Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Site Number: 18PR355 **Site Name:** National Archives

Other name(s):

Brief Description: Late Archaic lithic tool manufacturing loci

Prehistoric ✔ | Historic ☐ | Unknown ☐

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude: 38.9960 | Longitude: -76.9508 | Elevation: 66 m | Site slope: 6-10%

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 12 | SCS soil & sediment code: SuC2

Physiographic province: Western Shore Coastal | Terrestrial site ✔ | Underwater site ☐

Ethnobotany profile available ☐ | Maritime site ☐

Site setting:

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Topography

Floodplain ☐ | High terrace ☐ | Hilltop/bluff ☐ | Rockshelter/cave ☐ | Interior flat ☐ | Hillslope ☐ | Upland flat ☐ | Unknown ☐ | Ridgetop ☐ | Other ☐ | Terrace ☐ | Low terrace ✔

Ownership

Private ☐ | Federal ✔ | State of MD ☐ | Regional/county/city ☐ | Unknown ☐

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any): Springs

Saltwater: Ocean ☐ | Estuary/tidal river ☐ | Tidewater/marsh ☐

Freshwater: Stream/river ☐ | Swamp ☐ | Lake or pond ☐ | Spring ✔

Minimum distance to water is 60 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site ☐ | Archaic site ☐ | Early archaic ☐ | MIddle archaic ☐ | Late archaic Y

Woodland site ☐ | MD Adena ☐ | Early woodland ☐ | Mid. woodland ☐ | Late woodland ☐

Contact period site ☐ | ca. 1630 - 1675 ☐ | ca. 1675 - 1720 ☐ | ca. 1720 - 1780 ☐ | ca. 1780 - 1820 ☐

ca. 1820 - 1860 ☐ | ca. 1860 - 1900 ☐ | ca. 1900 - 1930 ☐ | Post 1930 ☐

Unknown historic context ☐ | Unknown prehistoric context ☐ | Unknown context ☐

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American ☐ | African American ☐ | Anglo-American ☐ | Hispanic ☐ | Asian American ☐ | Unknown ☐ | Other ☐

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Prehistoric

Multi-component ☐ | Misc. ceremonial ☐ | Village ☐ | Rock art ☐ | Hamlet ☐ | Shell midden ☐ | Base camp ☐ | STU/lithic scatter ☐ | Rockshelter/cave ☐ | Quarry/extraction ✔ | Earthen mound ☐ | Fish weir ☐ | Cairn ☐ | Production area ✔ | Burial area ☐ | Unknown ☐

Other context ✔ tool manufacture loci

Historic

Urban/Rural?

Domestic ☐: Homestead ☐ | Farmstead ☐ | Mansion ☐ | Plantation ☐ | Row/townhome ☐ | Cellar ☐ | Privy ☐

Industrial ☐: Mining-related ☐ | Quarry-related ☐ | Mill ☐ | Black/metalsmith ☐ | Furnace/forge ☐ | Other ☐

Transportation ☐: Canal-related ☐ | Road/railroad ☐ | Wharf/landing ☐ | Maritime-related ☐ | Bridge ☐ | Ford ☐

Educational ☐

Commercial ☐: Trading post ☐ | Store ☐ | Tavern/inn ☐

Military ☐: Battlefield ☐ | Fortification ☐ | Encampment ☐

Townsite ☐

Religious ☐: Church/mtg house ☐ | Ch support bldg ☐

Burial area ☐: Cemetery ☐ | Sepulchre ☐ | Isolated burial ☐

Bldg or foundation ☐: Possible Structure ☐ | Post-in-ground ☐ | Frame-built ☐ | Masonry ☐ | Other structure ☐

Slave related ☐ | **Non-domestic agri** ☐ | **Recreational** ☐ | **Midden/dump** ☐ | **Artifact scatter** ☐ | **Spring or well** ☐ | **Unknown** ☐ | **Other context** ☐

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples: Soil samples taken N | Flotation samples taken N | Other samples taken

Historic context samples: Soil samples taken | Flotation samples taken | Other samples taken

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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types

		Koens-Crispin	
Clovis		Perkiomen	
Hardaway-Dalton		Susquehana	
Palmer		Vernon	1
Kirk (notch)		Piscataway	
Kirk (stem)		Calvert	
Le Croy		Selby Bay	
Morrow Mntn		Jacks Rf (notch)	
Guilford		Jacks Rf (pent)	
Brewerton		Madison/Potomac	
Otter Creek		Levanna	

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Prehistoric Sherd Types

				Shepard		Keyser	
Marcey Creek		Popes Creek		Townsend		Yeocomico	
Dames Qtr		Coulbourn		Minguannan		Monongahela	
Selden Island		Watson		Sullivan Cove		Susquehannock	
Accokeek		Mockley		Shenks Ferry			
Wolfe Neck		Clemson Island		Moyaone			
Vinette		Page		Potomac Crk			

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone		Staffordshire		**Stoneware**	
Astbury		Jackfield		Tin Glazed		English Brown	
Borderware		Mn Mottled		Whiteware		Eng Dry-bodied	
Buckley		North Devon		**Porcelain**		Nottingham	
Creamware		Pearlware				Rhenish	
						Wt Salt-glazed	

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts

		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	480	Human remain(s)	☐
Ground stone		Modified faunal	
Stone bowls		Unmod faunal	
Fire-cracked rock	13	Oyster shell	☐
Other lithics (all)	13	Floral material	☐
Ceramics (all)		Uncommon Obj.	
Rimsherds		Other ☐	

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)		Storage/trash pit	☐
Midden	☐	Burial(s)	☐
Shell midden	☐	Ossuary	☐
Postholes/molds	☐	Unknown	☐
House pattern(s)	☐	Other	☑
Palisade(s)	☐	buried landform	
Hearth(s)	☐		
Lithic reduc area	☐		

Lithic Material

		Fer quartzite	☐	Sil sandstone	☐
Jasper	☐	Chalcedony	☐	European flint	☐
Chert	☐	Ironstone	☐	Basalt	☐
Rhyolite	☑	Argilite	☐	Unknown	☐
Quartz	☑	Steatite	☐	Other	☐
Quartzite	☑	Sandstone	☐		

☐ **Dated features present at site**

Historic Artifacts

		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)		Activity item(s)	
Glass (all)		Human remain(s)	☐
Architectural		Faunal material	☐
Furniture		Misc. kitchen	
Arms		Floral material	☐
Clothing		Misc.	
Personal items		Other ☐	

Historic Features

		Privy/outhouse	☐	Depression/mound	☐	Unknown	☐
Const feature	☐	Well/cistern	☐	Burial(s)	☐	Other	☐
Foundation	☐	Trash pit/dump	☐	Railroad bed	☐		
Cellar hole/cellar	☐	Sheet midden	☐	Earthworks	☐		
Hearth/chimney	☐	Planting feature	☐	Mill raceway	☐		
Postholes/molds	☐	Road/walkway	☐	Wheel pit	☐		
Paling ditch/fence	☐						

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1:	+/-	years BP	Reliability	**Sample 2:**	+/-	years BP	Reliability	**Sample 3:**	+/-	years BP	Reliability
Sample 4:	+/-	years BP	Reliability	**Sample 5:**	+/-	years BP	Reliability	**Sample 6:**	+/-	years BP	Reliability
Sample 7:	+/-	years BP	Reliability	**Sample 8:**	+/-	years BP	Reliability	**Sample 9:**	+/-	years BP	Reliability

☐ **Additional radiocarbon results available**

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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at

☐ Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The National Archives archeological site (18PR355) is an apparent Late Archaic lithic tool manufacturing site in the College Park area of Prince George's County, MD. The site is located at the National Archives II facility on the edge of the University of Maryland campus. The site is surrounded by several major roads, a golf course, and is bounded on the west by a PEPCO power line. The topography of the site is formed by two unnamed tributaries of Paint Branch, which have cut back into the level land surface, isolating a flat hilltop between two gullies. The site is covered with a mixed hardwood forest of beech, cherry, and maple, with an understory of dogwood, Virginia creeper, greenbrier, honeysuckle, and poison ivy. Parts of the forest are mature, with large trees at least 150 years old, while other parts are covered with younger second growth trees. The soils at the site are loams and sandy loams from the Sunnyside and the Christiana series.

The site was first examined in 1988, when the National Archives was planning construction of a new facility in the area. The construction would include a new National Archives facility, plus structures to accommodate parking for patrons of the facility. Several State and Federal legislative acts mandated evaluation of the construction project area to identify archeological resources in the vicinity. Prior to the evaluation, the Maryland Historical Trust had identified the area as having a high potential for the presence of significant archeological resources based on the presence of nearby sites and predictive modeling data. Thus, a Phase I survey was carried out in the area to begin the mitigation process.

Phase I survey entailed a program of shovel test pitting (STPs). A total of 180 STPs, approximately 30 cm square and averaging 40 cm deep, were excavated in areas of high probability, at intervals of 20 m. In addition, a path traversing the property was surface collected and collection was also performed on areas of bare ground along the powerline to the west of the project area. These surface collections provided some testing in areas outside those predicted to have high potential for prehistoric remains. All material from the STPs was screened through hardware cloth, and following the cleaning and identification of artifacts in the laboratory, a map was prepared showing the distribution of STPs with artifactual material.

A total of four positive STPs resulted in the identification of 18PR355 (out of a total of 12 STPs within the site boundaries as eventually determined during Phase II work). From surface collections on the path which extends through the site, it was determined that this site approaches what is now the University of Maryland Golf Course. The surface finds along the path extend well beyond the property line, but some may be material removed by surface water flow in the path. Two pieces of a projectile point were found in the path within the site. The point appears to be a Clagett point indicative of a Late Archaic occupation at the site. The Phase I assemblage consisted of a quartzite Clagett point, 1 quartzite biface, 1 quartzite core, 1 quartzite uniface, 1 utilized quartz flake, 3 utilized quartzite flakes, 15 quartz flakes, 25 quartzite flakes, 2 possible sandstone flakes, 6 fragments of quartz shatter, 4 pieces of fire-cracked rock and 3 broken quartz pebbles. The results of the Phase I field investigations showed no significant historic material present at the site. Post WWII artifacts were found scattered throughout the area, but this is believed to be diffuse refuse and not part of any specific occupation. The historic material will not be discussed further in this synopsis report.

Based on the results of the initial survey, researchers moved immediately on to Phase II testing at 18PR355. Phase II testing at the National Archives archeological site consisted of a program of STPs and 1 X 1 m test square excavations. Twenty-seven additional STPs were placed at 5 and 10 m intervals from Phase I artifact locations around the edges of the site, where necessary to better delineate the horizontal limits of each site. Five 1 X 1 m test units were excavated within site 18PR355 in order to better define the site's stratigraphy and uncover undisturbed features.

Again, the STPs were approximately 30 cm wide and were excavated to a depth of 40 cm or subsoil. All soil matrix was screened through hardware cloth, and the artifacts were retained by provenience. A soil profile was drawn for each STP. Excavation of the 1 X 1 m2 test units followed the natural strata on the site. Each layer was removed as a separate provenience. Natural soil layers more than 10 cm thick were excavated in arbitrary 10 cm levels. A standardized layer/level form was recorded for each provenience and a cross section was drawn for at least one wall of each square. All soil matrix was dry-screened through hardware cloth, and the artifacts were collected by vertical provenience within each square.

Twenty-one of the 27 Phase II STPs produced artifacts (between 1 and 6 artifacts per STP). The western border was found to be that delineated during the Phase I investigation, while the northeast and southeast ends continued off the property onto the golf course.

The first test unit excavated at the site was placed immediately in the area of a Phase I STP that yielded a large quartzite core. Test Unit 1 revealed a thick humus above a deep soil profile similar to that characteristic of natural undisturbed soils. However, the horizontal growth pattern and abrupt end of the tree roots at approximately 40 cm below the surface indicate a soil consistency difference that may be indicative of an old plowzone horizon. If this area had last been plowed over 150 years ago (early 19th century or before) this profile could have resulted from the leaching of the humus. Artifacts were recovered from well below this division in the soil profile and indicate an undisturbed, unplowed stratum in this area of the site.

Test units 3 and 4 were located in the mature hardwood forest south of the path. These units were chosen because of the high artifact content in nearby STPs, as well as the topography. Both of these units contained dry, silty soils similar to those in Test Unit 1. They showed evidence of heavy leaching from the humus layer although it was much harder to discern the presence of an old plowzone in these squares.

Test Units 2 and 5 were placed north of the path in the secondary growth hardwoods area. This area is generally level with a barely discernible slope to the east. Both test squares were located near Phase I STPs that contained artifacts. Additional STPs excavated during Phase II around the test unit area found a definite concentration of lithics in this area. After removal of a thin humus layer, a homogenous brown loam plowzone stratum was encountered. During excavation this layer was believed to continue to the top of the subsoil. It was noted during fieldwork that the soil consistency became slightly more compact near the bottom of layer 3 in Test Unit 5. Upon examination of the profiles during the recording process, a distinct lens was noticed in both Test Units 2 and 5. Sandier, slightly redder, and more compact than the plowzone above, this stratum may represent an undisturbed in situ occupation layer. Artifacts continued to be recovered at this depth.

The Phase II prehistoric assemblage included 1 quartz Vernon point, 1 quartzite spokeshave, a possible sandstone core, 1 quartz uniface, 1 quartzite uniface, 1 utilized quartz flake, 15 utilized quartzite flakes, 2 rhyolite flakes, 18 quartz flakes, 354 quartzite flakes, 4 sandstone flakes, 7 pieces of quartz shatter, 18 pieces of quartzite shatter, 9 fragments of fire-cracked rock, and 10 broken quartz pebbles.

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Prehistoric ☑

Historic ☐

Unknown ☐

Brief Description: Late Archaic lithic tool manufacturing loci

Site 18PR355 represents a special activity site dating from the Late Archaic period. The presence of a high percentage of quartzite flakes and tools, including cores, from which some of the tools may have been derived, suggests that quartzite raw material was brought to the site, and flakes and tools were manufactured on the site. The presence of several tools suggesting woodworking activities (a retouched flake with a notch and "spokeshaves") as well as retouching and utilization of flakes may indicate the use of tools for other work.

The stratigraphy from this site indicated a probable buried land surface, with the potential for artifacts in an undisturbed spatial context which will allow the reconstruction of one aspect of Late Archaic adaptation. The portion of the site on the National Archives project location may represent only one of a range of activities carried out by the occupants of this area.

The site has tremendous potential to contribute to our understanding of the Late Archaic. Specifically, the site can be expected to contribute information about settlement patterns, particularly in the range of usage of the landscape for different activities, and technology, in distributional and lithic analysis of material from a tool manufacturing and use site. In addition, the tools produced may shed light on our understanding of the prehistory of Maryland and the Mid-Atlantic Region.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00006658