.

The current architectural review board that was established under a special state legislation for Herndon regulates the appearance of any exterior construction for any building other than single family dwellings. If this town body is going to be used as the architectural review board for the historic preservation ordinance, it needs special training geared to this new function. It should also consider developing and adopting a historic preservation guidelines publication that the town would distribute to all affected property owners. These new historic preservation guidelines should be based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects.

In terms of public education, additional items may be appropriate. Several brief publications, including a guide to architectural styles and a walking tour brochure could be developed and distributed by the Herndon Historical Society. This organization might also produce a slide/tape presentation on the historical and architectural development of Herndon and offer it for use in the school system and for civic club programs. In addition, historical plaques with old photographs and appropriate text might be placed in key locations to commemorate important events in Herndon's past.



MAP 1 - PARCELS INCLUDED IN SURVEY



MAP 2 - PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT

(This is a preliminary proposal. A final proposal will be made at a later date by the Herndon Planning Department after consultation with the Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks.)

HISTORIC CONTEXT OF HERNDON, VIRGINIA

Statement of Significance

The major historic context of Herndon is transportation; specifically, the role that the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad has exerted over the community from its founding in the mid-nineteenth century until 1968 when the railroad terminated operations. The railroad was responsible for the development of the village of Herndon into one of Fairfax County's residential communities. In the post-Civil War years the railroad helped influence settlement patterns of northern Virginians with its direct link to Washington, D.C. The railroad contributed to the growth of dairy farming in the region by providing a ready means of transporting milk to market in Washington, D.C. in the period from 1880 to 1940. In the early twentieth century until after World War II the railroad helped turn Herndon into a bedroom community for Washington, D. C. and many residents used the passenger service to commute to government jobs in the nation's capital. With the rising popularity of the automobile and truck transport the railroad finally ceased operations in 1968 but not before playing one last significant role in the region. From 1959 to 1961 it carried the most traffic in its history when it was used to haul materials for the construction of the nearby new Dulles Airport.

Historical Background

The town of Herndon is situated on the western edge of Fairfax County, Virginia, on land that was originally patented to Robert "King " Carter, Jr., and Thomas Barnes. The Carter patent contains the majority of the site of Herndon in Fairfax County while the Barnes land involved a small portion along the Loudoun County line. In 1688 King Charles II of England granted almost five and one third million acres, known as the Northern Neck, to Thomas Culpeper, second baron Culpeper of Thoresway, and a very small portion of this immense grant became the land on which Herndon is situated. Two thousand acres of this land was subsequently granted by Thomas Fairfax, sixth baron Fairfax of Cameron (son-in-law of Lord Culpeper) to Carter and Barnes patents in 1728.¹

¹Donald Levine, Herndon the Land, 1649-1900, 3 vols. (Herndon: privately printed, 1982).

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries this part of Fairfax County was primarily agricultural, and the first sign of a settlement was the construction in the early nineteenth century of a mill in a hollow along a stream near present-day Elden and Locust streets. As farming flourished and additional settlers arrived in the region, the area around the mill was developed. In 1857 this settlement was selected as one through which the Alexandria, Loudoun & Hampshire Railroad would pass.

The story of the building of this railroad actually goes back to the competition between Baltimore and Alexandria for inland trade and commerce in the 1830s and 1840s. After almost a hundred years as a prosperous seaport, Alexandria realized that the extensive network of inland turnpikes of Northern Virginia and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal project, which were to have opened up new trading opportunities all the way to the Ohio River, were threatened by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. By 1842 the B & O extended to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia and Cumberland, Maryland. On March 20, 1847, at the request of a group of Alexandria merchants, the General Assembly chartered the Alexandria and Harper's Ferry Railroad to join the Winchester & Potomac Railroad at Harpers Ferry. This union would have opened up and secured the Shenandoah Valley market for Alexandria, but the B & O outmaneuvered the Alexandria merchants by purchasing the Winchester and Potomac Railroad in 1848 before the Alexandria and Harper's Ferry Railroad could be built.²

Alexandria continued to pursue the need for a rail link to the inland markets and on March 15, 1853, a second company, the Alexandria, Loudoun & Hampshire Railroad, was formed by a group of prominent local citizens including Lewis McKenzie, Cassius Lee, Benjamin Morgan, and William Gray. The line would extend past Winchester to Hampshire County, West Virginia. Construction started in 1855; by 1859 the line had extended twenty-seven miles to the settlement that would later be known as Herndon and a small board-and-batten frame depot was constructed.³

The line eventually reached Bluemont, in Loudoun County at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains, but it never reached West Virginia. After the Civil War a resurgence of railroad construction resulted in ambitious plans to build to the

² Herbert H. Harwood, Jr., Rails to the Blue Ridge, 1847-1963, the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad, (privately published, no date), p. 1.

³Ibid.

Ohio River, which was reflected in the renaming of the line the Washington & Ohio Railroad on July 26, 1870. By 1877 the company was in receivership and after various name changes and reorganizations the small feeder line became part of J. P. Morgan's new giant Southern Railway system.

With the completion of the railroad to Herndon in 1859, more settlers arrived and the village soon had several stores and a livery stable. A post office was needed and application was made to Washington, D.C. On July 13, 1858, the settlement was named Herndon and William W. Hollingsworth was appointed postmaster. Various names had been suggested for the community but had been rejected by the U.S. Post Office Department because they were already in use in Virginia or because the department insisted that post offices should not be named after local families. Legend has it that a local man, whose name was not recorded and who had been involved in a shipwreck, brought forward the name Herndon to commemorate the captain of the ship upon hearing of the local dilemma.

Captain William Lewis Herndon was the skipper of the packet *Central America* that sailed from New York to Panama, a main route for the California gold rush. On September 12, 1857, the ship sank in a storm off Cape Hatteras with the loss of 426 men including Herndon who went down with his ship. Most of the women and children were rescued and Herndon was praised for his orderly removal of passengers, his disciplined crew, and his personal bravery.⁴

The news of the sinking received front page coverage in the *New York Times* and Herndon became a national hero. A monument to him was erected at the United States Naval Academy and on March 6, 1858, the Virginia General Assembly instructed Governor Henry A. Wise to commission a gold medal to be presented "in the name of the commonwealth, to the widow of the deceased, as a simple testimonial of respect for a virtuous and brave man, and a noble and gallant officer."⁵ Within five months a Virginia town also had commemorated this naval officer and at the same time had solved the problem of naming the community.

⁴ Edward F. Heite, "Scientist on the Bridge," Virginia Cavalcade Vol. XV, No.4 (Spring 1966).

⁵ Ibid.

William Lewis Herndon was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1812 and was named for his uncle, Captain William Lewis, who was lost at sea in 1815 with the brig *Epervier*. Herndon received an appointment as a midshipman in the U.S. Navy on November 1, 1828, two years after the death of his parents. Over the next fourteen years he served on a variety of ships including the *Constellation*, the *Constitution*, and the *Independence*. In 1842 he became an assistant to his brother-in-law, Matthew Fontaine Maury, Superintendent of the Depot of Charts and Instruments, which they transformed into the U.S. Naval National Observatory. From 1850 to 1852 Herndon conducted research on the Amazon River; that voyage resulted in a two-volume work, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon*.⁶ Thus the town of Herndon was commemorating a scholarly explorer as well as a naval hero.

Shortly after the founding of Herndon at the outbreak of the Civil War, the Union Army immediately seized the Alexandria, Loudoun & Hampshire Railroad and secured it for their use as far as Vienna. Most of the remaining tracks and bridges were destroyed or damaged as General Robert E. Lee and his Confederate forces withdrew from Northern Virginia. Herndon was spared destruction during the war because of its proximity to the Union forces, although major battles were fought in nearby Manassas. Both sides seemed to consider Herndon a useful no-man's-land where provisions and information could be exchanged.⁷

After the Civil War many northern soldiers remained to settle in the area, and residents from northern states also moved to this part of Virginia with its moderate climate and lower land prices. Ancel St. John, of New Jersey, was a political leader of the new arrivals; they also included families from Pennsylvania and New York. These newcomers from the north were probably responsible for the founding in 1872 of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Herndon which was affiliated with the northern governing body of that denomination.⁸

⁶ James P. Reddick, Jr., "Herndon, Maury, and the Amazon Basin," U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings, (March 1971).

⁷ Robert Parker, "A Town Called Herndon," The Virginia Cardinal: A Magazine of Northern Virginia, (December 1973) p. 23.

⁸ Nan Netherton, Fairfax County, A History, (Fairfax County, Virginia: Board of Supervisors, 1978), p. 426.

This simple frame Gothic Revival-style church is located on the corner of Center and Elden streets and is now used by the Church of Jesus Christ (VDHL 235-10). Lottie Dyer Schneider, in her *Memories of Herndon*, wrote that "about this time, (1872) a number of New England people had come to town who were Congregationalists. The Methodists graciously offered the use of their church to these people for worship."⁹ By 1873 the Congregationalists had completed their own building on the corner of Pine and Monroe streets and by 1876 the local Episcopalians had done likewise with their chapel on Grace Street (both now demolished).

In 1878 the first map of Herndon P. O. was printed in *G. M. Hopkins Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, D.C.*; it showed the Washington and Ohio Railroad cutting diagonally through the town and crossing the stream known locally as the Branch. The steam sawmill on the Branch was owned by the Carlin family and other large landowners included Ancel St. John, J. W. Taylor, L. D. Ballou, J. H. Baker, and Isaiah Bready who built "Edwardstone," an imposing residence on Vine Street (VDHL 235-213). Bready became the first mayor of Herndon when it was chartered by the state in 1879. Originally from New York, he typified the northern orientation of the newly elected officials of Herndon as did the Town Clerk Henry Blanchard, who was from Maine. Other Town Council members from the North included Ancel St. John, of New Jersey, Stephen Killam, of Nova Scotia, and William D. Sweetzer, of New England. The population of the town was 442 and its area covered four and one third miles.¹⁰

Herndon established its first school in 1869 when the state constitution mandated free public education. When that building burned a new one was constructed on Center Street and has since been converted into a residence (VDHL 235-206). In addition, Mrs. Robert A. Castleman established the Herndon Episcopal Seminary for Girls in her residence on Grace Street and that establishment remained in operation until the mid-1920s (VDHL 235-178).¹¹

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 427.

¹¹ Lottie Dyer Schneider, *Memories of Herndon, Virginia* (Marion, VA: privately printed, 1962; reprint ed., Radford VA: Commonwealth Press, 1979), p. 12.

In 1889 the Fortnightly Club, a literary group, was established and that association was responsible for the town's first library, which was constructed in 1927 in a classically inspired building on Spring Street (VDHL 235-62).

At the turn of the century dairy farming was the most important industry in Fairfax County and the majority of its 18,580 residents were farmers. Most of the leading dairy producers in the county were located around Herndon and farmers from Chantilly to Dranesville shipped their milk daily on six trains to Washington dairies for processing and distribution. By 1911 Herndon was home for nineteen milk shippers, four land agents, a hotel, and two guest houses. In addition, a newspaper office, a bank, and several general stores lined the streets.¹²

In 1911 the railroad line became electrified when it was leased by and connected to the Great Falls & Old Dominion Railroad, an electric trolley line started by John R. McLean and Senator Stephen B. Elkins in 1906. These successful entrepreneurs had built a fourteen-mile-long trolley to scenic Great Falls on the Potomac River and had begun developing several suburban communities along the route including what is now McLean. The rise of the clean, speedy, and quiet electric trolley made living outside of the city convenient and there were fortunes to be created in the process. McLean and Elkins therefore decided to expand their operations and tied into the existing Washington & Ohio line. The combined companies became the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad, and Herndon received its first electric trolley in 1912.¹³

The arrival of summer residents, commuters, and real estate developers began to change the rural character of Herndon and other Fairfax County communities. By 1925 the majority of the 22,000 county residents were living in towns, although in that same year Fairfax County was still the leading producer of dairy products in the state. This was evidenced by the Herndon dairyman, Ben Middleton, who owned "Sadie, the best known Holstein in the world." This prize dairy cow produced over thirty tons of milk and one ton of butterfat in three years.¹⁴

¹² Parker, "A Town Called Herndon," p. 23.

¹³ Harwood, Rails to the Blue Ridge.

¹⁴ Netherton, Fairfax County, p. 541.

Herndon was also dramatically changed on March 22, 1917, when a terrible fire destroyed most of the downtown including sixteen businesses, two homes, and the Congregational Church.¹⁵ The downtown was quickly rebuilt and most of the new buildings were constructed of brick instead of wood. Residential growth continued as more Washington, D.C. workers chose Herndon as a convenient town from which they could commute to their jobs. Many new residences were built in the popular styles of the day, including several Sears and Roebuck houses that were brought in unassembled on flatbed railroad cars.

After the death of both of the founding partners of the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad, the company was mismanaged. Financial losses contributed to the deterioration of service and by 1932, because of the Great Depression, the company was put into receivership. After continued reductions in operations, passenger service was eliminated in 1941 and shortly thereafter the freight operations changed from electric to diesel power. From 1959 to 1961 the line experienced its busiest years ever when it was used to haul sand and construction materials to build neighboring Dulles Airport, which opened in 1962.¹⁶ However that one-time boom did not keep the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad from discontinuing service in 1968. Today the tracks are gone and the right of way is used for power lines and a regional trail system.

Recent growth in Herndon has been overwhelming: from 1970 to 1980 its population nearly tripled from 4,301 to 11,449. This rapid development is part of the larger suburban growth of the entire Washington metropolitan area. The establishment of the neighboring new town, Reston, and the opening of the Dulles Access Toll Road to local commuting traffic have both contributed to the recent explosive growth of Herndon; that growth is expected to continue in the near future.

¹⁵ Parker, "A Town Called Herndon," p. 23.

¹⁶ Harwood, Rails to the Blue Ridge.

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