

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

1. Name of Property

historic

other 315 Great Falls Road

2. Location

street and number 315 Great Falls Road __ not for publication

city, town Rockville __ vicinity

county Montgomery

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

name Michael Henry and Cynthia Fischer-Henry

street and number 315 Great Falls Road telephone

city, town Rockville state MD zip code 20850

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery Co. liber 20786 folio 278

city, town Rockville tax map GR22 tax parcel P523 tax ID number 00158270

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 <input type="checkbox"/> district <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) <input type="checkbox"/> structure <input type="checkbox"/> site <input type="checkbox"/> object	Ownership <input type="checkbox"/> public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private <input type="checkbox"/> both	Current Function <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade <input type="checkbox"/> defense <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic <input type="checkbox"/> education <input type="checkbox"/> funerary <input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> health care <input type="checkbox"/> industry <input type="checkbox"/> landscape <input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture <input type="checkbox"/> religion <input type="checkbox"/> social <input type="checkbox"/> transportation <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> unknown <input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	Resource Count <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Contributing</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Noncontributing</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Total</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____</p>	Contributing	Noncontributing	1	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	1	_____	_____	_____	Total	
Contributing	Noncontributing																
1	_____																
_____	_____																
_____	_____																
1	_____																
_____	_____																
Total																	

7. Description

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Summary

The house at 315 Great Falls Road is a 1½ story cottage built in the Colonial Revival style. The house faces east toward the street with a side gable roof and twin dormers. It features wide weatherboard siding, 6/6 sash windows, and an array of interesting interior finishes and details such as its open interior plan, added basement, and shutters and doors with tree-shaped cutouts.



East (primary) and south facades

Description

The house at 315 Great Falls Road in Rockville faces east toward a fairly busy thoroughfare that runs from the southwest into the City of

Rockville. Its exact date of construction is unknown, but sources and a physical inspection indicate that it was erected on the site of a former agricultural building around 1927. The house encompasses 1,826 square feet of interior space and sits on a 19,103 square foot piece of property. This parcel was subdivided from the Bingham-Brewer House at 307 Great Falls Road (MHT Inventory No. M:26/9) in 1948. It is a relatively flat piece of land with a wide expanse of lawn separating the house from the road. A tall row of arbor vitae lines the paved driveway, along the southern edge of the parcel. Two mature black walnut trees grace the property, one off the northeast corner of the house and one to the immediate west of the house. A stone patio/deck was added to the rear of the house in recent years. The patio extends out to and partially surrounds the black walnut tree in the back yard.



West (rear) façade with large black walnut tree

The diminutive house stands 1½ stories tall and presents a symmetrical Colonial Revival-style primary façade. The side gable roof extends into an integral shed roof to the rear and is covered with composition shingles. The house rests on a poured concrete and concrete block foundation, which supplements an earlier rubble stone foundation, still visible in the basement. Wide modern clapboard siding sheaths the frame construction. Primary windows in the house are 6/6 wood sashes within undecorated wood frames. Each of the two gable roofed dormers on the main facade contains paired six-pane casement windows. Paired windows on the north and south sides illuminate

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the second floor. On the north side, the windows are split around the exterior brick chimney. Just below the gable roof, semicircular louvered vents provide air circulation to the attic. On the north wall, as with the windows, the vent is split in two by the presence of the central chimney.

One-story projections flank either side of the main building and an added rear shed dormer has increased the interior space on the second floor. The southern ell is an enclosed side porch, which rests on a brick foundation. Cloth awnings shade its extensive fenestration and an open wood balustrade surrounds the flat roof. Double French doors with eight lights each open to the south. This doorway is flanked by large 8/8 sash windows. In the east and west walls, large multi-pane fixed windows allow a considerable amount of light to enter the porch.



South façade showing southwest corner of porch



Interior door details: Left - one of pair of doors leading from living room to north addition. Right - Front door (note decorative post and beam to left of door)



The northern addition, also one story in height, is not historic. It appears to date from the 1970s and features a rustic, open frame wood interior built around the exposed brick chimney, which was encompassed by the addition. Because all the siding on the house is identical, it seems likely that it was added after construction of this addition. An interesting decorative feature on the house at 315 Great Falls Road is the shutter design, which incorporates a tree-shaped cutout in each of the two-panel wood shutters. This motif is repeated inside the house, where it appears on two plywood doors that lead into the north addition.

The main entrance to the house is through a central Dutch door covered with a modern single light storm door. The Dutch door is constructed of vertical boards with horizontal and diagonal wood bracing and features elaborate metal strap hinges. The front stoop is brick and is accessed via a curving concrete walk leading up from the driveway. It is covered by a gable roof supported by square wood posts.

Inside, the main floor is fairly open with a large living area with a brick fireplace and mantel along the north wall. The dominant features in the room are the exposed wood posts and beams that run up the east and west walls and span the width of the room. These exposed members are not structural, but add a rustic character to the space. The living room steps down to a small dining area to the west with a galley

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kitchen located in the northwest corner of the building. In the north addition, narrow concrete steps lead down to the basement. These steps would have originally opened to the exterior of the building before this addition was put on. The basement allows a glimpse of the oldest part of this building, the foundation. The perimeter rubble fieldstone foundation lies under the main room of the house only and does not extend to the dining room area, kitchen, or either addition. This foundation dates to the 19th century and was likely built to support a barn, carriage house, or other larger outbuilding for the house at 307 Great Falls Road.

It is possible that a cellar existed in this building as barns sometimes incorporated root cellars for the storage of perishable foods and canned goods. This type of cellar, however, is more often associated with dwellings. It is more likely that the basement was excavated within the existing foundation when the outbuilding was demolished and the house constructed. The space was necessary for the installation of water and sewer pipes, the water heater, and other mechanical equipment. At this time, the original stone foundation was supplemented with poured concrete and concrete block. Only the north half of the basement was excavated and a concrete floor poured and concrete block half walls installed. The south half remains as a crawl space only, but is visible over the concrete block half wall that bisects this underground space.

8. Significance

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

Significance dates	Architect
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Specific dates	c. 1927	Builder
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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 reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Significance

The house is associated through ownership and construction with the National Register-listed house at 307 Great Falls Road, alternately known as the Bingham-Brewer House, the Brewer House, or the Casey House. Several families with important ties to Rockville owned this property, including the Bingham, Brewer, and McClenahans. These families made significant contributions to the economic, political, and religious development of Rockville. The foundation of this building would have served as the support for one of the property's outbuildings, such as a barn or carriage house. The house that stands on these foundations today is a good example of a common style and form of residential architecture in the United States during the first half of the 20th century.

Narrative History

Great Falls Road, known alternately as Falls Road or the Road to Cabin John, is an ancient travel route, in use prior to the settlement of Rockville. It was a road used by Indians such as the Sussquehannocks, Senecas, and Piscataways, who traveled extensively through Montgomery County prior to and immediately following European contact. Some of the earliest settled properties in the Rockville area lie along this road, including Rose Hill, the Bingham-Brewer House, and other historic farmsteads.

The house at 315 Great Falls Road has its earliest associations with the house at 307 Great Falls Road, known alternately as the Bingham-Brewer House, the Brewer House, or the Casey House. This property was first settled by early Rockville residents and entrepreneurs Julius A. and Charlotte Bingham. It is presumed the Bingham's built the house at 307 Great Falls Road in 1821, as a brick bearing Bingham's initials and the date 1821 was located in the chimney during renovations. Julius Bingham is significant as an early Rockville businessman and publisher. He began



Bingham-Brewer House, 307 Great Falls Road

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publishing *True American and Farmers Register*, the second newspaper printed in Rockville, in 1824. He was obviously wealthy as a house of these proportions and built of brick would have been expensive to construct at the time.

William and Elizabeth McClenahan were the next owners, during the period 1834-1840. Reverend McClenahan, an immigrant from Ireland, was instrumental in founding the Disciples of Christ Church in Rockville. Formally known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), this denomination is among the oldest indigenous religions in America. This Disciples of Christ has its foundations in a variety of sources, one of them with a direct link to Reverend McClenahan. The Church traces its history to the Restoration Movement in Scotland, Ireland, and America, which sought to reform the Presbyterian Church by returning it to its oldest roots. In Ireland, in particular, the Restoration Movement gained momentum. Reverend Alexander Carson broke from the Presbyterian Church to form the Tubbermore Baptist Church in the first decade of the 19th century.¹ Carson, essentially the founder of the Baptist faith in Ireland, was a prominent and well-published minister. His beliefs were similar to those of Thomas and Alexander Campbell, also from Ireland, who emigrated to the United States in 1807 and 1809, respectively.²

The father and son Campbells broke with the Presbyterians in 1809. They were briefly affiliated with the Baptists, as the reformers were in Ireland. In 1823, Alexander separated from the Baptist church in West Virginia and founded the Disciples of Christ Church. In 1832, the Disciples formed an alliance with the followers of Reverend Barton Stone, known as the Church of Christ or Christian Church.³

William McClenahan, also a native of Tubbermore, came to Rockville in around 1817⁴ and immediately began preaching Restorationist principles. While there is no direct evidence linking him to the teachings of Carson, even Alexander Campbell could not deny the connection between Carson and the Disciples of Christ, stating in 1848 that “many brethren from Tubbermore, who have, on their arrival in this country, united with our churches.”⁵ Another source reports that Carson’s “influence upon the Disciples is more or less problematical but there does not appear to be any doubt concerning its existence.”⁶ It would seem, then, that Reverend McClenahan was one of the earliest followers of what would come to be called the Disciples of Christ, conforming to their ways first in Ireland, through

¹ One source reports that “Rev. Alexander Carson was the minister of Tubbermore Baptist Church which was formed c. 1809 in Kilcronaghan Parish, Co. Londonderry.” (“The Ms of Co. Londonderry.” *The Regarde Bien*, Issue No. 5, http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~alanmilliken/regarde_bien/5.html). Another source reports that Carson broke with the Presbyterian Church in about 1803 (Schaff, Philip. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Volume 1*, <http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/encyc/encyc01/h/baptistry.htm>).

² Kershner, Frederick D. “The Disciples of Christ,” from *Restoration Movement: Historic Background*, www.geocities.com/Athens/Crete/2155/churchhistory.htm.

³ Hamm, Terrance. “A Brief History of the Disciples of Christ in West Virginia,” www.wvculture.org/history/wvhs123.html).

⁴ Carter, Mary Hurley. “The Story of the Rockville Christian Church.” Unpublished manuscript dated Nov. 4, 1966, p. 4. On file at Montgomery County Historical Society.

⁵ Carson, Alexander. “Letters from Europe – No. XXXI.” *The Millennial Harbinger* vol. 5, no. 9 (September 1848).

⁶ Kershner, “The Disciples of Christ.”

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their association with the Baptist faith, the separation in 1823, and the affiliation with the Christian Church in 1832.

McClenahan initially held religious gatherings in his home and at the Rockville Academy, where he was an English teacher. By 1820, a small congregation had organized, although they continued to meet in the school and the homes of various church members.⁷ By 1834, the Reverend was successful enough to afford the large brick house on Great Falls Road. He remained here for six years, selling the 7¼ acre property in 1840 to Joanna Everett.

Everett, about whom, no information could be located, passed the property to Jetson and Mary Granger in 1860. Mary Granger was a follower of the Disciples of Christ and had been baptized by McClenahan in 1835.⁸ The Grangers were a moderately wealthy farming family, owning seven slaves in 1853.⁹ By 1870, Jetson (also spelled Judson) had passed away and Mary resided at the house with Elizabeth, Hezekiah, and Judson Trail, presumably her daughter, son-in-law, and grandson, as well as Anna McCormick and Adam Baker, both identified as African American.¹⁰ The same Anna McCormick had been living with the Grangers since at least 1860, when she was identified as a white child four years of age.¹¹

McCormick is also cited as being Mrs. Granger's niece and was given the property in 1878 for "her care and kindness and one dollar."¹² It is possible that the house was then used as a rental as McCormick married Henry Hurley and no record of them is found in the 1880 census. In 1888, the couple deeded the property to Rebecca Viers, who immediately sold it to Amos Adams of Washington, DC for \$1600.¹³ During the late 19th century, Rockville was a popular resort for residents of the District. It is possible that Adams used the residence at 307 Great Falls Road as an investment property, renting to vacationers in Rockville, or using it himself in this way. No record of the Adams family in Rockville could be located and they did not retain the property for long.

In 1892, they repaid debts to the Joshua Dorsey estate by deeding their 7¼ acre Rockville property to Dorsey's minor children, Hortensia and Lloyd, via their Trustee, Valeria Waters, who was their mother (she remarried Horace Waters in 1878).¹⁴ It is believed that the property was used as a rental, coming into the occupancy of the Brewer family around 1895.¹⁵ The Brewer family eventually purchased the

⁷ Carter, p. 4.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Montgomery County Slave Tax List, 1853. On file at Montgomery County Historical Society.

¹⁰ Montgomery County Census, 1870. On file at Montgomery County Historical Society.

¹¹ Montgomery County Census, 1860. On file at Montgomery County Historical Society.

¹² Montgomery County Land Records EBP17/442.

¹³ Montgomery County Land Records JA6/22 and JA11/123.

¹⁴ Montgomery County Land Records JA30/273 and Montgomery County Census, 1900. On file at Montgomery County Historical Society.

¹⁵ MHT Inventory form, Attachment Sheet B.

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property in 1906, when John Brewer obtained the half interests of both Dorsey siblings.¹⁶ The 7¼ acres passed among members of the Brewer family and in the late 1920s, the small house at the 315 Great Falls Road property was constructed. It was likely built for one of the numerous Brewer children or grandchildren.

The Brewers were early settlers in Rockville who contributed to the growth and success of the town in important ways. The Brewers had large real estate holdings and extensive business and political interests in the town. John Brewer (1804-1866) was the son of early settlers in Montgomery County. The family's farmstead lay on the east side of the town in the vicinity of St. Mary's Church and the B&O Railroad Station. John became an attorney and attended the Maryland Constitutional Convention in 1851.¹⁷ In 1860, he was appointed along with attorneys William V. Bouic and John Vinson as a committee to approach the Maryland legislature on the subject of the incorporation of Rockville.¹⁸ Brewer and Bouic were jailed in 1861 for their anti-Union sentiments when the country was engaged in a civil war.¹⁹

John's elder son William Brewer (1847-1885) was responsible for the presence of the B&O Railroad station in Rockville. In the early 1870s, William, an attorney and publisher, subdivided a parcel of the family's land and sold lots to construct the station. He also built his family home in the vicinity at 8 Baltimore Road. In exchange for creating the railroad property, the City annexed the subdivision, known as Brewer's Third Addition, to Rockville.

John Brewer's younger son, John Buchanan Brewer (1850-1908), decided to purchase the property on Great Falls Road. He rented the house for a number of years, residing there with his wife Virginia and their 10 children. He bought the property in 1906, but died soon after.²⁰ The property passed to his son, John, who moved to the District of Columbia. In 1924, the younger John transferred the property to his wife Rosalind Caldwell Brewer and their son Richard. In 1940, George Brewer, either a son or nephew, obtained the property, which now contained the two houses.²¹

The 20,000 square foot parcel containing the small house at 315 Great Falls Road was separated from the larger parcel in 1948. At this time, the house at 315 was deeded from George to John B. Brewer, a descendant of William.²² It is unknown if the property was occupied at this time by family members or renters. It was being rented by 1957, when John turned the house over to Leroy and Mildred Winkler,

¹⁶ Lloyd Dorsey died in 1902. His ownership the property was transferred in Circuit Court to John Brewer by the Dorseys' Trustee, Valeria Waters, for the amount of \$1750. Hortensia (married George Hunter) transferred her interest to John Brewer at Brewer's request, also for the sum of \$1750 (see Land records 190/279 and 281).

¹⁷ MHT Inventory form, Attachment Sheet B.

¹⁸ McGuckian, Eileen. *Rockville: Portrait of a City*. Franklin, TN: Hillsboro Press, 2001, p. 42.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁰ MHT Inventory form, Attachment Sheet B.

²¹ Montgomery County Land Records 368/250 and 774/467.

²² Montgomery County Land Records 1141/34.

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“tenants of the entireties,” for \$10.²³ The larger family home at 307 Great Falls Road was sold two years later to Gretchen and Thomas Casey. The Winklers were long-term owners of the small house, residing there until 1992. Subsequent owners included Gerard Boquel and the current owners Michael Henry and Cynthia Fischer-Henry.

The exact date of construction of the house at 315 Great Falls Road is unknown. The state tax assessor’s office gives it a construction date of 1918, although there is no substantiation for this date. The Maryland Historical Trust inventory form for the Bingham-Brewer House states that “an old barn situated west of the house was demolished and a home (which became 309 Great Falls Road) constructed on the old foundations, and modeled after the style of the barn.”²⁴ The address was later changed to 315 when the former Brewer property was further subdivided. An undated reference to the house corroborates this assessment, stating that “south of the house was an old barn which was remodeled into a home in 1927.”²⁵

A physical inspection of the home seems to verify this information and the later date of construction, which would have been during the ownership of Rosalind and Richard Brewer. The house stands on a 19th century fieldstone foundation, typical for houses and outbuildings alike, but the structure of the house itself dates to the 20th century. The construction and design details such as the Colonial Revival style, form, wall thickness and finishes, attic framing, lack of eaves, hardware, shutter cutouts (although these could have been added), and the use of plywood are all common to 1920s and 1930s residential architecture.

The house was built during a period when Americans were discovering an interest in their colonial heritage. Beginning in the late 19th century, this fascination became evident in architecture through the development of the Colonial Revival style. The style was further popularized after 1907, when the tercentenary of the settlement of Jamestown was celebrated. This event was followed in the 1920s by the restoration of the colonial city of Williamsburg. Architects began to design commercial, residential, civic, and religious buildings with the colonial aesthetic in mind. Houses, in particular, were a popular forum for displaying the characteristics of colonial architecture. McAlester indicates that one-story Colonial Revival dwellings first appeared after 1910 and remained popular through the 1940s.²⁶ They were most commonly built in the 1920s and in the 1940s.²⁷ Common characteristics of this style, which are seen in the house at 315 Great Falls Road, include a symmetry of form and fenestration, 6/6 double hung sash windows, dormers, and a side porch.

²³ Montgomery County Land Records 10765/431.

²⁴ MHT Inventory form, Attachment Sheet A

²⁵ Unpublished sheet entitled “The Bingham-Brewer House, 307 Great Falls Road.” On file at the City of Rockville Planning Office.

²⁶ McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996, p. 325.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

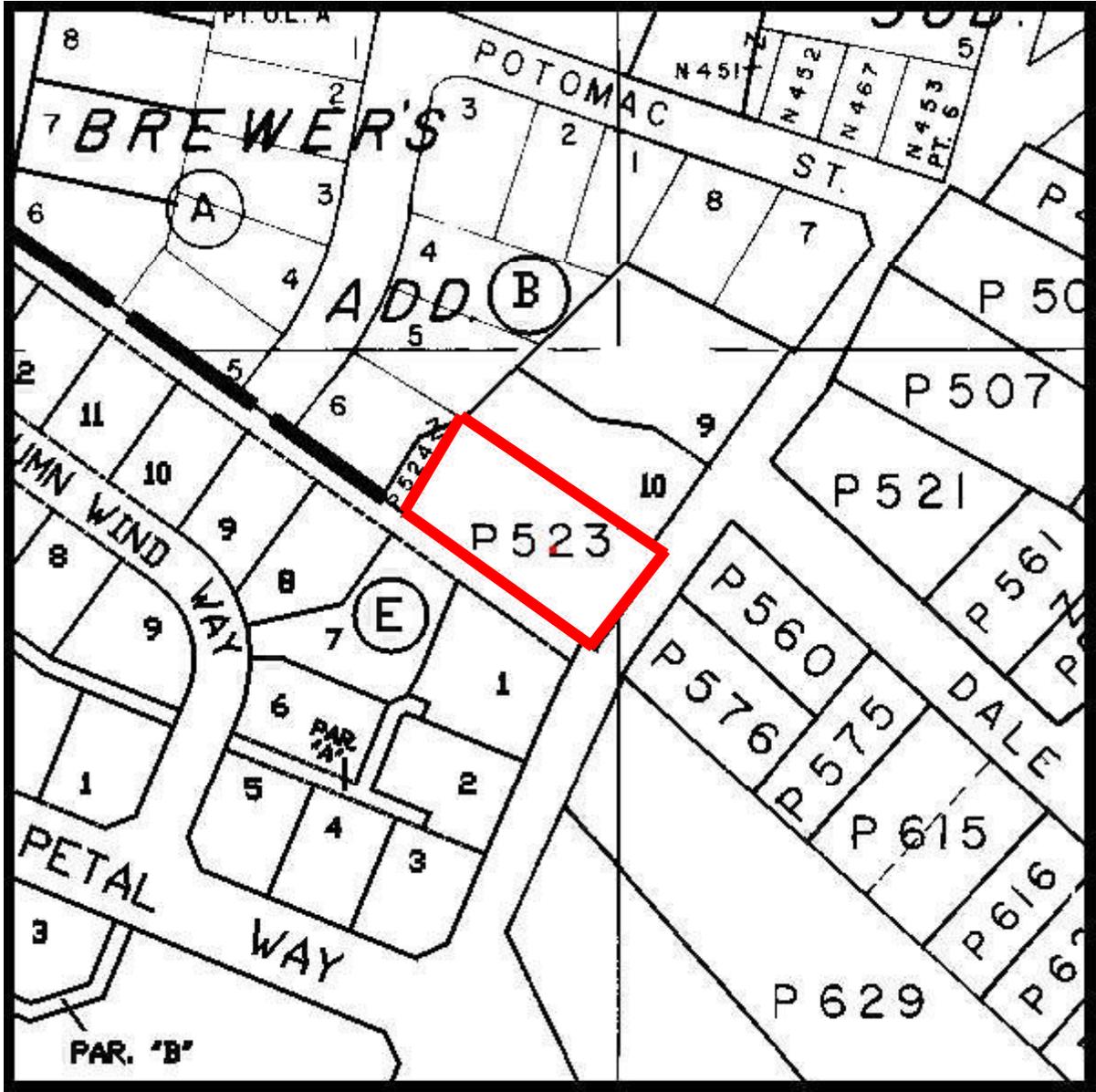
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It is speculative to determine which of the many Brewers constructed the house on the grounds of the family home. Because of its small size, it is possible that it was built as a summer residence or vacation home for John and Rosalind Brewer after they moved to DC. Or the house may have been built as the primary residence for Richard or another of John Brewer's children, his nine siblings, or nieces or nephews. It is also possible that it was never occupied by the Brewer family but was built as a rental house.

Regardless of its original purpose, the house remains today as a reminder of a popular residential style of the early part of the last century. It is a representative example of Colonial Revival architecture in Rockville in the 1920s. The property is associated with the owners of the house at 307 Great Falls Road, the Bingham, McClenahans, and Brewers, who contributed to the economic, political, and religious development of Rockville. The foundation of the house would have served the owners as part of a carriage house, barn, or other outbuilding.



315 Great Falls Road
Brewer's Addition, Parcel 523