

## College Park (66-021)

“Old Town” College Park is a representative example of the many residential subdivisions that emerged as the suburbs of Washington, D.C. expanded with the advent of the streetcar and automobile at the end of the nineteenth century and in the early- to mid-twentieth century. Washington-based real estate developers John O. Johnson and Samuel Curriden submitted the original plat for “College Park” in 1889 on property historically associated with the Stier and Calvert families. In 1945, the City of College Park incorporated. Because of the suburb’s historic status, the “Old Town” neighborhood became the center of the newly formed municipality. The 125-acre community was laid out specifically to attract middle- and upper-middle-income residents, and persons associated with the nearby Maryland Agricultural College (now the University of Maryland) and, later, the College Park Airport. The development of the area, which began slowly, was spurred by the growth of neighboring suburbs, the university, and the transportation resources such as the Washington and Baltimore Turnpike, the streetcar, and Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) Railroad that traversed the community. The second such suburb planned near the college (the failed College Lawn was platted in 1872), Old Town was one of the first successful commuter suburbs located along the railroad and turnpike in Prince George’s County. The greatest period of residential development began in the 1920s and subsided with the end of World War II (1941-1945).<sup>1</sup>

The Old Town community is bordered by commercial establishments along Baltimore Avenue (U.S. Route 1) to the west and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad right-of-way to the east. The campus of the University of Maryland at College Park is located to the north and northwest, and the Calvert Hills neighborhood is to the south. The boundaries, excluding the businesses on Baltimore Avenue, roughly follow Columbia Avenue and the B&O Railroad, Norwich Road and the University of Maryland campus, Yale Avenue, and Calvert Road.<sup>2</sup>

Forty-foot-wide streets that run perpendicular to the rectangular blocks, delineate the community. The grid plan, as laid out by developers Johnson and Curriden in 1889, provided thirty-nine blocks, each divided into sixteen narrow rectangular building lots. The standard lot size was fifty feet by two hundred feet with a limited number of irregular-shaped or -sized parcels. The original plat established College Avenue, running east to west, as the primary corridor. Accordingly, the building lots along this broader avenue were oriented to face north or south, rather than the east or west orientation of the narrower streets.<sup>3</sup> Both the 1861 Martenet Map and the 1878 Hopkins Map documents that the homes of Ella Calvert Campbell and Charles B. Calvert were the only improvements in the Old Town area.<sup>4</sup> Subsequent development of the blocks, and the establishment of Calvert Hills to the south, forced a re-subdivision of several building lots to face Calvert Road and the newly introduced north/south streets, such as Dickinson Avenue and Girard Street. Commercial development then moved from College Avenue to the highly traveled Baltimore Avenue, with the former becoming residential.<sup>5</sup>

Developed gradually, Old Town College Park retains much of its original grid plan as platted by Johnson and Curriden in 1889. Residential buildings make up most of the neighborhood. Building types include single-family dwellings, multiple-family dwellings, educational housing (fraternities and sororities), religious, governmental, and social buildings. The above-ground resources date from the 1890s to the last

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<sup>1</sup> E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., “Old Town College Park Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (July 2003, revised April 2006), 8:43.

<sup>2</sup> E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., “Old Town College Park,” 10:67.

<sup>3</sup> E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., “Old Town College Park,” 7:1.

<sup>4</sup> Simon J. Martenet, “Atlas of Prince George’s County, Maryland, 1861, Adapted from Martenet’s Map of Prince George’s County, Maryland” (Baltimore: Simon J. Martenet C.E., 1861) and G.M. Hopkins, “Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, Including the County of Prince George Maryland” (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, C.E., 1878).

<sup>5</sup> E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., “Old Town College Park,” 7:1.

decade of the twentieth century, with a single resource erected prior to the 1889 platting of the neighborhood. The buildings of College Park are generally set back from the tree-lined streets on lots of varying widths. Many of the residential properties have driveways to the side of the primary resources, several with freestanding garages at the rear. Buildings constructed in Old Town College Park reflect the periods in which they were erected, illustrating fashionable styles, forms, and materials. The variety of architectural styles included Queen Anne and Colonial Revival as well as later designs and forms such as the American Foursquare, Cape Cod, Bungalow, and Craftsman.

There are five designated Historic Sites in Old Town:

- PG: 66-021-08, Cory House, 4710 College Avenue
- PG: 66-021-09, College Park Woman's Club, 4711 Knox Road
- PG: 66-021-10, McDonnell House, 7400 Dartmouth Avenue
- PG: 66-021-30, Taliaferro House, 7406 Columbia Avenue
- PG: 66-021-31, Holbrook House, 4618 College Avenue

Old Town College Park contains one Historic Resource:

- PG: 66-021-11, Harrison Store/Trolley Stop Sweet Shop, 4622 College Avenue

## **Prince George's County Historic District**

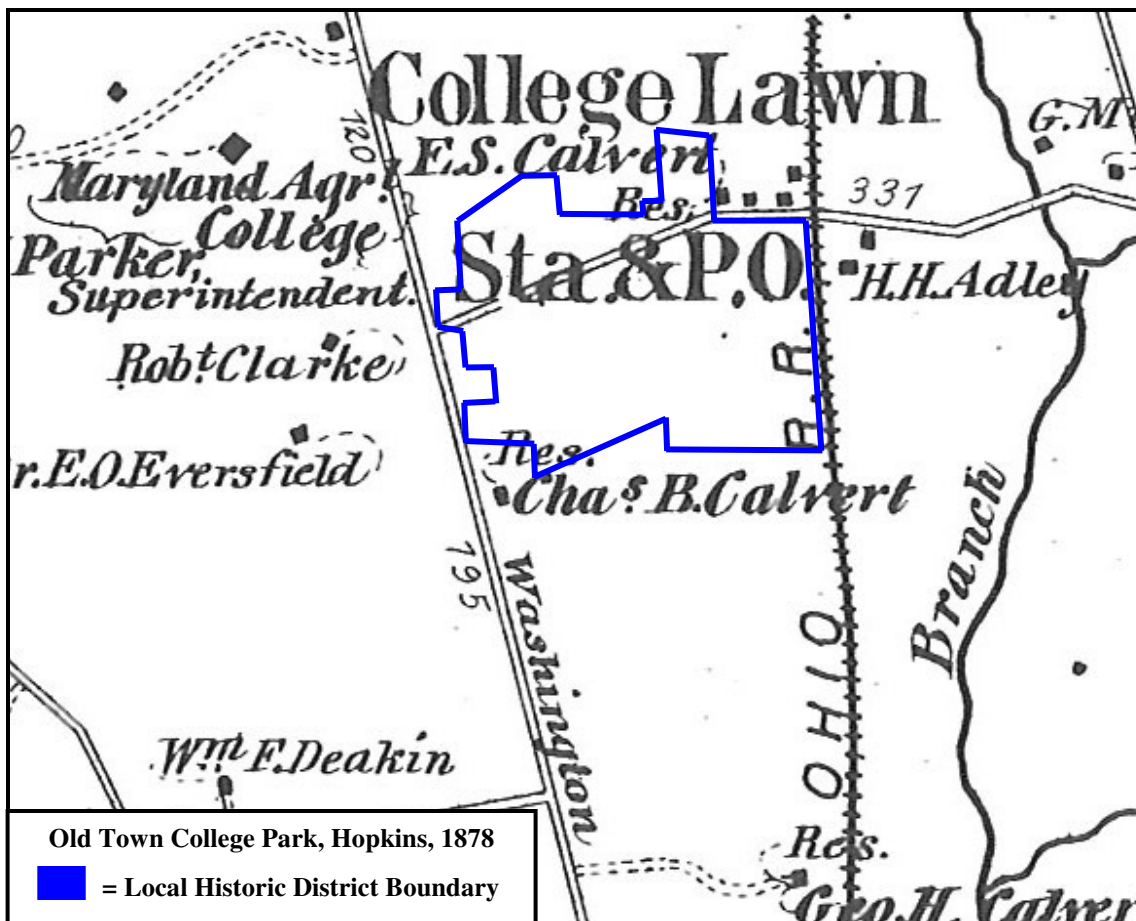
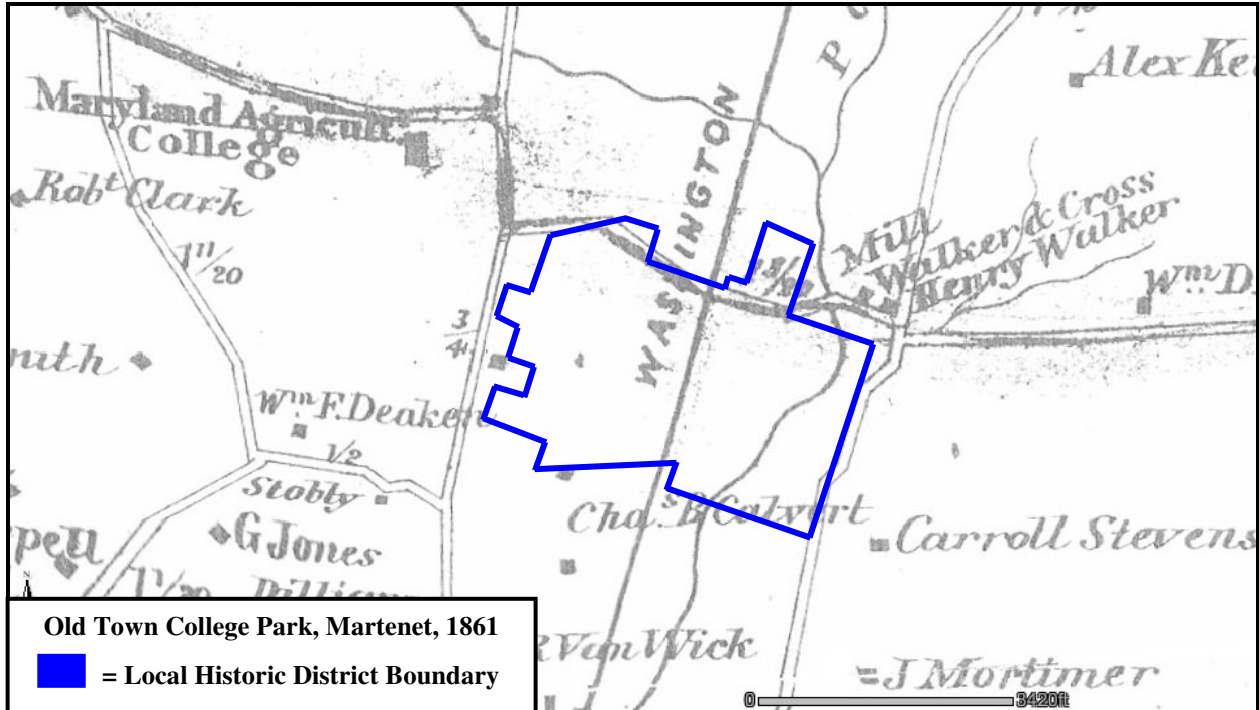
Old Town College Park was designated as a Prince George's County historic district in June 2006. Old Town College Park meets this designation as a Historic District under Section 29-104 of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Ordinance and the Historic Preservation Commission's Adopted Policies and Procedures (#1-87) for criteria (A)(1)(iv), (A)(2)(i), and (A)(2)(iv). Further, Old Town College Park meets National Register Criteria A and C, and is significant under the themes of architecture and community planning/development. The period of significance for Old Town College Park extends from 1889 to 1950. The University of Maryland has made a distinct contribution to the historic context of the neighborhood. This second period of significance for the university-related properties extends from 1935 to 1965. Old Town College Park consists of 215 properties, made up of 295 primary and secondary resources. A total of 211 of the resources are contributing to the historic context of the district, while 84 are non-contributing. There are 215 primary resources and 80 secondary resources, including garages, carriage houses, and sheds.

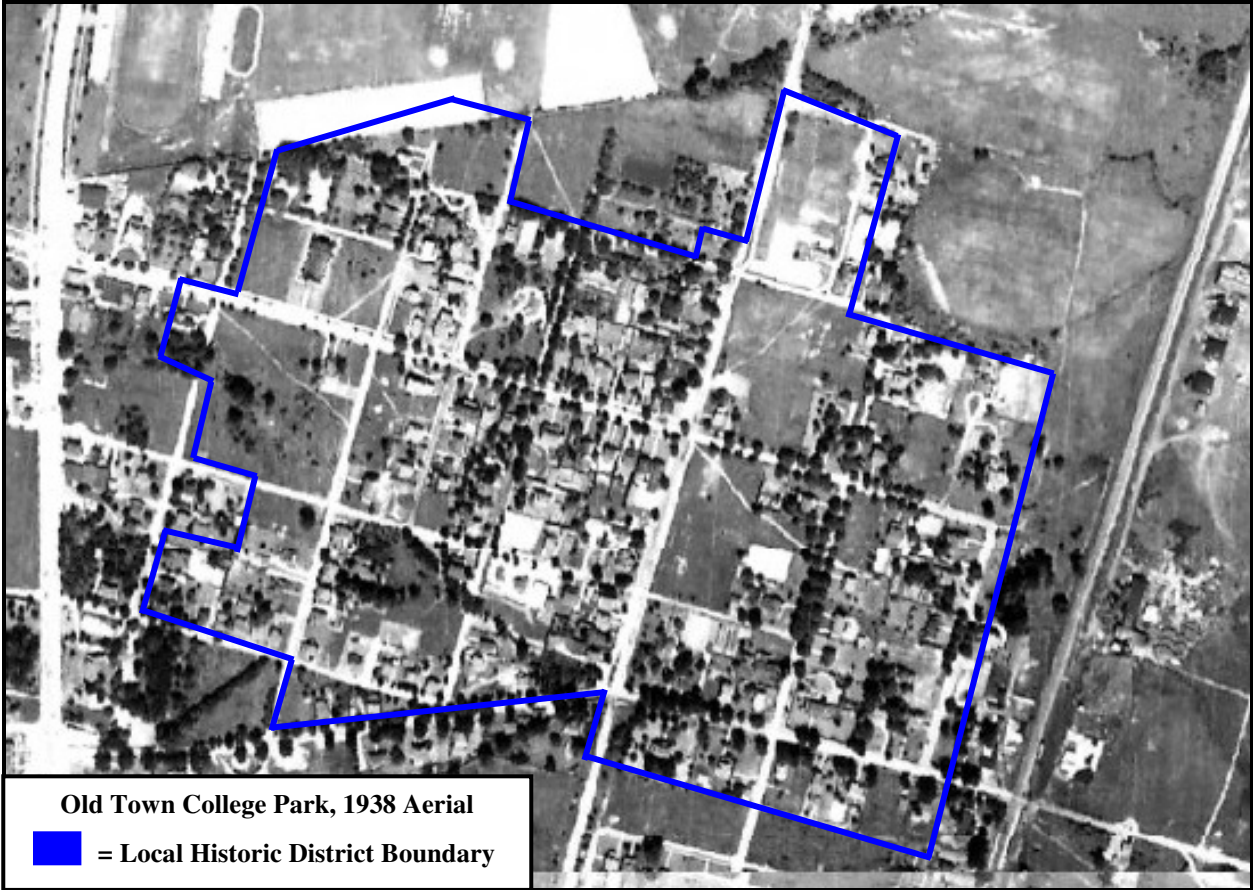
## **Windshield Survey**

A windshield survey of Old Town College Park was conducted in July 2007. There have been no visible changes since the designation of Old Town College Park as a Prince George's County historic district in June 2006. The boundaries of the district have not been compromised and both the district as a whole and the boundaries retain their integrity.

Prepared by EHT Tracerics, Inc.  
November 2007









Looking northeast, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (PG: 66-021-36), 4512 College Avenue  
(EHT Traceries, 2007)



Looking northwest, Holbrook House (PG: 66-021-31), 4618 - 4620 College Avenue (*EHT Traceries, 2007*)







Southwest corner, 7402 Princeton Avenue, Alpha Phi House (*EHT Traceries*, 2007)



Looking southwest, 7308-7310 Hopkins Avenue (*EHT Traceries*, 2007)



Looking north, 7400 Hopkins Avenue (*EHT Traceries*, 2007)



Looking northeast, 7401 Princeton Avenue, Theta Chi House (*EHT Traceries*, 2007)



Looking northeast, Harrison Store/Trolley Stop Sweet Shop (PG: 66-021-11), 4622 College Avenue and 7501 Rhode Island Avenue (*EHT Traceries*, 2007)