

VLR-12/2/98 NRHP-1/21/99

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Buckingham Historic District

other names/site number DHR File No. 00-0025

2. Location

street & number Area bounded by N. 5th, N. Oxford, N. 2nd Streets & N. Glebe Road not for publication N/A

city or town N/A vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Arlington code 013 zip code 22203

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

McCarton Kussner 12/14/98

Signature of certifying official/Title Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting official/Title _____ Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet
 - determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet
 - determined not eligible for the National Register
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain): _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>52</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>52</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/
Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick

roof Slate
other Slate

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

See Attached Continuation Sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Planning & Development

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1937 - 1938

Significant Dates

1937-1938

Significant Person

(Completed if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Wright, Henry

Paramount Communities, Inc.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property of one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

VA Department of Historic Resources

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 22 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1.	18	317100	4304970	3.	18	317520	4304500
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2.	18	317420	4304960	4.			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marie Ryan, Project Assistant

organization Paradigm Development Company date July 15, 1998

street & number 3333 K Street, NW, Suite 100 telephone (202) 342-3487

city or town Washington, D.C. state _____ zip code 20007

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Pershing Drive Associates, Limited Partnership c/o Paradigm Development Company

street & number 3333 K Street, N.W., Suite 100, Washington, D.C. 20007 telephone (202) 342-3487

city or town Washington, D. C. 20007 state _____ zip code 20007

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: this information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing of 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, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Buckingham Historic District
Arlington County, VA

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Buckingham Historic District comprises the residential community of Buckingham located in the urban county of Arlington, Virginia, just south of Washington, D.C. Now known as Historic Ballston Park, the 52 brick buildings which make up the community are situated in an area that is bound by N. 5th Street, N. Oxford Street, N. 2nd Street and N. Glebe Road and bisected by N. Pershing Drive. The multi-family apartment buildings were designed by Henry Wright in the Colonial Revival style and were built by Paramount Communities, Inc. between 1937 and 1938. The two-story brick buildings were constructed of brick and hollow tile. One three-story brick building was constructed to test the appeal of modern architecture. Each two-story building has decorative entrance surrounds, symmetrically paired windows and brick quoining. The site plan of the community, which incorporates open spaces and courtyards, is also a significant feature of the community. Generally, the community is in good condition but it is necessary for a major rehabilitation to be undertaken to extend the useful life of the buildings. A sympathetic rehabilitation has been planned so that the original architectural integrity of the buildings will continue to be kept intact.

Originally, the land on which the Buckingham Historic District was built was a farm. About 100 acres of the eastwardly sloping landscape was developed as a model of affordable apartment communities for middle class Americans in the 1930s to 1950s by Paramount Communities, Inc. The earliest part of the development is situated on nearly 25 acres of land and is comprised of the 52 brick buildings that constitute the historic district. All but one of these brick buildings are two-story Colonial Revival-style brick buildings. There is a single three-story brick building that was built in the International style to test the appeal of modern architecture. Some brick buildings have only one address. The majority of single-address brick buildings have four apartments that may be one, two, or three bedrooms, or efficiency apartments. There are several single-address brick buildings which are configured with townhouses that have two or three bedrooms. Most brick buildings have two or three addresses which contain one, two, or three bedrooms or efficiency apartments as well. The original community also had a commercial area which is outside of the proposed historic district.

The Colonial Revival-style brick buildings that make up most of the proposed historic district were constructed with brick and hollow tile. Most of the six-course American bond brick buildings have gable or hip-roofs that are clad in slate shingles. Several of the brick buildings, including the three-story brick building, have flat roofs. Architectural features such as cast concrete decorative surrounds at the front entrance and brick quoining help to accentuate the Colonial Revival style of the buildings. Windows were originally double hung, six over six, wood windows. Many windows are paired sets that are symmetrically balanced on the facades of the brick building. Roofs were accentuated with wooden ventilation louvers that were originally covered in copper. Several of the brick buildings were originally painted in an off-white or gray color. As the community progressed, the painted brick buildings became increasingly popular and thus, more brick buildings were painted by the end of construction of the entire community.

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The brick buildings of Buckingham were laid out on angular streets instead of costly curving streets. Angular streets were used to relieve some of the heavy vehicular traffic around the residential area and promoted safety in the neighborhood. With this street layout, the designers were able to place the facades of the buildings near the streets and create large open courtyards to the rear of the buildings. These courtyards were designed for use by the residents at Buckingham as recreational areas and included amenities such as playground equipment for children. There are only two instances in which a more formal courtyard was created at the front elevations of a group of buildings. The arrangement of buildings at Buckingham resulted in a density that is far less than that of other comparable communities. Further, less area in the streets as compared to a typical gridiron plan and the merging of open space into large communal areas, helped to achieve a more desirable density than that which was achieved with high rise or other types of high density residential development.

The predominant feature of the original landscape plan are trees along the street frontages which have matured. Vegetation including azaleas, rhododendrons and many species of evergreens continue to thrive and dot the landscape but do not create a clear pattern of the original landscape plan. Many areas have been left barren after the demise of the original plant materials.

The condition of the earliest constructed brick buildings is generally good. Over time certain alterations have taken place at the community. The original wood windows have been replaced with aluminum and vinyl, single hung windows. As a cooling system was not incorporated into the community during construction, air conditioning has been achieved by placing individual units in apartment windows or by cutting into the brick and placing an air conditioning unit through the wall. Other alterations have included the replacement of slate shingle roofs with asphalt shingle roofs and reconfiguration of some flat roofs to either hipped or gable roofs. The exterior facades of the brick buildings do not generally reveal the antiquated mechanical systems or other interior conditions that necessitate renovation in order to extend the useful life of these brick buildings. Currently, the owners are undertaking a major rehabilitation of the community.

Over the course of time, Buckingham has changed hands several times. The level of maintenance and upkeep which the community received has varied over the past fifty years. As a result of the varying degrees of disrepair as well as the age of the brick buildings, numerous items will be repaired, refurbished or replaced during the rehabilitation process:

Within the historic district are two brick buildings that do not contribute to the significance of the historic district. The first is the new one-story, cross-hipp-roofed marketing and community center at 351 N. Glebe Road. This brick building built in 1996 was designed to be sympathetic to the original brick buildings but to also provide the necessary space for management of the community and be distinguishable as a new brick building.

The second non-contributing brick building is a two-story single-family house located at 225 N. Piedmont Street. This Craftsman-style house borrows detailing from earlier Victorian architecture. The

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exposed roof rafters and windows typical of the Craftsman style are accentuated by a steeply pitched roof more commonly found on Victorian houses. Built prior to the development of Buckingham, this dwelling does not contribute to the significance of the planned community.

The Buckingham Historic District appears much as it did when it was first developed. Significant development to the surrounding community has included several high-rise apartment brick buildings and office brick buildings to the north of the area as well as a shopping mall and a municipal parking garage. The residential neighborhoods of single-family dwellings to the east and west are contemporaries of Buckingham and continue to maintain the residential feel of the overall neighborhood. Further south is some commercial development focused on the intersection of N. Glebe Road and U.S. Route 50.

Buckingham's two-story brick apartment buildings are distinct from the surrounding community of single-family dwellings, high-rise condominiums, and commercial areas. The arrangement of brick buildings along the streets with rear courtyards and the low density also distinguishes the community from the surrounding area. The 52 brick buildings which make up the Buckingham Historic District are distinguished from the rest of the original Buckingham community because they are the earliest brick buildings developed as part of Paramount Communities' planned community. Another factor which distinguishes the community from the surrounding neighborhood is that it continues to be a rental housing community for middle-class workers of Washington, D.C.

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Description of Individual Brick buildings

<i>Address</i>	<i>Description</i>
VILLAGE 9	
3900, 3904, 3908 N. Fourth Street	This is the three-story, white painted brick building which tested the appeal of modern architecture. It's a three-bay, flat-roofed building with an English basement.
3912 N. Fourth Street	This is a one-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, painted brick building. It is part of a 5-building landscaped courtyard (3912, 3914, 3916, 3918, 3920, 3922, 3924, 3926) located on N. Fourth Street.
3914-3916 N. Fourth Street	This brick building has a hip roof and is comprised of two back-to-back townhouses. The building has been painted.
3918-3920 N. Fourth Street	This two-bay, two-story brick building has a hip roof and is painted.
3922-3924 N. Fourth Street.	This brick building has a hip roof and is comprised of two back-to-back townhouses. The building has been painted.
3926 N. Fourth Street	This is a one-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, painted brick building.
3930-3932 N. Fourth Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, painted brick building
310, 312, 314 N. Piedmont Street	This is a three-bay, two-story, gable-roofed brick building. The door surrounds at this address are some of the more elaborate found on site.
320-322 N. Piedmont Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building that is part of a three-building (320-322, 324-326-328, 330-332) landscaped courtyard on N. Piedmont Street.
324, 326, 328 N. Piedmont Street	This is a three-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
330,332 N. Piedmont Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
3903, 3905, 3907 N. Pershing Drive	This is a three-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
309, 311 N. Quebec Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, gable-roofed brick building.

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<i>Address</i>	<i>Description</i>
315, 317, 319 N. Quebec Street	This is a three-bay brick building. The center address (315) has a gable roof with flat roofs on the "wings" which are 317 and 319 N. Quebec.
347-349 N. Glebe Road	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
351 N. Glebe Road	This is a new, 3500 square foot, single story, community center which is non-contributing.
353-357 N. Glebe Road	This brick building has a hip-roofed and is comprised of two back-to-back townhouses.
359, 363, 367, 369 N. Glebe Road	This is a two-story, two-bay brick building with two townhouses at either end. The main part of the building has a gable roof while there are flat roofs on the townhouses. The entire building is painted.
373 N. Glebe Road	This is a one-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
381-383 N. Glebe Road	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
VILLAGES 8 & 12	
411, 415, 419 N. Glebe Road	This is a three-bay, two-story, painted, hip-roofed brick building.
3825 N. Fifth Street	This is one-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
3900-3902 N. Fifth Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, brick building with a gable roof.
3901, 3903, 3905 N. Fifth Street	This is a three-bay, two-story, cross-gable-roofed brick building.
3908, 3910, 3912, 3914, 3916 N. Fifth Street	This is a five-bay, two-story brick building with a cross-gable roof and flat roofs at both ends.
3909- 3911 N. Fifth Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, brick building with a central hipped roof and flat roofs at both ends. It is part of a three-building landscaped courtyard (3909, 3911, 3915, 3917, 3921, 3923) on N. Fifth Street
3915, 3917, 3919 N. Fifth Street	This is a three-bay, two-story, gable-roofed building.
3921-3923 N. Fifth Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, brick building with a central hipped roof and flat roofs at both ends.

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<i>Address</i>	<i>Description</i>
4000, 4002, 4004, 4006 N. Fifth Street	This is a four-bay, two-story, brick building with a central hipped roof and flat roofs at both ends. The roof of this building was changed from slate shingles to asphalt shingles.
4001, 4003, 4005 N. Fifth Street	This is a three-bay, two-story, brick building with a central cross gable roof and hipped roofs at both ends.
3901-3903 N. Fourth Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, painted brick building with a central gable roof and flat roofs at both ends.
3909-3911 N. Fourth Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, brick building.
3919-3921 N. Fourth Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, brick building.
3931, 3933, 3935 N. Fourth Street	This is a three-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, brick building.
VILLAGE 11	
3822, 3824, 3826 N. Fifth Street	This is a three-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, painted brick building.
309, 311, 313, 315 N. Piedmont Street	This is a four-bay, two-story gable roofed brick building.
319, 321, 323, 325 N. Piedmont Street	This is a four-bay, two-story brick building with a central hipped roof and a flat roof at each end.
401, 403, 405, 407 N. Piedmont Street	This is a four-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
310-312 N. Oxford Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
316, 318, 320, 322 N. Oxford Street	This is a four-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, painted brick building.
326-328 N. Oxford Street	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.
400, 402, 404, 406 N. Oxford Street	This is a four-bay, two-story, painted brick building with a hipped roof and two cross gables above the bays at the farthest ends of the building.
3823-3825 N. Pershing Drive	This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, painted brick building.

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VILLAGE 10

200, 202, 204 N. Piedmont Street

This is a three-bay, two-story, gable-roofed, brick building.

Address

Description

201, 203, 205 N. Piedmont Street

This is a three-bay, two-story, gable-roofed, brick building.

209, 211, 213, 215 N. Piedmont Street

This is a four-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, painted brick building.

216, 218, 220, 222 N. Piedmont Street

This is a four-bay, two-story, gable-roofed brick building.

219-221 N. Piedmont Street

This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, brick building.

225 N. Piedmont Street

This is a stand alone, single family dwelling which is non-contributing.

226, 228, 230, 232, 234 N. Piedmont Street

This is a five-bay, two-story brick building with a central gable roof and flat roofs at both ends.

227, 229, 231 N. Piedmont Street

This is a three-bay, two-story, brick building.

215, 217, 219 N. Glebe Road

This is a three-bay, two-story, hip-roofed, painted brick building.

223-225 N. Glebe Road

This is a two-bay, two-story, hip-roofed brick building.

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Buckingham Historic District
Arlington County, Virginia

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As a community, the Buckingham Historic District is closely associated with the development of Arlington from a rural area to an independent suburban Northern Virginia county. Built between 1937 and 1938 in the Colonial Revival style, Buckingham is historically significant as a well preserved example of the planned garden-style residential communities that became popular during the suburbanization of many metropolitan areas during the first decades of the twentieth century. With its low-density buildings, landscaped courtyards and streetscapes and accessibility to the nation's capital, the community became a model for other planned residential communities for white collar, middle class families. The success of the first 52 buildings included in this nomination, which comprised the original community development, led to the construction of nearly 2,000 units by the end of Buckingham's construction in 1950 based on the final site plan design of architect Henry Wright. In the mid 1930's, the Committee for Economic and Social Progress, a private group consisting of 16 national business leaders including Allie Freed, sponsored the Buckingham project. The Committee for Economic and Social Progress formulated the concept of linking private financial sources with home building companies to foster the creation of better housing, i.e. higher quality, lower cost housing, for the majority of American families. During the same period Allie Freed was also the president of Paramount Communities Inc., which became the home building company that constructed the Buckingham project.

Prior to 1900, Arlington was a rural area on the outskirts of the nation's capital and the City of Alexandria. The economy of the county was supported mostly by black farmers who were welcomed in the area due to the abolitionist sentiment that had existed prior to the Civil War. In the latter part of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, the introduction of the electric railway and other developments in transportation gave Washingtonians the opportunity to live outside the capital in the "country".¹ Arlington became an appealing location for commuters because it proved to be closer to jobs in the District than some locations within the District's city limits. With considerable growth in the size of the federal government through both World Wars as well as construction projects such as the Pentagon and Ft. Myer, the appearance and demographics of the county began to change. An increasing number of middle class families working for the government at the local, state, and federal levels created a demand for housing that could not be met within the city limits of Washington, DC

With an increasing population and improved standard of living, developers throughout the country became aware of the necessity for better housing at more moderate prices. Planned residential communities in suburban communities of Long Island and New Jersey were developed outside of metropolitan New York by men such as architect Henry Wright and planner Clarence Stein. The communities of Sunnyside Gardens and Radburn served as templates for Wright to model and improve upon. Henry Wright collaborated with his associates for his last project which would be known as

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Buckingham Historic District
Arlington County, Virginia

Buckingham in Arlington, Virginia. As first contemplated, Buckingham was to be a 54-building, 510-unit rental community.² By the time construction ended in 1950, over 2,000 units had been constructed occupying nearly 85 acres of land. The community also included a commercial area that was not part of the original development plan.

As a result of Allie Freed's implementation of the concepts developed by the Committee for Economic and Social Progress, Buckingham was hailed by Oscar Fisher, author of *Architectural Record's* January 1938 article "Buckingham: Housing Laboratory", "as an excellent example" of the "attempt to provide economically sound housing for the forgotten 90 percent."³ In a report prepared by the Committee for Economic Recovery, private funds were urged to be invested in rental housing. The report urged private businesses to "organize home building companies to create large scale planned community developments."⁴ With the backing of the Federal Housing Administration, a low interest mortgage was obtained which allowed for more secure investment of private funds into the project. Although the necessity for housing predicated the need for the development of Buckingham, profit was the principal motivator for the investors in this project. At that time, private investment in rental communities was not popular. Success, as determined by the dividends paid of 4.65% and 5% to its investors, by organizations such as the City and Suburban Homes Company of New York and the Washington Sanitary Improvement Company proved that investment in the rental housing business could be profitable.

Allie Freed chose Henry Wright to design the buildings and site plan for his community, as Wright was known for his work as a promoter of the garden city principles. Wright had collaborated with Clarence Stein at the Sunnyside Gardens project outside of New York City as well as the Radburn, New Jersey project. At these projects, these men implemented the principles of British garden cities which were outlined in Ebenezer Howard's *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* as well as German designs which were known as "Zeilenbau". These early projects contributed to the acceptance of the garden city movement in America. Throughout his career, Wright advocated solving the problem of well-designed housing while providing housing at a cost which all Americans could afford. By rejecting the standard practices of the real estate practice, Wright "turned the buildings around" and demonstrated that with the elimination of side yards, greater light, ventilation, and open recreation space could be accommodated in residential communities without increasing the costs.⁵

In order to make the project successful, Allie Freed saw that the home building business needed to change from a professional approach to an industrial approach. Mr. Freed saw home building as an "agglomeration of guilds, each operating independently."⁶ With his Paramount Communities, Inc. company, Freed was able to apply techniques used in the automobile industry to the construction of Buckingham. In order to facilitate the construction, materials were bought and packaged in complete units. For example, tiles for each bathroom were packaged in "room-unit sets" and "constituted one of

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continuous use of construction equipment and forms accomplished further economies.”⁸ As a result, Buckingham was not “low-cost” housing but rather housing that was lower in cost because of the “economies and improved quality made possible by large-scale operation”⁹

Building homes at a lower cost was only part of the equation in making the Buckingham project successful. Construction of dwellings appealing to the market was also of utmost importance. Although rental housing was increasingly becoming popular with a variety of income classes, designs for apartment buildings were not altered. Most designs for multi-family dwellings resulted in narrow, deep buildings with dark side lots. Henry Wright, though, advocated the preservation of open spaces in community planning to provide for “natural green, for recreation, for light, for healthful living, and for more spacious and beautiful living.”¹⁰ These ideas were implemented at Wright and Clarence Stein’s projects of Sunnyside Gardens and Radburn as well as at Buckingham. The building’s characteristics are those that were found in the increasingly popular garden style. They have wide frontages, varying from 45 feet to 80 feet to 170 feet, with shallow depths, generally 30 feet. Each apartment is equal in depth to that of the building. As had been done at Radburn, bedrooms were placed so that they faced the interior courtyards and sides of buildings while service rooms such as living or dining rooms faced the roads.¹¹ Buildings were built no higher than two stories with the exception of the one building designed in the International Style.

At the time of Buckingham’s development, the Colonial Revival architectural style was the predominant style for new construction. Americans began to return to colonial architecture after the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876. With growing American dominance in the political and economic arenas around the world, Americans looked more proudly on their own architectural achievements and over the course of years from the Centennial to the development of Buckingham, the style enjoyed a period of maturity that led to reproductions of Georgian and Federal-style buildings. As time progressed through the Great Depression and America’s participation in the World Wars, “changing postwar fashions led to a simplification of the style.”¹² Throughout these periods, the Colonial Revival style continued to be the prevalent architectural style in residential construction.

At Buckingham, the site plan was designed so that approximately 20% of the land was covered with buildings and the remainder “devoted to landscaped parks, play areas, and streets.”¹³ With the use of wide frontages, courtyards were created to the rear of the buildings. These courtyards were occupied by children’s play equipment in several areas around the community. Underground utilities were put in place so that these courtyards could be utilized for other recreational activities by the community’s residents. Two formal courtyards were also designed. Both rear and front courtyards were designed with an interconnecting network of sidewalks. This network also connected the parking areas along the streets with the interior courtyard buildings and rear entrances to buildings. Due to Washingtonians’ habits, parking bays along the streets were created rather than provisions for garage parking. These bays

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“provide an innovation which preserves the full street width for traffic and an orderliness not otherwise possible.”¹⁴

While construction continued, the developers adapted their original plan to suit market trends. Despite using assembly line techniques during construction, variations were allowed for in the buildings. In order to avoid monotony, several buildings were painted with gray or white in order to break up the monochromatic red brick buildings. Other decorative details such as cast stone door surrounds were created in various styles. Also used as a tool in adding to the variety were cast stone window lintels and sills. Quoining was used on some buildings to create variety in the architecture of Buckingham. One-bedroom apartments, or as it was referred to in 1938, a three-room apartment, was the most popular dwelling configuration. The developers were able to make changes in their plans and create more of these particular units as construction progressed. Dining space outside of the kitchen also became a feature that prospective residents preferred and one which the developers were able to incorporate into their plans. Standardization, though, was a key in keeping down the costs of the project.

By combining many different ideas related to development, financing and construction Buckingham is an innovative example of the garden-style apartment community which Americans embraced in the early half of this century. By improving on already accepted principles of garden city planning, Wright was able to design a community that met the needs of a growing middle class population. This plan also met with favorable responses by investors who helped to secure financing that allowed the project to be constructed. Buckingham is also a significant reminder of the growth of Arlington as a major residential community supporting the nation's capital and Arlington's development as an urban center.

Buckingham passed through several owners before Pershing Drive Associates, Limited Partnership, a joint-venture between Paradigm Development Company, Arlington Housing Corporation and Arlington County, purchased the property in February 1996. As Allie Freed had been able to accomplish during the original development of Buckingham, these organizations were able to take advantage of several unique financing mechanisms in order to rehabilitate Buckingham, now known as Historic Ballston Park at Buckingham. Through historic tax credits, low-income tax credits and an affordable housing program, Pershing Drive Associates has been able to maintain the original architectural integrity of the community and create a thriving community which will continue to endure as a model example for middle-class, rental housing.

¹ Christine M. Peleszak, “The Demographic Complexion of Arlington, Virginia 1800-1950,” graduate paper, The George Washington University, Washington, D. C., 1986, p. 1

² “New Va. Project Result of U.S. Home Shortage,” *Washington Post*, May 16, 1937, pp. 1.

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- ³ Oscar Fisher, "Buckingham: Housing Laboratory," *Architectural Record*, January 1938, pp. 70.
- ⁴ "Private Funds Urged in Housing Program," *The New York Times*, February 1937, Real Estate. pp. 4
- ⁵ Deborah Canann and Joy Gatewood, "Draft National Register of Historic Places nomination", Arlington Heritage Alliance, p. 8.2
- ⁶ Fisher, p. 69.
- ⁷ Fisher, p. 75.
- ⁸ Fisher, p. 72.
- ⁹ Fisher, p. 69.
- ¹⁰ Clarence Stein, *Toward New Towns for American*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1971, p. 21.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41
- ¹² Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1989, p. 326.
- ¹³ Fisher, p. 70.
- ¹⁴ Fisher, p. 70.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of the following parcels; 20-009-023, 20-010-023, 20-017-001, 20-021-001, 20-032-002, 20-033-095, 20-033-096, 20-018-001, 14-061-066 as described on Map 3 of the Arlington County 1998 Real Estate Assessment Book.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the proposed Buckingham Historic District include that portion of the entire Buckingham project that was constructed between 1937 and 1938. These 52 buildings were part of Paramount Communities' original plan for development. It was not until these buildings were constructed that the approximately 1,500 remaining units were contemplated for construction. Development of the commercial areas, which occurred after that of the original residential areas, was based on the success of the first 52 buildings meeting the housing market's demand. In this application the commercial areas have been excluded and are non-contributing.

Further, this portion of the community is architecturally cohesive. The architectural detailing for these 52 original buildings is of the same quality and design. Later constructed buildings feature more simplistic and less distinguished elements such as door surrounds.

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PHOTOGRAPH LABELS

Name of Property.....Buckingham Historic District
County & State.....Arlington County, Virginia
Photographer.....Marie Ryan
Date of Photographs.....March 1997
Location of Original Negative.....Virginia Department of Historic Resources
2801 Kensington Ave.
Richmond, VA 23221

Description of View..... View looking Southwest at 3918/3920 N. Fourth Street, 3922/3924 N. Fourth Street and 3926 N. Fourth Street, Village 9, Fourth Street Courtyard
Negative No.....16822:4
Photograph No..... 1 of 13

Description of View..... View looking Southeast at rear of 310/312/314 N. Piedmont, Village 9
Negative No.....16822:24
Photograph No..... 2 of 13

Description of View..... View looking South along 200 block of N. Piedmont Street, Village 10
Negative No.....16824:9A
Photograph No..... 3 of 13

Description of View..... View looking Northeast at 3909/3911 and 3915/3917/3919 N. Fifth street during rehabilitation, Village 8
Negative No.....16824:21A
Photograph No..... 4 of 13

Description of View..... View looking West at rear 4000/4002/4004/4006 N. Fifth Street during rehabilitation, Village 8
Negative No.....16824:23A
Photograph No..... 5 of 13

Description of View..... View looking Northeast at 347/349, 353/347 N. Glebe Road, Village 9
Negative No.....16821:3
Photograph No.....6 of 13

Description of View..... View looking North at rear of 359/363/367/369 N. Glebe Road and 3918/3920 N. Fourth Street, Village 9
Negative No.....16821:5
Photograph No..... 7 of 13

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Description of View..... View looking Northeast along Piedmont Street, Village 8 and Village 11
Negative No......16821:20
Photograph No...... 8 of 13

Description of View..... View looking West at 324/326/328 and 330/332 N. Piedmont Street, Village 9
Negative No......16823:18
Photograph No...... 9 of 13




Description of View..... View looking Southeast at 3900/3904/3908 N. Piedmont Street, Village 9
Negative No......16710:12
Photograph No......10 of 13

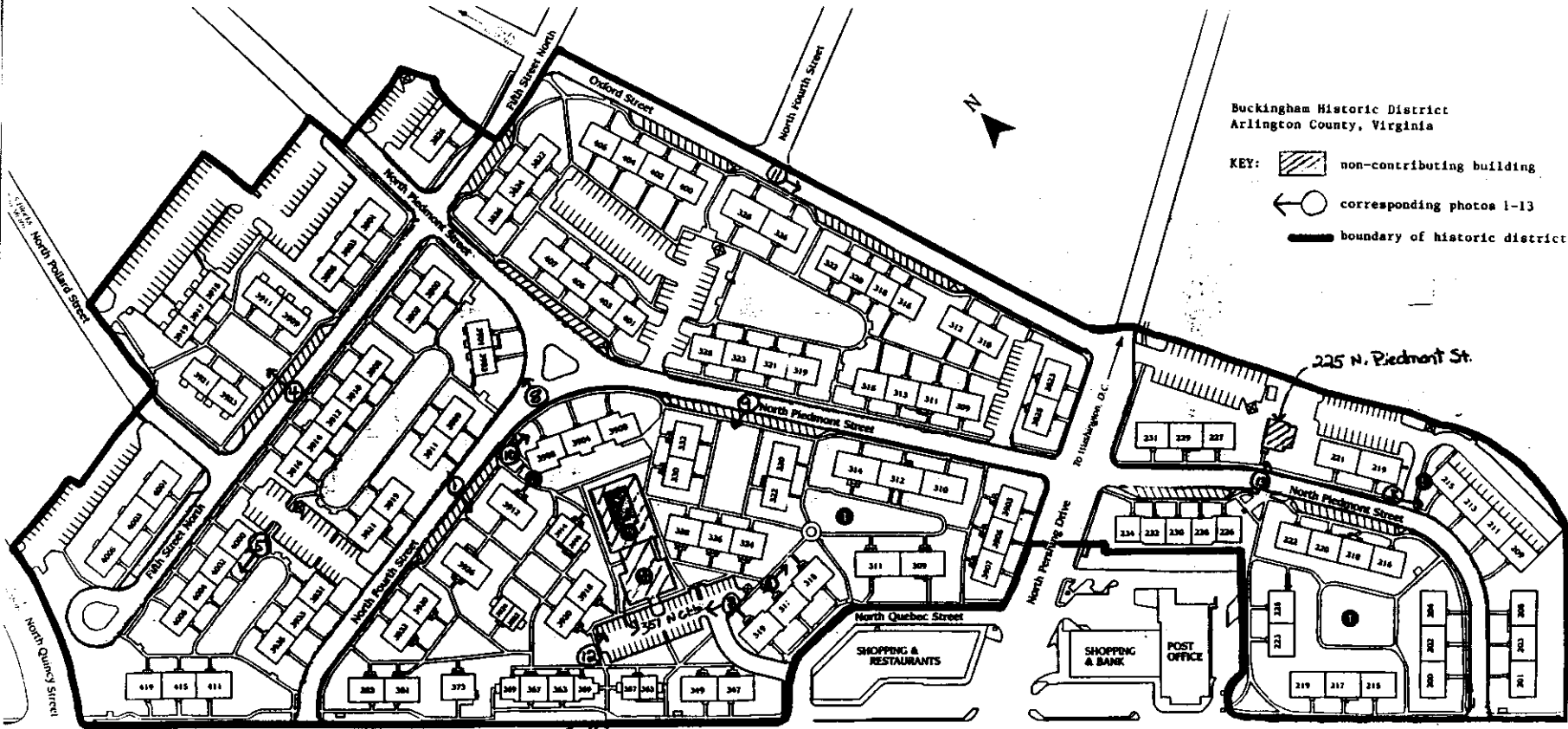
Description of View..... View looking South at Oxford Street, Village 11
Negative No...... 16710:30
Photograph No...... 11 of 13

Description of View..... View looking at 351 N. Glebe Road, Community & Marketing Center, Village 9 (Noncontributing building)
Negative No......16711:8A
Photograph No...... 12 of 13

Description of View..... View looking east at 225 N. Piedmont Street, Village 10 (Noncontributing building)
Negative No......16709:13
Photograph No...... 13 of 13

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- KEY:  non-contributing building
 corresponding photos 1-13
 boundary of historic district



-  Management Office
-  Pool
-  Laundry Facilities
-  Tot Lot Playgrounds

Paradigm
MANAGEMENT CO

