

**CLARKSBURG HEIGHTS HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
**CLARKSBURG, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD 20871**

**MASTER PLAN HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION FORM**  
**JANUARY 2025**





|                                                                                                                                       |           |
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Maryland – National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
 Montgomery County Planning Department  
 Master Plan Historic District Designation Form

### 1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Clarksburg Heights

Current Name: N/A

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties #(s): 13-61

### 2. LOCATION OF PROPERTY

Address Number and Street: 12700-12712 Running Brook Drive

County, State, Zip: Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland 20871

### 3. ZONING OF PROPERTY

R-200: The intent of the R-200 zone is to provide designated areas of the County for residential uses with a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet. The predominant use is residential in a detached house.

### 4. TYPE OF PROPERTY

#### A. Ownership of Property

☒ Private  
☐ Public  
☐ Local  
☐ State  
☐ Federal

#### B. Category of Property

☒ Private  
☐ Public  
☐ Local  
☐ State  
☐ Federal

#### C. Number of Resources within the Property

##### Contributing

5 Buildings  
☐ Structures  
☐ Objects  
☐ Archaeological Sites  
5 Total

##### Noncontributing

4 Buildings  
☐ Structures  
☐ Objects  
☐ Archaeological Sites  
4 Total

D. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places: In 2019, the Maryland Historical Trust found the Clarksburg Heights subdivision eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

### 5. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic Function(s): DOMESTIC: Single-family dwelling

Current Function(s): DOMESTIC: Single-family dwelling

## 6. DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

### Site Description:

Clarksburg Heights is located in Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland. The mid-twentieth century planned subdivision is 1.25 miles southeast of the Clarksburg Historic District on the west side of Frederick Road (MD 355). Francis Wilson Wims and Sarah J. Wims platted the 4.07-acre Clarksburg Heights in 1963. The subdivision consists of six, single-family houses on ½-acre lots along Running Brook Drive. Clarksburg Heights is bounded by Frederick Road to the east, Community of Faith United Methodist Church, Inc. to the south, the Clarksburg Neighborhood Park and Activity Building and single-family dwellings to the north, and Rocky Hill Middle School to the west.

Running Brook Drive, a narrow street, provides access from Frederick Road and terminates at the end of the subdivision. The six houses are setback approximately 55' from the public right-of-way and separated from the road by manicured lawns. Minimal fencing or other demarcations in the front yards adds a sense of openness. The two houses on the north side of the street are all raised 6' to 10' above Running Brook Drive which creates a pleasant rolling hill and privacy. The house at the southwest corner of the intersection of Running Brook Drive and Frederick Road similarly is raised above the street, but the remaining three houses on the south side of Running Brook Drive are all at grade with the public right-of-way. The properties are accessed via asphalt or concrete driveways. Most of the driveways terminate at one or two-car, attached garages. Outbuildings in the subdivision primarily consists of storage sheds.

### Architectural Description (see App. 4 and App. 5 for current and historic photographs):

F. Wilson Wims, an African American builder, owned and constructed five of the six houses in the subdivision between 1963 and 1964. Wims built Ranch and Split-Level houses, which were popular architectural forms in the mid-twentieth century. These five resources contribute to the Clarksburg Heights Historic District. The Colonial Revival house at 12712 Running Brook Drive is a non-contributing resource to the district. While the house is in the original subdivision, it was constructed in 1974 by a different builder.

#### *Ranch Houses — 12700, 12701, and 12705 Running Brook Drive (App. 4, Figs. 1-3)*

One-story Ranch houses were a typical architectural style utilized by developers and merchant builders in the vast suburban expansion and development in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. Three Ranch houses are located at 12700, 12701, and 12705 Running Brook Drive in Clarksburg Heights. These modest dwellings exhibit a shared aesthetic characterized by a similar form and minimalist ornamentation. Each one-story, five-bay, side-gable dwelling is clad in a running-bond brick veneer. The single-story, side-gable form, paired with off-center front doors, an overall asymmetry, and shallow-pitched, asphalt shingle roofs, emphasizes a sense of horizontality. At 12701 Running Brook Drive, Wims incorporated additional details to his future home including a projecting cross-gable—a feature typical of the style—that disrupts the horizontal roof line, a recessed covered front patio, and faux stone veneer. Typical fenestration for the Ranch houses consists of double-hung windows, picture windows, and single-leaf doors. The houses at 12700 and 12701 Running Brook Drive feature non-historic replacement doors and windows, but the house at 12705 Running Brook Drive retains its original two-over-two, double-hung windows, a large single-light picture window, single-leaf, front door with a half-elliptical light, and 4-light, 16-panel, roll-up garage door. Two of the three houses (12700 and 12705 Running Brook Drive) retain their original semi-attached garage—a character defining feature of Ranch houses—albeit with enclosed breezeways. The owners of 12701 Running Brook Drive demolished the attached garage and constructed a gable addition on the front of the house for additional living space.

#### *Split-Level Houses — 12704 and 12708 Running Brook Drive (App. 4, Figs. 4-5)*

Two Split-Level houses with Ranch-styled details are located at 12704 and 12708 Running Brook Drive. Despite the similarities between Ranch and Split-Level houses, the latter are distinguished by their two-story height with one-story wing between the first and second stories. This design results in three distinct levels within the home. The main entrance is typically found on the one-story section that commonly consisted of the



living room and kitchen. A stair led to the first floor (primarily a family room) and the second floor (bedrooms) in the two-story section of the house.

The two Split-Level houses in Clarksburg Heights both reflect the form, but differ in layout. The house at 12704 Running Brook Drive consists of a two-story, hipped roof dwelling intercepted mid-height by a one-story, side-gable wing with an attached garage. The house features multi-color, running bond, brick veneer, strong horizontal emphasis, shallow pitched asphalt shingle roofs, and overhanging eaves. On the façade of the two-story section, fenestration consists of two, one-by-one, slider windows on the first story and a ribbon of four, one-by-one, slider windows on the second story. The one-story wing features a six-panel, single-leaf door with a single, one-light, sidelight, and a ribbon of five, single-light, bowed, casement windows. While the location and size of the openings remains largely intact, the original 15-light bowed window, slider windows, single-leaf front door, and garage door have been replaced. The property owners constructed a central, one-story, gable addition on the rear elevation in the late twentieth century.

The house at 12708 Running Brook Drive has an atypical floorplan which may have resulted due to its narrower lot. The two-story, side-gable section of the house has a projecting one-story, front-gable wing in lieu of the traditional side wing. The primary entrance is located at the intersection of the side-gable block and front-gable wing, but it accesses a smaller hyphen separating these two forms. This plan would not affect the traditional interior arrangements associated with a Split-Level home. Similar to other buildings of the type, the house has an asymmetrical plan, low-pitched roofs, overhanging eaves, one-by-one sliding windows, and sliding glass doors. Most of the original windows and doors have been replaced. Unlike the other dwellings constructed by Wims in this subdivision, the house never had an attached or semi-attached garage.

*Colonial Revival House — 12712 Running Brook Drive (App. 4, Fig. 6)*

There is a single non-contributing house at 12712 Running Brook Drive. Schulz Homes, Inc. constructed the Colonial Revival-inspired dwelling in 1974. The two-story, three-bay, side-gable house has an attached single-car garage. The walls are clad with brick veneer on the first story and vinyl lap siding on the second story. The asphalt single roof has overhanging eaves. The house is adorned with a walk-up front porch sheltered by a shed roof supported by slender turned post. Typical fenestration consists of single and paired one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl-sash windows with eight-over-eight, simulated divided light.

## 7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### A. Applicable Designation Criteria as described in Chapter 24A: Historic Resources Preservation, §24A-3, Montgomery County Code

Clarksburg Heights meets three of the nine designation criteria as described in §24A-3 of the Montgomery County Code. See Section J of this report for a detailed analysis.

### B. Statement of Significance:

Clarksburg Heights is a small, but notable, mid-twentieth century subdivision planned, built, and owned by African Americans. F. Wilson and Sarah L. Wims developed this subdivision in 1963 to counter widespread discriminatory housing practices and provide modern, middle-class housing in the popular Ranch and Split-Level styles for African Americans. The Wims sold several residences to educators, allowing them to live closer to their place of employment. At that time, the NAACP estimated that over ninety percent of Montgomery County's African American educators lived outside of the county due to discriminatory practices.<sup>1</sup>

The subdivision further reflects the resilience and achievements of its developers and residents, notably the contributions of Wilson Wims, Katie R. Harper, Mary E. Johnson, Edith J. Gregg, and James R. Gregg. Montgomery County has recognized Wims as a central figure in Clarksburg's history by naming a baseball field and elementary school in his honor. Wims participated and led civic organizations and fostered inclusivity in

<sup>1</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Hearing Before the United States Commission on Civil Rights, April 12-13, 1962* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962), 103.

the neighborhood through youth athletics. Katie Harper, Mary Johnson, and Edith Gregg collectively contributed over 100 years of service in the county's segregated and integrated schools. James R. Gregg's actions facilitated the integration of country clubs and similar public accommodations. Therefore, Clarksburg Heights stands as a testament to the African American community's efforts to improve the lives of residents, and is a singular resource in Montgomery County.

**C. Period of Significance:** 1963 - 1964

**D. Significant Dates:** 1963 (subdivision) and 1963-1964 (construction)

**E. Significant Persons:** F. Wilson Wims, Sarah L. Wims, Katie R. Harper, Mary E. Johnson, Edith J. Gregg, and James R. Gregg

**F. Areas of Significance:** African American Heritage; Social History

**G. Architect/Builder:** F. Wilson Wims (builder)

**H. Narrative:**

*Historic Context: Francis Wilson and Sarah Louise Wims*

Born on July 13, 1915, Francis Wilson Wims, often referred to as F. Wilson or simply Wilson, was the second child of James Henry and Altia Mora (nee Onley) Wims.<sup>2</sup> Wims first lived at the Warner and Elizabeth Wims House, the home of his paternal grandparents at 22615 Frederick Road.<sup>3</sup> In 1919, his parents acquired and moved the family to a 114-acre farm property near Hyattstown, now part of Little Bennett Regional Park.<sup>4</sup> He attended segregated Montgomery County Public Schools until 7<sup>th</sup> grade and then worked on his father's farm.<sup>5</sup>

Wims married Sarah Louise Spencer on May 1, 1937.<sup>6</sup> Born on October 18, 1918, Sarah Spencer was the daughter of William H. and Blanche E. (nee Diggs) Spencer. The Spencers raised their family in the Urbana District, Frederick County, where they acquired a half-acre of land in 1912.<sup>7</sup> Records suggest that Sarah Spencer attended Montgomery County Public Schools until 7<sup>th</sup> grade.<sup>8</sup> Following their marriage, Wilson and Sarah Wims welcomed Francis, their first daughter, in 1938. The family resided in Clarksburg where they rented a property for \$10 per month.<sup>9</sup>

Wilson Wims left farming for the building industry and worked for the construction firm Bowling and Gardiner in the late 1930s.<sup>10</sup> He started with basic construction tasks and eventually ascended to building foreman. During his employment, Francis E. Gardiner, one of the white owners of the business, and Wims became friends. At the onset of World War II, Gardiner convinced Wims to relocate his family and join him to manage his new farm in Davidsonville, Anne Arundel County. The United States deferred Wims' service due to his occupation as a farmer.<sup>11</sup> The Wims lived in the house with the Gardiner family—an atypical arrangement in

<sup>2</sup> United States Social Security Death Index, "Francis Wims," FamilySearch.

<sup>3</sup> Ethel Gardiner Frye, *Wilson Wims: A Remarkable Life* (Self-published, July 2014).

<sup>4</sup> The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission acquired the farm property in 1963. Montgomery County Circuit Court, "Bradley H. and Birdie J. Dudrow to James H. and Altie M. Wims," May 1, 1919, Liber PBR 280, Folio 52, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>; Montgomery County Circuit Court, "Altia M. Wims to Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission," May 15, 1963, Liber CKW 3087, Folio 636, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

<sup>5</sup> Ethel Gardiner Frye, *Wilson Wims: A Remarkable Life* (Self-published, July 2014).

<sup>6</sup> "Sarah Wims Obituary," *The Frederick News Post*, April 23, 2008, <https://www.legacy.com>.

<sup>7</sup> Frederick County Circuit Court, "John Diggs and Sarah Diggs to James and Blanche Spencer," December 11, 1912, Liber HWB 302, Folio 420, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

<sup>8</sup> Sarah Spencer's obituary stated that she was educated in Montgomery County, Maryland. "Sarah Wims Obituary," *The Frederick News Post*, April 23, 2008, <https://www.legacy.com>; 1950 United States Federal Census, "Sarah Wims," Ancestry.

<sup>9</sup> 1940 United States Federal Census, "Wilson Wims," Ancestry.

<sup>10</sup> Real estate advertisements of Bowling & Gardiner properties in Washington, D.C. and Montgomery County started in the mid-1930s.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Karen Walker and Francis Wims, July 18, 2024.



segregated Montgomery County—until the completion of their own residence on the property. Wims managed the farm, but continued to serve as a foreman for Bowling and Gardiner and learned the business aspects of the building industry. In 1946, the Wims family moved back to Montgomery County and rented a house in Kensington for a year.<sup>12</sup>

In the late 1940s, Wilson and Sarah Wims built their first family house at 22601 Frederick Road in Clarksburg, where their second daughter, Patricia Wims, was born, and established their own construction company (App. 2, Fig. 2).<sup>13</sup> Wilson Wims, then a master carpenter, builder, and brick mason, led the construction efforts, and Sarah Wims managed the office and records. Notably, their new business, later named Clarksburg Construction Company, supported and employed young African American men.<sup>14</sup>

In 1951, the Wims purchased a 1.8-acre parcel from Ora and Iris King on the east side of Frederick Road (App. 2, Fig. 2). The couple subdivided this land into four distinct lots, which are now known as 22611-2263 Wims (previously Weems) Road.<sup>15</sup> On these lots, Wims constructed four houses that he rented to family members and other African American residents of Clarksburg.<sup>16</sup> In 1963, the Wims subdivided Clarksburg Heights and constructed their second family house at 12701 Running Brook Drive where the couple lived for the remainder of their lives (App. 2, Fig. 2). The descendants of the Wims continue to own and reside at the property.

Wilson and Sarah Wims advocated for African Americans in Rocky Hill, Clarksburg, and across Montgomery County. Stories of their generosity abound with one memorable example occurring during a snowstorm in 1951. Severe high winds, below freezing temperatures, snow, and ice marooned multiple buses in Clarksburg. The Wims sheltered and fed 30 children overnight who resided near Boyds and were unable to return home.<sup>17</sup> The following year, Wilson Wims served on an advisory committee to Montgomery County Public Schools to expand and improve bus service from the upper sections of the county to Carver Junior College in Rockville. Students in this area struggled with attendance due to poor transportation options. The committee advocated for better support and assisted in appropriate bus routes and employment of drivers.<sup>18</sup> In addition, Wilson Wims served in positions of leadership and other roles in various organization such as the Clarksburg Community Association, Montgomery County Recreation Board, and the Montgomery County Community Action Board.<sup>19</sup>

Beyond his civic activism, Wilson Wims participated in African American sandlot and semi-professional baseball leagues. His father, James “Jim” Wilson, who shared a passion for athletics, installed a baseball diamond on his family’s farm for the African American community. Wilson Wims played on various local and regional teams including the Hyattstown Bluebirds.<sup>20</sup> He then managed (coached) the Maryland Wildcats—one of the most successful semi-professional teams in the region—and later sponsored the Maryland Wildcats Junior team. In Clarksburg, Wims championed integration through youth athletics and emphasized the importance of sports to ease racial tensions and create an inclusive community.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ethel Gardiner Frye, *Wilson Wims: A Remarkable Life* (Self-published, July 2014).

<sup>13</sup> The Wims acquired this property in 1942 (recorded in 1943). Montgomery County Circuit Court, “Elsie D. and James E. Carter to Francis Wilson and Sarah Louise Wims,” July 24, 1942, Liber CKW 918, Folio 24, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

<sup>14</sup> Ethel Gardiner Frye, *Wilson Wims: A Remarkable Life* (Self-published, July 2014).

<sup>15</sup> Montgomery County Circuit Court, “Ora H. and Iris R. King to Francis W. and Sarah L. Wims,” April 26, 1951, Liber 1528, Folio 115, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

<sup>16</sup> The Wims defaulted on three of the four properties in 1966. The couple sold the house at 22611 Wims Road to Altia M. Wims (Wilson Wims’s mother) in 1966.

<sup>17</sup> “Mercury Tumbles to 11 for 3-Year Low; Cold to Continue Today,” *Evening Star*, February 8, 1951, Newspapers.com.

<sup>18</sup> Other well-known African American leaders from this era served on the including Noah E. Clarke (Poolesville), Dorothy Garner (Lincoln Park), Robert Taylor (Spencerville), Inez McAbee (Damascus), Geneva Mason and Agnes Legedge (Scotland), Leslie Plummer (Stewardtown), Leslie Gaines (Sandy Spring), George Johnson (Rockville), and Dr. Webster Sewell (Norbeck). “College Students Get Bus Service,” *Washington Afro American*, January 26, 1952, Newspapers.com.

<sup>19</sup> Rande Davis, “The House that Wims Built,” *Monocacy Monocle*, March 30, 2007; Interview with Karen Walker and Francis Wims, July 18, 2024.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Karen Walker and Francis Wims, July 18, 2024; “Wildcat Tour North Carolina,” *Washington Afro-American*, June 20, 1953, Newspapers.com; “Maryland Wildcats Meet RM All-Stars,” *Rocky Mount Telegram*, August 28, 1953, Newspapers.com.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Karen Walker and Francis Wims, July 18, 2024.

The Montgomery County community has recognized the life and contributions of Wilson Wims in the past twenty years. In 2006, the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights inducted Wims into the Human Rights Hall of Fame.<sup>22</sup> The following year, Clarksburg High School named their new baseball field “Wims Field.” He attended opening day and threw the first pitch.<sup>23</sup> In 2014, Montgomery County Public Schools named the new elementary school in Clarksburg in his honor at the behest of the community.<sup>24</sup> Sarah Wims and Wilson Wims died in 2008 and 2015, respectively. The couple were buried at Community United Methodist Church Cemetery adjacent to the Clarksburg Heights subdivision. There are no sites or districts that recognize the contributions of Wilson or Sarah Wims in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.

### ***Historic Context: Subdivision of Clarksburg Heights***

In 1960, John Henning and Hattie Rebecca Mason sold a 7.75-acre parcel—located on the west side of Frederick Road just north of the Community of Faith United Methodist Church in the African American Rocky Hill community—to the Wims.<sup>25</sup> Wilson and Sarah Wims proceeded to sell the northern portion of the property to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) for a park and playground and subdivided part of the southern half. Oral histories suggest that Wims championed the construction of a community building at the M-NCPPC property and personally provided the labor to construct the \$22,000 facility at no expense. The Clarksburg Neighborhood Park – Activity Building opened to the public in 1968 and continues to be utilized by residents of Clarksburg.<sup>26</sup>

After the sale of the northern half of the property, Wilson and Sarah Wims proceeded to subdivide the southern half.<sup>27</sup> On February 5, 1963, the Planning Board approved the eight-lot subdivision, with six lots marked as developable (App. 3, Fig. 1).<sup>28</sup> The Wims sold “Outlot B,” directly to the rear of Community of Faith United Methodist Church’s cemetery, to the congregation for an expansion of their burial grounds.<sup>29</sup> He retained Lot 6 to build his family house at 12701 Running Brook Drive, constructed and sold houses on Lots 2 and 3 and Lot 5 to African American families, and defaulted on Lots 1 and 4. Oral histories and the design of the house at 12700

<sup>22</sup> Montgomery County Office of Human Rights, “2006 Inductees,” <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/humanrights/outreach/halloffame.html>.

<sup>23</sup> Rande Davis, “The House that Wims Built,” *Monocacy Monocle*, March 30, 2007; Interview with Karen Walker and Francis Wims, July 18, 2024.

<sup>24</sup> “About Wilson Wims,” <http://www.inte.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/wimses/about-us/aboutwilsonwims/>.

<sup>25</sup> Montgomery County Circuit Court, “John Henning Mason and Hattie Rebecca Mason to F. Wilson and Sarah L. Wims,” August 16, 1961, Liber CKW 2772, Folio 489, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

<sup>26</sup> In 1960, the Superintendent of Schools informed M-NCPPC that five abandoned school sites in Upper Montgomery County were available for free. These school sites were located in the vicinity of Clarksburg, Dickerson, Sellman, Stewartown, and Unity. This included the quarter-acre site of the abandoned segregated Black elementary school at the current southwest corner of the intersection of Frederick Road and Wims Road. After formal acquisition of the school property, the Montgomery County Planning Board, part of M-NCPPC, moved to acquire an additional 3.4-acres from Wims bordering the school to create a local park. The Planning Board meeting minutes record Commissioner King as pushing for the acquisition of the property due to its proximity to the “colored church in there...and colored settlement.” Wims declined an offer of \$1,400 per acre for the property and offered to purchase the abandoned school site from the Commission. The Planning Board valued the acquisition of the property due to its proximity to the Black community and authorized staff to offer \$2,000 per acre for land. Wims continued to negotiate with the board and accepted an offer of \$6,300 for 3.4-acres. In April 1962, the Planning Board authorized payment of \$6,433.96 for the land and settlement costs. Soon thereafter, the Commission demolished the abandoned school to further develop the park and playground. Montgomery County Planning Board, “Land Acquisition Matter, William Wims Property,” August 23, 1961; Montgomery County Planning Board, “Wilson Wims Property, Adjacent to Clarksburg” October 4, 1961; Montgomery County Planning Board, “F. Wilson Wims Property, Adjacent to Abandoned Colored School,” November 1, 1961; Montgomery County Planning Board, “W. Wilson Wims Property – Clarksburg, Maryland,” November 15, 1961; Montgomery County Planning Board, “Voucher Number 620473,” April 18, 1962; Montgomery County Circuit Court, “F. Wilson and Sarah L. Wims to Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission,” April 9, 1962, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

<sup>27</sup> Montgomery County Circuit Court, “Clarksburg Heights, Plat No. 6950,” March 12, 1963, <http://www.plats.msa.maryland.gov>.

<sup>28</sup> Montgomery County Circuit Court, “Clarksburg Heights, Plat No. 6950,” March 12, 1963, <http://www.plats.msa.maryland.gov>.

<sup>29</sup> Montgomery County Circuit Court, “F. Wilson Wims and Sarah L. Wims to John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church of Clarksburg, Maryland,” September 17, 1963, Liber CKW 3135, Folio 201, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

Running Brook Drive (Lot 1) suggests that Wims built that residence as well. The five houses constructed between 1963 and 1964 reflects the prevalent architectural forms of the period including Ranch and Split Level designs. Scholz Homes, Inc. built the non-contributing house at 12712 Running Brook Drive (Lot 4) ca. 1974.

Clarksburg Heights provided ownership opportunities typically denied to African American purchasers in Montgomery County in the mid-twentieth century. Racial discrimination and unfair legally discriminatory housing practices excluded African Americans from acquiring residences in the suburbs. Clarksburg Heights represents a notable example where middle-class African American could purchase modern suburban housing prior to the passage of the County's Fair Housing Ordinance (1967) and Fair Housing Law (1968). For example, the Wims sold the house at 12705 Running Brook Drive to Mary E. Johnson, an African American Montgomery Public School teacher, for \$23,500.<sup>30</sup>

### ***Historic Context: Early Residents of Clarksburg Heights***

Wilson and Sarah Wims recognized the discriminatory practices and obstacles limiting African American homeownership in Montgomery County. The couple strived to sell the newly constructed houses in Clarksburg Heights to African American families. In particular, African American teachers in Montgomery County long struggled to find adequate housing in proximity to their schools.

Mary E. Johnson purchased the property at 12705 Running Brook Drive (Lot 5) in 1964.<sup>31</sup> Johnson, the daughter of Elbert M. and Annie Laura McKearner Johnson, was born in 1915 in the Barnesville District, Montgomery County.<sup>32</sup> Johnson gained employment with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and joined the staff of the segregated Black elementary school in Poolesville. She later transferred to Sellman and Edward U. Taylor elementary schools. Mary E. Johnson retired from MCPS after 36 years and owned the house at Running Brook Drive until her death in 2005. In an interview with Nina H. Clarke and Lillian B. Brown, Johnson recalled her struggles with travel, building maintenance, and conditions:

I did not have a car when I started teaching, so I rode the Rockville High School bus to get to Poolesville School. I caught the bus at 6:30 AM. I would alight [sic] at Jerusalem Road and Route 28 and trudge a half mile to my school. The road was unpaved and extremely rutty--deep ones. When it snowed the ruts were covered, so it was a "hit-and-miss" affair to walk over the road.... I had many thoughts racing through my mind about why the county officials did not grade this miserable dirt road or, better yet, why didn't they pave it?

My second humorous experience was assembling the potbellied stove each morning. Any amount of pressure or any slight jar would cause the stove pipes to disjoint and the stove doors to fall off. After the ashes had been shaken down prior to building a fresh fire each morning, the 'assembly period' for the stoves begin. My principal...and I could have taken an extra job in a stove parts factory after the many times we reassembled our potbellied stoves.

Lastly, I remember the 'mad dashes' my principal and I made for an undisturbed session in the outside 'John.' Every time we tried, hordes of youngsters would descend upon the building at the same time.<sup>33</sup>

Charles Sylvester and Katie (nee Ricketts) Harper purchased the house at 12704 Running Brook Drive (Lot 2) in 1965.<sup>34</sup> Katie Ricketts, the daughter of Worthington and Emma Ricketts, was born in 1932. She attended

<sup>30</sup> The sale price is noted in an appraisal for another property owned and built by F. Wilson Wims. Adolph C. Rohland, "Appraisal Report and Valuation Analysis: Parcel 105, Little Bennett Regional Park," February 8, 1965, M-NCPPC Archives.

<sup>31</sup> Montgomery County Circuit Court, "F. Wilson Wims and Sarah L. Wims to Mary E. Johnson," August 19, 1964, Liber CKW 3260, Folio 213, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Social Security Applications and Claims Index, "Mary Ellen Johnson," <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>33</sup> Nina H. Clarke and Lillian B. Brown, *History of the Black Public Schools of Montgomery County, Maryland, 1872-1961*, (Vintage Press: Washington, D.C., 1978, 159-160.

<sup>34</sup> Montgomery County Circuit Court, "F. Wilson Wims and Sarah L. Wims to Charles S. Harper and Katie R. Harper," March 17, 1965, Liber CKW 3335, Folio 681, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.



segregated schools in Montgomery County including Lincoln High School in Rockville. She enrolled at Maryland State Teachers College, the predecessor of Bowie State University, and received a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. Harper returned to teach the first grade at Poolesville Elementary School and taught for 37 years in Montgomery County and Prince George's County prior to her retirement.<sup>35</sup> Charles Harper, born in 1933 in Montgomery County, served in the United States Air Force during the Korean War. He died in 1998 and is buried at Jerusalem Baptist Church Cemetery, Poolesville.<sup>36</sup> Katie Harper continues to own the property on Running Brook Drive.

James Robert and Edith (nee Jackson) Gregg acquired the house at 12700 Running Brook Drive (Lot 1) after the Wims defaulted on the property.<sup>37</sup> Edith Jackson, the daughter of Sarah and Smith Jackson, was born in the Rockville Election District, Montgomery County, in 1933. She attended local elementary schools and Lincoln High School in Rockville, and trained in classical piano at Howard University as a child. She then enrolled at Virginia State University where she majored in music and graduated in 1955. Edith Gregg returned to Montgomery County, started her career with MCPS, and married James Gregg. She first worked as a music teacher, returned to college, and received an advanced degree in early education. She then transitioned to an elementary school teaching position. In 1992, Gregg retired from MCPS after more than 35 years of service. She died in 2021 and is buried at Rockville Cemetery.<sup>38</sup> Her obituary noted the following:

She was instrumental to the success of integration by assisting African American students, especially in her time teaching at Edward U. Taylor Elementary School in Boyds, MD, during the time of de jure segregation. Teaching at Taylor felt as though her service to her community had come full circle.<sup>39</sup>

James Gregg, the son of Maggie Gregg, was born in Cullen, Virginia, in 1936. He graduated from high school at 15 years old and enrolled at Virginia State University where he likely met his spouse, Edith Jackson. Gregg later continued his education at the University of Baltimore. He served in the Marine Corps and worked for various federal agencies including the Veterans Administration, Internal Revenue Service, National Institutes of Health, and Department of Energy. Gregg was active in the Montgomery County community and served on the board of the Rockville Housing Authority, President of the Rockville Citizens Association, life-long member of the local branch of the NAACP, and Worshipful Master of Pythagoras Lodge #74, Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Maryland. Gregg fought for the rights of Black residents of Montgomery County.<sup>40</sup> In 1976, he filed a complaint against the Montgomery Country Club with the Montgomery County Human Relations Commission (HRC). Gregg alleged that the country club owner refused Black applicants due to their race. At the time, the club had an all-white membership. The HRC ruled in his favor and ordered the club to sign a consent agreement, provide five years of free membership to the Gregg family, cease inequitable treatment of African Americans, develop written membership requirements, and advertise that memberships were available to all interested parties. The owner appealed the HRC's decision to the Circuit Court and three years later the parties settled out of court.<sup>41</sup>

**I. Areas Exempt from Designation:** There are no areas exempt from designation.

<sup>35</sup> Marie Smith, "666 Plats Led to Montgomery," *Washington Post*, August 26, 1961, Proquest Historical Newspapers; "Montgomery County Chapter, Bowie State University, MCC Members," <http://www.mccbssunaa.com> (accessed August 22, 2024).

<sup>36</sup> "Charles S. Harper," <http://www.findagrave.com>.

<sup>37</sup> Montgomery County Circuit Court, "David E. Betts and Lewis R. Roberts to James R. Gregg and Edith J. Gregg," August 15, 1966, Liber CKW 3544, Folio 579, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

<sup>38</sup> "Official Obituary of Edith Jackson Gregg," <http://www.snowdencares.com> (accessed August 21, 2024).

<sup>39</sup> "Official Obituary of Edith Jackson Gregg," <http://www.snowdencares.com> (accessed August 21, 2024).

<sup>40</sup> "Official Obituary of James Robert Gregg," <http://www.snowdencares.com> (accessed August 21, 2024).

<sup>41</sup> "Integration Ordered for Country Club," *Cumberland News*, December 10, 1976, Newspapers.com; "Montgomery County Club Ordered to Accept Black Man," *The News (Frederick, MD)*, December 8, 1976, Newspapers.com; Brack, David, "Twenty Years of Civil Rights Progress," Human Relations Commission, Montgomery County Archives; "Official Obituary of James Robert Gregg," <http://www.snowdencares.com> (accessed August 21, 2024).

## J. Designation Criteria:

The Clarksburg Heights District meets Designation Criteria 1.A, 1.C, and 1.D as listed in §24A-3 of the Montgomery County Code.

### **1.A Historical and cultural significance. The historic resource has character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the county, state or nation.**

Clarksburg Heights is a unique example of a mid-twentieth century subdivision in Clarksburg, planned, built, and owned by African Americans. In Montgomery County, African Americans faced widespread and pervasive discrimination by land developers, property owners, and the government who used or supported de jure or de facto segregation to limit housing opportunities. Between 1890 and 1960, the Black population in Montgomery County stagnated and occasionally declined, while the white population experienced exponential growth.<sup>42</sup> In particular, African American educators struggled to acquire housing in the county. The NAACP estimated that ninety percent of African American teachers commuted to Montgomery County from Washington, D.C. because of discriminatory housing practices.<sup>43</sup> In 1963, F. Wilson Wims, an African American builder, and Sarah L. Wims, sought to address the housing crisis with the construction of Clarksburg Heights, a small subdivision of modern, middle-class housing in the Rocky Hill community of Clarksburg. African American purchasers included at least three Montgomery County Public School teachers including Mary E. Johnson, Katie R. Harper, and Edith J. Gregg. Clarksburg Heights represents the efforts of the African American community to expand housing options prior to the passage of Montgomery County's Fair Housing Ordinance (1967) and Fair Housing Law (1968) and the Federal government's Fair Housing Provisions of the United States Civil Right Act (1968).

### **1.C Historic and cultural significance. Is identified with a person or group of persons who influenced society.**

Clarksburg Heights is significant for its strong association with F. Wilson and Sarah L. Wims, leaders of the Clarksburg community, who subdivided, planned, and built this middle-class subdivision. The Wims supported African Americans who wanted to move to the suburbs, but faced intense discrimination. Montgomery County has recognized Wilson Wims for his dedication to the advancement of the African American community, his actions to create an inclusive community through youth athletics, and his participation in civic organizations. In 2006, the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights inducted Wims into the Human Rights Hall of Fame. The following year, Clarksburg High School named their new baseball field "Wims Field" in his honor. In 2014, Montgomery County Public Schools named the new elementary school in Clarksburg "Wilson Wims Elementary" at the behest of the greater community.

The significance of Clarksburg Heights is enhanced by its association with its first and long-standing owners who influenced local affairs. This report highlights the contributions of Mary E. Johnson, Katie R. Harper, and Edith J. Gregg, three African American women who taught at both segregated and integrated Montgomery County public schools, and James R. Gregg who challenged discriminatory practices at country clubs and worked to improve conditions for African American residents.

There are no historic sites or districts listed in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* that reflects the contributions of these individuals to Clarksburg or Montgomery County.

### **1.D Historic and cultural significance. Exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political or historical heritage of the county and its communities.**

Clarksburg Heights serves as a poignant reminder of segregated life and the resilience, achievements, and contributions of African Americans residents in mid-twentieth century Montgomery County. F. Wilson and

<sup>42</sup> Between 1890 and 1960, the white population increased from 17,500 to 327,736 (+1,773 %). In comparison, the Black population increased from 9,685 to 11,527 (+19 %).

<sup>43</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Hearing Before the United States Commission on Civil Rights, April 12-13, 1962* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962), 103.

Sarah L. Wims had the knowledge, skills, and determination to counter rampant discriminatory housing practices and provide much-needed middle-class housing for African Americans. Clarksburg Heights represents the productive life of the African American community in Clarksburg. The Wims, Johnson, Harper, and Gregg families all tirelessly worked to improve conditions for African Americans who lived in Montgomery County.

#### **K. Conclusion:**

Clarksburg Heights retains its integrity as a cohesive residential neighborhood, platted and constructed between 1963 and 1964. The integrity of location and setting remain intact, with all the houses in their original locations and the property owners maintaining the open space and manicured lawns characteristic of the subdivision. The development of Clarksburg High School and Rocky Hill Middle School does not negatively affect the overall setting of the subject properties. The design, workmanship, and materials that comprise the district are sufficiently intact to reflect the vision of Wilson Wims. The five contributing resources retain the architectural style and form associated with Split Level or Ranch houses. Minor rear additions, infill, and replacement windows and doors are typical of houses from this period and do not negatively affect the overall integrity of the proposed historic district. The continued cohesiveness of the Clarksburg Heights enables the subdivision to retain its integrity of feeling and association as a successful expansion of African American suburban housing during a period of rampant discriminatory housing practices in the mid-twentieth century.

### **8. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING/GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Property Land Area:** 4.42 acres

**Account Number:** 00020907, 00021514, 00022542, 00028708, 00022633, 00022495, and 00030952.

**District:** 02

**Environmental Setting Description:** The environmental setting incorporates the entire subdivision as platted in 1963 except for Outlot B transferred to Community of Faith United Methodist Church.

**Environmental Setting Justification:** The environmental setting does not include Outlot B as it was never associated with the Clarksburg Heights subdivision.

### **9. PROPERTY OWNERS**

Name: Karen Walker

Premise Address: 12701 Running Brook Drive, Clarksburg MD 20871

Name: Thomas Lee

Premise Address: 12705 Running Brook Drive, Clarksburg MD 20871

Name: Maryland Academy of Energy and Ecology, Inc.

Premise Address: Outlot A (N/A)

Name: Kim Hall Gregg & William Daniel Gregg

Premise Address: 12700 Running Brook Drive, Clarksburg MD 20871

Name: Katie R. Harper

Premise Address: 12704 Running Brook Drive, Clarksburg MD 20871

Name: Juan Sartor & Sidvany Pedraza

Premise Address: 12708 Running Brook Drive, Clarksburg MD 20871

Name: Jaroslav Plevko

Premise Address: 12712 Running Brook Drive, Clarksburg MD 20871

## 10. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: John Liebertz, Cultural Resource Planer III, Montgomery County Planning Department

Date: August 2024

## 11. MAJOR SOURCES CONSULTED

Ancestry.com [numerous].

Clarke, Nina H and Lillian B. Brown. *History of the Black Public Schools of Montgomery County, Maryland, 1872-1961*. Washington, D.C.: Vintage Press, 1978.

Frye, Ethel Gardiner. *Wilson Wims: A Remarkable Life*. Self-published, 2014.

*Evening Star* [numerous].

Montgomery County Land Records, <http://www.mdlandrec.net>.

United States Commission on Civil Rights. *Hearing Before the United States Commission on Civil Rights, April 12-13, 1962*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962.

*Washington Post* [numerous].



**APPENDIX ONE:**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING/GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

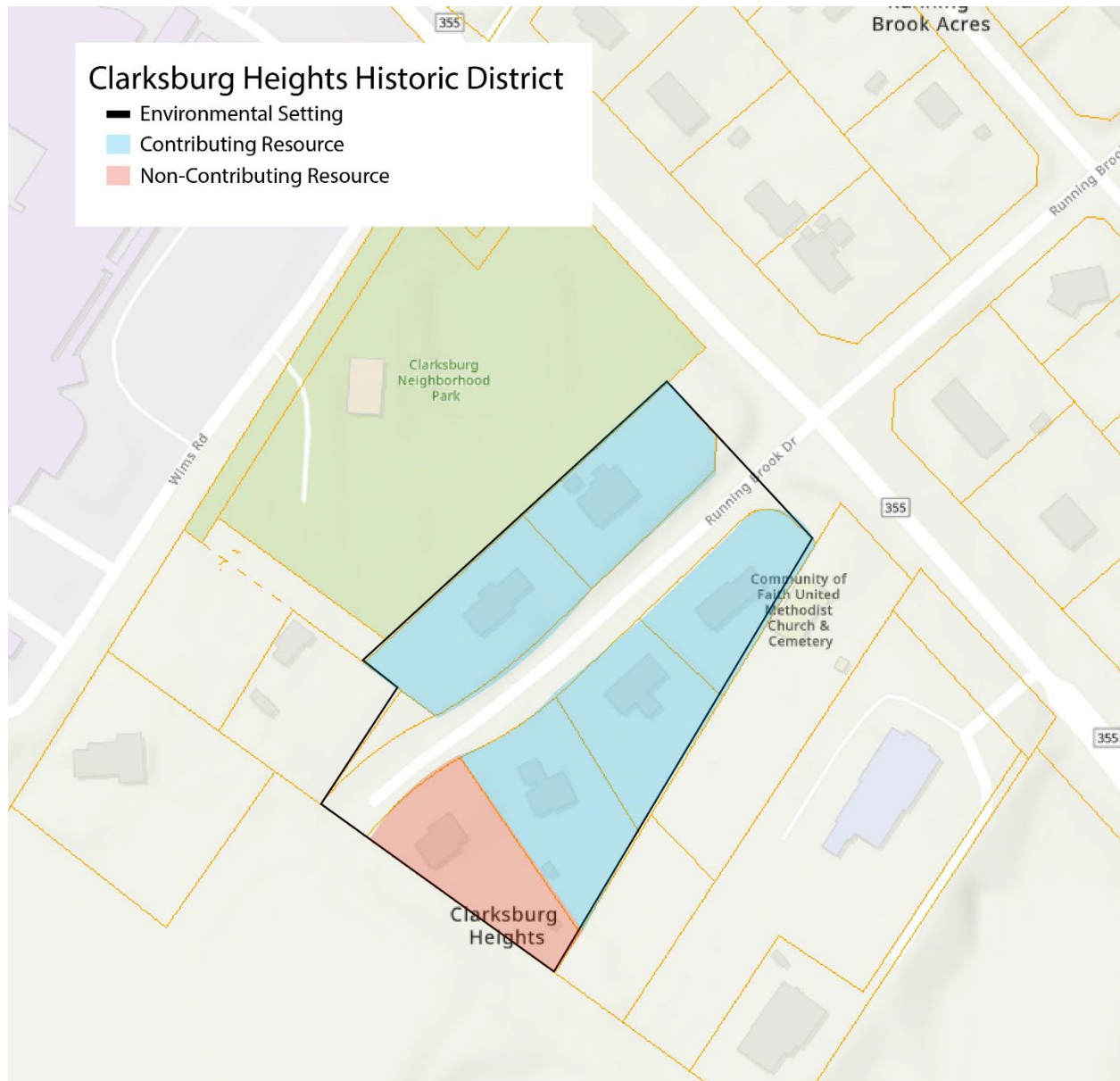


Figure 1: Proposed environmental setting for the Clarksburg Heights Historic District, Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland.

**APPENDIX TWO:**  
**AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS**



Figure 1: Aerial photograph, 1970. The red outline shows the proposed Clarksburg Heights Historic District.





Figure 2: Aerial view showing the proposed Clarksburg Heights Historic District (red), 2023. The blue arrow points to the Clarksburg Neighborhood Park Activity Building, the green arrow points to Clarksburg High School, and the yellow arrow to Rocky Hill Middle School.



**APPENDIX THREE:**  
**PLAT OF THE CLARKSBURG HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION**

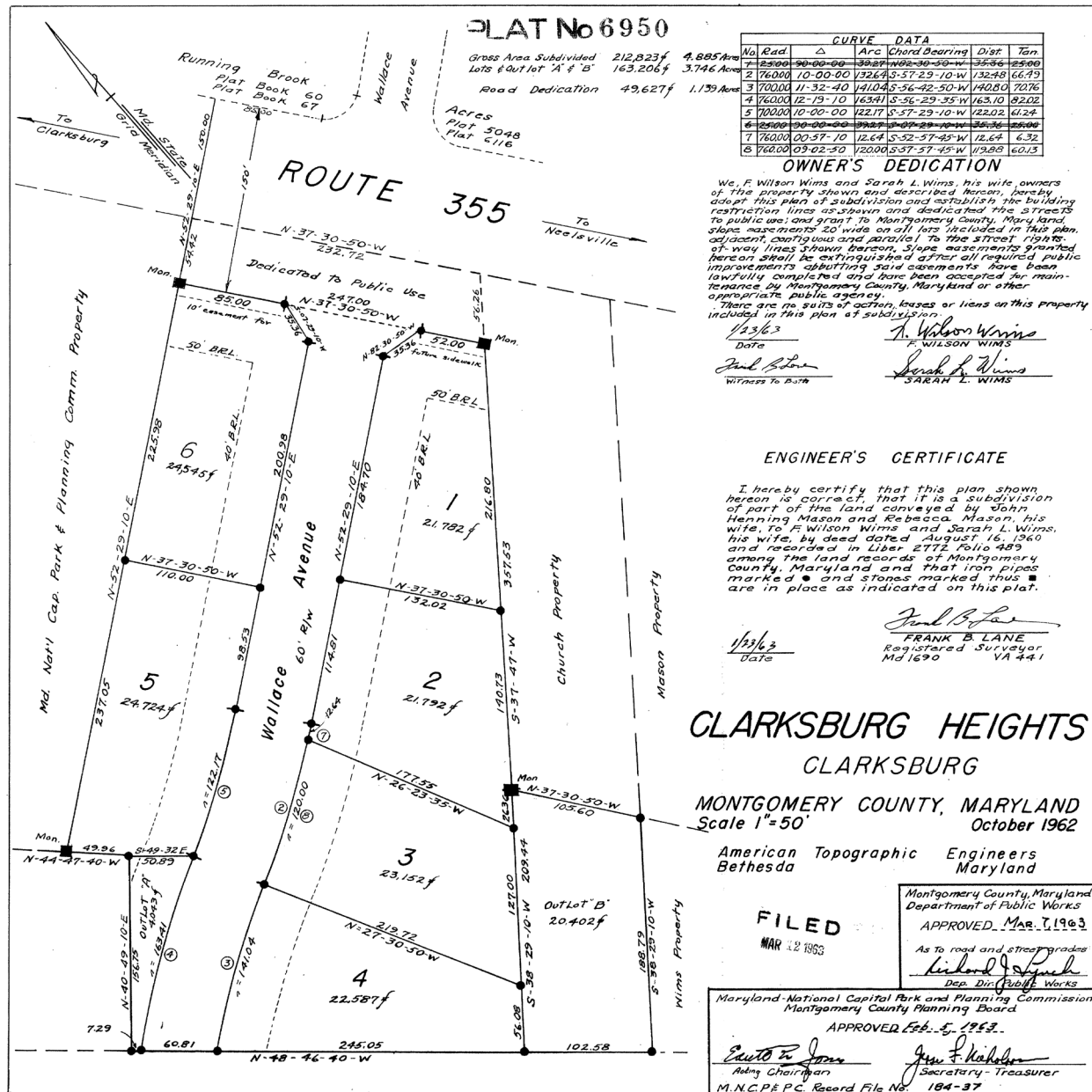


Figure 1: Plat of Clarksburg Heights, 1963.

**APPENDIX FOUR:**  
**EXTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS OF CLARKSBURG HEIGHTS**



Figure 1: View of 12701 Running Brook Drive, 2024. Note the infill of the garage (yellow arrow).





Figure 2: View of 12705 Running Brook Drive, 2024. The building appears to retain its original doors and windows.



Figure 3: View of 12700 Running Brook Drive, 2024.





Figure 4: View of 12704 Running Brook Drive, 2024.



Figure 5: View of 12708 Running Brook Drive, 2024.





Figure 6: View of 12712 Running Brook Drive, 2024.

## **APPENDIX FIVE: HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS**





Figure 1: Aerial view of 12701 Running Brook Drive (foreground), 1972. The blue arrows point to the Clarksburg Community Building in the background.  
Source: Vintage Aerials.



Figure 2: Aerial view of 12705 Running Brook Drive (foreground), 1972. The blue arrows point to the Clarksburg Community Building in the background.  
Source: Vintage Aerials.





Figure 3: Aerial view of 12704 Running Brook Drive (red arrow) and partial view of 12700 Running Brook Drive (yellow arrow), 1972. The burial ground at Community of Faith United Methodist Church is visible in the background.

Source: Vintage Aerials.

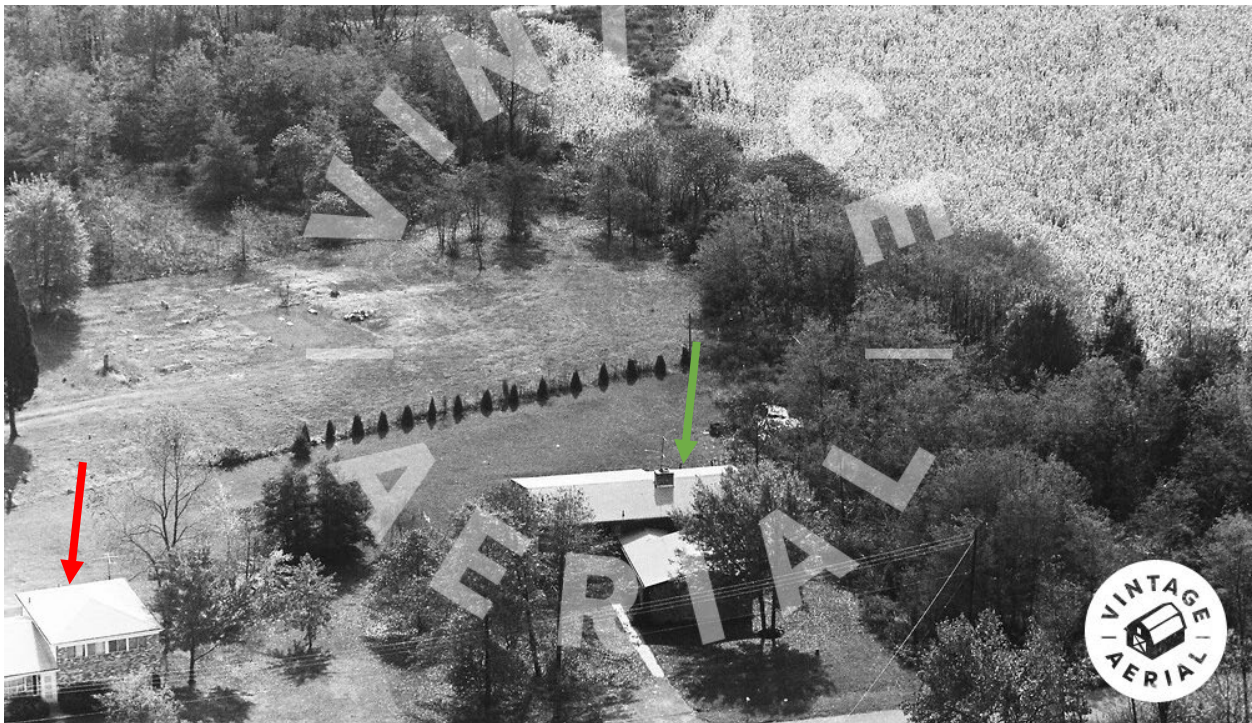


Figure 4: Aerial view of 12708 Running Brook Drive (green arrow) and partial view of 12704 Running Brook Drive (red arrow), 1972.

Source: Vintage Aerials.

## **APPENDIX SIX:**

### **MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES FORM**



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of

### Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M: 13-61

#### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic      Clarksburg Heights

other

#### 2. Location

street and number      Running Brook Drive      \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town      Clarksburg      \_\_\_ vicinity

county      Montgomery

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

name      Multiple

street and number      Multiple      telephone

city, town      Multiple      state      MD      zip code      20871

#### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.      liber      folio

city, town      tax map      tax parcel      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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | _____ public                                | _____ agriculture                            | _____ landscape          | Contributing   | Noncontributing  |
| _____ building(s)                            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | _____ commerce/trade                         | _____ recreation/culture | 5              | 1 buildings      |
| _____ structure                              | _____ both                                  | _____ defense                                | _____ religion           | _____          | _____ sites      |
| _____ site                                   |                                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic | _____ social             | _____          | _____ structures |
| _____ object                                 |                                             | _____ education                              | _____ transportation     | _____          | _____ objects    |
|                                              |                                             | _____ funerary                               | _____ work in progress   | 5              | 1 Total          |
|                                              |                                             | _____ government                             | _____ unknown            |                |                  |
|                                              |                                             | _____ health care                            | _____ vacant/not in use  |                |                  |
|                                              |                                             | _____ industry                               | _____ other:             |                |                  |

**Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory**

\_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

Inventory No. M: 13-61

### 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.

**The following information for the MIHP form is copied from the Determination of Eligibility completed by Erin Leatherbee for Clarksburg Heights as part of the MD 355 Bus Rapid Transit Improvements Project in 2018.**

### Introduction/Location:

Clarksburg Heights is a mid-20th century planned subdivision composed of 4.07 acres in Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland. The subdivision consists of six single-family residential lots along Running Brook Drive on the southwest side of Frederick Road. The lots are addressed as 12700-12712 Running Brook Drive. The subdivision is bordered by a Methodist Church to the southeast, a middle school to the southwest, a public park and high school to the northwest, and Frederick Road to the northeast. The land on which the subdivision was developed was conveyed to F. Wilson and Sarah L. Wims by John and Rebecca Mason in 1960 (Montgomery County Deed Book [MCBD] 2772:489). In 1963, the property was subdivided into six lots, which were subsequently developed during the 1960s and early 1970s by Wilson Wims. Architecture in this subdivision consists of ranch, split level, and two-story houses with modest ornamentation and detailing. The subdivision played a role in suburbanization of Clarksburg by African-American families. In Clarksburg Heights, Wims established one of the first rent-to-own programs in the area in which he rented homes to African-American families who would otherwise be unable to afford to reside in Montgomery County. Eventually Wims sold the homes to these families when they could afford to buy. Wilson Wins is important at the local level for his role in supporting the suburbanization of Clarksburg and Montgomery County by African-American families.

### Architectural Description:

According to current available tax data, five of the houses in Clarksburg Heights were constructed in 1963-1964 and the sixth house was constructed in 1974. The houses are all single-family dwellings situated on lots approximately 0.5-acre in size, though the shapes of the lots are not uniform (Maryland State Department of Assessments & Taxation [SDAT] 2018). The houses are oriented towards Running Brook Drive and have uniform building setbacks of approximately 60 feet. The houses towards the front (northeast) end of the subdivision overlook Running Brook Drive, while those at the rear (southwest) end of the subdivision are generally at road grade. Four of the lots are accessed via asphalt driveways, one via a gravel driveway, and one via a concrete driveway; most of the houses possess attached garages.

The houses represent typical architectural forms and styles of the time period in Montgomery County and include ranch, split-level, and two-story houses (KCI 1999: D-20-21). Detail and ornamentation on the houses in the subdivision are modest representation of architectural styles. The ranch houses, such as the example at 12700 Running Brook Drive, are one-story and possess either side-gable or cross-gable, low-pitched roofs. Front entrances are generally off-center and the fenestration is asymmetrical, and typically features a picture window. The split-level at 12704 Running Brook Drive features a two-story stacked unit with a single-story attached side wing and has a combination side-gable and pyramidal hipped roof. The narrow band of sliding windows on the second story is a modest expression of the horizontal emphasis of the contemporary style. The two-story house at 12712 Running Brook Drive has an overhanging second story and central entrance suggestive of the Colonial Revival style, but with a low-pitched roof, deep eaves, and an asymmetrical front porch, which is suggestive of a contemporary influence. The house at 12708 Running Brook Drive is a one-story rear-down dwelling with a side-gable roof and a front-gable front wing. The house has an asymmetrical plan, a low-pitched gable roof, lack of windows on the front facade, and an obscured and asymmetrical front entry door (KCI 1999 and MCALESTER 2013).

All of the houses in the subdivision feature brick veneer siding, though some feature a combination of materials in addition to the brick including aluminum or vinyl siding and stone veneer. Primary entrances are generally on the front facade and are flush with the elevation. Two of the houses, the ranch at 12701 Running Brook Drive and the two-story house at 12712 Running Brook Drive, feature covered front porches which cover the primary entrance. On the house at 12708 Running Brook Drive, the primary entrance is located on the side of the front wing while a tripartite replacement sliding glass door faces the road. Brick chimneys, both interior and exterior, were present on most houses.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M: 13-61

Name

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All of the houses in the subdivision have some form of alteration; replacement doors and windows are the most common alterations. Most of the primary entrance doors in the subdivision have been replaced with what appear to be metal or wood doors. Doors are generally paneled and most feature multi-light half-circle lights; the door at 12712 Running Brook Drive features a large decorative frosted-glass light. Most doors are set behind replacement storm doors. Most of the windows have been replaced throughout the subdivision with either metal or vinyl. On the two-story house at 12712 Running Brook Drive, the windows have been replaced with eight-over-eight sash windows in single and double configurations. The ranch house at 12700 Running Brook Drive possesses replacement four-over-one sash and tripartite windows on the front facade; the side and rear facades possess replacement vinyl one-over-one and awning windows. The ranch house at 12701 Running Brook Drive features a replacement one-over-one sash window and a multi-light Palladian window on the front elevation. The ranch house at 12705 Running Brook Drive appears to retain its original two-over-two sash windows and front door, though the condition of the garage door suggests it may be a replacement. Two of the ranch houses, 12700 and 12705 Running Brook Drive, have what appear to be enclosed breezeways connecting the garage to the main house. At 12700, the breezeway has been enclosed with wood windows and a one-light metal door. The breezeway at 12705 Running Brook Drive has been enclosed with T1-11 siding and a two-panel, nine-light door behind a non-original wood storm door.

Rear additions appear on at least two of the houses, the most substantial of which is on the rear of the split-level house at 12704, which was added in the 1980s (NETR 1981 and 1989). This addition is clad in what appears to be hardiplank siding and has a gable roof covered with a combination corrugated plastic and asphalt shingles. Rows of wood windows are located on three sides of the addition and, in combination with the corrugated plastic roof, create the appearance of a greenhouse. A metal sliding glass door provides access to one side of the addition. The ranch house at 12701 Running Brook Drive features a rear sunroom with shed roof added sometime in the 1970s, according to aerial photographs (NETR 1970 and 1980). A large rear wood deck was also added to this house sometime after 1989. The deck features a gazebo with a pyramidal roof and is enclosed with lattice wood (NETR 1989 and 1993). Wood decks and concrete patios are extant on the rear of several other houses in the subdivision; the latter appearing to be original to the houses.

Landscaping throughout the subdivision consists of lawn, ornamental trees, foundation shrubs, and mature trees. Lots towards the front (northeast) end of the street tend to have few trees and shrubs, while the lots at the rear (southwest) end of the street have more wooded lots with mature trees. Wood fencing separating lots was observed on several properties, though it often appeared to be replacement or non-original based on the condition of the wood. Outbuildings in the subdivision generally consist of storage sheds, some of which appear to be original. A wood fence separates the southeast boundary of the subdivision from the adjacent church property, and a chain link metal fence at the end of the street separates the southwest boundary from the adjacent school property. No sidewalks or curbs were present along the road.



## 8. Significance

Inventory No. M: 13-61

| 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 type="checkbox"/> architecture       | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering     | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              | <input 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 checked="" 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: _____              |  |

---

|                           |                          |             |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Specific dates</b>     | <b>Architect/Builder</b> | Wilson Wims |
| <b>Construction dates</b> | 1963-1964; 1974          |             |

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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.)

**The following information for the MIHP form is copied from the Determination of Eligibility completed by Erin Leatherbee for Clarksburg Heights as part of the MD 355 Bus Rapid Transit Improvements Project in 2018.**

Clarksburg Heights is a planned development constructed at the end of the Modern Period of suburbanization (1930-1960) as described in Maryland's Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology (KCI 1999). In order to be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A, a resource must not only be associated with important events or trends, it "must clearly be important within the associated context... and it must retain historic integrity" (Shrimpton et al 1990: 12). To qualify for eligibility under Criterion B, a property must be associated with an individual "whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, State, or national historic context" and the property must be associated with that individual's productive life (Shrimpton et al 1990: 14-15). Clarksburg Heights is a planned development constructed in an African-American community in Clarksburg during a period of growth for the suburb. Although it was one of many mid-20th century planned subdivisions, Clarksburg Heights was unique in Clarksburg that it was constructed by F. Wilson Wims, a notable Clarksburg resident, to support African-American families who were trying to leave the more urban areas of Washington, D.C. Wims was an important individual to Clarksburg and Montgomery County, particularly for his efforts to assist African-American families with affordable housing in the growing suburban area. Through Clarksburg Heights, Wims offered one of the first rent-to-own programs for African-American families in Montgomery County, allowing those families to live in new, single-family houses in a planned suburban subdivision who would otherwise be unable to afford it. Additionally, Wims and his family resided in one of the houses in the development. While Wims constructed other individual houses nearby along Weems Road (now Wims Road), Clarksburg Heights is unique as a full neighborhood planned by Wims. Clarksburg Heights possesses a strong association with Wims' productive life and the actions through which he gained his significance at the local level. It is also associated with African American suburbanization overall in Clarksburg and Montgomery County. Although there have been alterations to the houses in the subdivision such as replaced doors and windows, the houses maintain their overall original design and footprint; additions, where present, are modest and confined to the rear of the dwellings. These alterations do not diminish the integrity of the overall neighborhood in a manner that limits its ability to convey its association. Therefore, Clarksburg Heights is recommended eligible for the NRIIP under Criteria A and B.

To be considered eligible for listing under Criterion C, the resource must "retain the characteristics of its style, type, period or method of construction and convey its role in architectural history." (KCI 1999: D-22). The houses within the subdivision only represent modest expressions of architectural styles and do not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. The neighborhood as a whole is a very modest planned development and does not embody an excellent example of a mid-20th century planned development. Although it features a cohesive design and architectural styles common to the Montgomery County suburbs during the Modern Period, the houses have been altered. Alterations such as replacement doors and windows as well as rear additions, though modest, prevent the houses from serving as significant examples of their architectural types and styles, as outlined in Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology (KCI 1999: D-12-14). Therefore, the resource is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C. As an architectural resource, it was not evaluated under Criterion D.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M: 13-61

Name  
Continuation Sheet

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### Historic Context:

The area now known as Clarksburg began as a crossroads of Native American trails in the 1730s where a trading post was established by William Clark. In the 1750s, Michael A. Dowden opened a 17-room inn known as Dowden's Ordinary, which became a popular stop for those travelling along The Great Road (now known as Frederick Road) between Frederick and Georgetown. William Clark's grandson, John G. Clark surveyed the area and laid out lots in 1790, which spurred settlement in the area that eventually came to be known as Clarksburg. Clarksburg became a thriving commercial center of upper Montgomery County, spurred by a tanning industry and supported by related businesses. By 1879, Clarksburg had 250 residents and was the third largest town in Montgomery County. However, Clarksburg experienced a decline when the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad arrived in nearby Gaithersburg and Germantown in 1873. The convenience of the railroad drew business and development away from Clarksburg to the vicinity of the train depots to the south (Clarksburg Historical Society, Inc 2018; Parker and Reed 1979).

Shortly after the Civil War, small enclaves of African-Americans clustered together in Montgomery County (Walston and Reed 1979). In Clarksburg, landownership by African-Americans was achieved later than in other communities in the county, not beginning until the 1880s. However, African-American families in Clarksburg were generally more prosperous than in other communities, as evidenced by the quality of houses, churches, and gravestones still extant in Clarksburg. These landowners worked together to build churches and schools to serve their newly established communities. One of the earliest African-American enclaves in Clarksburg was known as Rocky Hill, which was a 24-acre tract of land purchased by Lloyd Gibbs in 1884. This enclave included several other dwellings, the Clarksburg Negro School (MIHP number M: 13-34), and the John Wesley Methodist Church (MIHP number M: 13-48) (MCDaniel 1979; MCGuckian 1992: 194).

The advent and increasing popularity of the automobile in the early decades of the 20th century resulted in an economic revival in Clarksburg as areas beyond the railroad axes became accessible and open to residential and commercial development. Frederick Road was improved in the 1930s, which allowed for easier travel by automobile between Clarksburg and Washington, D.C. Many tourists from Washington enjoyed driving through Clarksburg and the surrounding countryside and area homeowners rented out rooms for boarders and tourists (Clarksburg Historical Society, Inc 2018; Parker and Reed 1979). It was during this period that more middle-class white families were moving to the Montgomery County suburbs while African-American families were heading to Washington, D.C. in search of employment; the percentage of African-Americans residing in the County subsequently dropped. Construction of houses, schools, and churches for and by African-Americans in the county during this period generally occurred on lots within existing communities (MCGuckian 1992: 195-196).

F. Wilson Wims was an African-American builder and community activist whose family has resided in Montgomery County since the early 1800s. The Wims family was one of the first generations of free African-Americans to own land in the Rocky Hill enclave in Clarksburg (MCDaniel 1979: 74). In the 1940s, Wims worked as a builder, master carpenter, and brick mason in Clarksburg, first for Bowling and Gardiner Contractors and then for his own company. He constructed homes along Weems Road (now known as Wims Road), and employed young African-American workers (Frye 2014). In 1960, Wims purchased approximately 7.75 acres of land from John Henning and Hattie Rebecca Mason, descendants of another African-American family of the early Rocky Hill enclave (MCDB 2272: 489 and MCDaniel 1979: 74). Wims subdivided the land in 1963 and filed a plat called Clarksburg Heights that included six single-family lots along what was Wallace Avenue (now known as Running Brook Drive); the subdivision also included two outlots (MCPD 6950). Wims and his family resided in the one of the dwellings he built in Clarksburg Heights and established one of the first rent-to-own programs in the area. Wims rented homes to African-American families who would otherwise be unable to afford to reside in Montgomery County. Eventually Wims sold the homes to these families when they could afford to buy (Frye 2014 and The Gazette 2002).

F. Wilson Wims is also notable for his activism in the Clarksburg and Montgomery County community. Wims was involved in the

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M: 13-61

Name

**Continuation Sheet**Number 8 Page 2

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establishment of the first public housing project in Montgomery County in Lincoln Park, Rockville. He was also very active in supporting youth activities. Wims established the Clarksburg Recreation Center on Wims Road, adjacent to Clarksburg Heights to the northwest. He founded and owned one of the first African American sandlot baseball teams, the Maryland Wildcats, and eventually sponsored the Junior Wildcats, an integrated youth baseball team. Wims also worked with historians in the County on projects and partnerships to ensure others can learn about Clarksburg's rich history (Frye 2014). Wim's contributions to Clarksburg and Montgomery County have been recognized through his induction to the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame in 2006. In 2008, Clarksburg High School named their baseball field, Wims Field, and after his death in 2014, the newest elementary school in Clarksburg was named Wilson Wims Elementary School (Montgomery County Public Schools 2018). Today, each lot in Clarksburg Heights has an individual owner including Wim's granddaughter, Karen F. Walker (SDAT 2018). Outlots A and B are now owned by the Maryland Academy of Energy and Ecology, Inc. and the Community of Faith Methodist Church, Inc., respectively, and are not included in the resource boundary (SDAT 2018)



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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Inventory No. 13-61

Maryland Determination of Eligibility Form, "Clarksburg Heights," M: 13-61, Prepared in 2018.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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|                               |                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Acreage of surveyed property  | <u>4.07</u>       |
| Acreage of historical setting | <u>4.07</u>       |
| Quadrangle name               | <u>Germantown</u> |

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Clarksburg Heights is a mid-20th century planned subdivision composed of 4.07 acres in Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland. The subdivision consists of six single-family residential lots along Running Brook Drive on the southwest side of Frederick Road. The lots are addressed as 12700-12712 Running Brook Drive. The subdivision is bordered by a Methodist Church to the southeast, a middle school to the southwest, a public park and high school to the northwest, and Frederick Road to the northeast.

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## 11. Form Prepared by (Reformatted 2018 Determination of Eligibility Form)

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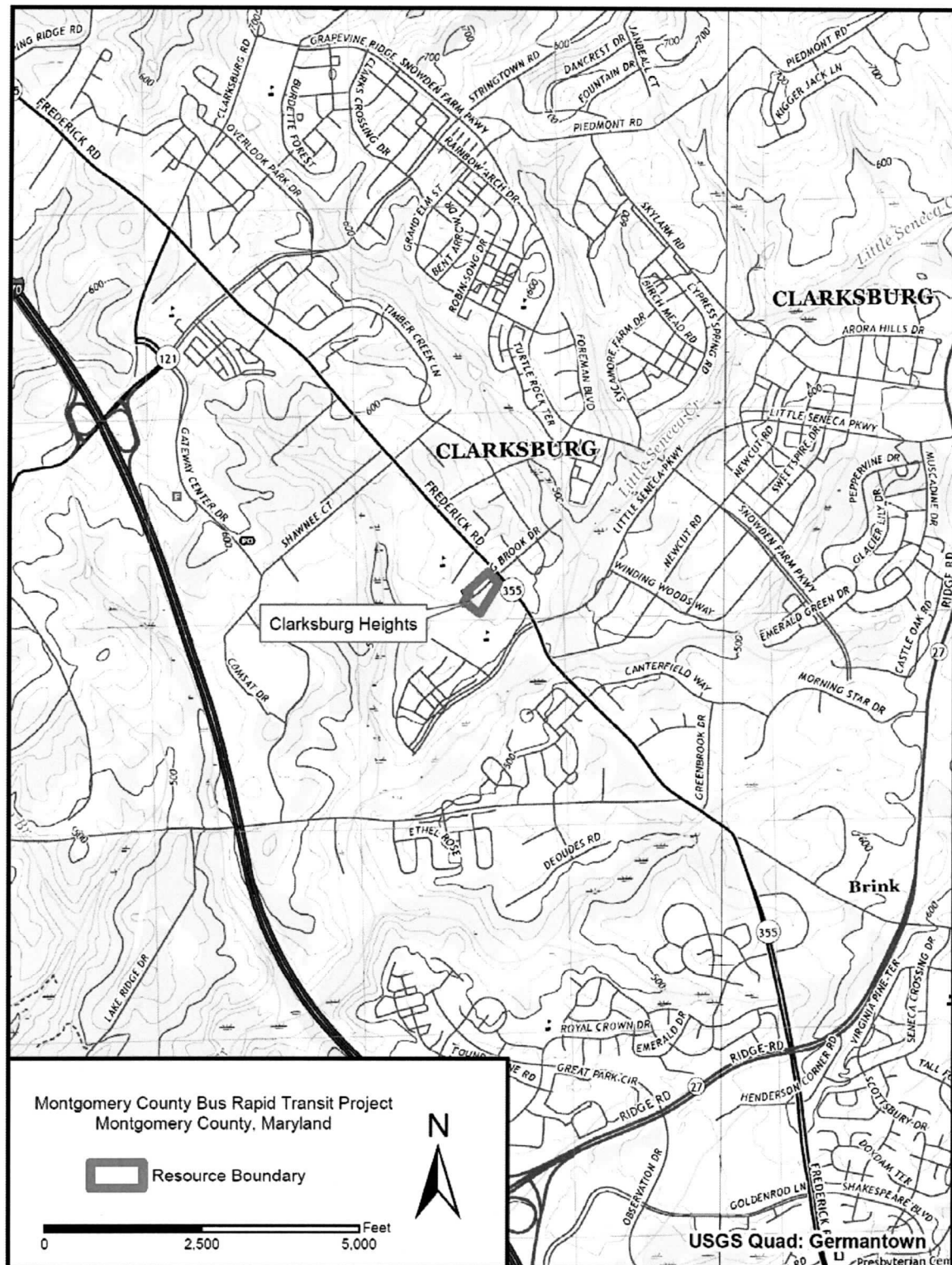
|                 |                              |           |               |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| name/title      | Historic Preservation Office |           |               |
| organization    | Montgomery Planning          | date      | December 2024 |
| street & number | 2425 Reddie Drive            | telephone |               |
| city or town    | Wheaton                      | 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.

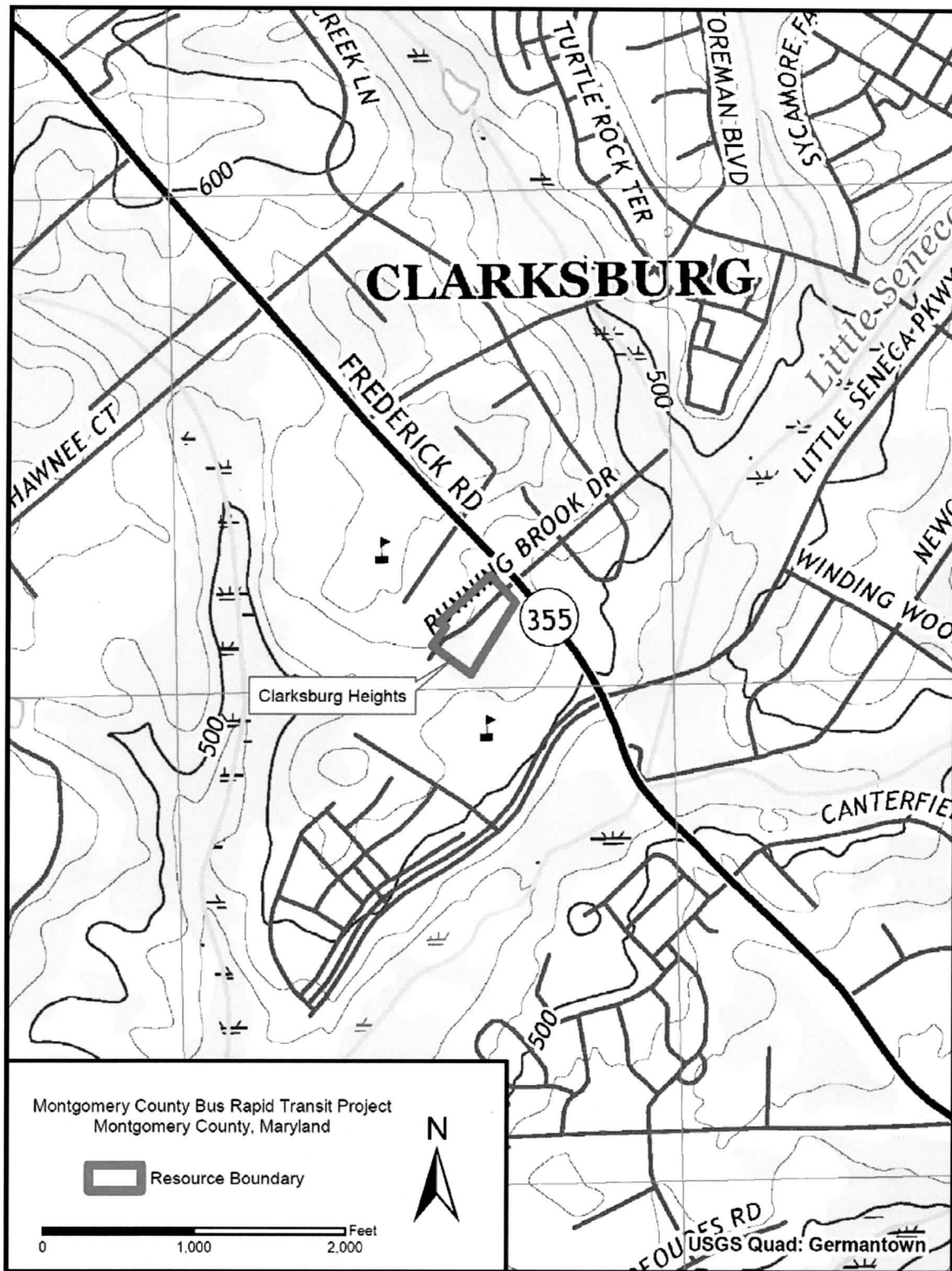
return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-697-9591

## Clarksburg Heights (M: 13-61) Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland



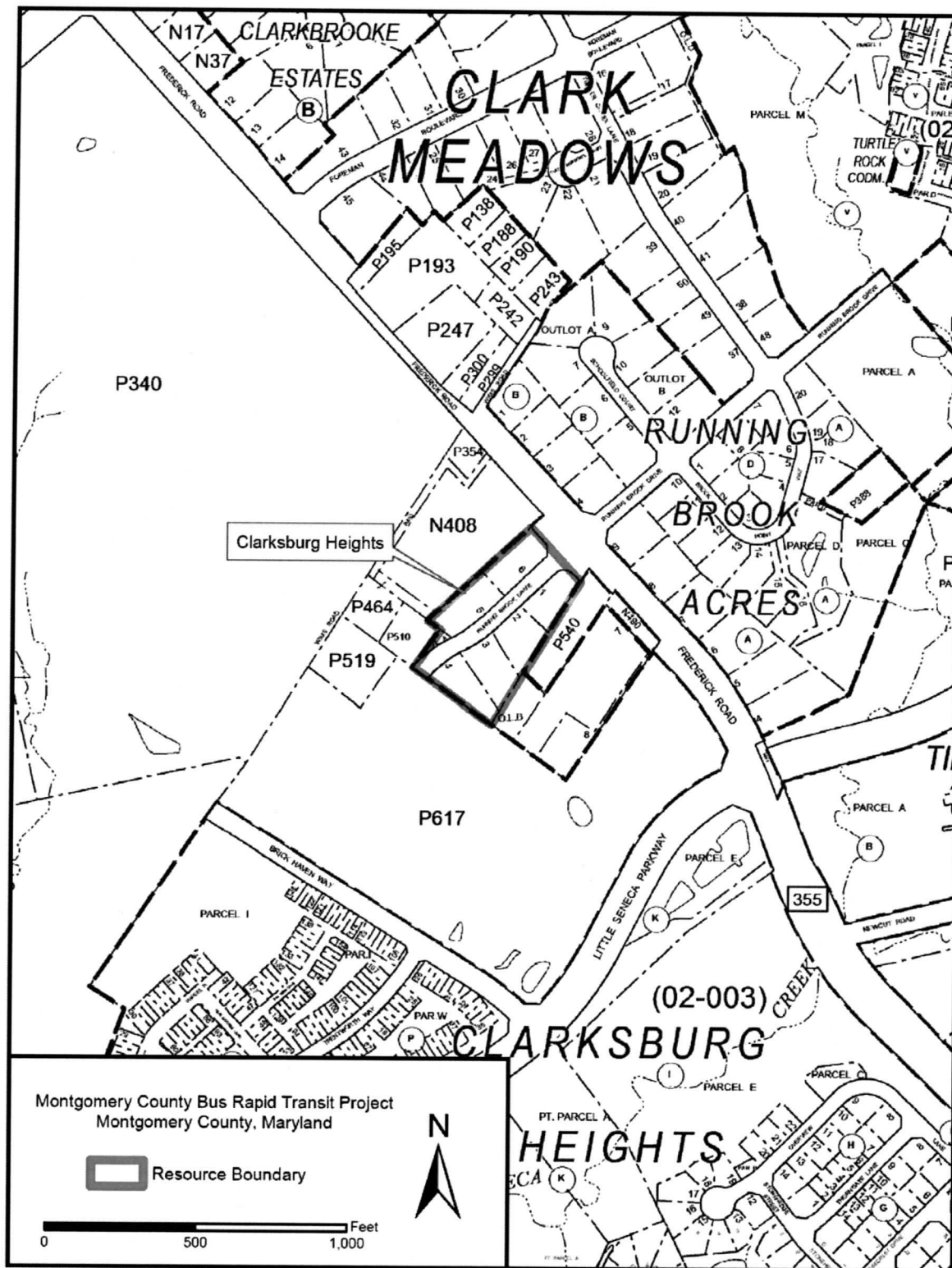
Location of Clarksburg Heights on 7.5-Minute Germantown, Maryland,  
United States Geological Survey Topographic Map (USGS 2016)

Clarksburg Heights (M: 13-61)  
Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland



Location of Clarksburg Heights on 7.5-Minute Germantown, Maryland,  
United States Geological Survey Topographic Map (USGS 2016)

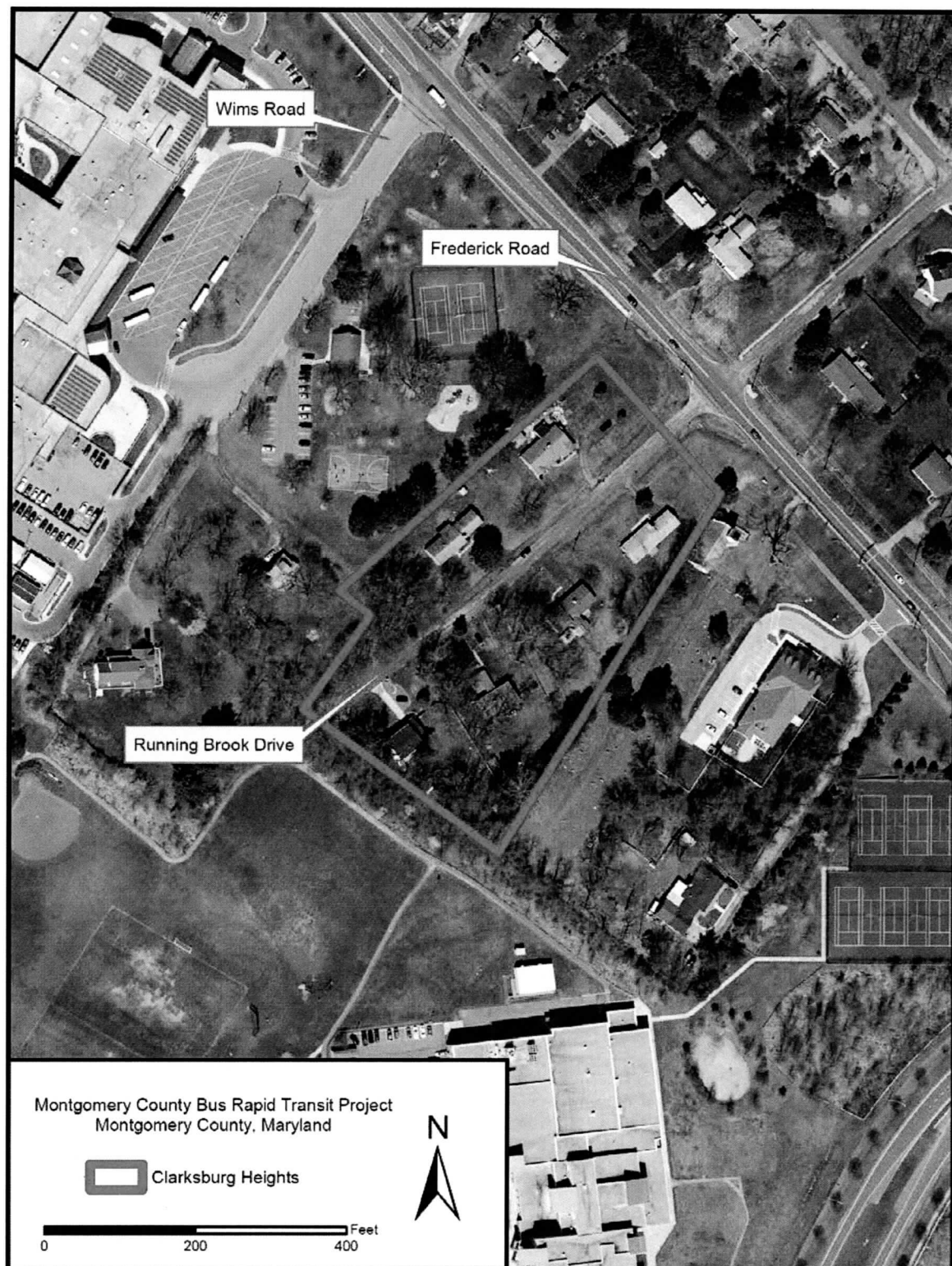
Clarksburg Heights (M: 13-61)  
Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland



Location of Clarksburg Heights on Montgomery County Tax Map  
(Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data and Analysis 2013)

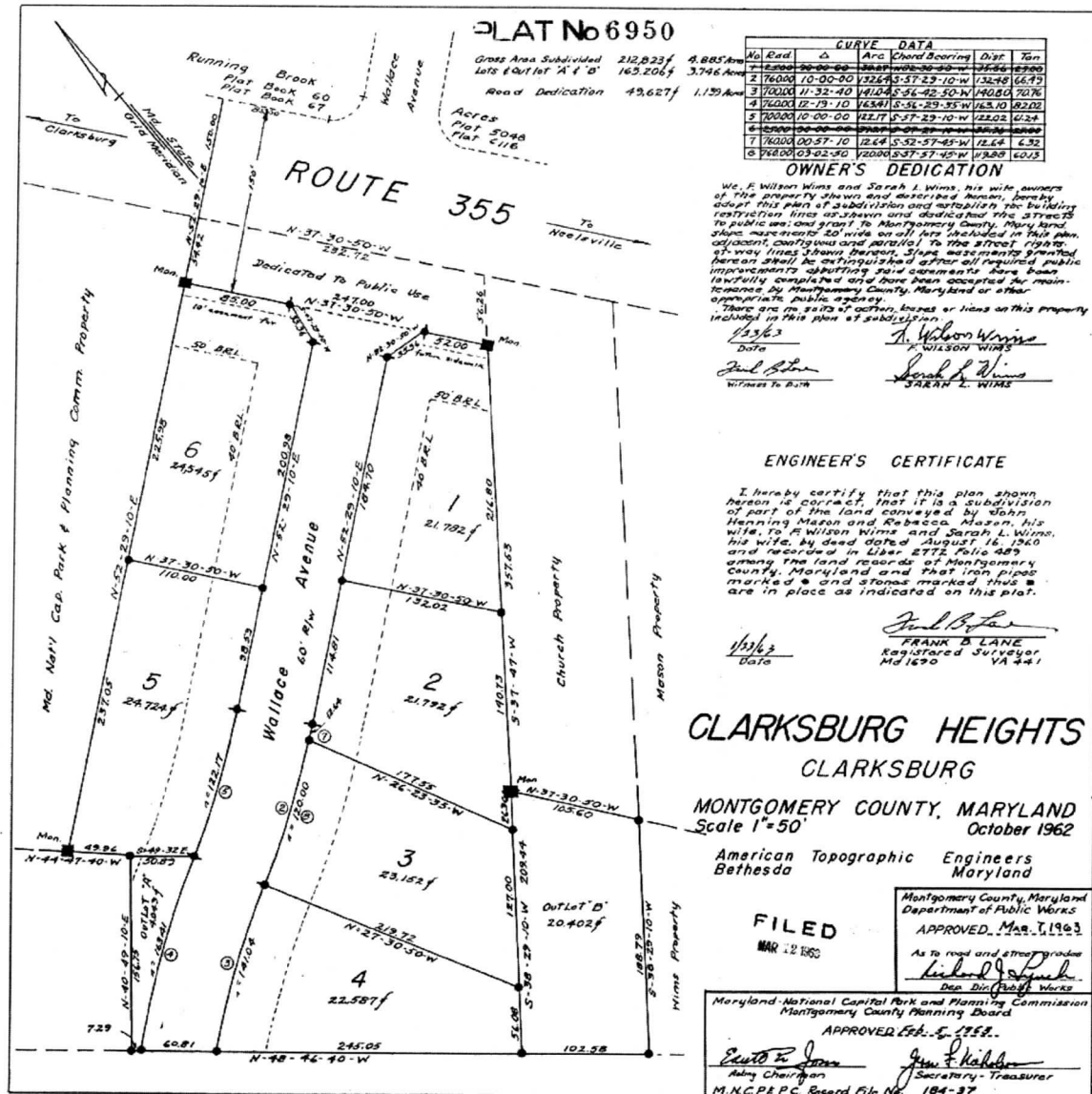


Clarksburg Heights (M: 13-61)  
Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland



Location of Clarksburg Heights on 2017 Aerial Image  
(Maryland's Mapping and GIS Data Portal 2017)

Clarksburg Heights (M: 13-61)  
Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland



1963 Plat of Clarksburg Heights (MCPB 6950)

**Clarksburg Heights (M: 13-61)**  
**Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland**

| <b>TIFF Image File Name</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                 | <b>Date Taken</b> | <b>Ink</b>                       | <b>Paper</b>                      | <b>Brand, Make &amp; Dye<br/>Type of DVD</b>          |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_01.tif  | View of houses along southeast side of Running Brook Drive                                         | 1/24/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_02.tif  | View of houses along northwest side of Running Brook Drive                                         | 1/24/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-03-13_03.tif  | Front elevation of 12700 Running Brook Drive                                                       | 3/13/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_04.tif  | Detail of garage and enclosed breezeway at 12700 Running Brook Drive                               | 1/24/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_05.tif  | Front elevation of 12704 Running Brook Drive                                                       | 1/24/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_06.tif  | Detail of replacement front door and awning windows on 12704 Running Brook Drive                   | 1/24/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_07.tif  | View of rear elevation of 12700 Running Brook Drive and rear addition on 12704 Running Brook Drive | 1/24/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-03-13_08.tif  | Front elevation of 12708 Running Brook Drive                                                       | 3/13/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-03-13_09.tif  | Front elevation of 12712 Running Brook Drive                                                       | 3/13/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_10.tif  | Front elevation of 12705 Running Brook Drive                                                       | 1/24/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_11.tif  | Detail of enclosed breezeway on 12705 Running Brook Drive                                          | 1/24/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_12.tif  | Front elevation of 12701 Running Brook Drive                                                       | 1/24/2018         | Canon Chromalife100 CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo Paper Plus Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife 4.7GB 8x Gold Archival Grade DVD-R |

Clarksburg Heights (M: 13-61)  
Clarksburg, Montgomery County, Maryland

| TIFF Image File Name       | Description                                                              | Date Taken | Ink                                    | Paper                                   | Brand, Make & Dye<br>Type of DVD                            |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| M; 13-61_2018-01-24_13.tif | Detail of siding and replacement windows on<br>12701 Running Brook Drive | 1/24/2018  | Canon<br>Chromalife100<br>CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo<br>Paper Plus<br>Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife<br>4.7GB 8x Gold<br>Archival Grade DVD-R |
| M; 13-61_2018-03-13_14.tif | Side elevation and rear addition of<br>12701 Running Brook Drive         | 3/13/2018  | Canon<br>Chromalife100<br>CLI-271 Inks | Cannon Photo<br>Paper Plus<br>Glossy II | Verbatim UltraLife<br>4.7GB 8x Gold<br>Archival Grade DVD-R |



# Attachment 5



# Attachment 5



# Attachment 5







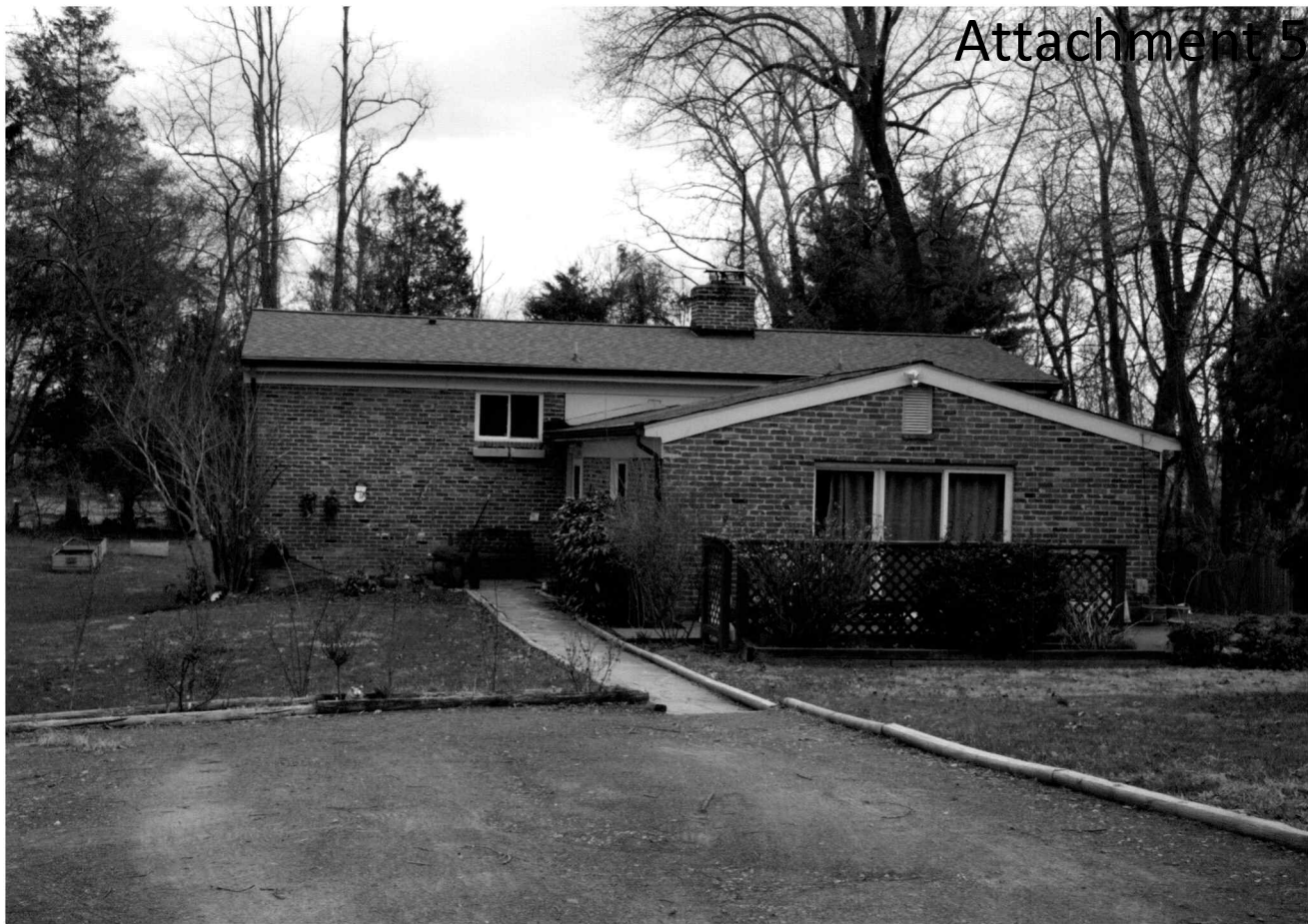
# Attachment 5





# Attachment 5













# Attachment 5





# Attachment 5



Attachment

