



ASALH

ASSOCIATION *for the* STUDY of AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE *and* HISTORY



HALLOWED GROUNDS

SITES OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEMORY

LET THE LAND TELL THE STORY



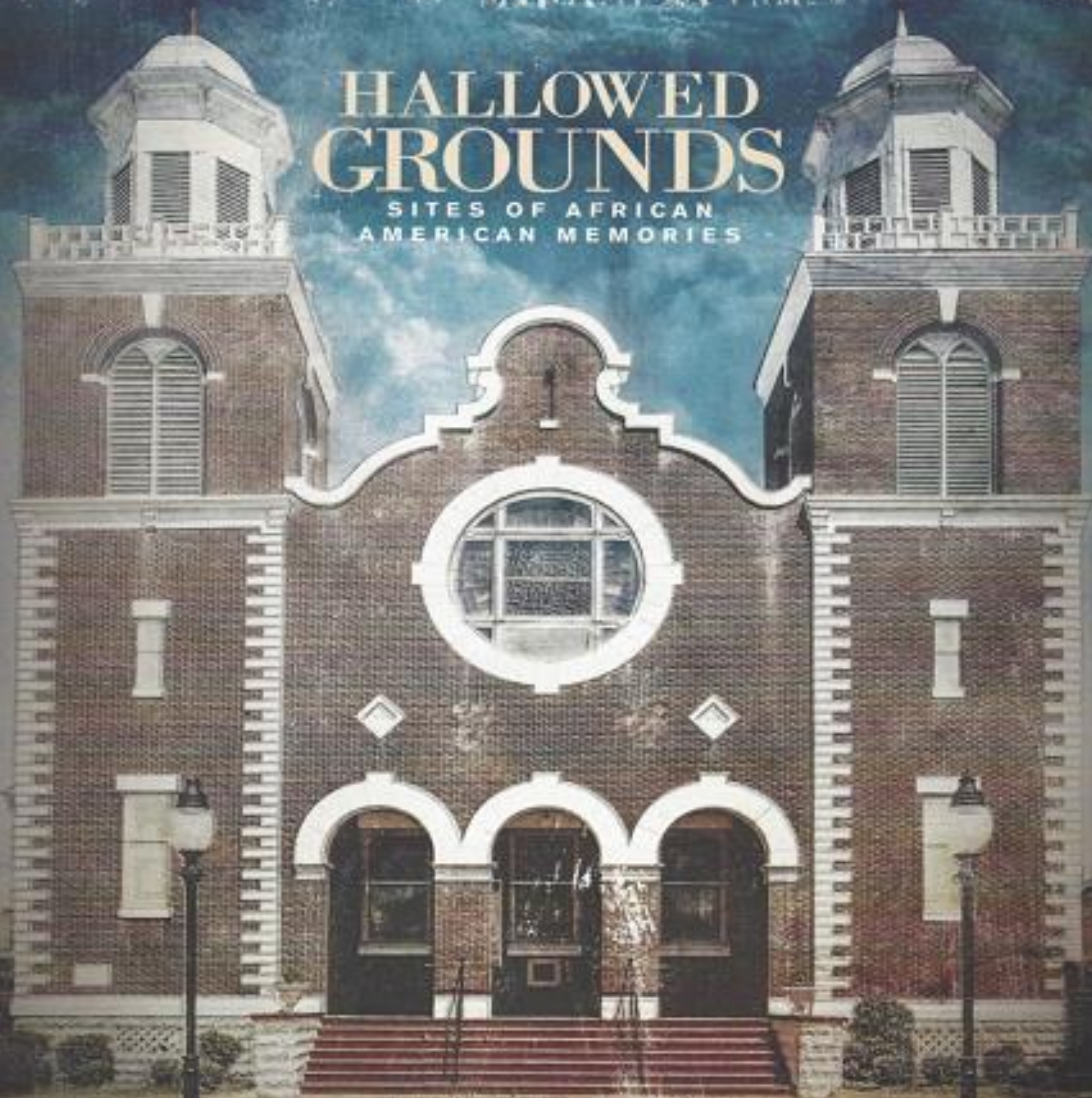
MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

GROWING THE FUTURE • LEADING THE WORLD

Black
History
Bulletin
VOL.78, No.2

HALLOWED GROUNDS

SITES OF AFRICAN
AMERICAN MEMORIES



BROWN CHAPEL - SELMA, AL

*INSIDE
THEME: HALLOWED GROUNDS: SITES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MEMORIES
FEATURING A "LITTLE ROCK NINE" LEARNING SERIES LESSON PLAN
PUBLISHED BY ASALH FOUNDERS OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

2016
National Park Service
CENTENNIAL

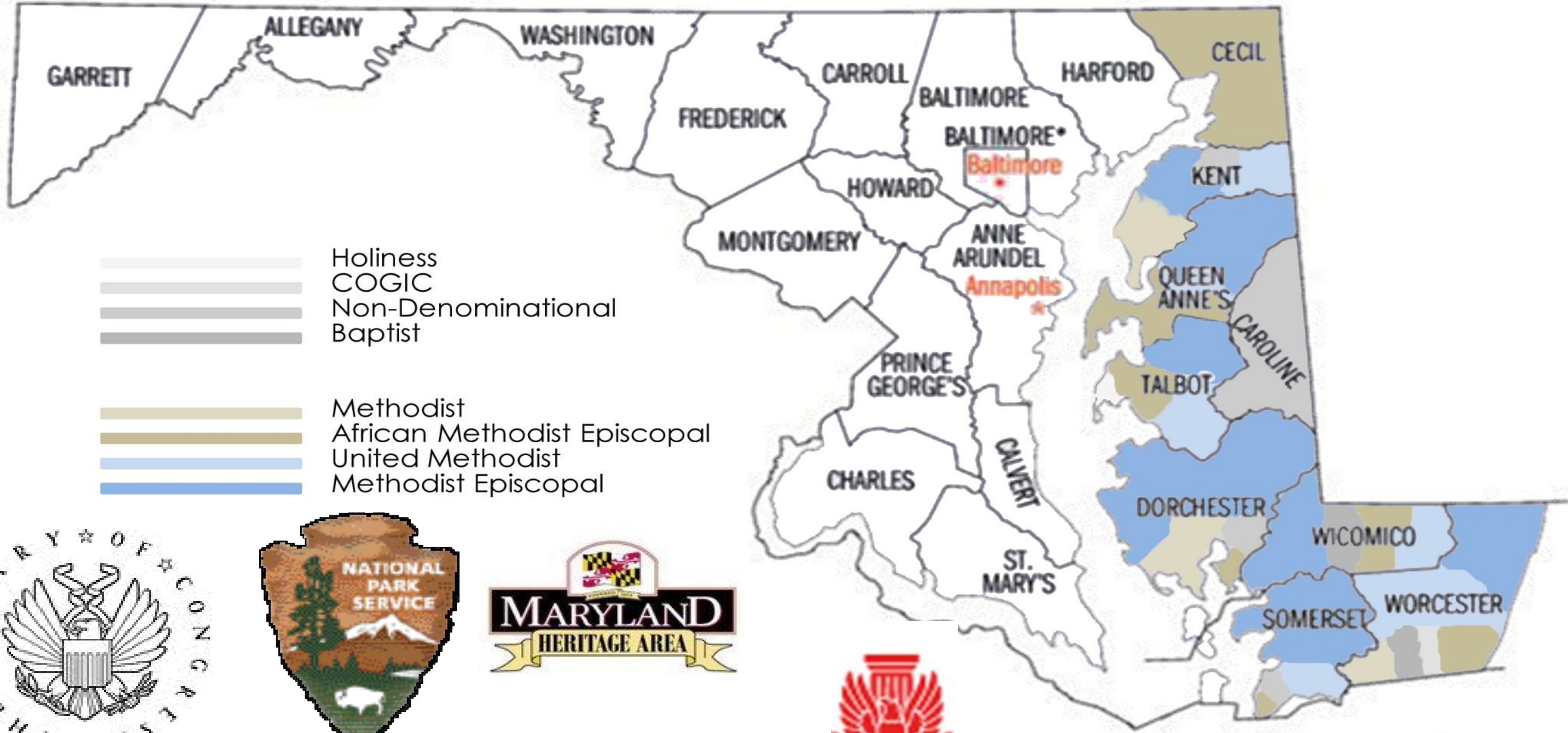
Preservation50

1966-2016



OUR LEGACY, OUR FUTURE





Light Gray: Holiness, COGIC, Non-Denominational Baptist
 Light Blue: Methodist Episcopal
 Light Brown: Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal
 Dark Blue: United Methodist



MCAAHC
Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture



Historic African American Churches Eastern Shore of Maryland



Left: Christ Rock Church after restoration of doors, windows, and siding.

Christ Rock Church, Dorchester County:

Exterior rehabilitation continues under several consecutive AAHPP grants to the Friends of Stanley Institute nonprofit organization. Also in 2013, a team of archeology students from Salisbury University, led by Professor Jason Boroughs, performed a Phase I archeological investigation on the site. The archeological study will assist in planning for the reconstruction of the fellowship hall and other outbuildings. The church will become a museum and community center and is located along the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway.



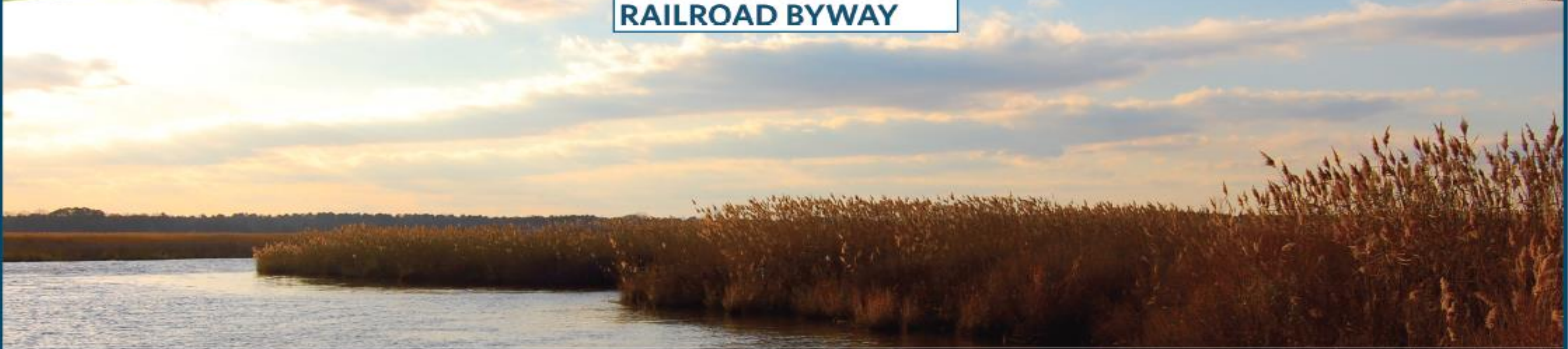
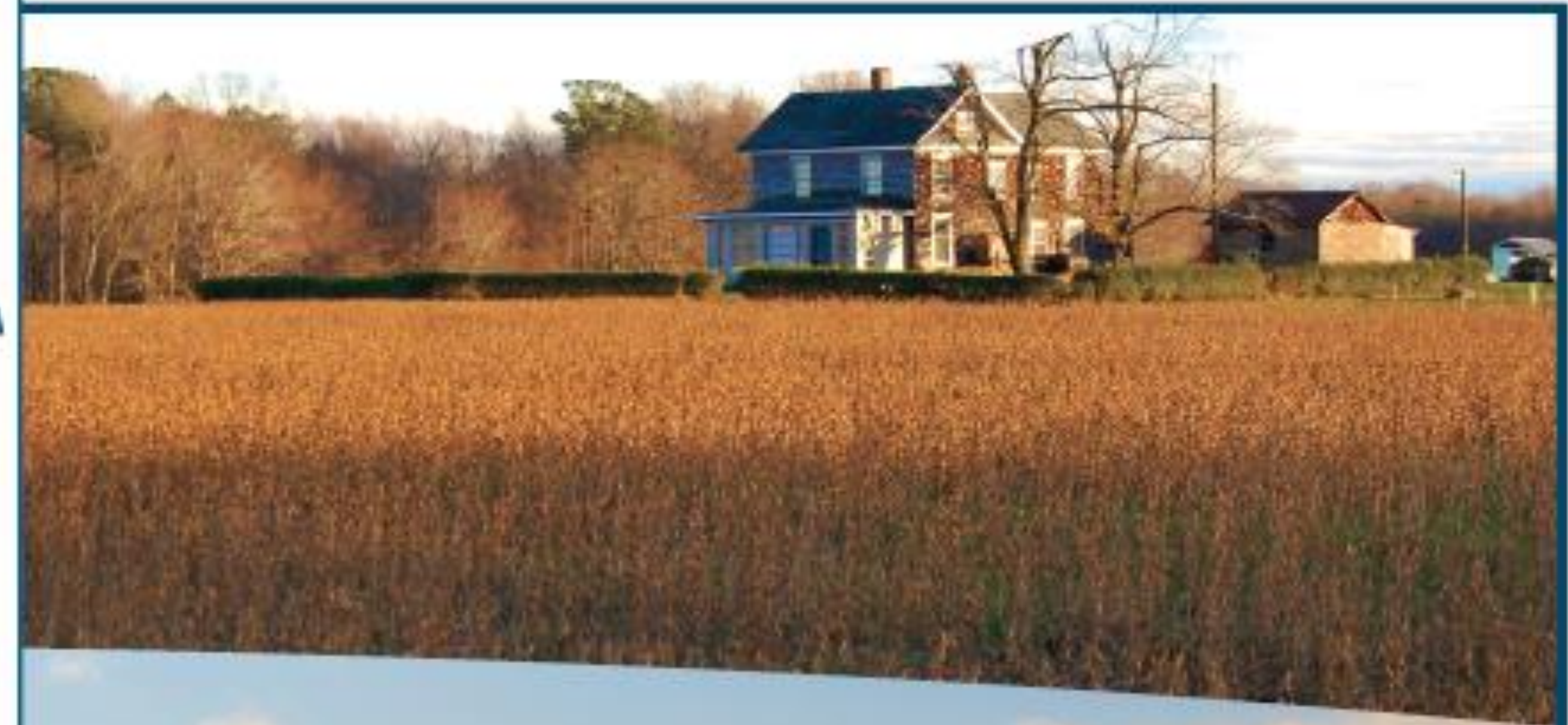
Above: Church during lifting and foundation repairs phase in the fall of 2012.



Above: In a public presentation on August 21, Professor Jason Boroughs of Salisbury University gave an overview of the archeological investigation at Christ Rock Church, while Professor Dale Glenwood Green discussed the history of the site. They are pictured along with Delegate Rudolph Cane; MCAAHC Chairman Theodore Mack, and Friends of Stanley Institute president Herschel Johnson.



FREEDOM
HARRIET
TUBMAN
UNDERGROUND
RAILROAD BYWAY



**HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN
FOR THE PRESTON/POPLAR NECK AREA OF THE
HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD BYWAY**

Submitted to Caroline Office of Tourism by Morgan State University School of Architecture and Planning

August 2012



American
Society of
Landscape
Architects

Civic
Stewardship
Award

MDP

Maryland Department of Planning

MARYLAND HISTORICAL



TRUST



LEED
LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN



EASTERN SHORE
LAND CONSERVANCY



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
EASTERN SHORE

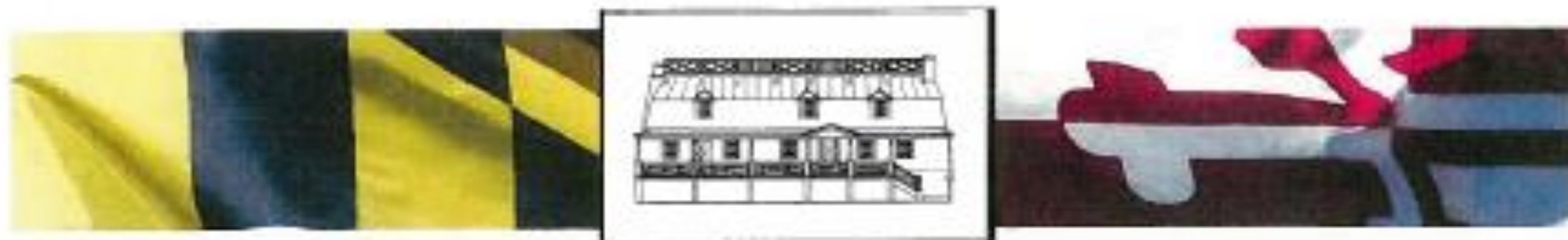


MORGAN
STATE UNIVERSITY



Cambridge City Hall





THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

is pleased to present this

Maryland Preservation Award

for

Excellence in Community Engagement

for the

Cambridge City Hall Renovation Plans

to the

Morgan State University School of Architecture and Planning



The Cambridge Studio is a ten week program for graduate architecture students from Morgan State University directed by the Delmarva Rural Laboratory, Inc. in cooperation with the City of Cambridge and Morgan State University's School of Architecture and Planning. In 2011, seven students took part in the ten week summer program to develop design solutions for the reuse of the historic 1926 City Hall/Fire Hall by the City of Cambridge for the administrative, finance and public works departments. Through multiple presentations to the Cambridge community the students engaged local citizens in the design process. Prior to the start of the project, the community was skeptical of reusing the old city hall believing it would be too expensive to rehabilitate and maintain and require programmatic compromises for the City. As a result of the student's work, the community realized that the building could be restored while still meeting the needs of the City. When completed, the project will fulfill all of the City's programmatic requirements, create a high performance work environment, meet the City's sustainability goals, cost less than building a new structure, and re-establish the old City Hall as a community landmark.

Presented the 31st day of January in the year 2012 at Annapolis, Maryland

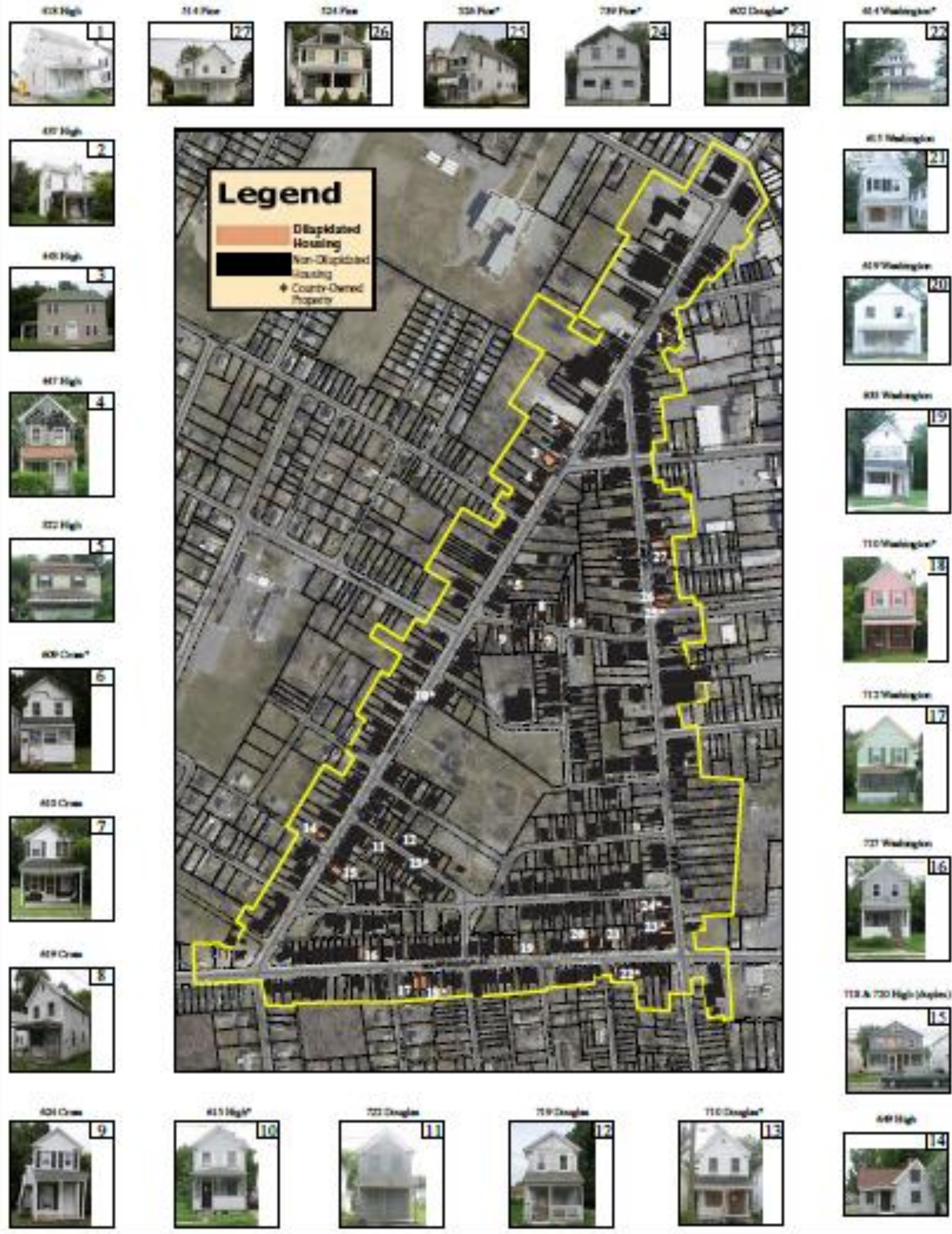



Harrison B. Wetherill, Jr., Chairman


J. Rodney Little, Director



**Pine Street Community
SMALL AREA PLAN**



PINE STREET COMMUNITY SMALL AREA PLAN
CAMBRIDGE, MARYLAND
DILAPIDATED PROPERTIES



The Hill Community Project:

2010 - 2018



*The Hill Community (c. 1790)
Easton, Talbot County, Maryland*

Scholars conducting the historical and archaeological research believe that The Hill Community will prove to be the oldest community still in existence in the Nation continuously inhabited by free persons of color.



AN UNTOLD AMERICAN STORY
EARLY AFRICAN AMERICAN SETTLEMENT UNCOVERED





In Gaston, Asbury United Methodist Church, left, on Higgins Street and Bethel A.M.E. Church, right, on Harrison Street are located inside "The Hill" boundaries. The churches are considered to be the birthplace of African-American Methodism on the Eastern Shore.

A town within 'The Hill'



Professor Dale Green of Morgan State University talks about the national historical significance of "The Hill."



The University of Maryland's Dr. Mark Leone and his graduate students will be digging for clues on "The Hill" this summer.



Dr. Debra Hays, professor of history at Morgan State University, and her graduate students will be digging for clues on "The Hill" this summer.



Dr. Debra Hays, professor of history at Morgan State University, and her graduate students will be digging for clues on "The Hill" this summer.



Priscilla Morris of Historic Gaston Inc. gives individual histories of many of the houses on "The Hill."



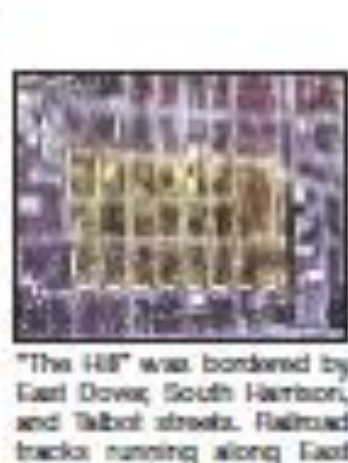
Archaeologists will dig for clues this summer on the property of the house of Eliza Skinner Green Dobson at Higgins and South streets on "The Hill" in Gaston. Dobson was the stepmother of Buffalo Soldier Sgt. William Gardner, who fought with Teddy Roosevelt in the Battle of San Juan Hill in the Spanish-American War.



Doris Hobson, Professor Dale Green, and James L. Wayman and his wife Debrae Lake Wayman remember their courtship on "The Hill," anniversary sitting at the Little Hill Restaurant. The Waymans have been married 67 years. Their oldest daughter, Leora Wayman Murray, is at left.



History buffs and former residents of the "The Hill" reminisce during the event at the senior center. From left: Doris Hobson, Professor Dale Green of Morgan State University, 94-year-old James L. Wayman and his wife Debrae Lake Wayman, Harrisville Lowery of the Frederick Douglass Honor Society and Leora Wayman Murray.



"The Hill" was bordered by East Dover, South Harrison, and Talbot streets. Railroad tracks running along East Avenue, now Rats to Trails, from bottom to top at right, separated the African-American and white neighborhoods.



From right, The University of Maryland's Dr. Mark Leone will begin digging for clues along with doctoral students Tracy Jenkins, Ian Skolnik and Geth Pruitt near the Eliza Skinner Green Dobson house on "The Hill."





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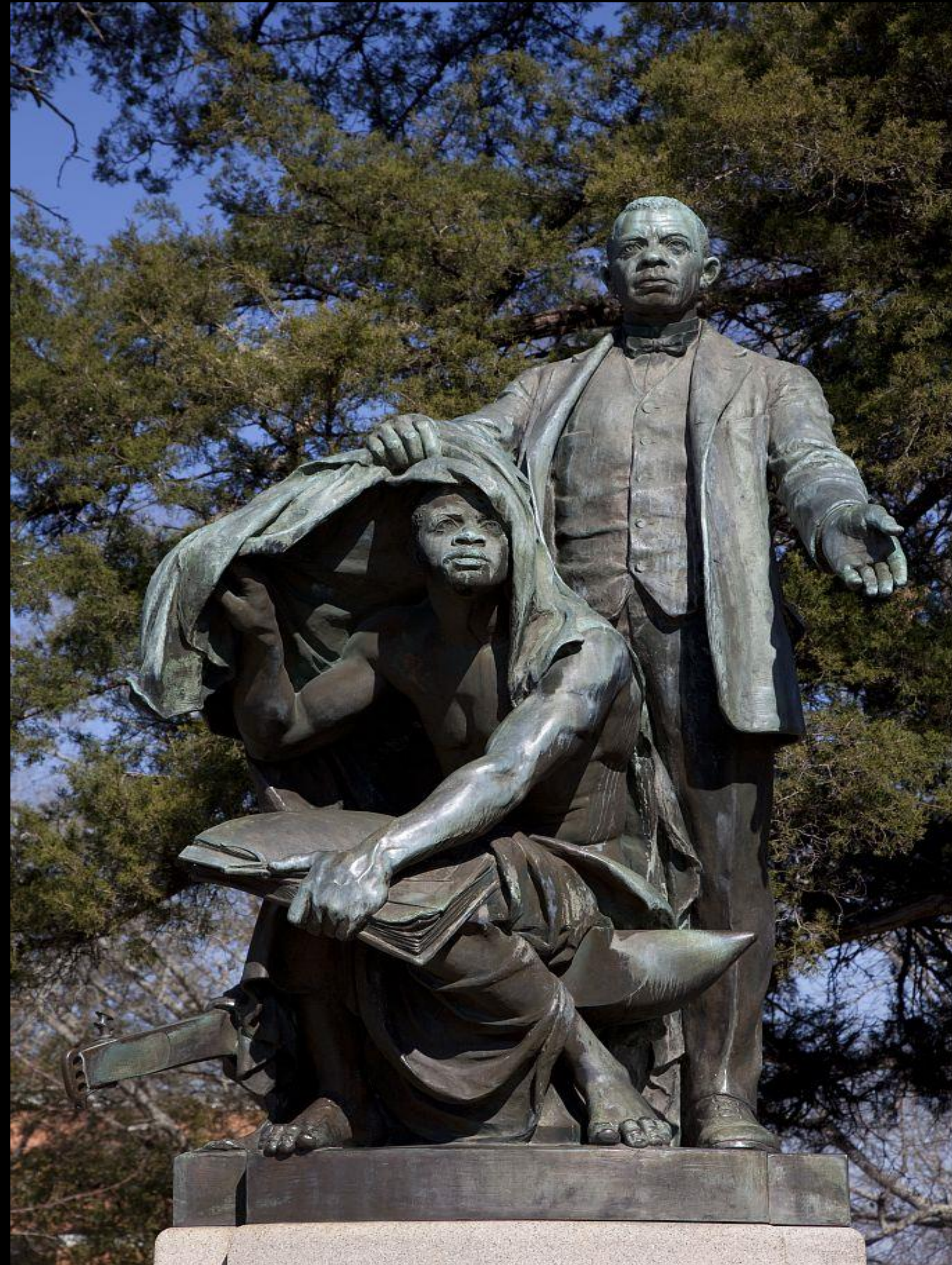
Leaira Redondo



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Uncovering The Hill Community

Lifting the Veil of Ignorance

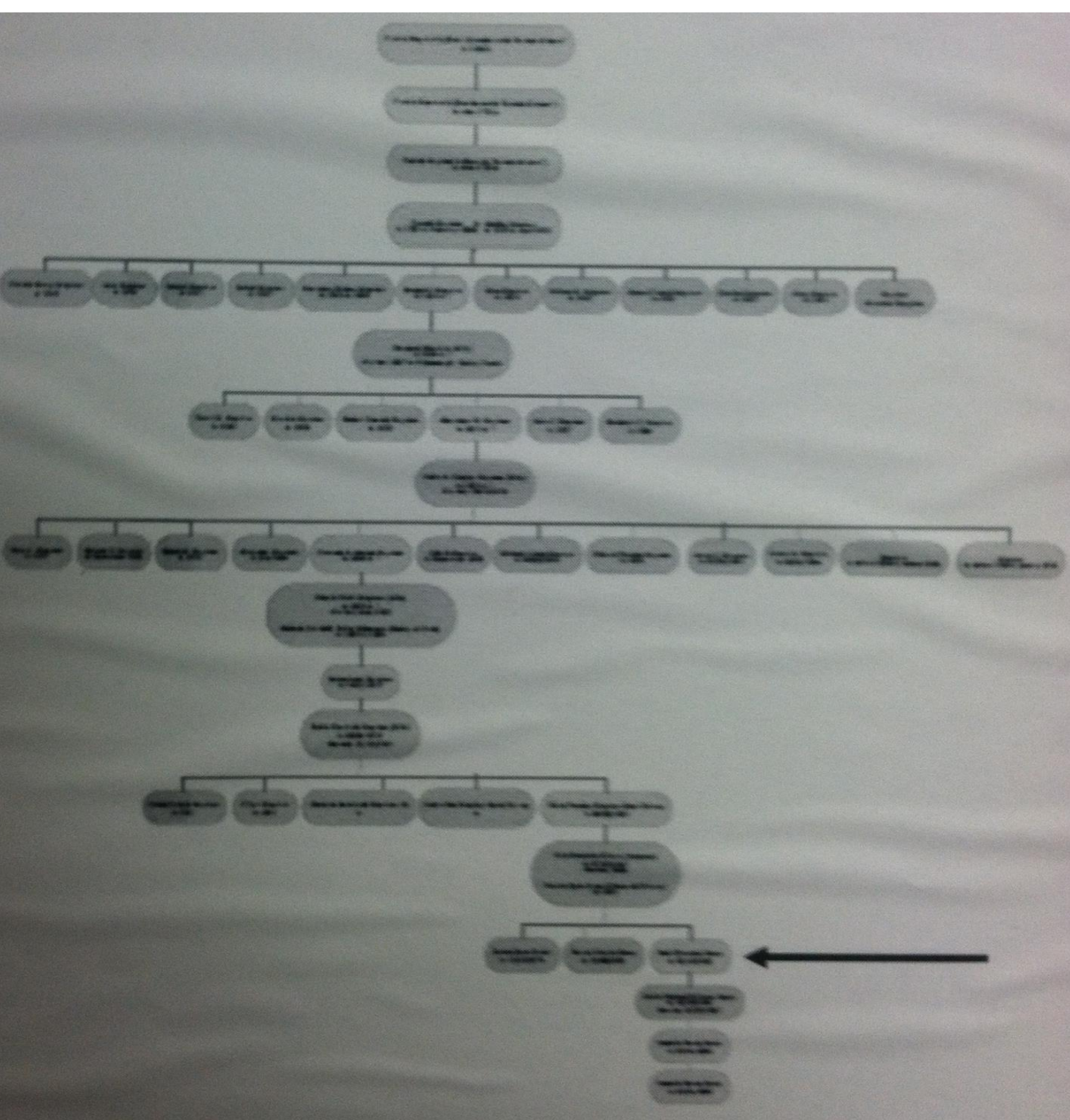


1. **Histiography**
2. **Land Records**
3. **Oral History**
4. **Genealogy**
5. **Archaeology**
6. **Preservation**

“A race, like an individual, lifts itself up by lifting others up.”
Booker T. Washington.

Head of Household	Last name	First name	Free W to-15	Free Males 16-26	Free White Females	All Other Free persons	Slaves
1	Adly	Richard	0	0	1	4	0
2	Adams	Samuel	0	0	0	5	0
3	Boxer	James	0	0	0	3	0
4	Brittington	Abram	0	0	0	4	0
5	Brooks	Grace	0	0	0	3	0
6	Boston	William	0	0	0	4	0
7	Blamer (Flamer)	Charles	0	0	0	2	0
8	Bridge	Harry	0	0	0	5	0
9	Brown	Thomas	0	0	0	4	0
10	Brown	Dark	0	0	0	7	0
11	Bell	Lucy	0	0	0	6	0
12	Bull	Adam	0	0	1	4	0
13	Clash	Jonathan	0	0	1	3	0
14	Clash	James	0	0	1	5	0
15	Cornish	Charles	0	0	0	3	0
16	Carse (Kersey)	James	0	0	0	13	0
17	Crouch	Ammon	0	0	0	4	0
18	Clark	William	0	0	0	1	0
19	Clash	John	0	0	1	8	0
20	Cooper	Dick	0	0	0	4	1
21	Cooper	Jack	0	0	0	5	0
22	Bantum	George	0	0	0	3	0
23	Cooper	Ben	0	0	0	9	0
24	Clark	Jere	0	0	0	5	0
25	Dorrell	Joseph	0	0	0	8	0
26	Dickinson	Susan	0	0	0	2	0
27	Dogan	Catharine	0	0	0	5	0
28	Erkins	Tom	0	0	0	4	0
29	Fonerdon	John	1	0	4	2	0
30	Gooby	Ben	0	0	0	5	1
31	Gibson	Ben	0	0	0	4	0
32	Gannon	Abner	0	0	0	6	0
33	Hunter	William	0	0	0	5	0
34	Kimbro	Edward	0	0	0	1	0
35	Lowe	Peter	0	0	0	1	0
36	Priss	Negroe	0	0	0	1	0
37	Mullican	Adam	0	0	0	8	0

Historiography



Genealogy

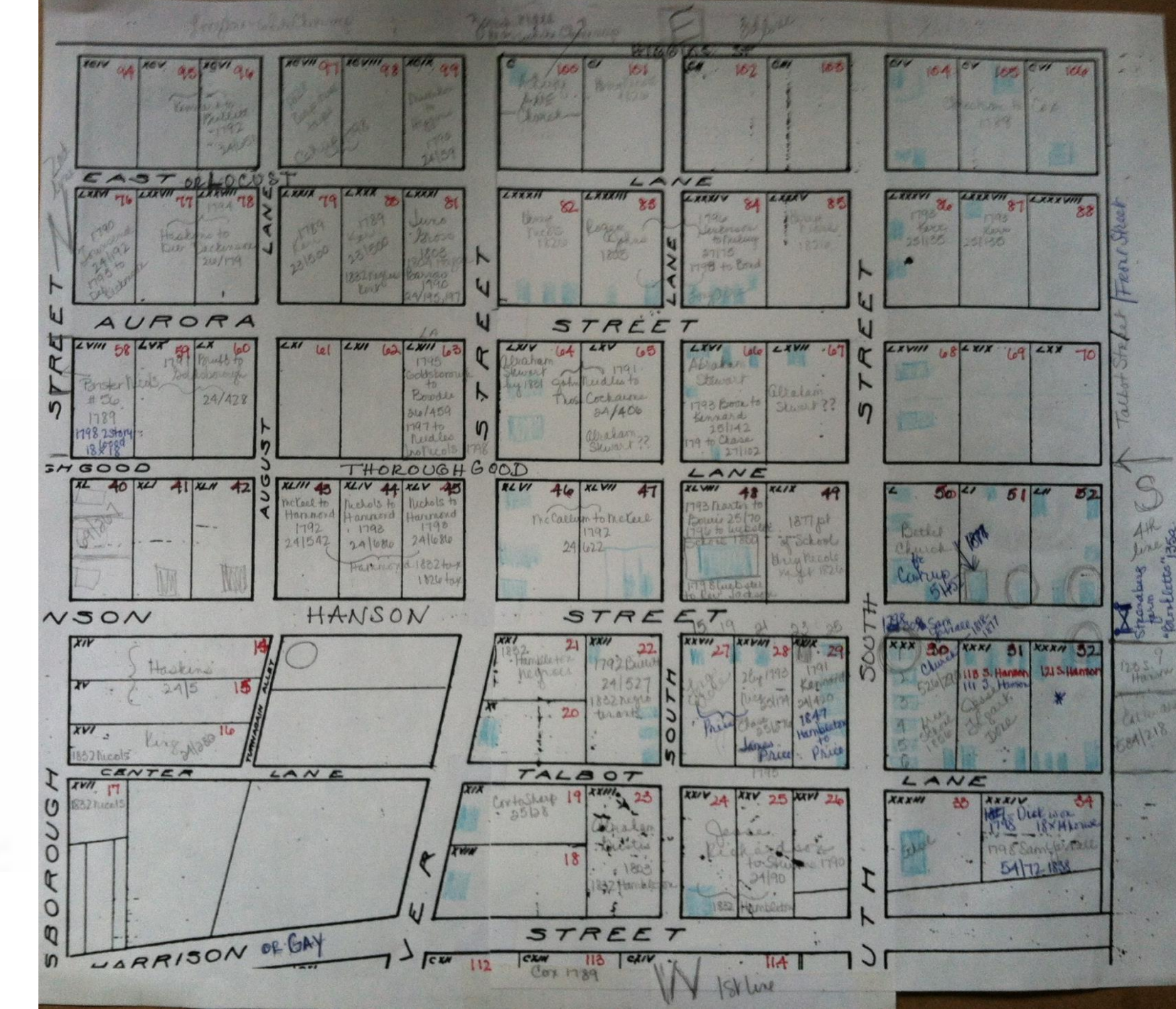


Archaeology



Maryland Comptroller Tours The Hill

Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot, center, and his party take a tour of "The Hill" led by Professor Dale Green, second from left, of Morgan State University.



Land Records

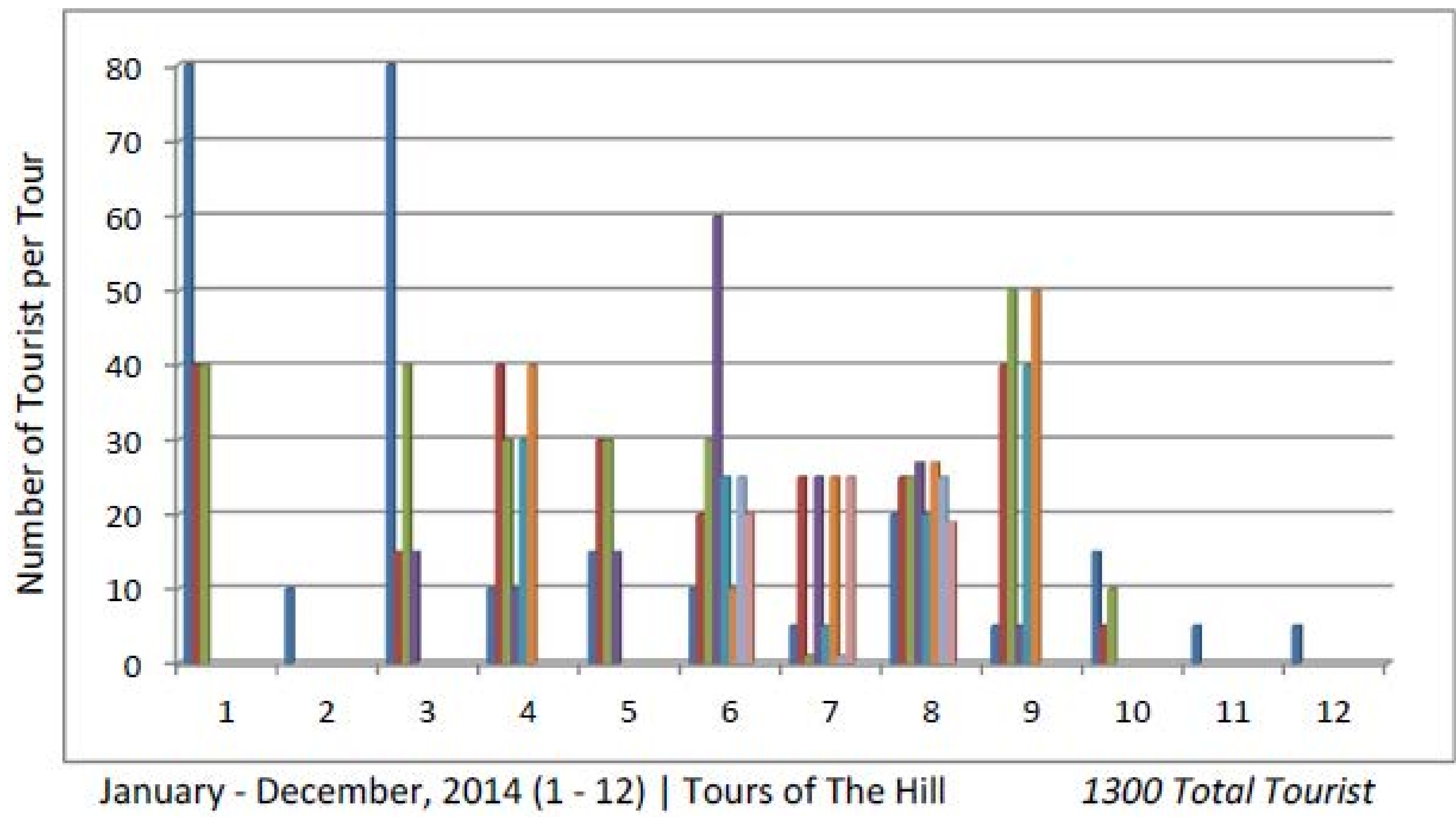


Oral History



Preservation


The Hill Community Project 2010 – 2018



Professor Dale Glenwood Green

Lieutenant governor tours The Hill

Story Comments Image (9)

Print  Font Size:  

Previous Next

Posted: Saturday, February 27, 2016 5:55 pm | Updated: 7:43 pm, Sat Feb 27, 2016.

By CHRIS POLK cpolk@stardem.com

EASTON — The African-American memories are countless, and the ground is considered to be hallowed, as scholars continue to try to prove it's the oldest free black community in the United States.

"The Hill" in Easton meets all the criteria of "Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memories"—the theme this year of Gov. Larry Hogan's Black History Month celebration in the state.

Since he took office, Hogan has chosen various Maryland locations for the Black History Month celebration.

On Saturday, Feb. 27, Lt. Gov. Boyd Rutherford did the honors by visiting the area, starting the day with a 25-person entourage tour of the The Hill, led by Dale Green, assistant professor of architecture and historic preservation at Morgan State University.

The Hill is an African-American neighborhood that goes back longer than anyone can



PHOTO BY CHRIS POLK

Lt. Governor tours The Hill

Lt. Gov. Boyd Rutherford, center left, walks up Harrison Street while taking a tour with an entourage of The Hill. Dale Green, right, leads the way during a Black History Month celebration in Easton on Saturday. Del. Johnny Mautz, R-37B-Talbot, is at center.

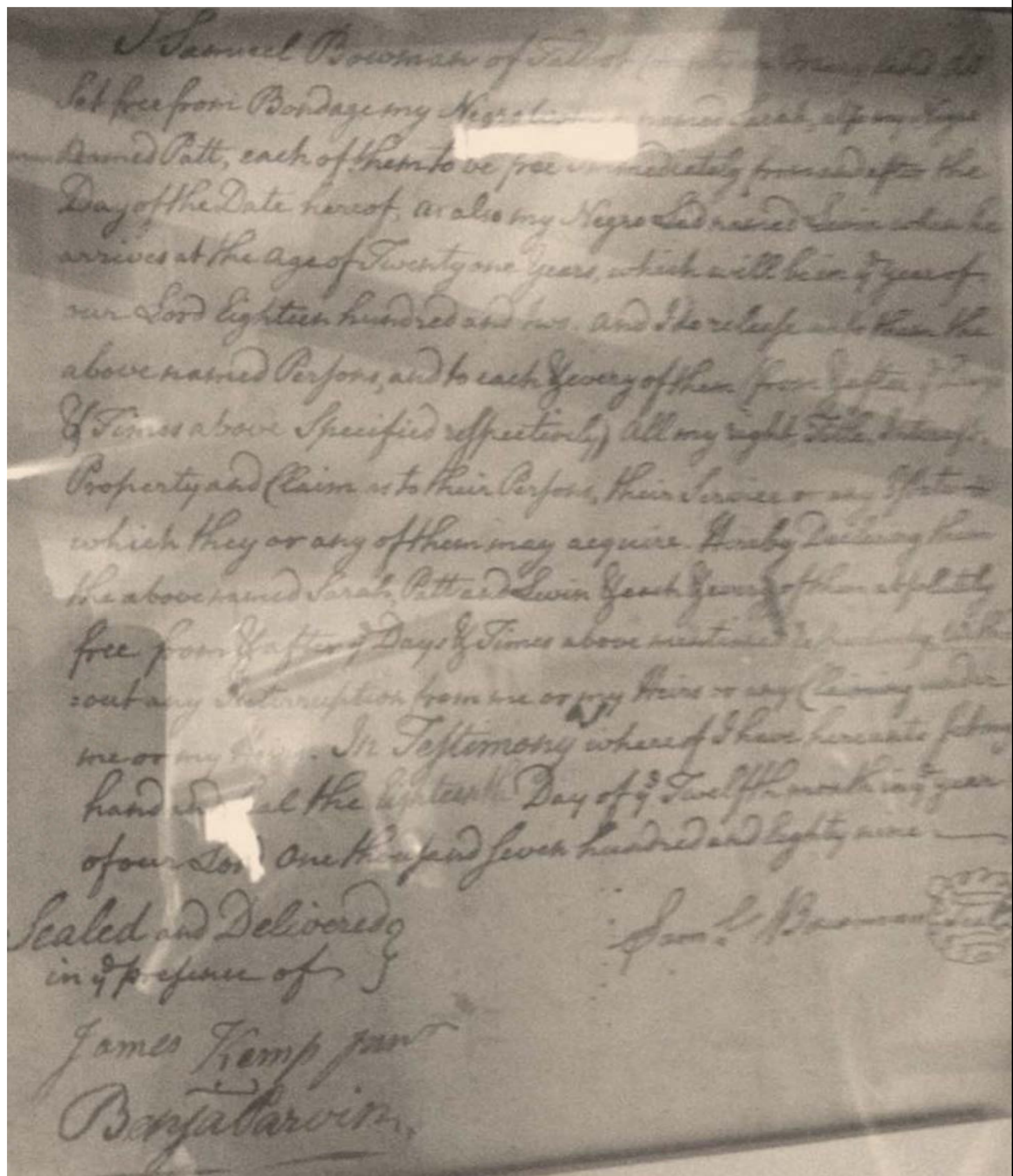




1790 Federal Census

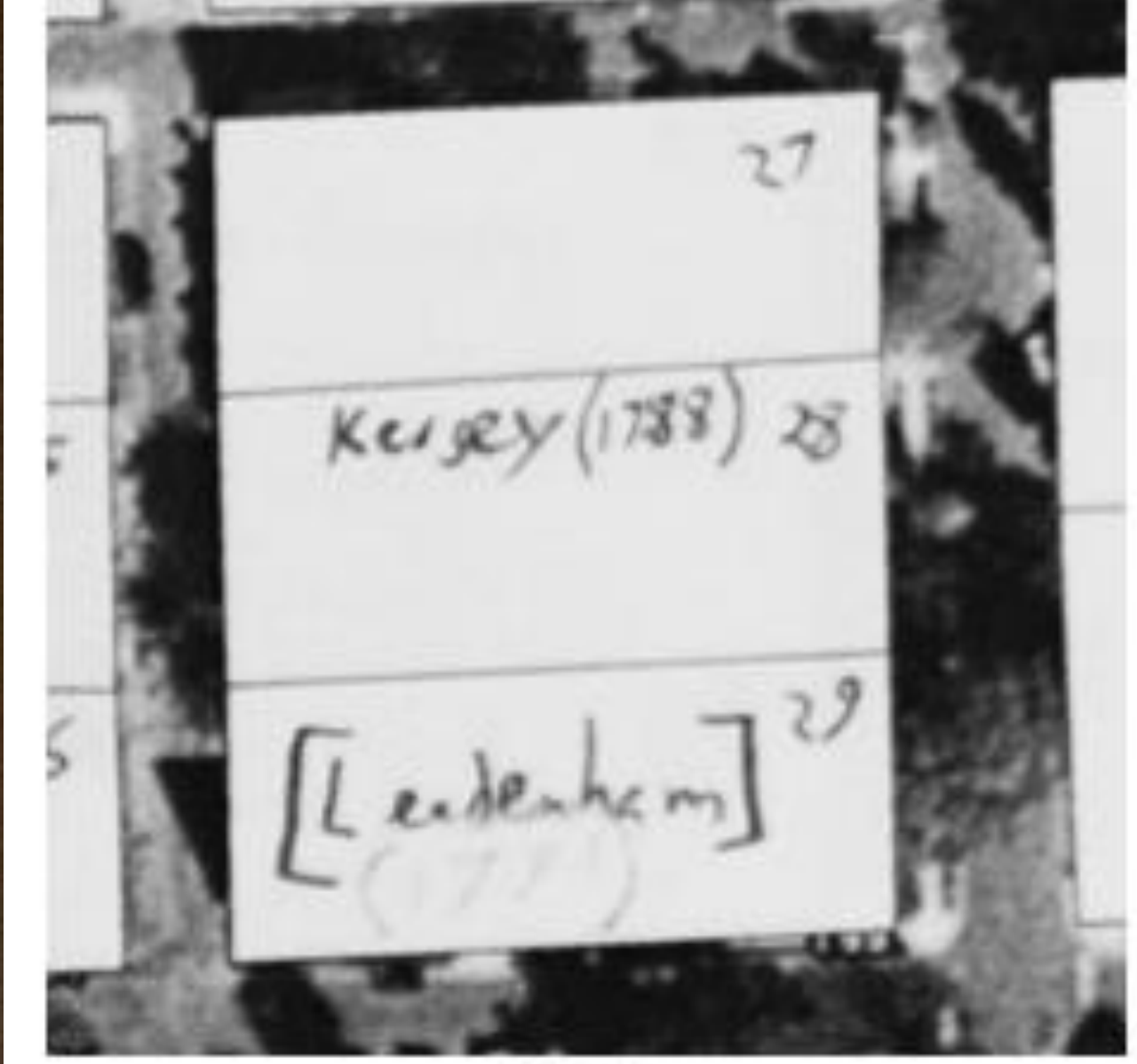
Some Families living on The Hill in 1880

- Joseph Lucas,
- Henry and Matilda Tilghman,
- Emory Poney,
- Jenkins Bailey,
- Josiah and Elizabeth Small,
- Lewis and Eliza Chase,
- Isaac and Patience Smith,
- Samuel and Sally Hazelton,
- Andrew and Rachel Ann Camper,
- William and Harriett Lewis,
- Simon and Mary Collins,
- William and Louisa Baynard,
- John and Eliza Johnson,
- Lewis Green and
- Mary Goldsborough,
- Lloyd and Margaret Thomas, and
- Alfred and Agnes Sprouse

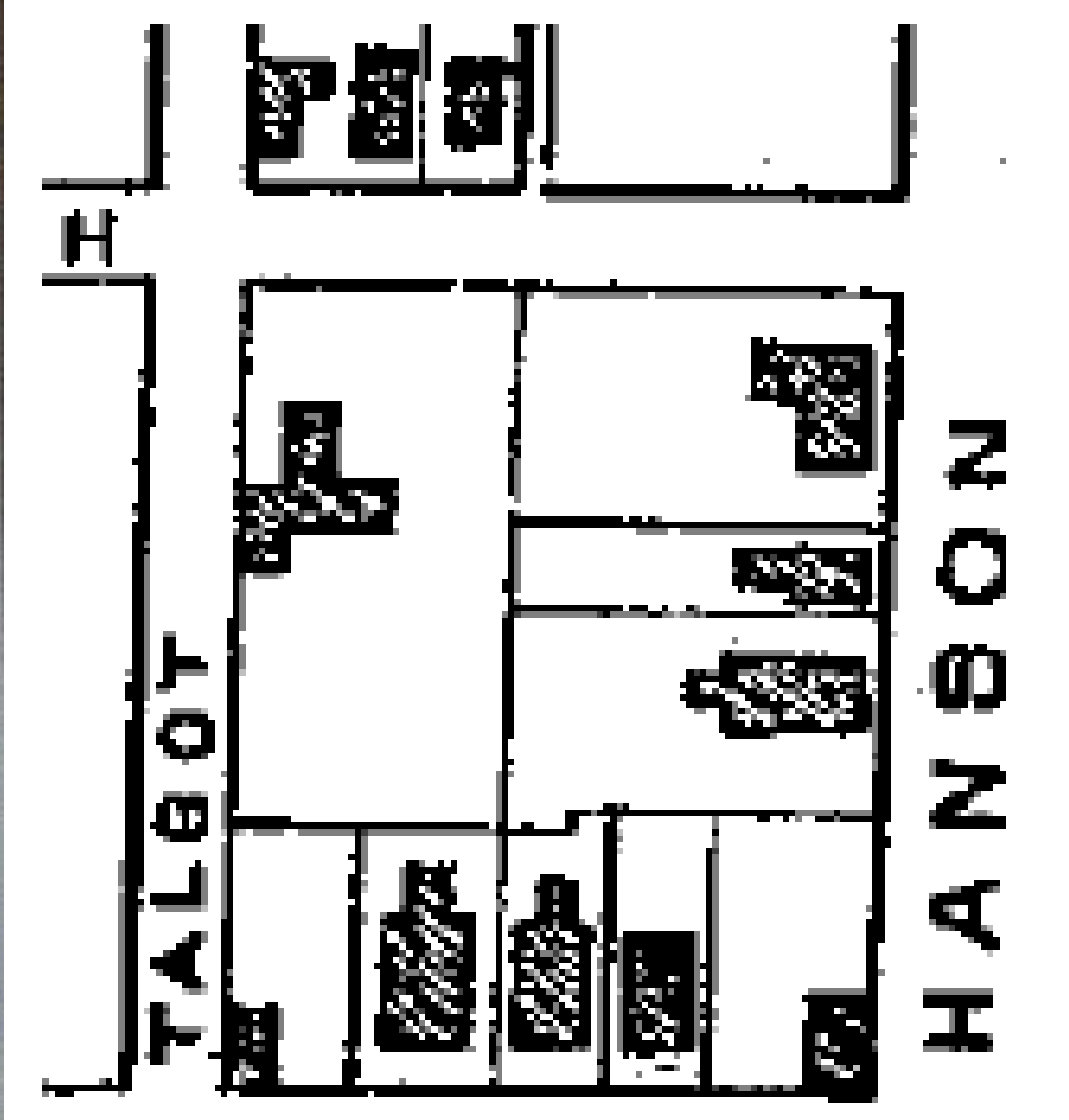


Manumission Paper for Sarah Bowman

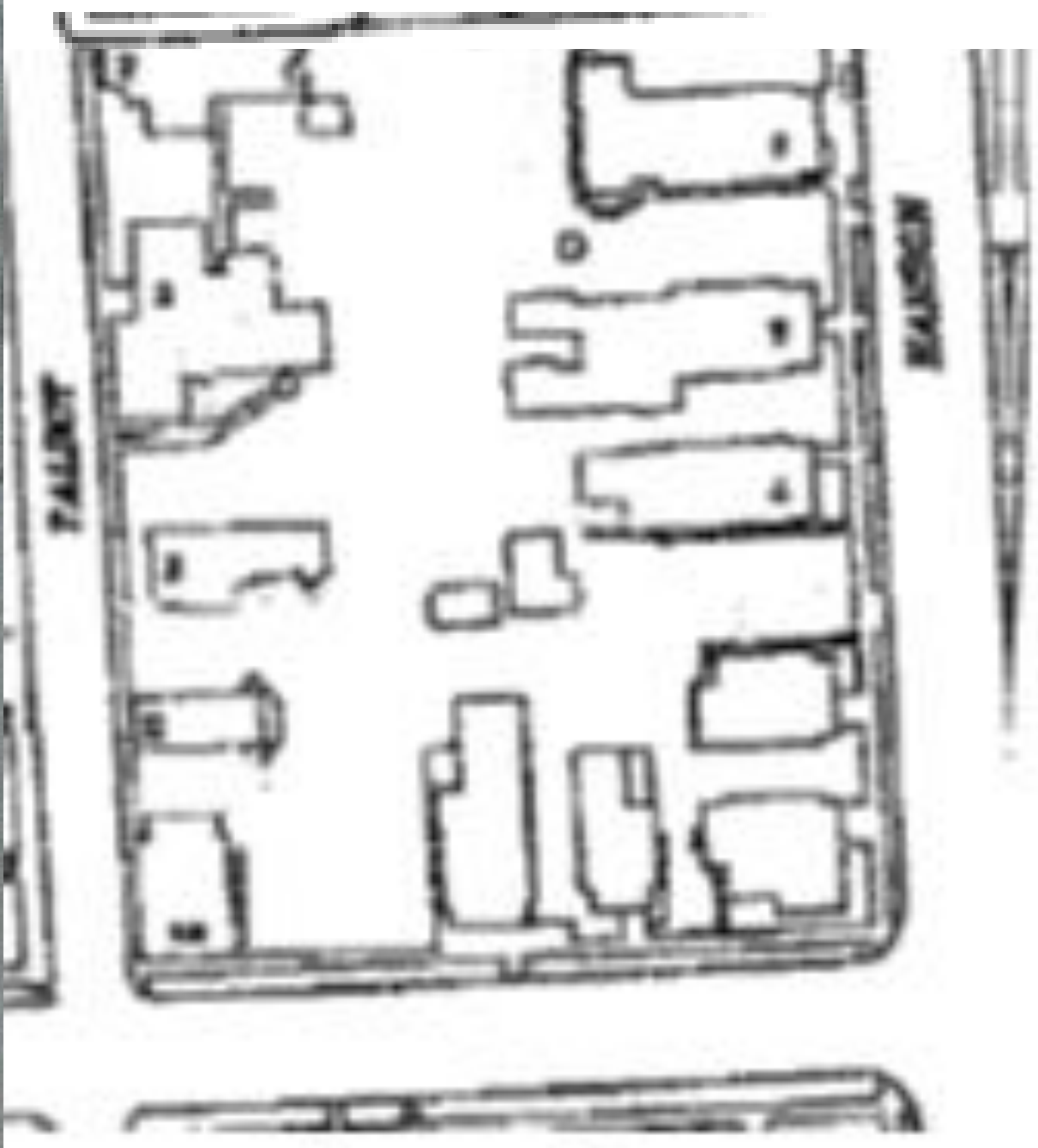
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4	Brittington	Abram	0	0	0	4	0
5	Brooks	Grace	0	0	0	3	0
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8	Bridge	Harry	0	0	0	5	0
9	Brown	Thomas	0	0	0	4	0
10	Brown	Dark	0	0	0	7	0
11	Bell	Lucy	0	0	0	6	0
12	Bull	Adam	0	0	1	4	0
13	Clash	Jonathan	0	0	1	3	0
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34	Kimbro	Edward	0	0	0	1	0
35	Lowe	Peter	0	0	0	1	0
36	Priss	Negroe	0	0	0	1	0
37	Mullican	Adam	0	0	0	8	0
38	McKey	Thomas	0	0	0	5	0
39	Hercules	Negroe	0	0	0	5	0
40	Bett	Negroe	0	0	0	5	0
41	Peg	Negroe	0	0	0	5	0
42	Noah	Negroe	0	0	0	4	0
43	Henney	Negroe	0	0	0	2	0
44	Sidney	Negroe	0	0	0	2	0
45	Rose	Negroe	0	0	0	1	1
46	Phillis	Negroe	0	0	0	4	0
47	Hannah	Negroe	0	0	0	6	0
48	Dick	Negroe	0	0	0	6	0
49	Isaac	Negroe	0	0	0	9	0
50	Caesar	Negroe	0	0	0	5	0
51	Robin	Negroe	0	0	0	3	0
52	Lucy	Negroe	0	0	0	5	0
53	George	Negroe	0	0	0	3	0
54	Anthony	Negroe	0	0	0	3	0
55	Macky	Dick Negroe	0	0	0	1	4
56	Sinah	Negroe	0	0	0	6	0
57	Ben	Negroe	0	0	0	7	0
58	Tom	Negroe	0	0	0	5	0
59	Maria	Negroe	0	0	0	4	1
60	Alice	Negroe	0	0	0	1	0
61	Anthony	Negroe	0	0	0	2	0
62	Hannah	Negroe	0	0	0	4	0
63	Mable	Negroe	0	0	0	3	0
64	Pone (Poney)	Judah	0	0	0	2	0
65	Proctor	Daniel	0	0	0	2	0
66	Ridgeway	Ben	0	0	0	4	0
67	Slow	Mathew	0	0	0	8	0
68	Smith	Moses	0	0	0	7	0
69	Tusles	Racheel	0	0	0	2	1
70	Tomlinson	William	0	0	0	5	0
71	Walters	William	0	0	0	7	0
			1	0	9	306	9
			0.31%	0.00%	2.77%	94.15%	2.77%



1790



1877



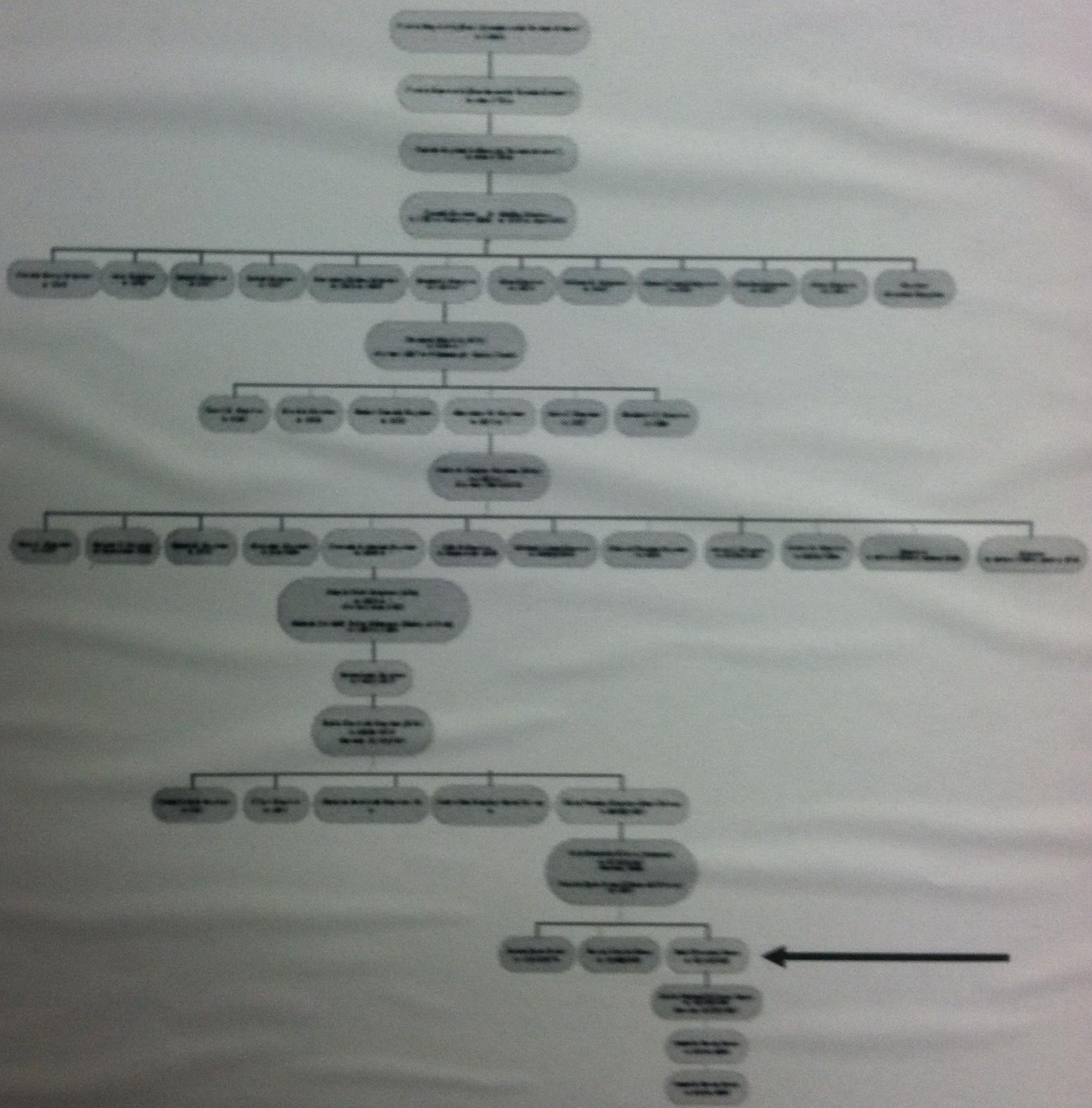
Present Day



James Freeman

FREE AFRICAN AMERICAN
FIRST OWNER OF LOT NO. 31
HANSON STREET
1788

JAMES AND HENNY FREEMAN
CHILDREN
JAMES, JACOB, GARRISON, DANIEL,
THOMAS, RACHEL, HANNAH AND
ANNE.





Archaeologists dig 'The Hill'



University of Maryland doctoral student Ben Gochini, center in red, gives a tour during one of the last days of working on the South Street site of 'The Hill' dig in Easton. See online video at www.studon.com.

BATES — On an unassuming street corner in the southeast part of Easton, a team of archaeologists descended for a two-week-long bit of digging, sifting, measuring and photographing.

They were hot on the trail of the oldest free African-American neighborhood in the United States, the birthplace of African-American Methodism on the Eastern Shore and a really neat house where a Buffalo Soldier may have lived or at least visited.

"The Hill" is an African-American neighborhood bordered by East Dover, South, Harrison and Talbot streets and Easton's Hills to Trade — has been a community within the town for at least 200 years, and scholars believe longer.

"We're hoping that it's one of the oldest, if not the oldest, African-American settlement in the country for free African-Americans," Morgan State graduate student Brittany Haskins said.

"We have some documents that suggest 'The Hill' neighborhood in Easton dates to the late 1700s, which is amazing, obviously, for that time, for free African-Americans to have their own neighborhood — say before the abolition of slavery — is a great feat," she said. "Currently, that title is given to Terre in Louisiana."

Terre is a neighborhood just off the French Quarter in New Orleans that is celebrating the 200th anniversary of its association to the city this year. Establishments of a neighborhood would have begun sometime after the annexation date. The site has become more popular with the creation of the HBO series "True Blood."

Scholars believe "The Hill" could prove to be earlier than Terre.

About a dozen archaeologists, undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Maryland and Morgan State University, staked out three roughly 10-foot-square areas to explore during the excavation.

They carefully probed back the layers of dirt, uncovering different materials indicating earlier activities — an alley where children played, a vegetable or rose garden and perhaps a trash pit.

The house, which is abandoned and owned by the Housing Authority of the Town of Easton, in the Elias Skinner Groves Dobson home, which has connections to one of the original Buffalo Soldiers.

Skinner was born in the 1840s on a farm where Anasida Shores off St. Michaels Road is now. She worked and lived as a domestic servant in the home of Dr. J.E.M. Caswell, the Bullitt House on Dover Street.

She began living at the site of the dig, 325 South St., around the time she married John Groves in 1878. Groves was a "hoop" carrier by trade, a very specialized, odd-sounding vocation that involved carrying hoops for masonry.

The year before Skinner and Groves were married, Talbot County's nation's first African-American writer and orator Frederick Douglass shared up in town. He dedicated the Asbury United Methodist Church and Bethel A.M.E. Church, both within the confines of the "The Hill." The polders where he stood in each respective church are still there, and revered by church members.

"He could have known families or been related to those who lived here," said Historic Easton Inc. Treasurer Pats Gales.

The fact of two African-American Methodist Churches situated so close together support some of the age theories about "The Hill." It was 1787 when the first free African-Americans broke from the white Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia to form their own church.

Records show the Rev. Simnach Bassett arrived in Easton in 1816 to start a new African-American Episcopal Church, and a "Bethel Society" existed in "The Hill" prior to 1821.

"Obviously, you would have to have enough people here to start a church," Morris said, noting it takes several years to develop a churchgoing population.

Because of these early dates, Professor Dale Green of Morgan State University believes Easton is the birthplace of African-American Methodism on the Eastern Shore.

At the site of the dig, 128 years ago, "hoop" carrier John Groves could have looked out his back window and seen the spire of the Asbury Church.

"It is very likely that he could



A military button found in the dig dates from roughly Civil War times to 1800, and could have popped off the coat of a Buffalo Soldier. The archaeological team says it needs more investigation before conclusions can be drawn.



Local volunteer Leita Redondo of the University of Edinburgh sifts through dirt for artifacts at the "The Hill" dig on South Street.



Detail of a 1890 map brought to the site from the Historical Society of Talbot County by professional genealogist Catherine K. Wilson shows "The Hill" clearly marked along with "colored church" or Bethel at bottom center left.



much of the mortar that was used to build Asbury and Bethel Churches," Morris said.

When Groves died, his widow married William Dobson, whose spouse was Sgt. William Gardner, U.S. Army, Troop E, a Buffalo Soldier. Gardner was a veteran of the Spanish American War, and fought beside Teddy Roosevelt's "Rough Riders" in the Battle of San Juan Hill.

Today's close-knit community of "The Hill" was front and center for the two weeks of the dig, coming out to watch, ask questions and reminisce.

Graduate student Brittany Haskins was digging in a front yard pit.

"We've had a lot of people come by and say, 'Oh I used to play here right here,' and were enough, just moments after, they said that we found another two dozen markers right here in the alleyway," she said.

Other artifacts included pottery from the 1800s, an old brass arrowhead, broken ceramic shards, bits of glass, bits of wood and a military button.

The button is a U.S. Army button from the 1800s, with stars and a shield with an eagle. It could have come from the coat of a Buffalo Soldier.

"It's always exciting when you find an artifact that you can sort of tie in with the historical record," said Kate Decker, a University of Maryland doctoral student. "But it's still very early in the analysis process. We still have a lot more to learn about this button."

This first dig on "The Hill" will help establish the extent and quality of archaeological remains, but the scholars aren't finished yet. They hope to do another dig on "The Hill" next summer.

Conclusions drawn from the dig will emerge after the archaeologists analyze the artifacts and data back in the University of Maryland College Park Department of Anthropology laboratory.

A report will be produced that will be available to everyone online, with maps and photographs. Artifacts belong to the property owner.

University of Maryland professor Dr. Mark Morris said it's 100 years of working with African-Americans, the dig was the most successful community-oriented excavation he had ever seen, with people bringing scrapbooks, pictures and coming to watch with lots of questions.

"Historical archaeology basically studies African-American culture without African-Americans," he said.

"We have two African-American students — a graduate student and a local volunteer. The African-American community comes and wants to talk to them. Why are you doing this, what are you getting out of it, how can you help us? That's a conversation that's very rare in the United States today. That conversation happened right here in Easton on 'The Hill.'"

This summer's dig is "The Hill" was the brainchild of Historic Easton Inc. and Morgan State University, with collaboration from the University of Maryland at College Park, students from Archaeology in Annapolis, Frederick Douglass Honor Society, residents of "The Hill" neighborhood, Professor Dale Green and Dr. Mark Lewis.





HART
ZALES
RE KEP

Bethel
Unit 1
7/11/14
East Wall Profile

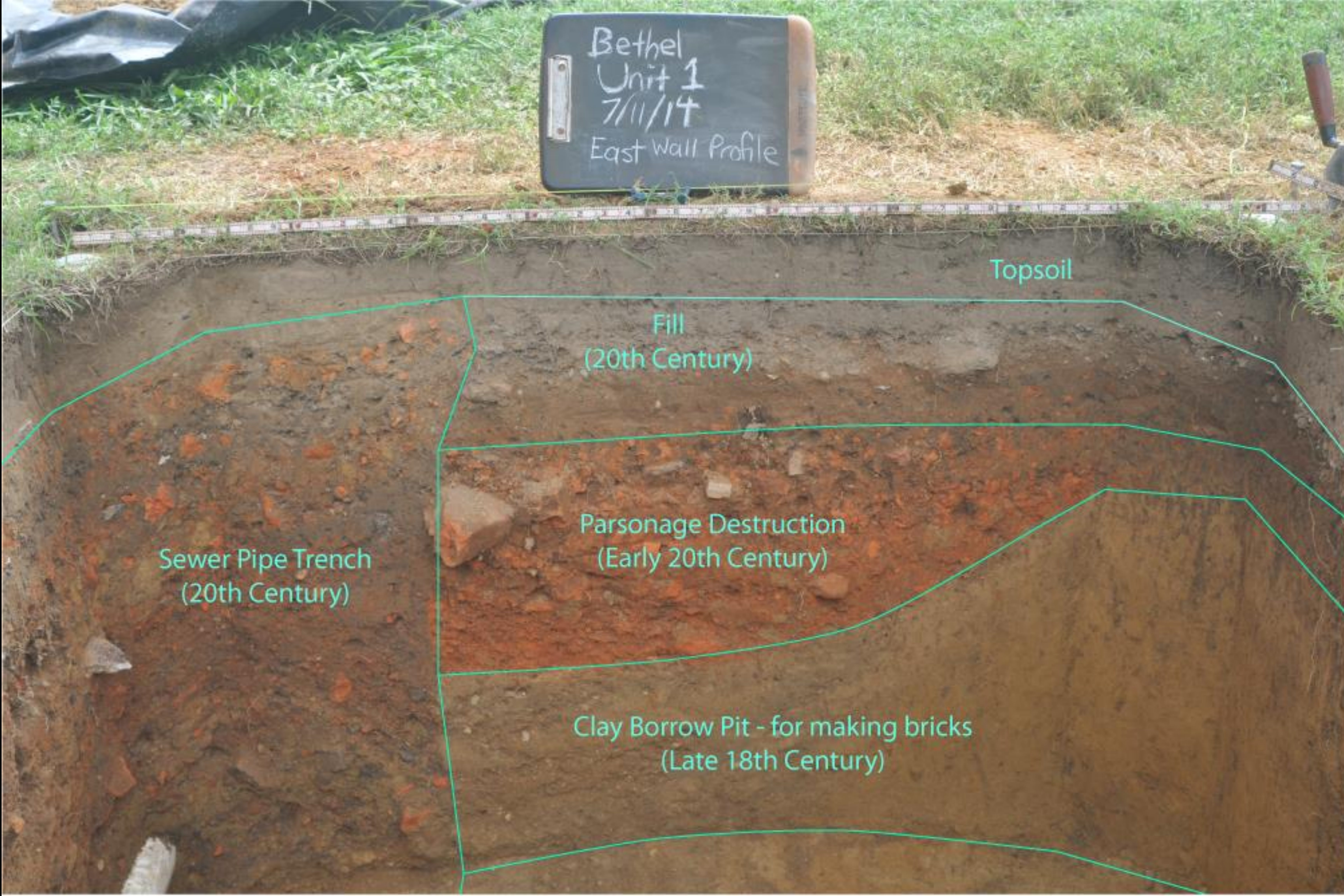
Topsoil

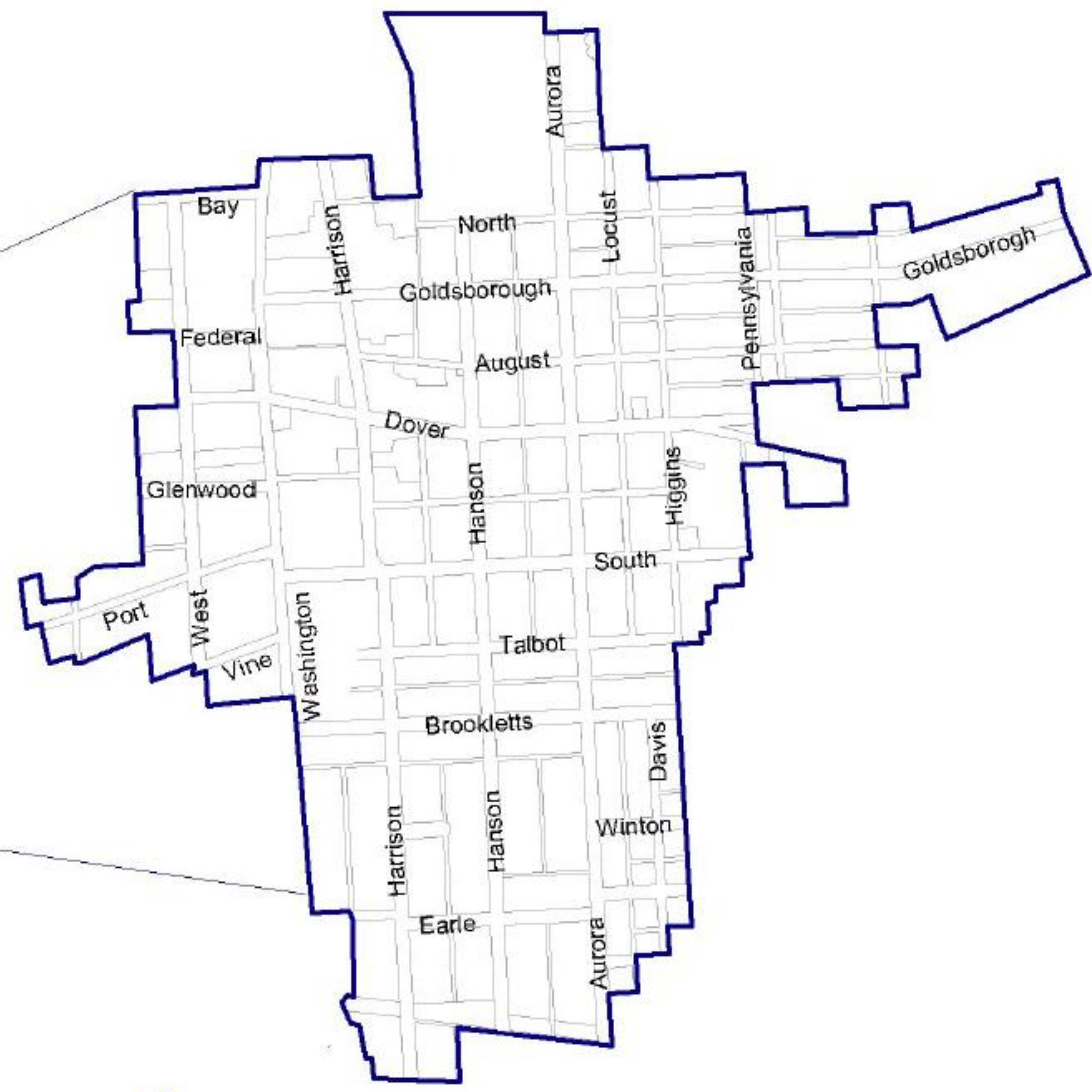
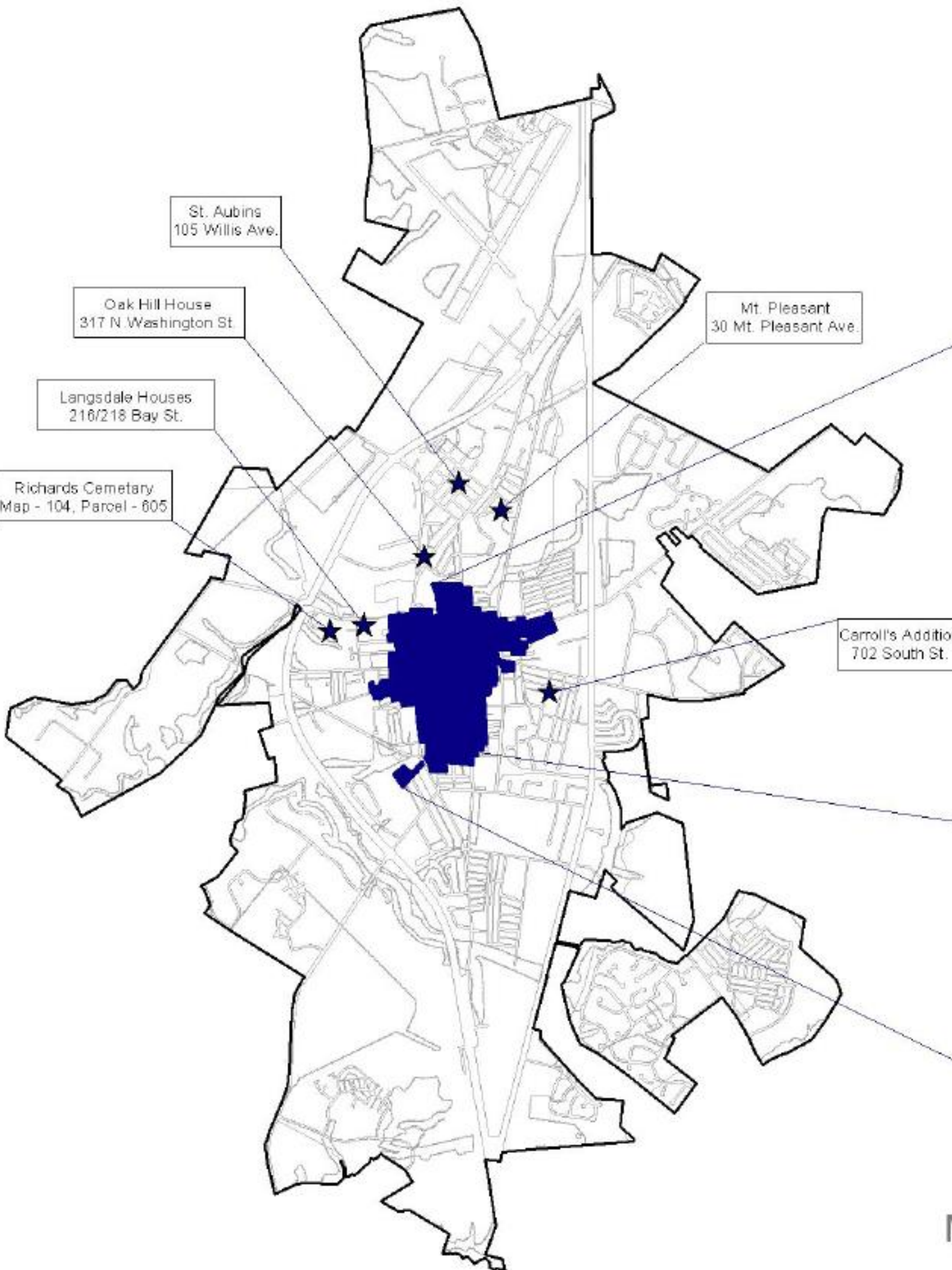
Fill
(20th Century)

Parsonage Destruction
(Early 20th Century)

Sewer Pipe Trench
(20th Century)

Clay Borrow Pit - for making bricks
(Late 18th Century)

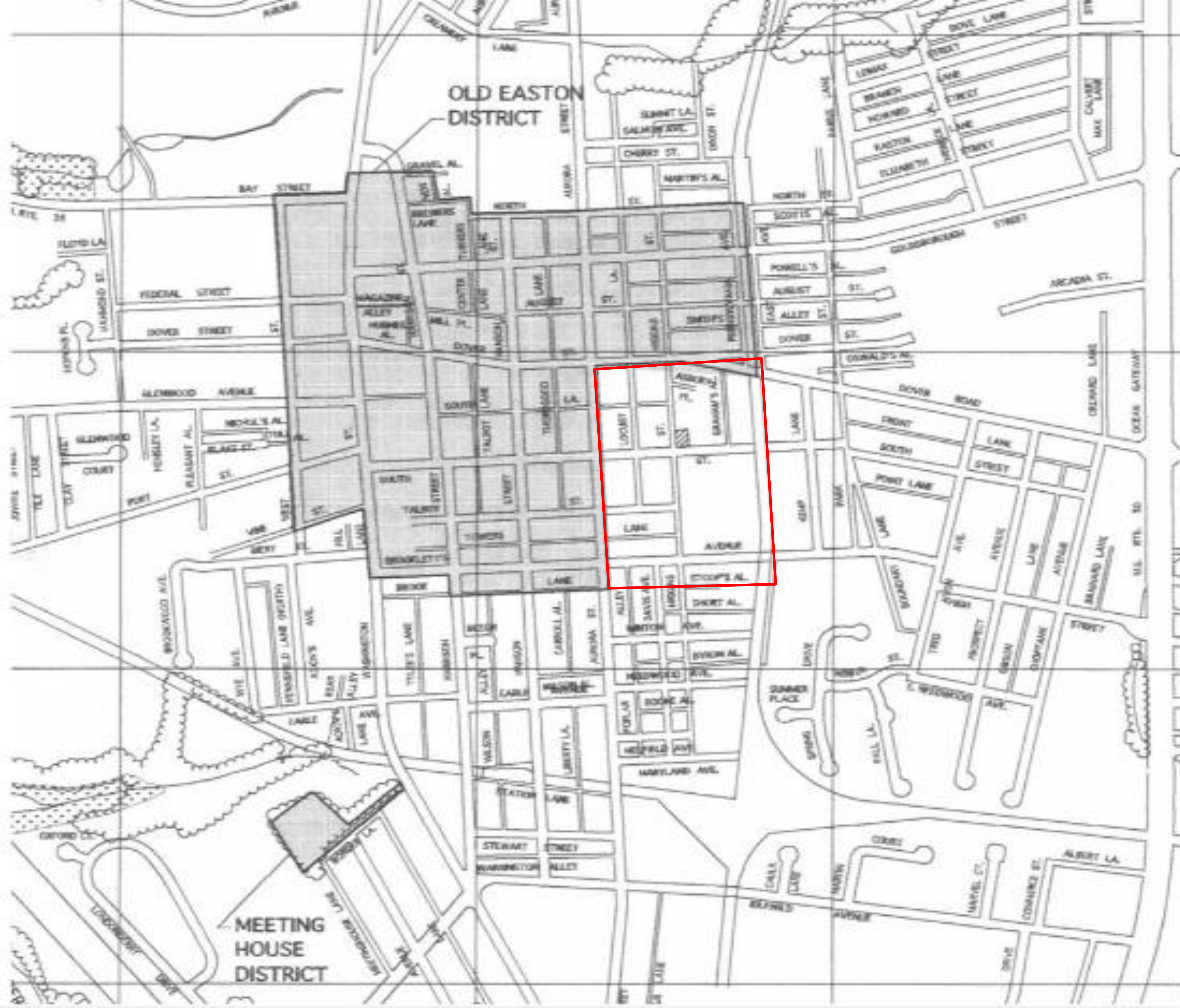




Meeting House District



**Town of Easton's
Historic Districts
Boundaries Map**



OLD EASTON DISTRICT

MEETING HOUSE DISTRICT

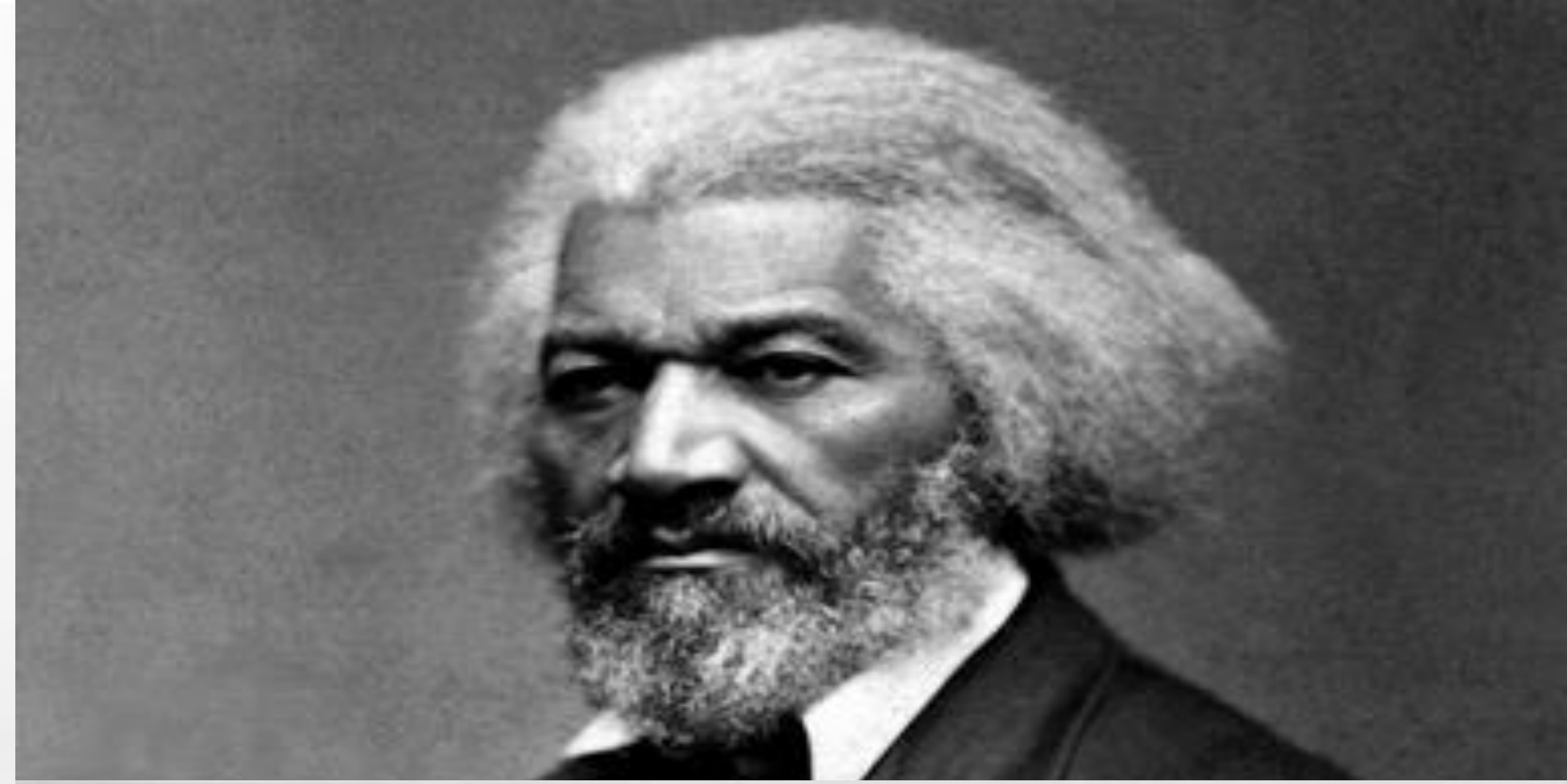


1) Talbot County
Womens Club (1793)

2) Tal South Anderson St
(1799)

3) (1810)













The Hill





HARTLEY
TEA & CO.





















ORANGEVILLE STREET 1900

LARGE TREE 1900

LARGE PARK 1900

ZONING DESIGNATION 1900

BUILDING FOOTPRINT 1900

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN 1900



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

2014 Sustainable Growth Challenge student competition

The Sustainable Growth Challenge, an annual collegiate competition hosted by the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission, engages students from across the state in planning and sustainability issues.

The competition enables teams to conduct community planning exercises, analyze economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable growth and develop creative community solutions. Projects must address one or more of Maryland's 12 Planning Visions.

2014 Challenge Winners

First Place

**Morgan State University Landscape
Architecture Program**

*"Rethinking Street Typology for Social
Equity, Environmental Stewardship and
Economic Revitalization: A design
intervention in the small-town historic
context of Easton"*





323 South St.



112 S Locust Ln.



308 South St.



34 S Locust Ln.



122 S Locust Ln.



36 S Aurora St.

125 S Locust Ln.

123 S Locust Ln.

13 S Locust Ln

116 South St.

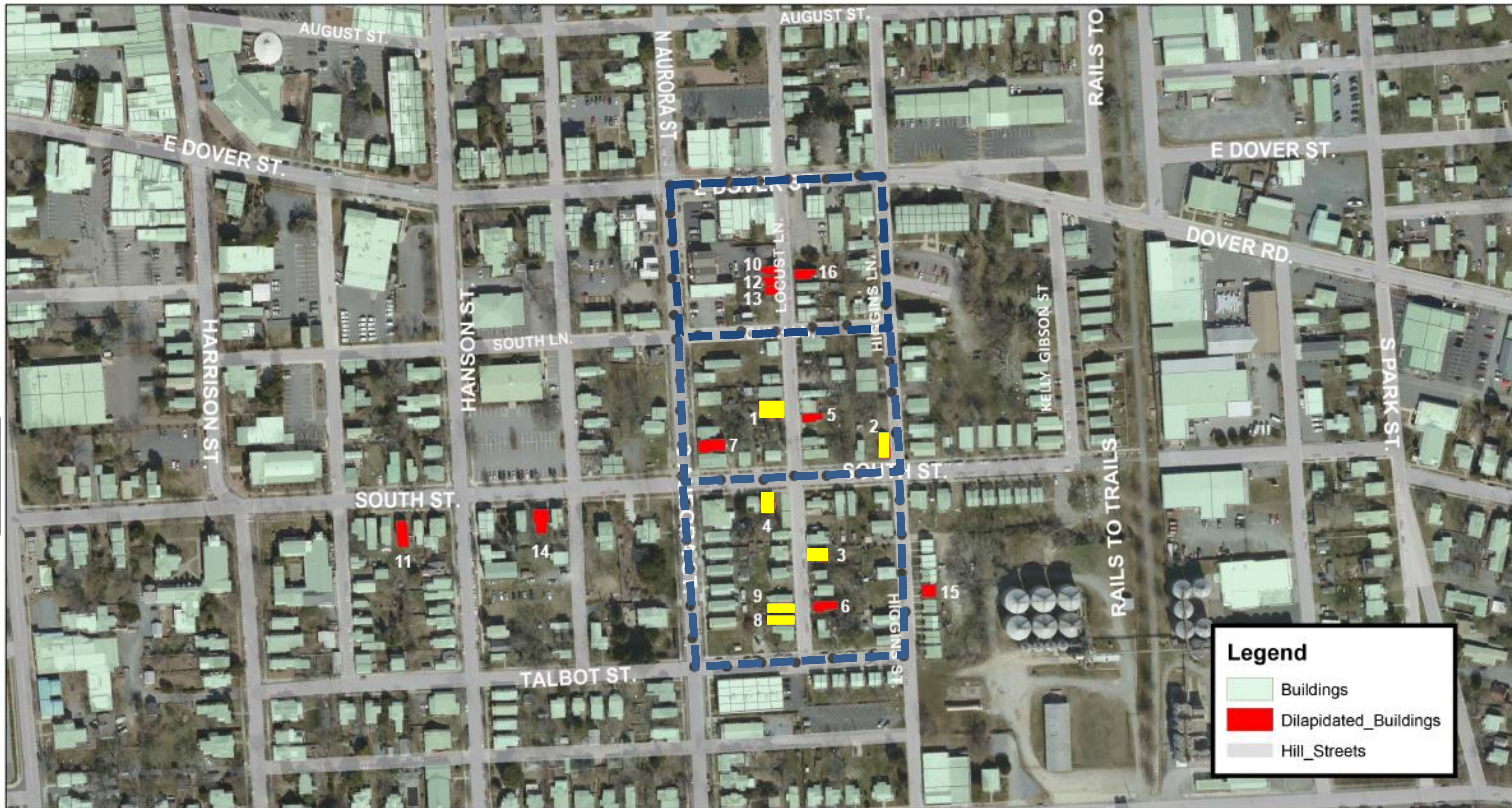
15 S Locust Ln

17 S Locust Ln

208 South St.

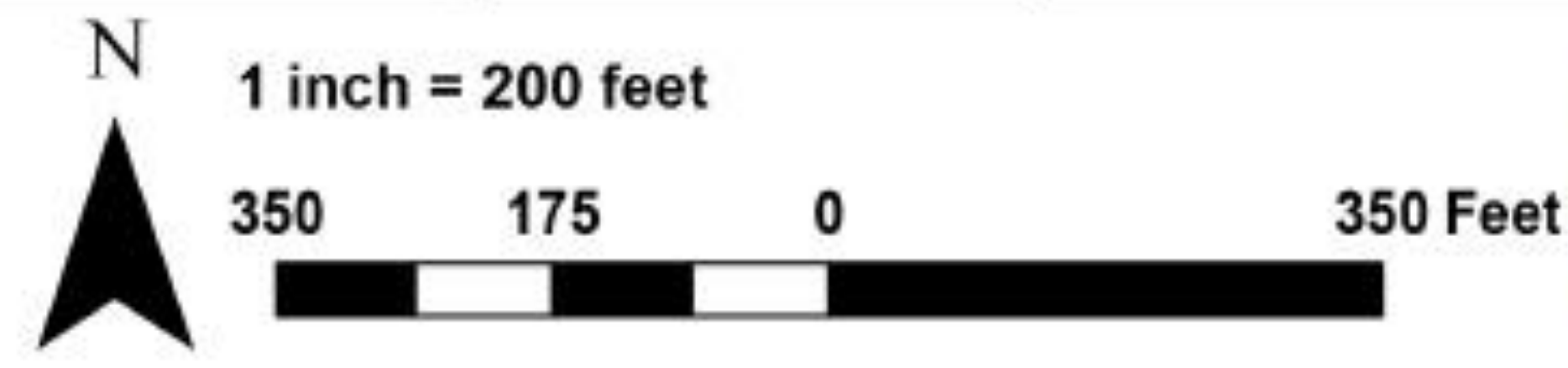
116 S Higgins St.

14 Locust Ln.



Legend

- Buildings
- Dilapidated_Buildings
- Hill_Streets



SMALL AREA PLAN FOR THE HILL, EASTON MD
DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS



31 S Locust Ln.



34 S Locust Ln.



323 South St.



308 South St.



122 S Locust Ln.



123 S Locust Ln.



125 S Locust Ln.



THE HILL SMALL AREA PLAN

HOUSING ON THE HILL

Town of Easton + Hodges Development

Affordable Homeownership
Environmentally Friendly
Historic Tax Credits



208-210 South Street | Developer: Gabrielle Koeppel
 Architect: Sulton Campbell Britt & Associates, P.C.





West Elevation (Existing)





West Elevation (Proposed)



Home Sweet Home

O's win relocated series in St. Petersburg

PAGE B1



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1799-2015



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EASTON, MARYLAND **5100**

MONDAY
MAY 4, 2015
VOL. 215 NO. 173

Hill renovation gets funding

By **CHRIS FOLK**
cfolk@stardem.com

STATE

Baltimore mayor lifts curfew

Six days after the death of Freddie Gray sparked riots in Baltimore, the city's mayor lifted a citywide curfew on Sunday morning, signaling an end to the extraordinary measures taken to ensure public safety.

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WEATHER



Sunny
High 82 Low 60
Mostly clear tonight

EASTON — What began as a series of archaeological digs and research to prove the age of the town's historic African-American free neighborhood has launched a master plan and a set of initiatives aimed at overcoming some of the blight and preserving structures there.

The Hill, an area in the south, south-east central part of town has been home to many local African-Americans for generations — since the early days of the United States.

The fact that those people were free and not enslaved is remarkable, according to scholars, who are working to prove the neighborhood's age. Right now the relative age of the Hill is believed to date prior to 1800.

Many citizens of the Hill grew up in the same homes their parents grew up in, their grandparents grew up in, and so on and so on. Many can trace their fami-



PHOTO BY CHRIS FOLK

Those working on the "Housing on the Hill" initiative include, from left: Morgan State University professor Dale Glenwood Green, Lisa Hodges of Hodges Development Inc., Easton Mayor Robert Wiley, homeowner Gabriella Koepfel, and Brach Roache, chief industry development officer at the Baltimore architectural firm Sutton Campbell Britt & Associates. Homeowners in the Hill neighborhood can earn a 20 percent historic tax credit on their revitalization projects because the neighborhood has been given designation in the National Register of Historic Places.

lies back for generations in the Hill.

A dig has taken place at various locations for several years.

In 2013 and 2014, teams of

students from Morgan State University talked to residents and accessed the community to see what would make the community more sustainable and preserve its

overall character, as well as create affordable housing.

The fruits of their labors have culminated in the creation of The Hill Small Area Plan, which is intended to

guide the Hill for at least 10 years.

From that small area plan another entity has risen: the Housing on the Hill initiative.

Scholars have identified 16 historic homes in the Hill, seven of which need serious revitalization.

Problems that they are addressing include a 69 percent rental tenure in the community, and houses that are blighted and the resulting threat to public safety.

Under the leadership of Easton Mayor Robert Wiley, a team of scholars, architects, preservationists and developers has launched a push to have those properties purchased by people looking for a home or private investors who can do the revitalization with the aid of historic tax credits.

Along those lines, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development in partnership

See **HILL**
Page A7



ASALH

ASSOCIATION *for the* STUDY of AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE *and* HISTORY



HALLOWED GROUNDS

SITES OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEMORY

LAND

For What and For Whom

Aleya Fraser
Eastern Shore Manager, Future Harvest CASA
aleya@futureharvestcasa.org

CURRENT SITUATION



CURRENTLY

- People of European descent account for 96 percent of the owners, 97 percent of the value, and 98 percent of the acres of land in the United States
- The majority of Americans, especially people of color are landless
- Conversations about land preservation are sterilized from the historical context that created a situation where we need to actively protect and preserve land
- Models of land management and agriculture have displaced people of color and small scale family farms and harmed the environment for centuries

WHO-WHAT-WHEN-WHERE-WHY

Who are we saving land for? Who has access to this land? Who has the resources?

What damaging models of land use are we still allowing on preserved/conserved lands?

When will we begin seriously adding diversity and equity to the conversation?

Where are we spending conservation and easement monies? Where do we prioritize land trusts?

Why are we conserving/preserving land? For what? For whom?

WHO

- We are not having a real conversation about land preservation until we are bringing land ownership, land use and colonialism to the conversation
- Land is power
- Landless people have no power over their environment and those with power do not often have communal or ecological harmony in mind.
- Conversation needs to shift to another “who”
- People who should have power

WHAT

-The plantation model of land use has not and will never be a viable model for ecological, environmental or social progression

-Land trusts should make it a priority to preserve land that is already in community use and will be shared and valued for generations to come. Ie community gardens, family farms, urban open spaces

WHEN

- As people reclaim public spaces for communal uses in urban and rural areas, land trusts need to be right there securing those spaces for future uses.
- As farm organizations, like FHCASA, train the next generation of farmers, land trusts should be right there making land more accessible to them through land linking programs.

WHY

- We have to interrogate land as it relates to power
- We have to interrogate power as it relates to the destruction of natural resources and loss of the commons and our current food system
- The future of our natural resources in this region depend on a redistribution of land and a shift in how we look at land use.
- We all agree that a 1000 acre grain operation is better than a mall, but 10, 100 acre family farms with integrated livestock and sustainable conservation practices are even better.

MOVING FORWARD

-Sustainability=Collaboration -Future Harvest CASA

-Land linking, farmer training, conservation practice education,organizational level collaboration

-Sustainability= Urban-Rural Alliances - Black Dirt Farm Collective

- Utilizing urban and rural spaces to grow food and creating systems that care for land and people