

HA-2291

Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse (Youth's Benefit School-2)

2414 Pleasantville Road

Fallston, Harford County, Maryland

1910

Private

Capsule Summary

Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse is a one-story, T-shaped, frame Vernacular style schoolhouse, resting on a low rubble stone foundation, clad with white vinyl siding, with modern replacement windows and doors, and is topped with a slate shingle gable roof. A modern outbuilding, currently in use as an office for the property owner's paving business, is also located on the one-acre property, west of the historic schoolhouse.

Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse was completed in 1910 to uniform State standards and constructed by Denis J. Shanahan. It served as the public school for white students in Fallston until its closure in 1953 and is currently used as a retail florist and gift shop. It is one of the few remaining one and two-room schoolhouses standing in Harford County. The school replaced the first Youth's Benefit School, a one-room school which eventually deteriorated and was demolished. Few one or two-teacher school buildings were built after 1910 when the increased number of public roads and improved transportation reduced the need for smaller, local school buildings. Thus, Youth's Benefit School-2 is unusual in its unique design and is one of only a few of these distinctive schoolhouses which are still standing and recognizable as former schools.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HA-2291

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse (preferred)
other Youth's Benefit School-2

2. Location

street and number 2414 Pleasantville Road ___ not for publication
city, town Fallston, MD 21047 ___ vicinity
county Harford

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name TES Properties, LLC (Anthony Stanley, Henry Stanley, Deborah Stanley)
street and number 2414 Pleasantville Road telephone 410.877.3372
city, town Fallston state MD zip code 21047

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Harford County Courthouse liber 13349 folio 00323
city, town Bel Air, MD 21014 tax map 0047 tax parcel 0456 tax ID number 044886

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
☐ district	☐ public	☐ agriculture	Contributing
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☒ commerce/trade	Noncontributing
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ defense	1
☐ site		☐ domestic	1
☐ object		☐ education	1
		☐ funerary	1
		☐ government	1
		☐ health care	1
		☐ industry	1
		☐ landscape	1
		☐ recreation/culture	1
		☐ religion	1
		☐ social	1
		☐ transportation	1
		☐ work in progress	1
		☐ unknown	1
		☐ vacant/not in use	1
		☐ other:	1

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
0

7. Description

Inventory No. HA-2291

Condition

☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated
☒ good	☐ ruins
☐ fair	☐ altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Summary

The current frame building, now rented for use as a retail florist and gift shop, was originally the two-room Youth's Benefit public school. It consists of a one-story, gable roofed, T-shaped building located at the front of the property near the road. To the rear and perpendicular to the schoolhouse building, is a one-story rectangular frame building built sometime between 1977 and 1980 according to historic aerial images, which is currently used as offices for the owner's paving business. A driveway and parking lot serve both buildings and includes a partially fenced area for heavy equipment storage. To historically distinguish the survey schoolhouse (HA-2291) from the original Youth's Benefit School building (YBS-1, no longer standing), the survey building will be referred to as YBS-2.

Comprehensive Description

The one-story, gable roofed white T-shaped frame Vernacular style schoolhouse, is located on the southwest side of Pleasantville Road, one-tenth of a mile south of State Rte. 152, Fallston Road, situated between a restaurant and a private residence. The schoolhouse sits close to the road on a low rubble stone foundation. The property slopes from the schoolhouse to the road. A paved driveway on the south side leads to a partially paved parking lot and open storage area serving both the schoolhouse and the more contemporary utility building to the rear of the property. Both buildings are clad with white vinyl siding. The property is bounded by the road to the east, woods to the west, by trees and shrubs to the north and south, with remnants of a chain link fence visible.

The YBS-2 Schoolhouse Building: The original exterior footprint and roofline of the schoolhouse can be discerned and consist of a small single bay gabled vestibule (17.25' wide x 9' deep) that projects east from the façade with two interior doors opening onto a gable roofed rectangular space, 3 bays long and 2 bays wide (48" long x 23.5" wide). The ridgeline faces north and south, and the building faces east. A single brick chimney is centered on the western side of the gable roof. The roof is slate shingled, with copper lightning rods at the peak and drainage gutters only on the western eave.

The vestibule's exterior centered entry is a paneled fiberglass or wood/plastic replacement door with decorative stain glass window, with two matching sidelights, flanked by two 6/6 vinyl clad double-hung windows without shutters. There is one single 6/6 window on each side wall of the vestibule, each with black vinyl decorative shutters, which match single windows on the east sides of the main wings. A vent is centered under the peak of the east gable. Outside, a low cement "stoop" steps down to a sidewalk which joins the driveway. There is a white lamp post and mature plantings on the northeastern front side of the building, with grass on the east and north side lawns. The rear section of the property is partially paved.

Moving clockwise from the vestibule entry, the south side of what was originally the classroom wing, has been extended (circa 1990s) by a partially glassed-in area 5.25 feet by 23.5 ft. This heated sun porch has large storefront windows in metal frames over vinyl panels, an asphalt-shingle shed roof with aluminum K-style gutter and downspout, and an exterior glass door with cement steps and landing which serves as the main entrance from the parking area to the retail shop. Accounts of former students indicate that the steps and landing were added during WWII as an emergency exit from an interior window in the event of an air raid or other emergency (2). There is a vent centered beneath the gable of the original roof. A metal industrial looking gate is installed on the parking lot a foot from the "porch" addition.

On the west side, constructed on wood footings, is an enclosed area 11.25' x 8' added after 1990, with a slightly pitched shed roof, and an exterior sliding glass door with wooden steps. This space is frame construction, with vinyl siding and a single 6/6 vinyl clad window which is compatible with the remainder of the building exterior; this space appears to be used for storage.

The interior is accessible from all sides of the building. Entering from the east vestibule, two doorways on the rear wall open onto the rectangular space, formerly the schoolhouse classrooms. Currently, the interior space is partitioned into four areas. The northwest

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interior section (what was once the upper grades or "large classroom") features a ship-lap vaulted ceiling, said to be original, painted white (owner believes this to be original paint). A steel tie rod, also said to be original, spans the west and east interior walls of the north side of the building. According to an online source (vermonttimberworks.com/blog/tag/steel-tie-rod/), this construction element is used in place of a buttress when a vaulted ceiling is desired. The tie rod provides structural support to interior walls that would be vulnerable to bending under heavy roof load (e.g., from snow). Steel tie rods are seen in other local two-room schoolhouses of this era (e.g., the former Wilna Chapel School, now Saint Alban's Anglican Church HA-1528, built in 1914 by D.J. Shanahan).

The remaining interior areas of the building have a partial dropped ceiling, revealing glimpses of a ship-lap vaulted ceiling, but no other tie rods, if present, are visible. Floors and interior walls have been replaced. The interior windows are recessed.

The two former classroom spaces have been partitioned and modified to reflect that the building has been repurposed since 1953 as a hardware store, computer repair shop, dental lab, video rental store, as well as a tea room, offices, and currently as a florist and gift shop. The space occupying the northwest wing currently features receiving/delivery and work areas, with utility closets, sink, cabinetry, and a commercial cooler for the floral business. Two interior sections on the southeast side of the building have a partial dropped ceiling and are fitted with shelving, closets, a bathroom, a counter, and display areas for the retail shop. It is unknown when the building was wired for electricity or plumbed for water and septic.

Remnants of brick chimney, painted white, are visible within an enclosed closet on the west side of the building. The closets also contain various painted cabinet fronts, pieces of wood, and a small round stain glass or plastic window element of unknown provenance. A small piece of flooring in one of the closets appears to predate the replacement flooring. The adjacent glassed-in porch addition on the west side of the building is currently used as a greenhouse/display area, as well as serving as the customer entrance from the parking lot to the retail shop.

The rectangular frame building toward the rear of the property, which today resembles a modern ranch-style residence (with attached garage, picture window, and basketball hoop), was not in evidence prior to 1953, and has in recent years served landscaping and dry-cleaning businesses. The current owners have significantly renovated the building as a modern office and storage for their paving company. This building does not contribute to the historical significance of the survey building (YBS-2, HA-2291).

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
☐ 1600-1699	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ health/medicine	☐ performing arts
☐ 1700-1799	☐ archeology	☒ education	☐ industry	☐ philosophy
☐ 1800-1899	☐ architecture	☐ engineering	☐ invention	☐ politics/government
☒ 1900-1999	☐ art	☐ entertainment/ recreation	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 2000-	☐ commerce	☐ ethnic heritage	☐ law	☐ science
	☐ communications	☐ exploration/ settlement	☐ literature	☐ social history
	☐ community planning		☐ maritime history	☐ transportation
	☐ conservation		☐ military	☐ other: _____

Specific dates 1910-1953 **Architect/Builder** Denis J. Shanahan

Construction dates The schoolhouse opened in 1910

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register ☐ Maryland Register ☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Summary

The schoolhouse, the second Youth's Benefit School building in the Fallston area, was constructed in 1910 by Denis J. Shanahan for \$1626 raised from both community and County funds. The building served as a local public two-room school until 1953, when three local schools were consolidated into Youth's Benefit Elementary School, and the schoolhouse property was sold. As the Harford County Public Schools remained segregated until 1966, the school served only the white students of the area during its years of operation. From 1858 to 1951, segregated education for local African American children took place at the small school building next to Tabernacle Methodist Church in Benson (which still stands). In 1951, elementary through high school education for African American children was consolidated at a school in Hickory. The original floor plan for the Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse of approximately 48'x24 feet plus vestibule, appears to follow the State school building standards adopted in 1870 for a "Plan No. 3" school building, frame construction, with a "dividing sash partition" which would enable use as a two-teacher school (1).

Narrative

The survey building, HA-2291, is the second public schoolhouse in the Fallston community to carry the name "Youth's Benefit School." The two-room school is one of only a few one- or two-room schoolhouses still standing in Harford County, which were built to conform to 19th century State school standards. These uniform State standards specified building size, window placement, and classroom furnishings. Early public school structures served local towns, villages, and scattered farms for which student transport was limited to walking or animal drawn carts. In 1916, school boundaries were abandoned, and students were permitted to attend the nearest school accessible by public road (3). The two-room Youth's Benefit School (YBS-2) on Pleasantville Road continued to serve students in grades 1 through 9 from 1910 to 1953, by which time improved transportation had reduced the need for local schools. In 1953, YBS-2 closed with the construction and opening of the consolidated Youth's Benefit Elementary School (YBES).

The first "verified" Youth's Benefit School (YBS-1) was thought to have been established prior to 1865, as a one-room schoolhouse built at the edge of a farm near the northwest corner of Pleasantville and Fallston Roads. At some point, the structure was moved on logs across the road east of present-day Hemphill's Nursery, where it served as a school until 1910 (4). After 1900, the need for a new, larger school became apparent (5). A one-acre lot for the new school was purchased in 1909 by the Harford County School Commissioners for \$400. The new two-teacher schoolhouse was built on Pleasantville Road and opened to great fanfare in 1910. The one-room YBS-1 then served as a tannery and residence, but the structure deteriorated and was eventually demolished.

According to Margaret B. Harlan in The Gateway, the building of YBS-2 was a community effort. Minutes of the school board meetings show that trustees and patrons would "obligate themselves to erect the foundation, furnish the sills and sleepers of the building, and do all the necessary hauling of the rest of the material without cost." Local builder Denis J. Shanahan was the low bidder at \$1656 (6).

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YBS-2 had a principal and assistant, and nine grades, divided between the upper and lower classrooms. Each child was provided with a slate, pencil, and sponge. The teacher sat on a platform above the desk. Students sat in twos on benches at wooden desks bolted to the floor. Each classroom was heated by a coal stove at the back of the room. In the early years, water was fetched from a spring near the rear of the property. In the 1920s, a well was drilled from which children pumped a bucket of water which was shared using a common dipper. Two 2-seater outhouses, one for boys, one for girls were located at the rear of the playground. The playground featured a cinder dodgeball court, ball field, and see-saws. Winter sledding on neighboring hills was a favorite pastime (7).

Former student Emily Hess Humm offers a detailed description of YBS-2 circa 1948-1953:

"Youth's Benefit School was a cream-colored frame building with brown trimmed windows and door and a black slate roof topped by a belfry. Large maple trees framed the school, shading the playground....The sound of the school bell, rung by pulling a rope inside the vestibule, signaled children that the school day was beginning....Blackboards lined the front walls and tall windows with crisscrossed metal grills were spaced around the side and back walls. Rows of desks with wooden tops and cast-iron sides were secured to the oiled wood floors with screws. The wall which divided the primary grades from the upper grades folded on hinges to create one large room used for PTA meetings and school functions (8)."

The belfry was located on the peak above the schoolhouse vestibule. The vestibule was initially the only means of entry and egress, until the 1940s, when a landing and steps were constructed beneath a window on the southern elevation to be used in emergencies. The original windows were wood, covered with cross-hatched screens. It is unknown when the school building was wired for electricity, though a 1916 photograph shows electrical connection to the exterior of the building. The building was plumbed for water and septic after 1953.

Improved transportation for public students in the County eventually diminished the need for smaller local schoolhouses. In 1953, the modern Youth's Benefit Elementary School opened on Route 152 on land purchased by the County. Three two-room schools: Fallston, Youth's Benefit, and Upper Crossroads Schools were consolidated in the new modern school for grades 1 through 7.

The origin and continued use of the school's iconic name, "Youth's Benefit," is of historical significance. Most public schools are named for a local place or feature, or a historic figure. A search of Harford County land records shows that in 1841, a small parcel of land was granted to a group of local trustees appointed by the County Board of School Commissioners. The land was to be held in trust for the sole purpose of building a schoolhouse for the education of neighboring children. The indenture, or deed, specified that the schoolhouse was to be built within eighteen months, and further that "the said school house be called by the name of 'The Youth's Benefit'." (9)

This writer was unable to document when the one-room schoolhouse (YBS-1) was actually built. The unusual school name has been controversial at times, yet the Youth's Benefit name has persisted for over 180 years. When asked how the consolidated school retained the Youth's Benefit name, local historian Alice Harlan Remsberg gave this reply:

"The village of Fallston had its own identity with a railroad station, churches, and stores. Upper Crossroads was a community of its own, but the first Youth's Benefit served an area of scattered farms and was not so much a centered community.... No doubt the Quakers in the community held influence in the naming process. When the 1953 consolidated school was to be named, representatives from each of the schools determined that it should be called Youth's Benefit (10)"

Many prominent local citizens were educated at YBS-2. Of the early public schools in the area, YBS-2 is among the few still standing, and remains recognizable as an early schoolhouse. With updating and maintenance from multiple owners since 1953, the

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Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

building is in very good condition. More recently, the building has served as a retail store for hardware, computers, and video rentals, as a tea room, offices, and currently as a florist and gift shop.

Works Cited:

- (1) Wright, C. Milton, Our Harford Heritage, 1967.
- (2) Youth's Benefit Alumni Reunion Committee, *Youth's Benefit School, The Golden Years, 1910-1953*. circa 2003.
- (3) Wright, C. M., Op.Cit.
- (4) Harlan, M. *The Gateway*, Fallston-Upper Crossroads Bicentennial Committee, c. 1975
- (5) Letter from Harford County School Board to William A. Harlan, May 5, 1909.
- (6) Harlan, M.B., Op.Cit.
- (7) Youth's Benefit School Alumni Committee, *Youth's Benefit School, The Golden Years 1910-1953*, Circa 2003
- (8) Youth's Benefit Alumni Reunion Committee, Op. Cit.
- (9) Harford County Land Records, Book: HD, liber 26, folio 0020-002, July 26, 1841.
- (10) Alice H. Remsberg, Personal Communication, September 23, 2021.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. HA-2291

Amoss, Rose Famous, Oral History, interview of 9.21.1995, with Alva Mary Amoss McMullen, Harford County Living Treasure, Harford County Public Library
Edmunds, Evelyn P. "For the Benefit of Youth," *Fallston Neighbors*, Best Version Media, December, 2021.
Harford County Land Records HD, liber 26, folio 0020-0021, July 26, 1841.
Harford County School Board letter to William A. Harlan, May 9, 1909, courtesy of Harlan family.
Harlan, Margaret B. et al, in Bicentennial Committee of Fallston-Upper Crossroads, *The Gateway*, circa 1975.
McMullen, Alva Mary Amoss, *Memoir of Rose Famous and David Hanway Amoss*, Historical Society of Harford County, 2022.
Remsberg, Alice Harlan, Interviews and personal communication from September, 2021 to December 2022.
Wright, C. Milton, *Our Harford Heritage*, private publisher, 1967.
Youth's Benefit Alumni Reunion Committee, *Youth's Benefit School-The Golden Years, 1910-1953*, circa 2003

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 1.0 acres
Acreage of historical setting 1.0 acres
Quadrangle name Jarrettsville, MD

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse encompasses 1.0 acres and is confined to the current tax parcel, which is found on Harford County Tax Map 47, Parcel 456 (2022). It is the same parcel purchased for construction of the school in 1909.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Evelyn P. Edmunds, Ph.D., Public Historian/Jacob M. Bensen, Historic Preservation Planner		
organization	OBO Chimney Corner Club of Fallston, MD/Harford County Dept. of Planning & Zoning date June 2023		
street & number	Harford County Dept. of Planning & Zoning, 220 S. Main Street	telephone	410.638.1303 ext. 1385
city or town	Bel Air	state	Maryland, 21014

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-697-9591

Chain of Title

June 28, 2019

Grantor: SPLJ LLC

Grantee: T.E.S. Properties, LLC

Deed Reference: JJR 13349, p. 323

May 19, 2010

Grantor: 2414 Pleasantville Road LLC

Grantee: SPLJ LLC

Deed Reference: JJR 8660, p. 182

November 2, 2004

Grantor: Robert J. and Maryann F. Morgan

Grantee: 2414 Pleasantville Road LLC

Deed Reference: JJR 5697, p. 743

May 1, 1998

Grantor: James G. and Darlene R. Wagner

Grantee: Robert J. and Maryann F. Morgan

Deed Reference: CGH 2701, p. 712

May 23, 1988

Grantor: Howard J. and Helen B. McCann

Grantee: James G. and Darlene R. Wagner

Deed Reference: CGH 1474, p. 537

November 18, 1968

Grantor: John M. and Dorothy V. McCann

Grantee: Howard J. and Helen B. McCann

Deed Reference: GRG 797, p. 153

December 14, 1953

Grantor: Board of Education of Harford County, successor to the Board of County School Commissioners of Harford County and Thomas G. Pullen, Jr., Superintendent of Schools for the State of Maryland

Grantee: Howard J. and John M. McCann, trading as McCann Brothers

Deed Reference: GRG 408, p. 9

August 28, 1909

Grantor: William A and Mamie E. Lancaster, Mary A. Lancaster

Grantee: Board of County School Commissioners of Harford County

Deed Reference: WSF 127, p. 230

HA-2291

Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse

2414 Pleasantville Road

Fallston, Harford County



*Youth's Benefit
School*

1910 - 1953

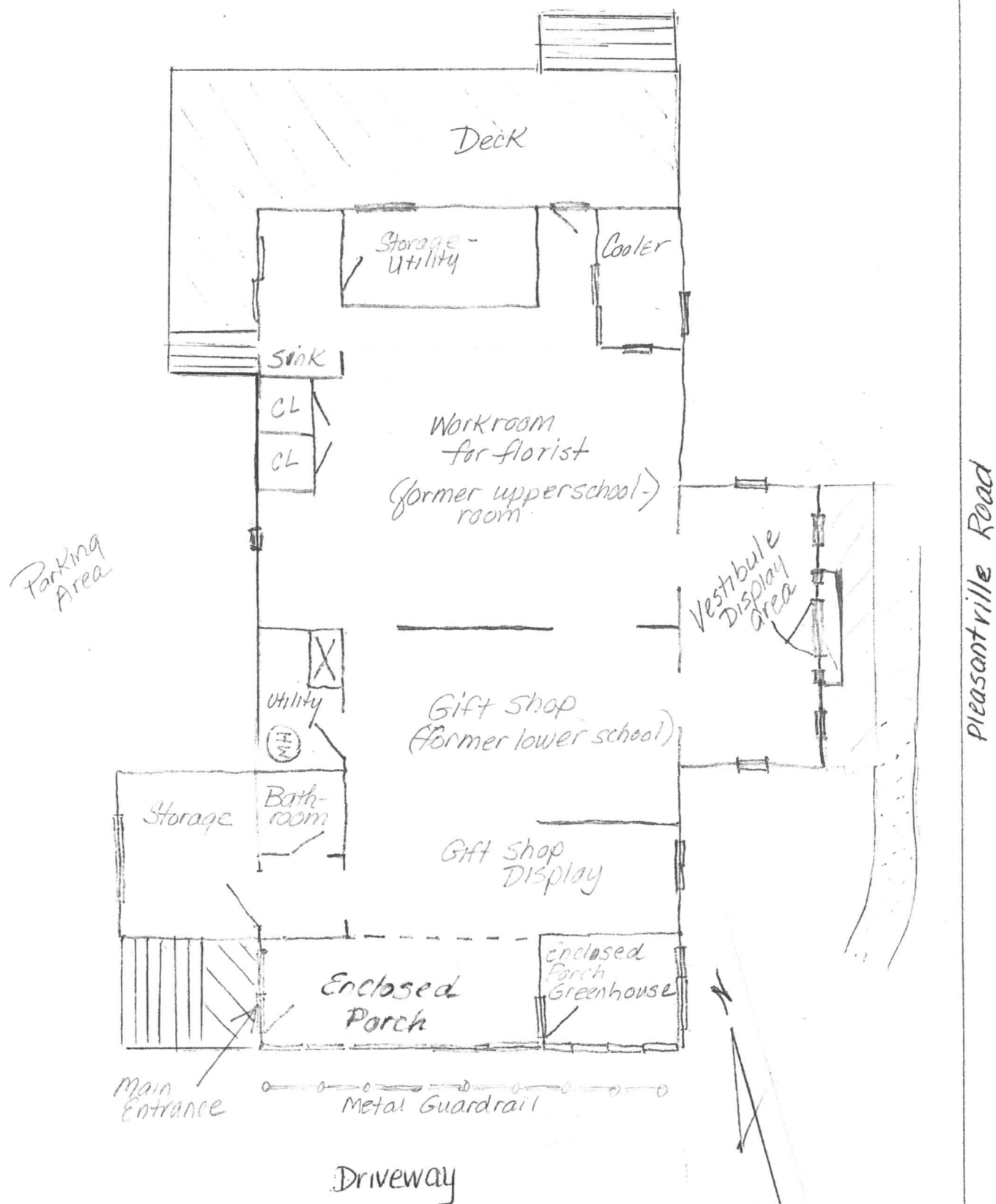


Youth's Benefit School c. 1953
Fallston, MD

HA-2291
Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse
2414 Pleasantville Road
Fallston, Harford County

Youths' Benefit School - 2

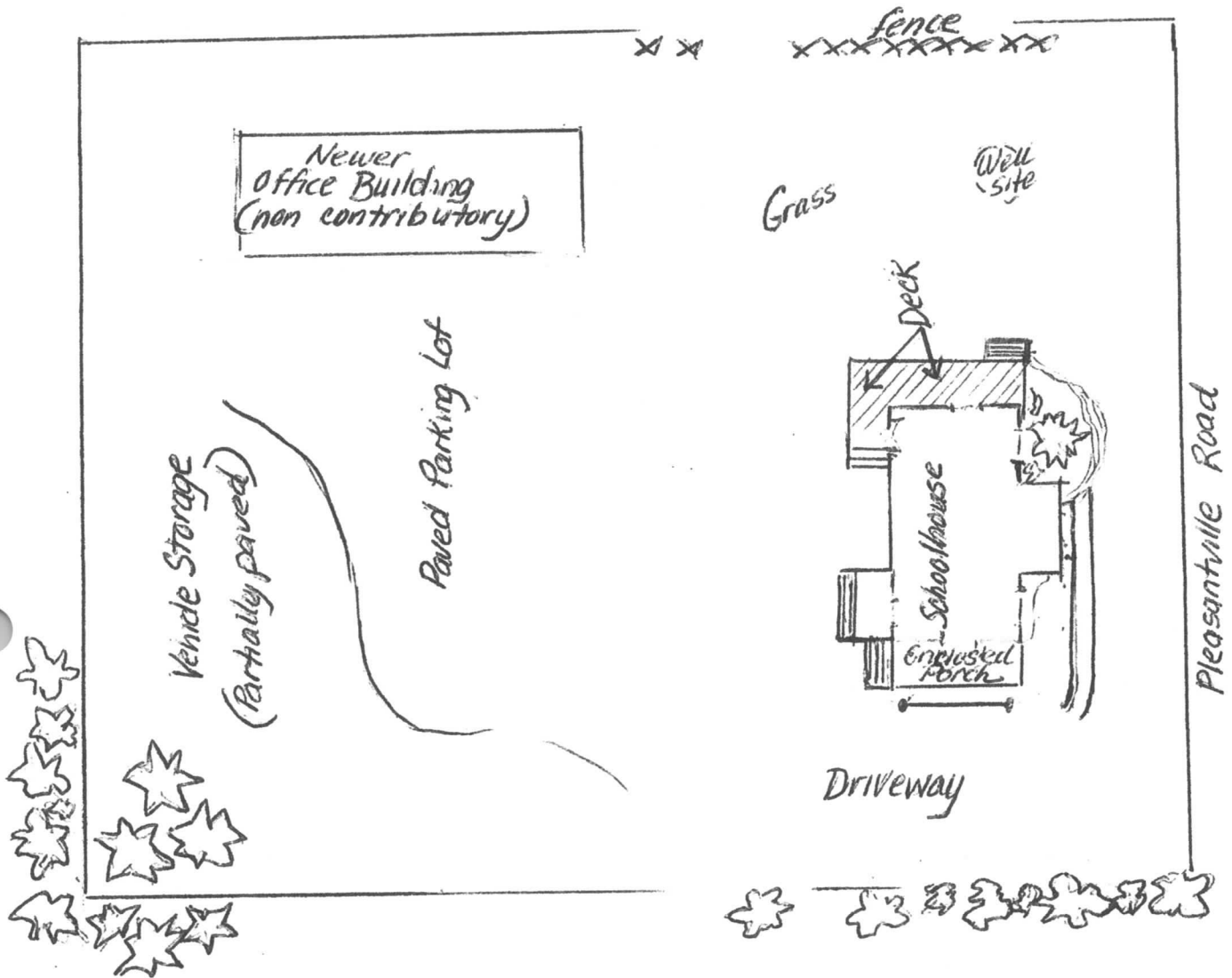
HA 2291



Site Plan

HA 2291

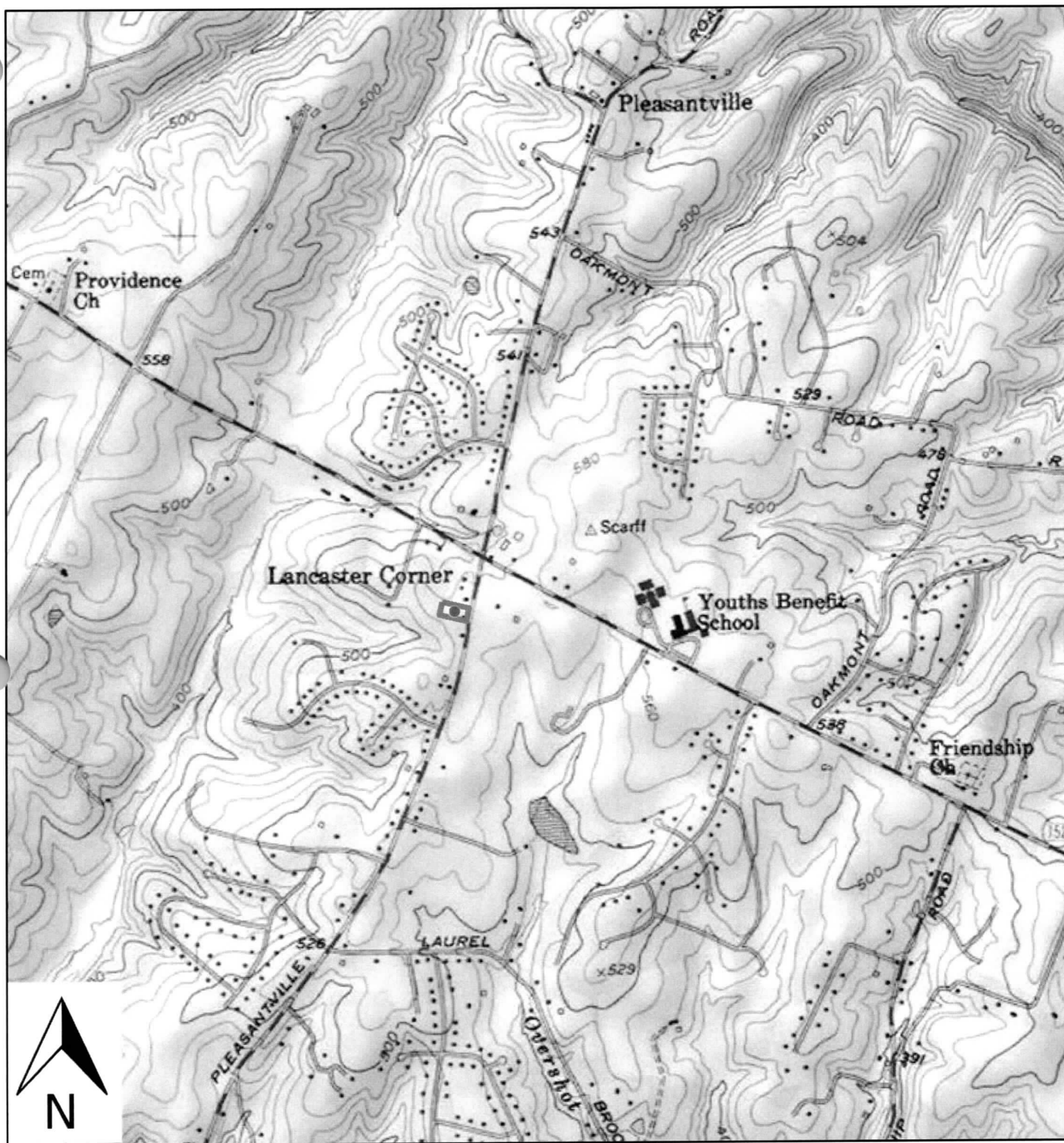
Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse (YBS-2)
built 1910



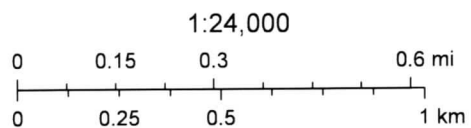
2414 Pleasantville Road
Fallston, MD 21047

Resource sketch map - Lot is approx. one acre
Parcel 456
(not to scale)

Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse (HA-2291)

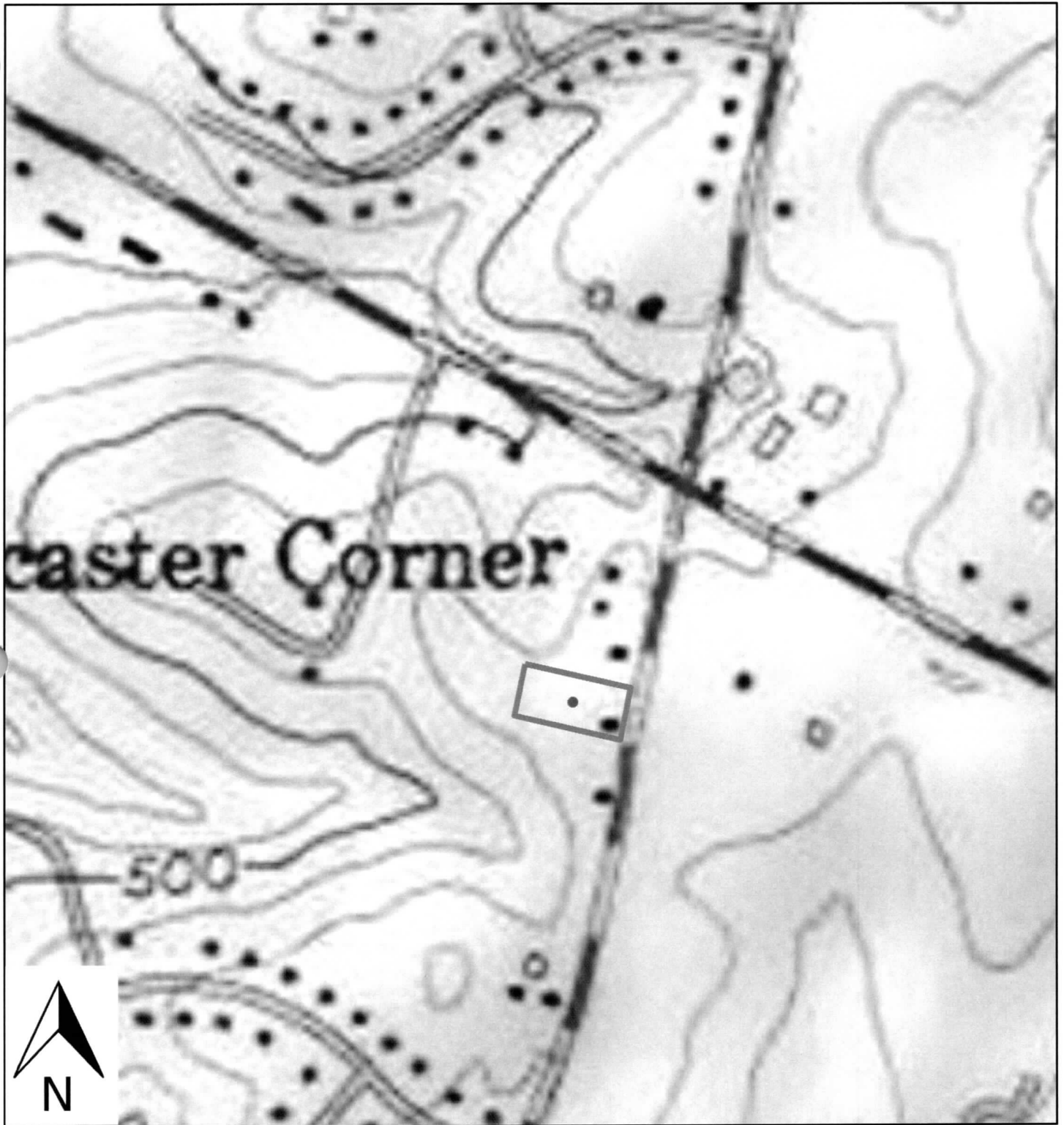


Address: 2414 Pleasantville Road, Fallston, 21047
USGS Quad: Jarrettsville

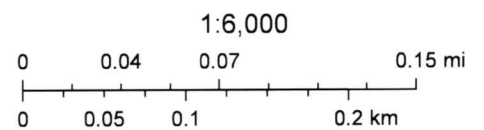


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Address: 2414 Pleasantville Road, Fallston, 21047
USGS Quad: Jarrettsville



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Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse (HA-2291)



1:1,000
0 0.01 0.01 0.02 mi
0 0.01 0.02 0.04 km

Address: 2414 Pleasantville Road, Fallston, 21047
USGS Quad: Jarrettsville

Baltimore County Government, Harford County Government, Esri, HERE,
Garmin, GeoTechnologies, Inc., USGS, EPA, USDA

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Photo 1 of 10: Façade, camera facing west.



Photo 2 of 10: South Elevation, camera facing north.

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Photo 3 of 10: West Elevation, camera facing east.



Photo 4 of 10: North Elevation, camera facing southwest.

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Photo 5 of 10: Façade and East Elevations of Modern Office Building, camera facing northwest.



Photo 6 of 10: Detail of Lightning Rod and Slate Roof.

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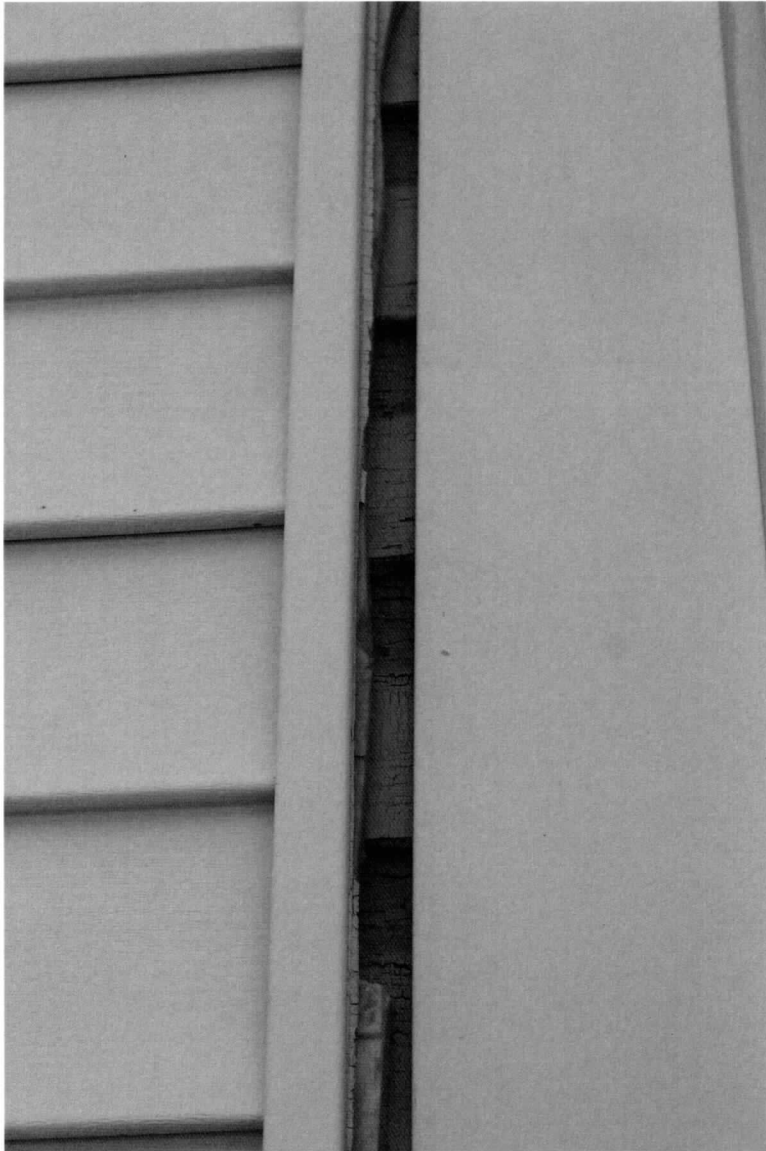


Photo 7 of 10: Detail of Wood Lap Siding beneath Vinyl Siding at West Elevation.

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Name Youth's Benefit Schoolhouse
Continuation Sheet

Number Photos Page 5

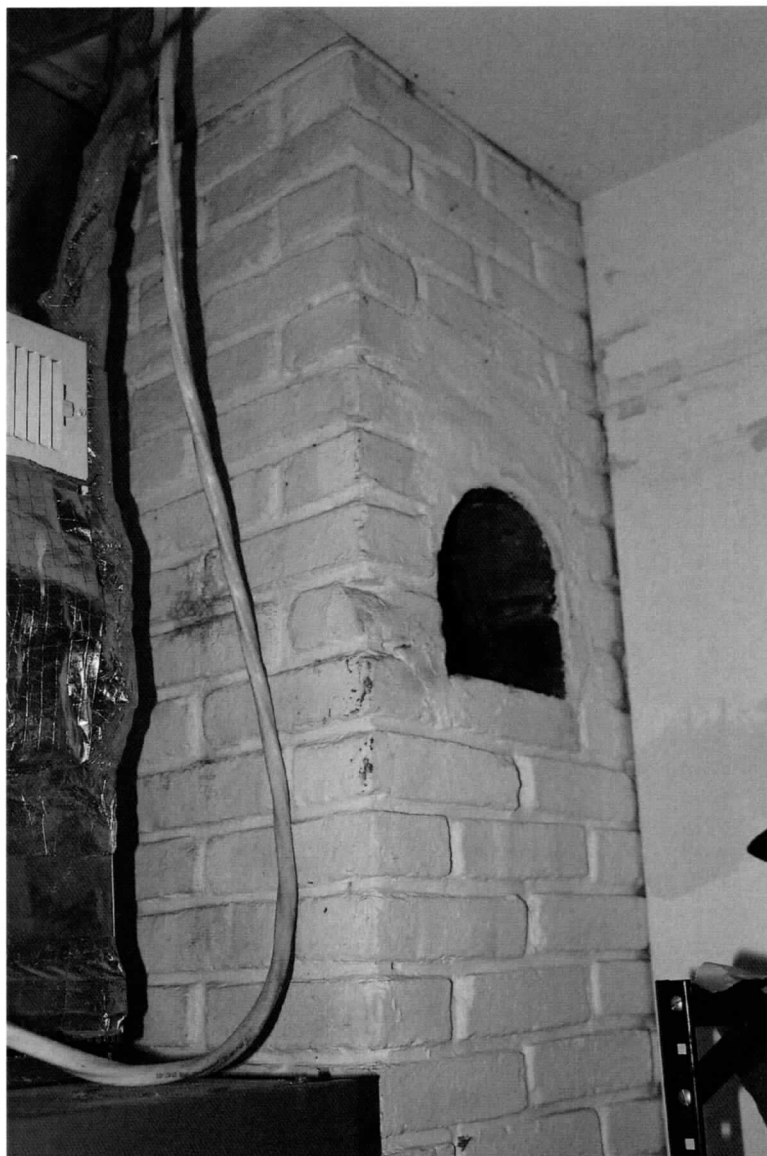


Photo 8 of 10: Detail of Chimney (Interior).

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Photo 9 of 10: Detail of Ceiling and Attic Access Panel (Interior).



Photo 10 of 10: Detail of Tie Rod (Interior).

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Continuation Sheet

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PHOTO LOG

Photographs inserted on continuation sheets; printed on Tru Red Copy Paper using Canon GPR-55 Toner

Name of Photographer: Jacob M. Bensen, Harford County Planning & Zoning
Date of Photograph: June 6, 2023
Location of Original Digital File: MD SHPO

Photo 1 of 10
Façade, camera facing west.
HA-2291_2023-06-09_01.tif

Photo 2 of 10
South Elevation, camera facing north.
HA-2291_2023-06-09_02.tif

Photo 3 of 10
West Elevation, camera facing east.
HA-2291_2023-06-09_03.tif

Photo 4 of 10
North Elevation, camera facing southwest.
HA-2291_2023-06-09_04.tif

Photo 5 of 10
Façade and East Elevations of Modern Office Building, camera facing northwest.
HA-2291_2023-06-09_05.tif

Photo 6 of 10
Detail of Lightning Rod and Slate Roof.
HA-2291_2023-06-09_06.tif

Photo 7 of 10
Detail of Wood Lap Siding beneath Vinyl Siding at West Elevation.
HA-2291_2023-06-09_07.tif

Photo 8 of 10
Detail of Chimney (Interior).
HA-2291_2023-06-09_08.tif

Photo 9 of 10
Detail of Ceiling and Attic Access Panel (Interior).
HA-2291_2023-06-09_09.tif

Photo 10 of 10
Detail of Tie Rod (Interior).
HA-2291_2023-06-09_10.tif