

HO-752

Ellicott City Post Office

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the “vertical files” at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

All material is property of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Last Updated: 02-07-2013

**INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM**

Property/District Name: Ellicott City Post Office, 8267 Main Street, Ellicott City, Howard County
Survey Number: HO-752

Project: Post Office restoration Agency: USPS

Site visit by MHT Staff: no yes Name _____ Date _____

Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G
 None

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)

Ellicott City Historic District has been listed in the National Register of Historic Place since July 1978. The Post Office building is not specifically identified in the National Register nomination form. However, its prominent location on Main Street confirms that it is well within the district and it is a contributing element. The building is constructed of ashlar granite stone laid in regular courses with a standing seam metal roof and 12 over 12 windows. The front entrance has hollow metal double doors with six lights in each door, and a transom. There are interior chimneys in each gable end of the building. The rear of the building is of brick laid in running bond and also contains a loading dock. In sum, it is an excellent example of the post office buildings designed by the U.S. Treasury's Architect in the first half of the twentieth century. The stone front is an example of the Architect's efforts to provide a contextual building that fit in with the other buildings in the town. The building is also an example of the federal government's efforts to provide buildings which demonstrated its presence in areas which were removed from the central seat of government. Therefore, it is our opinion that the building is both a contributing resource to the Ellicott City Historic District, and is individually eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C.

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Project Review and Compliance Files

Prepared by: Jan Matilde Walecka, Amos Bailey Arnold + Associates

Anne E. Bruder September 8, 2000
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

NR program concurrence: yes no not applicable

B. Kuntze 9/14/00
Reviewer, NR program Date

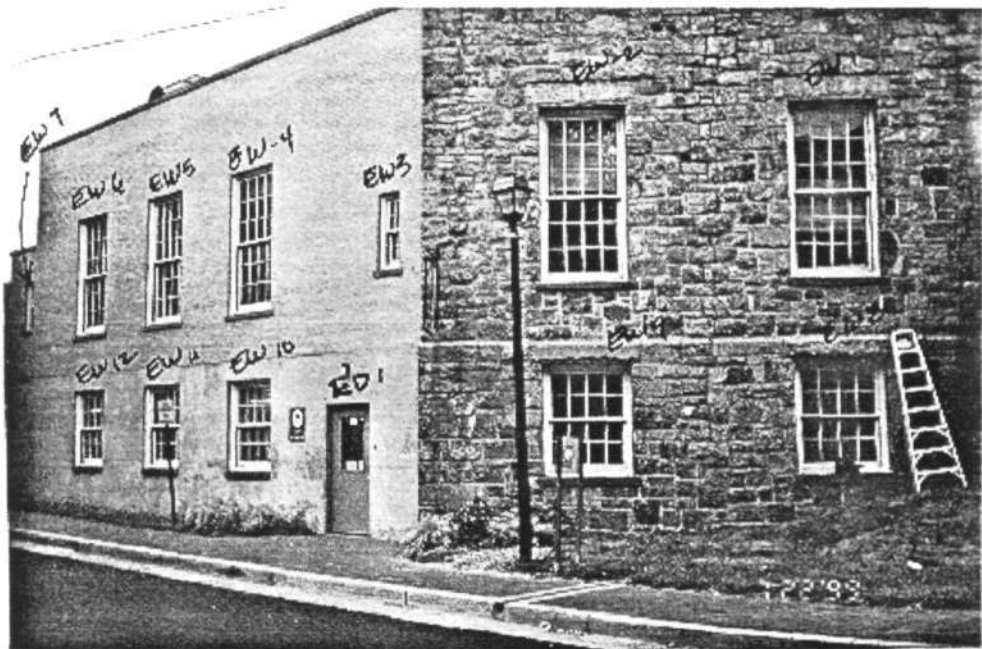
gmg



NORTH ELEVATION, MAIN ENTRANCE



NORTH DOOR #1, MAIN ENTRANCE



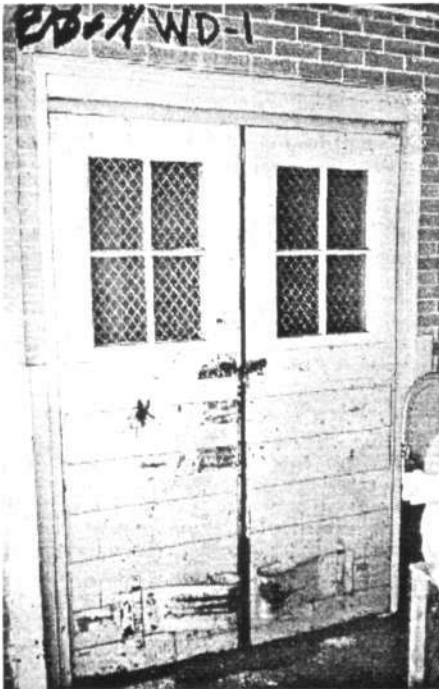
EAST ELEVATION



EAST DOOR, TOURIST INFORMATION



WEST ELEVATION, LOADING DOCK



WEST DOOR #1



WEST DOOR #2
@ LOADING DOCK



WEST DOOR #3



WEST WINDOW #2

SEE DRAWING 3/A1

NOTE: THIS WINDOW WILL BE RESTORED IN PLACE DUE TO THE PLACEMENT OF THE MECHANICAL SYSTEM .



USPO, HO-752
Ellicott City
USGS QUAD
Ellicott City

- SEE GRID F9
- 1 COURT AVE
 - 2 SARAHS LA
 - 3 COURT PL
 - 4 SAINT PAUL PL
 - 5 TIBER ALLEY
 - 6 MARYLAND AVE
 - 7 SAINT PAUL ST

ELLICOTT CITY
Tiber

29

40

210

144

987

103

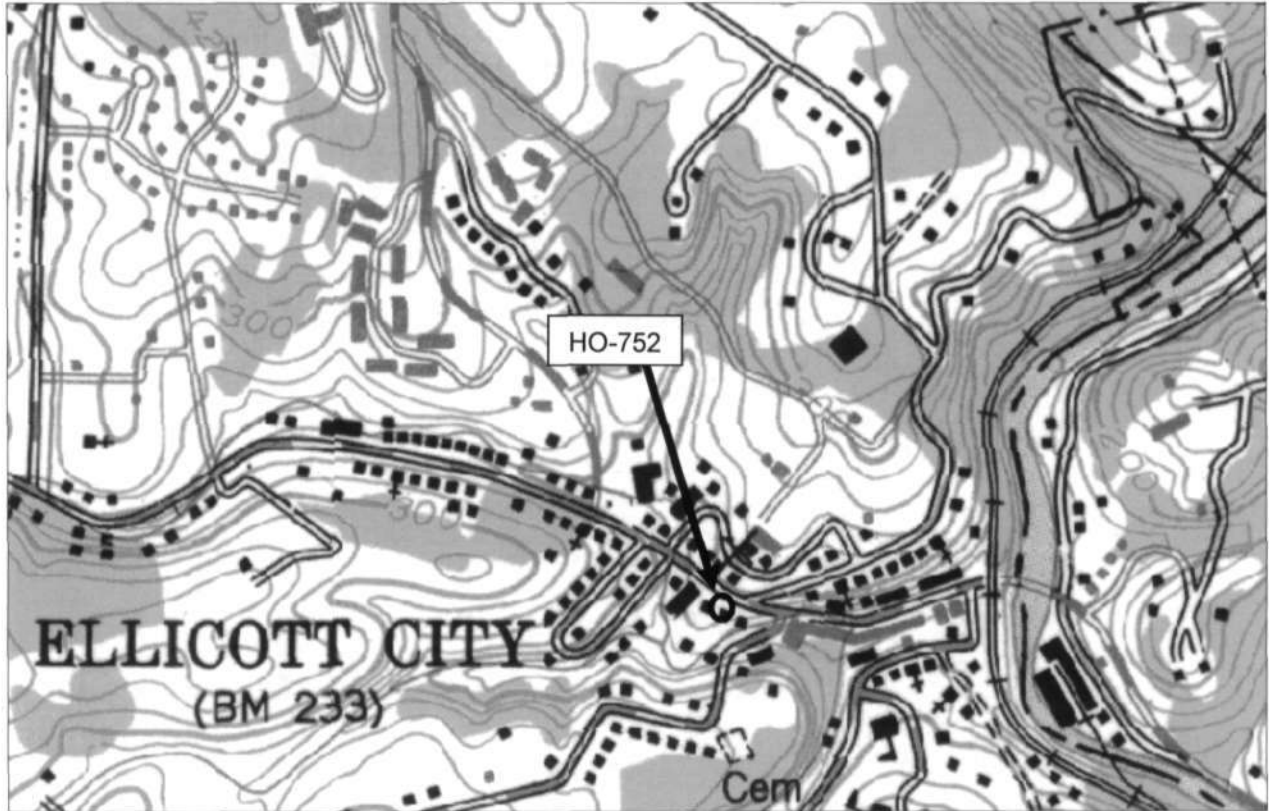
SEE GRID K1
1 SLATE DR
7 STONESTHROW CT

SEE GRID F9
1 COURT AVE
2 SARAHS LA
3 COURT PL
4 SAINT PAUL PL
5 TIBER ALLEY
6 MARYLAND AVE
7 SAINT PAUL ST

HO-752
Ellicott City Post Office
8267 Main Street (MD 144), Ellicott City
Sanborn Map

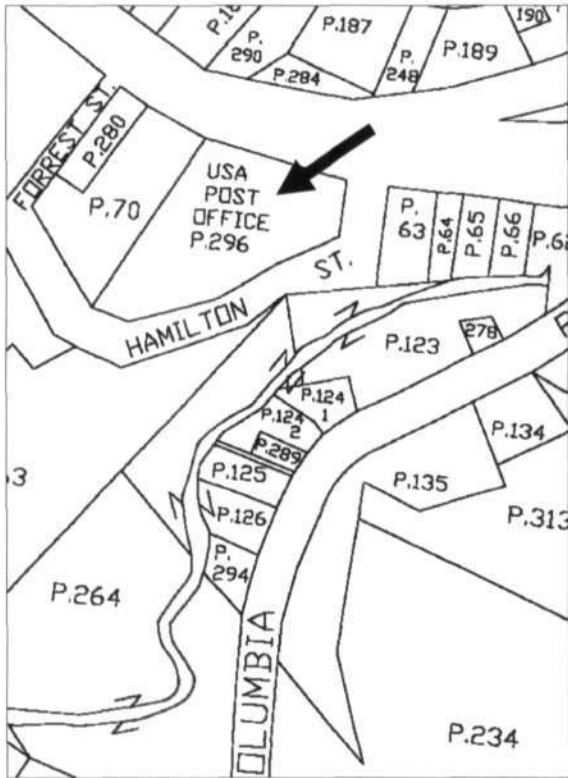


HO-752
Ellicott City Post Office
8267 Main Street (MD 144), Ellicott City
Ellicott City quad 1953, Photorevised 1966 and 1974



Tax Map 25A, Parcel 296

National Web Map Service 6" Orthophoto Map, c. 2010



HO-752
Ellicott City Post Office
8267 Main Street (MD 144), Ellicott City
Photo by Jennifer K. Cosham, 11/28/2012
East elevation



Southeast elevation from across Tiber River



HO-752

Ellicott City Post Office
8267 Main Street, Ellicott City
Public

DESCRIPTION:

The main block of the Post Office is a one-story, five-bay by two-bay, squared rubble stone structure with a gable roof that has copper roofing with batten seams and a northwest-southeast ridge. There is a water table with all of the stone walls. There are interior stone chimneys and parapets at both gable ends. On the southwest side of the building is a one-story triangular wing of buff brick with a parged foundation and a flat roof. The southwest side of the wing has a shorter square wing attached to it. The northeast elevation has a center entrance with paired doors. There is a waiting room across the four northern bays of the main block, with an office in the eastern bay. Behind the waiting area is the large mail room, with mail boxes in the north bay, attached to the waiting room. The waiting room has an entrance vestibule. On the northwest end is a mural of Ellicott City, while the southeast end has a mural depicting early settlement and building in the region. The mail room has a safe, and above it is the observation booth, with narrow slit viewing ports at the top of the wall that look down upon the mail room.

SIGNIFICANCE:

An appropriation of \$90,000 was made in the Construction Program Act of 1937 to purchase a site and construct a new post office in Ellicott City. Plans were made for "a one-story building of Greek Revival design" to be built with local granite on the front façade and with brick in the rear. The plans were apparently drawn up by the Office of the Supervising Architect. They called for a public lobby with five windows for patrons, an alcove attached that would contain 200 lock boxes, the postmaster's office, and a large workroom behind the patron's windows on the first floor. In the basement were offices for the county agent and the home demonstration agent. Contracts were awarded in the spring of 1940 and the building was completed and dedicated in December of that year. James L. Barnes Construction Company, of Greensboro, North Carolina, was the low bidder. The Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts was responsible for putting 1 % of the appropriation for a building toward artwork, and this program was especially used for post offices. In the case of Ellicott City, 21-year-old Petro Paul de Anna painted an oil-on-canvas mural of the building of Ellicott's Mills, and a general view of the town. They were reportedly completed in 1942.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HO-752

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Ellicott City Post Office

other

2. Location

street and number 8267 Main Street __ not for publication

city, town Ellicott City __ vicinity

county Howard

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

name Howard County, Maryland

street and number 3430 Courthouse Drive telephone

city, town Ellicott City state MD zip code 21043

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Howard County Courthouse liber folio

city, town Ellicott City tax map 25A tax parcel 296 tax ID number

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	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	0	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	1	0
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry		
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape		
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture		
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
		<input type="checkbox"/> social		
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress		
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
			1	

7. Description

Inventory No. HO-752

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 main block of the Post Office is a one-story, five-bay by two-bay, squared rubble stone structure with a gable roof that has copper roofing with batten seams and a northwest-southeast ridge. There is a water table with all of the stone walls. There are interior stone chimneys and parapets at both gable ends. On the southwest side of the building is a one-story triangular wing of buff brick with a parged foundation and a flat roof. The southwest side of the wing has a shorter square wing attached to it. The northeast elevation has a center entrance with paired doors. There is a waiting room across the four northern bays of the main block, with an office in the eastern bay. Behind the waiting area is the large mail room, with mail boxes in the north bay, attached to the waiting room. The waiting room has an entrance vestibule. On the northwest end is a mural of Ellicott City, while the southeast end has a mural depicting early settlement and building in the region. The mail room has a safe, and above it is the observation booth, with narrow slit viewing ports at the top of the wall that look down upon the mail room.

DESCRIPTION:

Exterior

The Ellicott City Post Office is located at 8267 Main Street, in Ellicott City, in northeastern Howard County, Maryland. The building is located on a flat site that drops off sharply to the southeast and south, and faces northeast toward Main Street. The main block of the Post Office is a one-story, five-bay by two-bay, squared rubble stone structure with a gable roof that has copper roofing with batten seams and a northwest-southeast ridge. There is a water table with all of the stone walls. There are interior stone chimneys and parapets at both gable ends. On the southwest side of the building is a one-story triangular wing of buff brick with a parged foundation and a flat roof. The southwest side of the wing has a shorter square wing attached to it.

The northeast elevation has a center entrance with paired doors that each have six lights over one panel, and have a matching panel above each door. Above the panels is a transom of paired three-light sash and a cut stone lintel. There are five stone steps set between cheek walls in front of the doorway, with iron lanterns set on the cheek walls. A handicap ramp has been added along the north half of the building. To either side of the doorway are two twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash with cut stone sills and lintels. There are copper gutters that obscure the narrow stone cornice.

The northwest elevation has two twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash with cut stone sills and lintels. The west bay sash has had the top eight lights altered for a louvered vent. The southeast elevation has an exposed basement with two eight-over eight double-hung sash with cut stone sills, and the water table

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HO-752

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 1

functions as lintels for the openings. The first story has two twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash with cut stone sills and lintels.

The south elevation of the wing is four bays and also has an exposed basement. There is a metal door with one light in the east bay and three eight-over-eight double-hung sash to the west. The first story has a small six-over-six sash near the east corner, and three twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash to the west.

The west elevation of the wing has three twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash to the north and the square wing attached to the south bay. This bay has double doors that open onto a covered loading dock that is part of the square wing, while the rest of the square wing does not have openings. There are exterior basement stairs down to a basement entrance in the north bay of the triangular wing.

Interior

There is a waiting room across the four northern bays of the main block, with an office in the eastern bay. Behind the waiting area is the large mail room, with mail boxes in the north bay, attached to the waiting room. The waiting room has an entrance vestibule of wood with doors at either end that have twelve lights, and five windows with eight lights each; the end windows are set on the diagonal. The floor is terrazzo with a band of serpentine along the edge, and there is wainscot of serpentine. The center of all four walls is a band of wood, with plaster above. There is an ogee cornice at the ceiling. On the northwest end is a mural of Ellicott City, while the southeast end has a mural depicting early settlement and building in the region. The southwest wall has five service windows with a small fixed sash at the top and a larger sliding sash at the bottom, covered by bronze bars. To the west of the service windows the wall is open to the mail box room, with bronze mail boxes lining the southeast and southwest walls.

The mail room has beaded-edge wood half wainscot. The floor is wood, but the furniture and light fixtures are modern replacements. On the northwest wall are the open back ends of the mailboxes. The southeast end has a safe labeled "The Schwab Safe Co., Lafayette, Ind., U.S.A. 1940." Above the safe is the observation booth, with narrow slit viewing ports at the top of the wall. There is a vestibule and stairway to the basement to the southeast of the safe. A doorway on the southwest gives access to the small, square wing.

The basement has an office to the northeast and a large room to the southwest with no historic features visible. The observation booth is accessed from the basement in two levels, via steel ladders. The booth is constructed of CMUs painted black on the interior, with recesses in the top half of the wall that contain narrow slit viewing ports in the bottom of the recess, each with a hinged glass cover. There are narrow wood shelves attached to the walls just below the recesses.

8. Significance

Inventory No. HO-752

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

Specific dates N/A **Architect/Builder** Office of the Supervising Architect

Construction dates 1940

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:

An appropriation of \$90,000 was made in the Construction Program Act of 1937 to purchase a site and construct a new post office in Ellicott City. Plans were made for "a one-story building of Greek Revival design" to be built with local granite on the front façade and with brick in the rear. The plans were apparently drawn up by the Office of the Supervising Architect. They called for a public lobby with five windows for patrons, an alcove attached that would contain 200 lock boxes, the postmaster's office, and a large workroom behind the patron's windows on the first floor. In the basement were offices for the county agent and the home demonstration agent. Contracts were awarded in the spring of 1940 and the building was completed and dedicated in December of that year. James L. Barnes Construction Company, of Greensboro, North Carolina, was the low bidder. The Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts was responsible for putting 1 % of the appropriation for a building toward artwork, and this program was especially used for post offices. In the case of Ellicott City, 21-year-old Petro Paul de Anna painted an oil-on-canvas mural of the building of Ellicott's Mills, and a general view of the town. They were reportedly completed in 1942.

SIGNIFICANCE:

A postmaster's office was established at Ellicott's Lower Mills, on the Baltimore County side of the Patapsco River, in 1797 and has continued in the vicinity of Ellicott City almost continuously to the present. An appropriation of \$90,000 was made in the Construction Program Act of 1937 in order for the Public Buildings Administration of the Federal Works Agency to purchase a site and construct a new post office in Ellicott City. The chosen site on Main Street, at the corner of Hamilton Street, contained a number of frame buildings, including several dwellings, Stephen Hillsinger's Undertaking Parlor, a livery, and apparently a wagon and carriage manufactory with a blacksmith's shop attached at the rear. Plans were made for "a one-story building of Greek Revival design" to be built with local granite on the front façade and with brick in the rear. The plans were apparently drawn up by the Office of the

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HO-752

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

Supervising Architect. They called for a public lobby with five windows for patrons, an alcove attached that would contain 200 lock boxes, the postmaster's office, and a large workroom behind the patron's windows on the first floor. In the basement were offices for the county agent and the home demonstration agent. Contracts were awarded in the spring of 1940 and the building was completed and dedicated in December of that year. James L. Barnes Construction Company, of Greensboro, North Carolina, was the low bidder at \$53,750, and presumably was responsible for the construction, since this was the quoted price of the building at the dedication.¹

Construction of federal buildings, including post offices, soared during the Great Depression as a means of putting people to work, and the Ellicott City Post Office was probably one of the last such projects, since the nation was gearing up for war at the same time that it was being built. The use of a symmetrical façade and generally Colonial Revival detailing was common for post offices at this time. They generally employed a standardized plan, but often used regional materials (such as local granite) to tie the building to its place. One feature that must have been common to all post offices, but is little discussed, is the use of a surveillance booth in order to observe postal employees and deter theft of valuable items being shipped through the post. This likely became more important during the Depression, when postal banks became popular because American citizens trusted the federal government to protect their savings more than they trusted private banks. The Ellicott City Post Office retains a safe, dated 1940, though it is not clear whether there was a bank in this post office branch, or whether this was for secure storage of other valuables. The Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts was responsible for putting 1 % of the appropriation for a building toward artwork, and this program was especially used for post offices. In the case of Ellicott City, 21-year-old Petro Paul de Anna painted an oil-on-canvas mural of the building of Ellicott's Mills, and a general view of the town. They were reportedly completed in 1942.²

The U. S. Postal Service built a new branch building off of Route 40, more easily accessible to automobile, though isolated from the historic core of town, and the old post office building was sold to Howard County in 2008. Renovations are currently underway (2011) to expand and improve the facilities for the tourism office, which was housed in the basement but will be moved to the main floor when the work is complete. The lock boxes, murals, and other distinctive features of the post office will generally be retained.

¹ Sanborn Map Company, "Ellicott City, Maryland," 1910, 1919, updated to 1959. *Ellicott City Bicentennial Journal*, summer-fall 1972, p. 28-B. *Ellicott City (Maryland) Times*, 14 March 1940, p. 1, cols. 4-6. *Ellicott City (Maryland) Times*, 5 December 1940, p. 1, cols. 4-6.

² Boland, Beth M. *How to Apply the National Register Criteria to Post Offices* (National Register Bulletin 13), (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, rev. ed., 1994), pp. 2-5.
<http://www.wpamurals.com/maryland.htm>.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. HO-752

See footnotes

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 13,916 sq. ft.
Acreage of historical setting 13,916 sq. ft.
Quadrangle name Ellicott City Quadrangle scale: 1:24000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries consist of the outlines of the property, tax map 25A, parcel 296, which encompasses all of the historic buildings and features on the site.

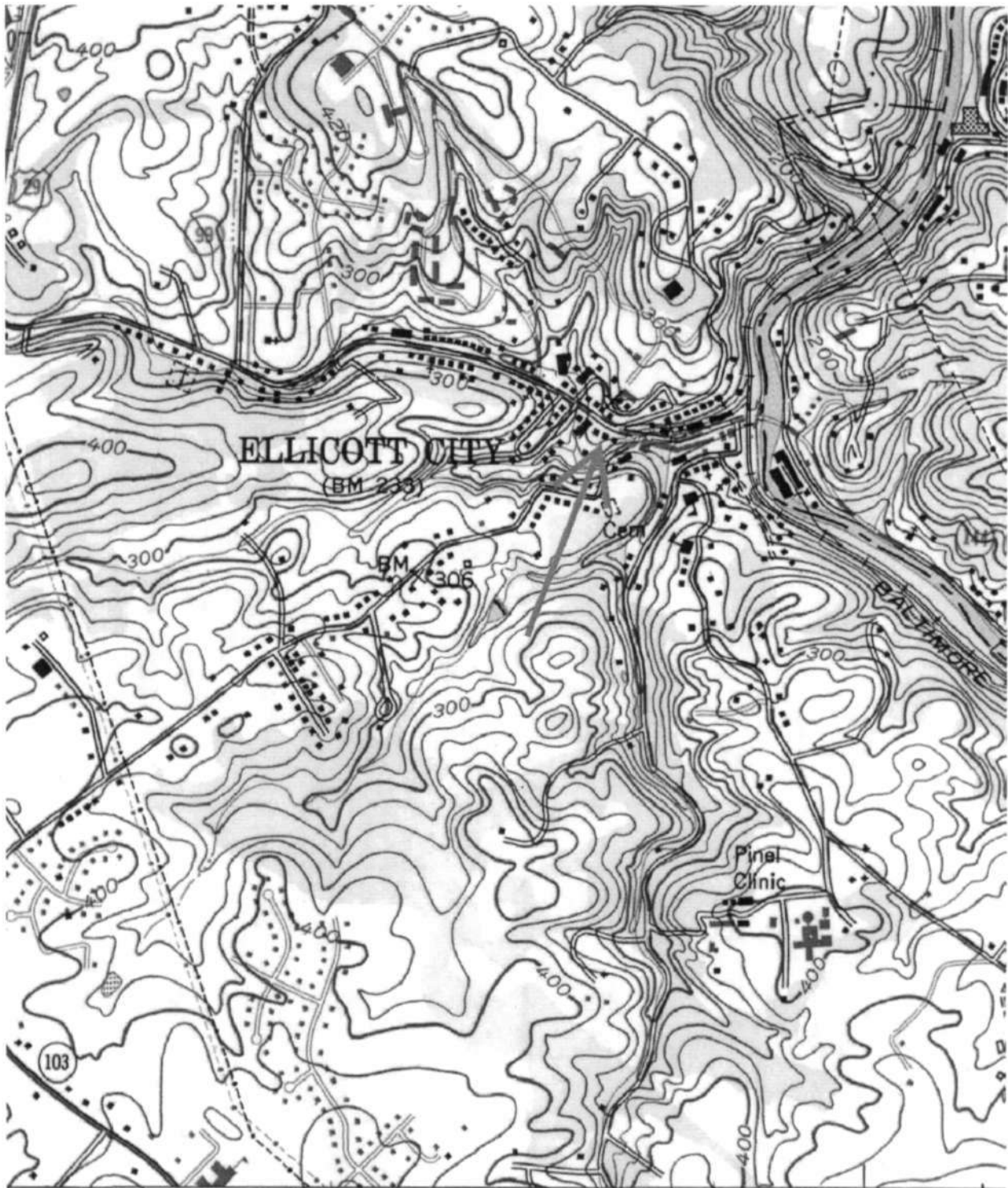
11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Ken Short		
organization	Howard County Department of Planning & Zoning	date	October 2011
street & number	3430 Courthouse Drive	telephone	410-313-4335
city or town	Ellicott City	state	MD

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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600



(SAVAGE) 1:3 MI. TO MD. 175

345 47'30"

HO-752
Ellicott City Post Office
8267 Main Street, Ellicott City
Ellicott City quad

HO-752
Ellicott City Post Office
8267 Main Street, Ellicott City
Howard County, Maryland
Ken Short, photographer

Photo Log

Nikon D-70 camera
HP Premium Plus paper
HP Gray Photo print cartridge

HO-0752_2010-07-20_01
Northeast elevation

HO-0752_2010-07-20_02
Northwest & west elevations

HO-0752_2010-07-20_03
South & southeast elevations

HO-0752_2010-07-20_04
Waiting room, view southeast

HO-0752_2010-07-20_05
Waiting room, southeast elevation mural

HO-0752_2010-07-20_06
Waiting room, northwest elevation mural

HO-0752_2010-07-20_07
Mailboxes

HO-0752_2010-07-20_08
Mail room, view southeast toward safe and
surveillance booth

HO-0752_2010-07-20_09
Safe

HO-0752_2010-07-20_10
Surveillance booth interior



H0-752
Ellicott City Post Office
8267 Main Street, Ellicott City
Howard County, Maryland

Ken Short

2010-07-20

MD SHPO

Northeast elevation

1 of 10



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Ellicott City Post Office

8267 Main Street, Ellicott City

Howard County, Maryland

Ken Short

2010-07-20

MD SHPO

Northwest + west elevations

2 of 10



HO-752

Ellicott City Post Office

8267 Main Street, Ellicott City

Howard County, Maryland

Ken Short

2010-07-20

MD SHPO

South + southeast elevations

3 of 10

EXIT



H0-752

Ellicott City Post Office

8267 Main Street, Ellicott City

Howard County, Maryland

Ken Short

2010-07-20

MD SHPO

Waiting room, view southeast

4 of 10



BULLETINS

WE DOUBLE DARE YOU...

H0-752
Elliott City Post Office
8267 Main Street, Elliott City
Howard County, Maryland

Ken Short

2010-07-20

MD SHPO

Waiting room, southeast elevation mural
5 of 10



AT THE END OF THE YEAR, WITH THE
MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND IN THE AIR,
THE BROTHERS ARE JOINING UP TO CELEBRATE THE
HOLIDAY AND THE WEEKEND IN THE AIR.



H0-752
Ellicott City Post Office
8267 Main Street, Ellicott City
Howard County, Maryland
Ken Short
2010-07-20
MD SHPO
Waiting room, northwest elevation mural
6 of 10



BOX MAIL
Will Be Available
For Pickup
By 1:00 AM
Monday - Saturday



H0-752

Ellicott City Post Office

8267 Main Street, Ellicott City

Howard County, Maryland

Ken Short

2010-07-20

MD SHPO

Mailboxes

7 of 10



HO-752
Ellicott City Post Office
8267 Main Street, Ellicott City
Howard County, Maryland
Ken Short

2010-07-20
MD SHPO

Mail room, view southeast toward safe
and surveillance booth

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H0-752

Ellicott City Post Office

8267 Main Street, Ellicott City

Howard County, Maryland

Ken Short

2010-07-20

MD SHPO

Safe

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HO-752

Ellicott City Post Office

8267 Main Street, Ellicott City

Howard County, Maryland

Ken Short

2010-07-20

MD SHPO

Surveillance booth interior

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