



Prince George's County Mid-century Modern Survey

FINAL REPORT

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Author:

Robinson & Associates, Inc.
Daria A. Gasparini, Principal
S. Michael Mitchell, Architectural Historian
725 15th Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

Project Sponsor:

Moyaone Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 113
Accokeek, MD 20607

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Prince George's County Mid-century Modern Survey was to complete Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties intensive-level survey documentation for eleven houses designed in the modernist mode and located in the Moyaone Reserve, a planned residential community in Accokeek, Maryland. Research addressed the development of the Moyaone Reserve, the emergence of the modern house, and the architects responsible for designing the houses that were surveyed. Survey work was conducted in March and April of 2019. The inventory forms, photographs, and supplemental documentation related to the project will be stored at the Maryland Historical Trust library in Crownsville, Maryland. The survey achieved the goals of the project, which included broadening public understanding of the work of architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., and enhancing public awareness of the historic and architectural significance of the Moyaone Reserve.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Prince George's County Mid-century Modern Survey documented a group of eleven historic residential properties in the Moyaone Reserve, a wooded residential community of approximately 180 homes that was established in the mid-twentieth century. The Moyaone Reserve is located within the southwestern corner of Prince George's County and part of the northern section of Charles County in Southern Maryland. It is bounded by the Piscataway National Park on the southern shore of the Potomac River. There are five principal subdivisions within the Moyaone Reserve: Cactus Hill, Bond's Retreat, Apple Valley, Auburn, and Poplar Hill.¹ (Figures 1 and 2) The houses documented as part of the survey were all located in Prince George's County, and the survey area encompassed roughly 79.25 acres. (See list of properties on following page.)

The houses documented as part of the Prince George's County Mid-century Modern Survey were designed according to principles of the modern movement and are associated with local architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., and contemporaries such as Charles M. Goodman, whose work contributed to defining the residential character of the Moyaone Reserve. Data gathering and research began in late February 2019, with fieldwork conducted in March and April. The project resulted in the completion of eleven Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties forms and a final report, which will be stored at the Maryland Historical Trust library in Crownsville, Maryland.

The Prince George's County Mid-century Modern Survey was supported by the National Park Service and Maryland Historical Trust through a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant. The project was administered by the Moyaone Association, Inc., a volunteer-funded homeowner group that acts on behalf of its members' and the broader community's interests. The project manager for the Moyaone Association was Rita Bergman. The principal investigator was Robinson & Associates, a research and consulting firm based in Washington, D.C. The project team included Daria Gasparini, Principal, and S. Michael Mitchell, Architectural Historian.

The content and format of this report follows Maryland Historical Trust guidelines as established in its *Standards & Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland, 2000*. The report begins with a statement of the survey's goals and a description of the methods and techniques used to meet these objectives. This is followed by a historical overview of the project area. The report includes a section on the results of the survey and concludes with recommendations.

¹ Hidden Valley is a sub-area of the Bond's Retreat subdivision, and Hickoryvale is a sub-area of Cactus Hill.

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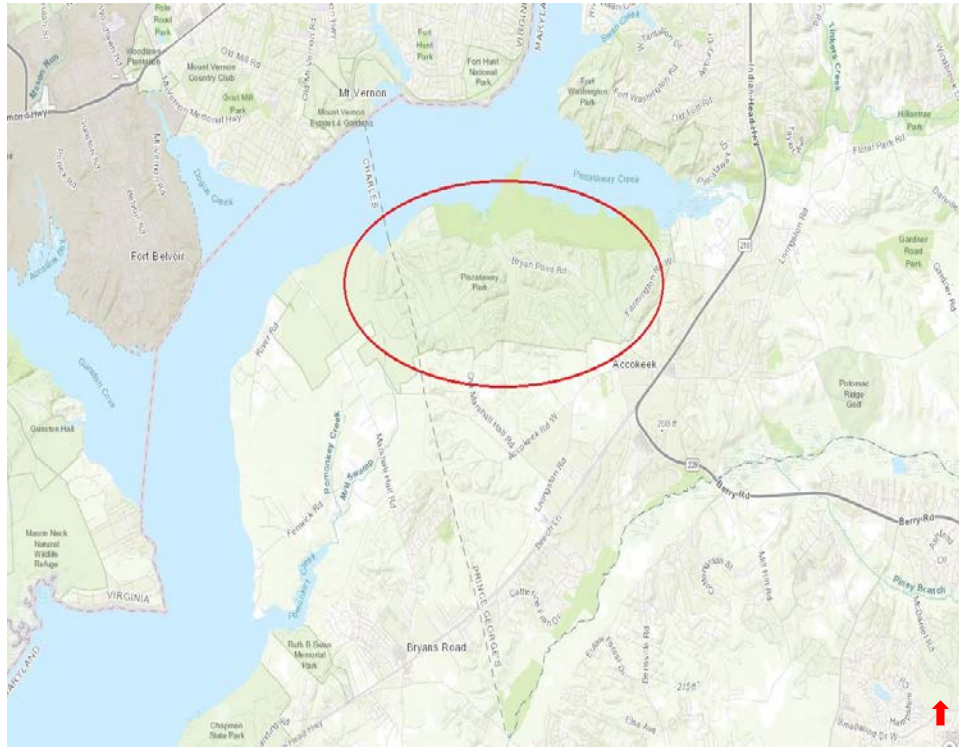


Figure 1: USGS map showing the location of the Moyaone Reserve, which spans parts of Prince George's County and Charles County in Southern Maryland. [USGS Historical Map Explorer, available at <http://historicalmaps.arcgis.com/usgs/>]

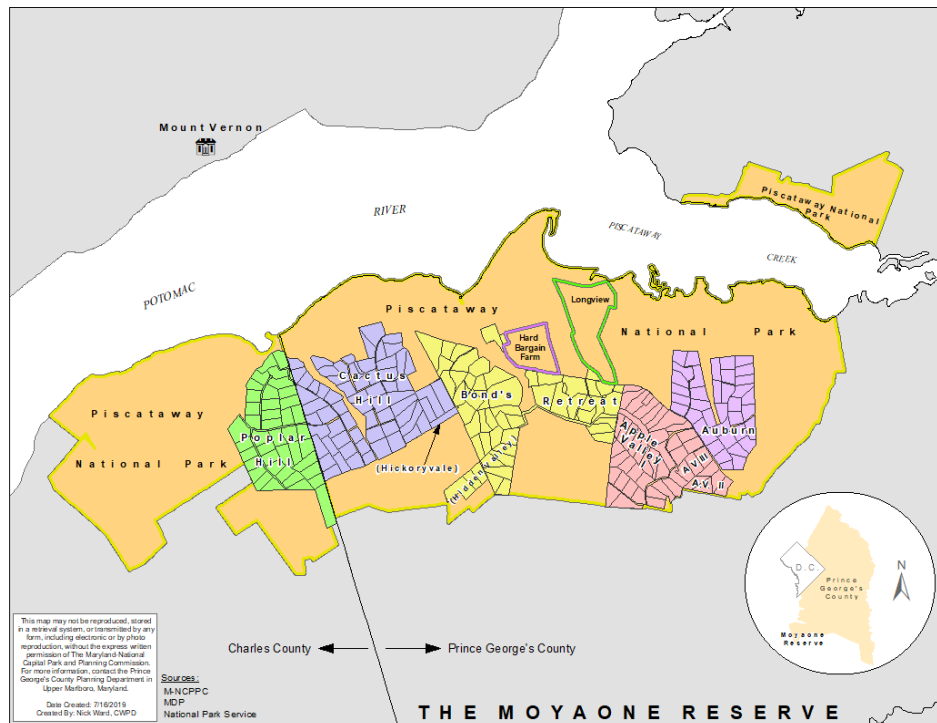


Figure 2: Map of the Moyaone Reserve showing its five principal subdivisions, which include Poplar Hill, Cactus Hill, Bond's Retreat, Apple Valley, and Auburn. Hidden Valley is a sub-area of the Bond's Retreat subdivision, and Hickoryvale is a sub-area of Cactus Hill. [Source: Nick Ward, Prince George's County Planning Department]

II. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The principal goal of the project was to document eleven modernist houses in the Moyaone Reserve at the intensive level of architectural investigation according to Maryland Historical Trust standards. Secondary goals were to enhance public understanding of the Moyaone Reserve as a unique residential community with a rich collection of modern architecture and to broaden public knowledge of the architecture and career of Charles F. Wagner, Jr. Another objective of the research and survey work was to aid a concurrent effort by the Moyaone Association and Robinson & Associates to prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Moyaone Reserve that, in part, will establish the national significance of the community's contributions related to the protection and preservation of the historic viewshed from Mount Vernon.

The methods and techniques used to carry out the Prince George's County Mid-century Modern Survey were designed to align with the standards acceptable to the Maryland Historical Trust and the U.S. Department of the Interior. The project began with a kick-off meeting attended by the project manager and representatives from the Moyaone Association, staff from the Maryland Historical Trust and the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Office, and the Robinson & Associates team.

Research included reviewing existing documentation, including Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties records of previously documented properties in the Moyaone Reserve, and gathering and evaluating primary and secondary sources to gain a familiarity with the work of Charles Wagner and the development history of the Moyaone Reserve. Architectural drawings and photographs of many of the houses were found in the records of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC)/Prince George's County Planning Department/Historic Preservation. Past issues of the Moyaone Association newsletter *Smoke Signals* provided valuable information regarding the completion dates of houses and dates for alterations. Secondary sources consisted of books and journal articles, which informed the development of a context for understanding the emergence of modern domestic architecture, the history of the Moyaone Reserve, and the careers of architects such as Charles Wagner and Charles Goodman. Drawings and background information were also provided by Holliday Wagner, the daughter of architect Charles Wagner. Materials held by homeowners, which included drawings and photographs, were also reviewed, including an extensive collection of photographs shared by J. Scott Odell. In addition, Robinson & Associates conducted interviews with homeowners when possible to learn about the ownership history of the houses and to gain an understanding of changes and alterations over time.

The houses that were surveyed were chosen by the Moyaone Association in coordination with the Maryland Historical Trust and the Prince George's County Planning Department for their modernist design and/or their connection to architects Charles Wagner and Charles M. Goodman. The resources that were documented included:

1. PG: 83-33, Harris House, 2307 Rockwood Road (22.8088 acres)
2. PG: 83-34, Dunphy House, 1804 Bryan Point Road (12.0863 acres)
3. PG: 83-35, Spratt House, 1710 Bryan Point Road (5.278 acres)
4. PG: 83-36, White Hinckley House, 1700 Bryan Point Road (4.714 acres)
5. PG: 83-40, Plumer House, 2002 Bryan Point Road (4.9343 acres)
6. PG: 83-44, Vanderslice House, 14801 West Auburn Road (5.708 acres)
7. PG: 83-45, Withers-Bologna House, 15101 East Auburn Road (5.15 acres)
8. PG: 83-46, Hickerson House, 1520 Laurel Drive (5.18 acres)

9. PG: 83-47, Miles House, 2407 Rockwood Road (5.04 acres)
10. PG: 83-50, Thomas-Straus House, 1611 Bryan Point Road (3.34 acres)
11. PG: 83-54, Swick House, 15100 West Auburn Road (5.006 acres)

Homeowner interest in the project and a willingness to provide access also influenced the selection of properties. Survey work was conducted at each of the houses, which were all located in Prince George's County, over the course of three weeks in March and April of 2019. Documentation addressed each house's exterior, interior, and site. The resulting Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties forms each included a detailed architectural description, historic context, house history, chain of title, bibliography, photographs, floor plan, and mapping in compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland*.

III. HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXTS

The Development of the Moyaone Reserve

The land on which the Moyaone Reserve was formed had earlier been home to Native American groups. The Piscataways, members of the Algonquin-speaking tribes, occupied the area at the time of the first European arrivals. A map drawn by English explorer John Smith and published in 1612 after his travels in the Chesapeake Bay region identified the location of a Native American village named "Moyaons" in the present-day Accokeek region. Some historians, however, have noted that Smith recorded the name "Moyaone" to refer to a group of Native American villages.² English settlers soon followed Smith and established a permanent presence in the area by the mid-seventeenth century. These settlers were initially cooperative with the Piscataways and other Native groups. The relationship deteriorated, however, by 1623, when a group of Virginians burned the Piscataways' fort at Moyaone.³

The present-day Moyaone Reserve was part of a section of Maryland referred to by English settlers as Piscataway. As was customary with much of the land the English settled, the crown divided Piscataway into land grants given out to prominent individuals and companies. What is now the Moyaone Reserve was divided into five tracts and granted to several different individuals, including William Calvert, nephew of Lord Baltimore. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the tracts were sold to a number of different owners. The largest tract, a 3,000-acre property known as Piscataway Manor (and later Calvert Manor) was patented in 1662. Samuel Bond acquired 470 acres of this property sometime around 1818. The land, referred to in an 1835 deed as Bond's Retreat, stayed in the Bond family until 1851. The property was then transferred twenty-five times over the next ninety-five years.

² G. L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community* (Accokeek, MD: Accokeek Foundation, 2007), 2.

³ *Ibid.*, 6.



Figure 3: Road map, Washington and vicinity, Maryland--Virginia--District of Columbia, published by the Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, 1925. The red oval denotes the general location of Alice and Henry Ferguson's farm. [Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division]

In 1922, prominent Washingtonians Alice and Henry Ferguson purchased a 139-acre farm immediately north of Bond's Retreat on the eastern bank of the Potomac River. (Figure 3) Henry Ferguson was a scientist for the U.S. Geological Survey, and Alice was an artist trained in painting at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C. Dubbed "Hard Bargain" by an earlier owner, the farm became a refuge for the Fergusons and their friends, whom they deemed "the gang."⁴ In 1925, Alice purchased a neighboring farm, Longview, and built a

farmhouse on the property, hoping to attract a gentleman farmer who shared her point of view on the future of the rural area. The plan, however, did not work, and, in the 1930s, Longview became a commune of sorts, attracting a group of young artists, architects, musicians, filmmakers, and other creatives. Alice was active in the local arts scene and maintained friendships with many of the group that lived at Longview.

Nervous about ever-expanding suburban development clearing the woods around Hard Bargain, Alice Ferguson began purchasing hundreds of acres of land around their property. In July 1945, she purchased Bond's Retreat, surveyed at 467 acres. Henry Ferguson wrote that, at the time, most of Bond's Retreat was "unusable scenery with steep gullies, swamps[,] and brooks."⁵ The land contained a few acres of what Henry described as good farmland, which the Fergusons sold in order to finance their plan to thoughtfully subdivide Bond's Retreat for low-density, residential development. Henry Ferguson was tasked with surveying the land. He found the upland country covered with second-growth hardwoods and some pine, while the bottom lands along the streams were a "dense tangle of scrub."⁶ Although Henry Ferguson initially intended to use the ravines that characterized the terrain as boundaries for lots, his friends convinced him that buyers would want both sides of the ravines. Henry Ferguson also cut trails to what

⁴ Ibid., 23.

⁵ Henry G. Ferguson, *Hard Bargain Adventures* (Accokeek, MD: Alice Ferguson Foundation, 1966), 14.

⁶ Ibid., 21.

he considered to be the best house sites.⁷ The Fergusons also acquired an area known as Hidden Valley. Although part of Bond's Retreat, it was not immediately subdivided and offered for sale.⁸

Some of the Fergusons' friends who stayed at Longview, including Robert Ware Straus, Richard Dunphy, and architect Charles Wagner, were among the first to purchase property in Bond's Retreat and helped market and sell other lots to select friends.⁹ Most of the available land in Bond's Retreat was sold by 1952. By 1949, Alice Ferguson had expanded her real estate venture when she acquired a 120-acre tract adjoining Bond's Retreat known as Cactus Hill.¹⁰

According to Accokeek resident William Harris, Prince George's County required that developments with tracts of less than 5 acres build hard surface roads and drainage systems. As such, deeds for property in Bond's Retreat stipulated that the land could not be sold or leased in parcels that measured less than 5 acres, a concept initiated by Henry Ferguson to avoid the expense of improved roads.¹¹ Exceptions could be made only with written consent of Alice Ferguson or of a majority of the then property owners of parcels in Bond's Retreat.

The real estate venture created a residential community that served as a rural refuge from nearby Washington, D.C. It offered acres of undeveloped land with stunning views of the Potomac River, Mount Vernon, and the Washington skyline. Charles Wagner wrote that Alice "wanted to create a community of congenial, friendly, energetic people interested in and sensitive to its orderly development."¹² (Figure 4) As new residents began purchasing land, several turned to architect

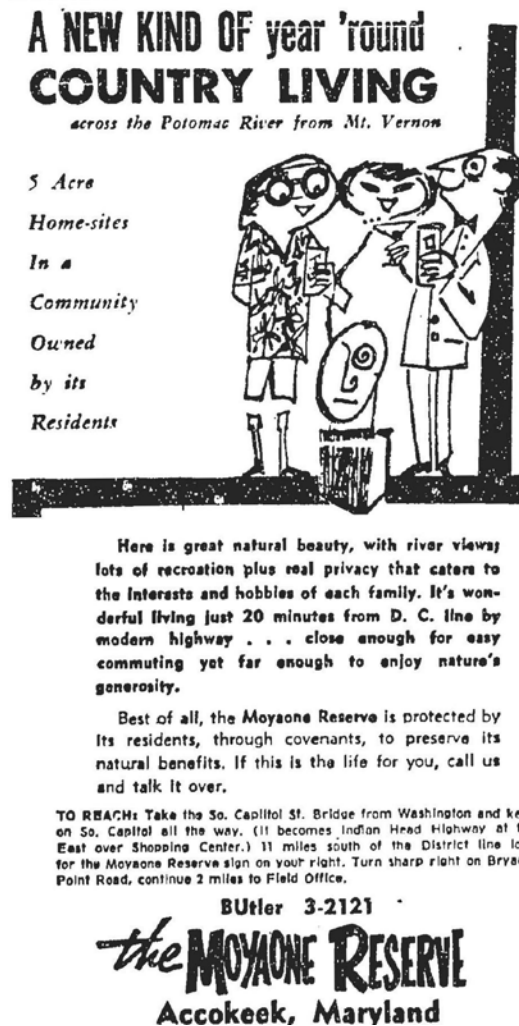


Figure 4: Early brochure for the Moyaone Reserve.
[Historic Preservation Section, Prince George's County
Planning Department, Upper Marlboro, Maryland]

⁷ Ibid., 22.

⁸ Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve*, 33.

⁹ Denise D. Meringolo, "The Accokeek Foundation and Piscataway Park," *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship* 5, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 49.

¹⁰ Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve*, 28-29, 33.

¹¹ Ibid., 29.

¹² Ibid., 23-24.

Charles Wagner to design their homes. Wagner's early commissions in Accokeek, beginning in 1948, were modest, one-story cottages, but designed in a modernist mode, with spare forms, low-sloped roofs, and large expanses of plate glass. (Figure 5) Some of these houses functioned initially as weekend retreats and consisted of only a few rooms, including a combined living room and bedroom. Often, as residents began having children and made Accokeek their year-round home, original houses were expanded. Newer houses were built with larger footprints.

Following Alice Ferguson's death in 1951, the unsold land, mortgages, and notes on sold land in Bond's Retreat and Cactus Hill were left to the residents of those subdivisions. A new corporation, named the Moyaone Company after the earlier Native American settlement, was established in December 1952 to administer Alice Ferguson's bequest. The Moyaone Company determined to develop the land in a manner that respected Alice Ferguson's original vision. In the next decade, more land surrounding Bond's Retreat was purchased by the Moyaone Company and sold for residential development. By 1956, the Moyaone Company was relegated to a civic organization, and a new corporation, the Piscataway Company, was established to handle business matters for what was by then referred to as the Moyaone Reserve.¹³

As the community continued to attract residents, more nearby land was acquired by the Moyaone Company (and later the Piscataway Company) for residential development. A 245-acre tract of farmland that bordered Bond's Retreat to the east was purchased in 1953. This plot became known as Apple Valley. An additional 28 acres of adjoining land was acquired and added to Apple Valley two years later. Northeast of Apple Valley was a 190-acre parcel of farmland that was purchased in 1957 and became known as the Auburn subdivision. By the summer of 1958, *Smoke Signals*, the Moyaone newsletter, reported that "most" of the land in Auburn was "spoken for."¹⁴ The last subdivision to be added to the Moyaone Reserve was known as Poplar Hill, which was acquired in 1958. Up until this point, all of the Moyaone Reserve subdivisions had been located in Prince George's County, but the addition of Poplar Hill extended the community into Charles County.¹⁵ (See Figure 2 for a map of the subdivisions.) Between Bond's Retreat and Cactus Hill was a narrow strip of land known as the Howe Estate. The parcel was left by Dr. O. E. Howe to build

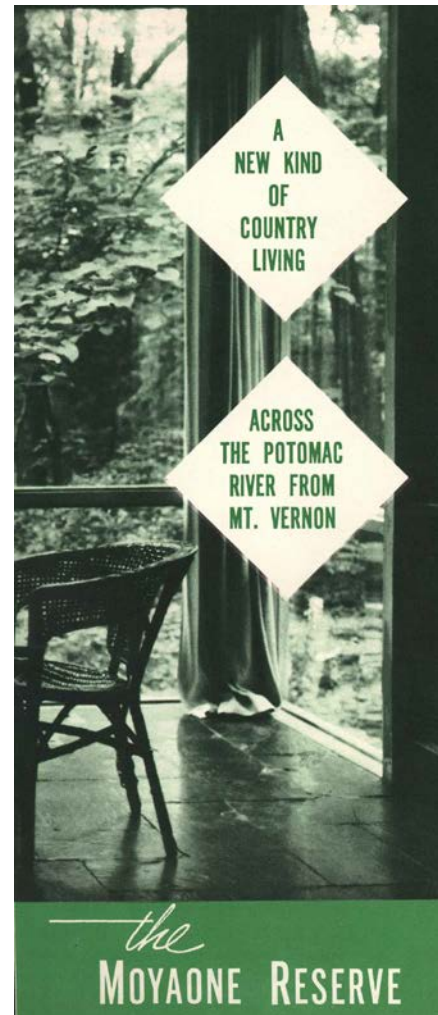


Figure 5: Cover of pamphlet advertising the Moyaone Reserve. The image depicts a corner of the Wagner House. [Historic Preservation Section, Prince George's County Planning Department, Upper Marlboro, Maryland]

¹³ Ibid., 36, 46-47.

¹⁴ *Smoke Signals* 1, no. 9 (July 1958), 2.

¹⁵ Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve*, 44-45, 49-50.

a home for wayward girls. Although discussions to buy the property occurred between the Fergusons and the board of trustees overseeing the Howe Estate, an agreement was never reached. Part of the Howe Estate, however, was later subdivided as the “Hickoryvale Addition to Cactus Hill” and became part of the Moyaone Reserve.¹⁶

In 1955, the wooded setting of the Moyaone Reserve was threatened by a potential land sale. The ESSO Corporation considered purchasing 485 acres that adjoined the Reserve directly across the Potomac River from Mount Vernon in order to construct oil storage tanks. To block the industrial development, Congresswoman Frances Payne Bolton of Ohio purchased the land later that summer. In order to further safeguard the viewshed of Mount Vernon, Congresswoman Bolton introduced a bill in Congress in 1961 to acquire land for a national park named Piscataway on the Maryland side of the river. A total of 1,100 acres, the park reached from Piscataway Creek on the east to Marshall Hall on the west. Eventually, more land adjacent to the park – enough acreage for natural wildlife to be sustained in its proper ecosystem – was protected from development through scenic easements.¹⁷ The establishment of the easements placed the area at the forefront of preservation policy as the national historic preservation movement gained momentum in the early 1960s.

The Modern House

Modernism emerged as an architectural and artistic movement in Western Europe, in countries such as Germany, Austria, and France, in the early twentieth century. The movement was a response to the Beaux Arts tradition of classicism and the interest in historicist styles that defined the nineteenth century. Modernism was partially inspired by American architect Louis Sullivan’s maxim “form ever follows function,” which he executed by expressing the structural systems and spatial organization of his buildings on their exteriors.¹⁸ The European modernists in the early twentieth century, however, went further than Sullivan in their adoption of functionalism. They embraced austere, reduced forms and rejected decorative ornament and references to the past as unnecessary.¹⁹ Modernists valued pure lines, planes, and geometries. Technological advances were celebrated in the choice of building materials, which included steel, reinforced and precast concrete, and large expanses of plate glass.

As the modernist works of European architects became known to an international audience in the late 1920s, American converts celebrated what they saw as a fundamental rethinking of architectural values. Historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock and critic Philip Johnson sought to articulate the movement to an American audience through their landmark exhibition on modern architecture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1932. They cited a number of Europeans, such as Austrian Otto Wagner, and Americans, like Frank Lloyd Wright, as pioneers of modernism. Hitchcock and Johnson identified three key values of

¹⁶ Ibid., 67.

¹⁷ Ibid., 54.

¹⁸ Lauren S. Weingarden, *Louis H. Sullivan and a 19th-Century Poetics of Naturalized Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2016), 2.

¹⁹ David P. Handlin, *American Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 197.

modernism — volume was more important than mass (a cage of skeletal supports, rather than masonry walls, provided interior spatial freedom), a building's structural system should be reflected on the exterior, and ornament and applied decoration served no positive function.²⁰

American architects in the 1930s applied the movement's principles to a variety of building types, including skyscrapers and the single-family house. For many Americans, the modern home was a radical reinterpretation of residential architecture. Modernists saw the Victorian home, with its formal division of public rooms, as outmoded. Instead, they looked to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and German architect Mies van der Rohe, who designed open floor plans, where public rooms flowed seamlessly into one another. Another hallmark of modern design was liberal glazing, with significant portions of the exterior wall consisting of plate glass. Large expanses of glass, seen in noted modern houses such as Mies' Farnsworth House in Plano, Illinois, dissolved the separation between exterior and interior spaces. (Figure 6) Modern architects also typically employed flat or low-sloped roofs, which they believed provided optimal planning flexibility.



Figure 6: Interior view of the Farnsworth House, designed by Mies van der Rohe. The use of floor-to-ceiling windows dissolved the separation between interior and exterior spaces. [Available through Creative Commons at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Farnsworth_House_by_Mies_Van_Der_Rohe_-_interior.jpg]

Frank Lloyd Wright was particularly influential in the development of modern residential architecture. In 1938, he developed a housing model he called Usonia, intended as a modern, affordable housing solution for the United States. Usonian houses, designed by Wright between 1938 and his death in 1959, were known for having simple forms built with readily available materials such as plywood and brick and had flat or low-sloped roofs with large overhangs. Houses were often placed in natural settings and provided with floor-to-ceiling windows that immersed the occupants in their surroundings. Usonian plans were divided into three distinct zones: a large, open living area, a kitchen/dining room, and a cluster of small bedrooms. (Figure 7) Mechanical systems for the house were placed together in a single core. Wright's Usonian houses were widely publicized and highly influential.²¹

²⁰ Ibid., 200-202.

²¹ Carla Lind, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian Houses* (San Francisco, CA: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1994), 13, 15.

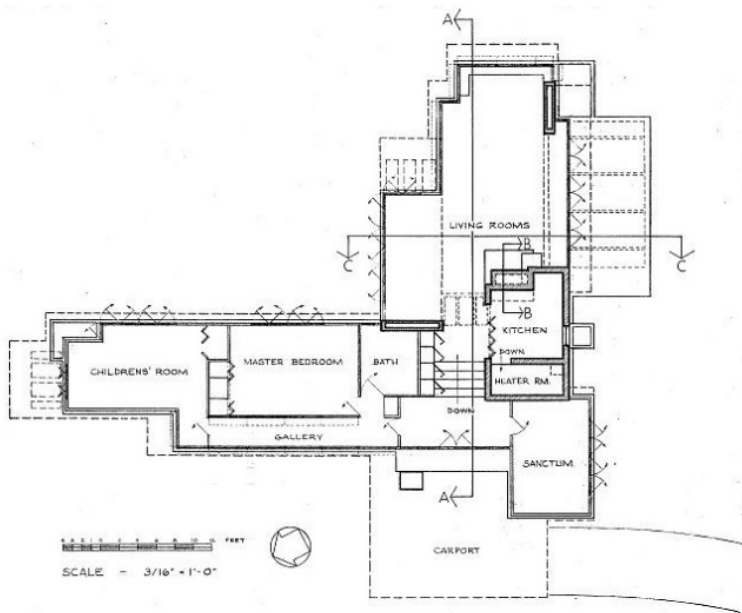


Figure 7: Plan of the Pope-Leighey House, a Usonian house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in Fairfax County, Virginia. [Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division]

Despite its popularity among some converts, modernism was not widely embraced in the United States in the 1930s. After World War II, however, modern architecture became a more mainstream phenomenon.²² Modern architecture appealed to a prosperous postwar country that sought a break from a past that reminded them of war and economic depression. A survey conducted by the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1945 reported that only fourteen percent of Americans were interested in renting or living in a “used” house.²³ Modern houses, in particular, appealed to Americans who, in large numbers during the postwar period, were leaving crowded, dense cities for detached houses in suburban communities with large lots

and generous lawns. Following the national trend, Washington, D.C., suburbs in Maryland and Virginia grew exponentially after the war. In 1953, for the first time, less than half of the Washington metropolitan region’s population lived in the city proper.²⁴

Educated upper-middle class and middle class suburbanites adopted the modern home as a symbol of distinction and refinement.²⁵ While plenty of American houses were built according to strict modernist principles as flat-roofed glass boxes, many architects adopted a blend of modern and vernacular architecture. Traditional materials, such as board-and-batten siding, were applied to the exterior, while the interiors employed modernist features like open floor plans, glass walls, and other elements that brought nature into living spaces. Some modern houses utilized passive solar heating, incorporating large expanses of glass that brought in the low, winter sun and overhanging eaves that shaded the interior from the high, summer sun.²⁶ In addition to modern materials like concrete, steel, and plate glass, modern

²² Isabelle Gournay and Mary Corbin Sies, “Modern Movement in Maryland,” Context Essay (University of Maryland, 2002), 44-45.

²³ *Urban Housing Survey: The Saturday Evening Post, Ladies' Home Journal, Country Gentleman* (Philadelphia: Curtis Publishing Company, 1945).

²⁴ Zachary Schrag, *The Great Society Subway: A History of the Washington Metro* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 17.

²⁵ Gournay and Sies, “Modern Movement in Maryland,” 47.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 45.

homes often incorporated prefabricated elements. Prefabrication, the off-site manufacturing of house components to be assembled on-site, became an increasingly common solution for building a significant amount of houses in a short amount of time. The process was ideally suited for a utilitarian architecture that included little to no embellishment. Entire walls could be brought to the construction site pre-assembled.²⁷

The typical suburban neighborhood of the postwar era featured tract houses laid out by a developer, each similar to its neighbor in its placement on the lot and orientation toward the street. Neighborhoods such as Hollin Hills in Alexandria, Virginia, however, challenged this practice by carefully incorporating houses into the landscape. (Figure 8) Developed in the mid-1940s, Hollin Hills was a result of the collaboration between developer Robert C. Davenport and architect Charles M. Goodman. The architect's modernist houses, featuring window walls and low-sloped roofs, were set at varying angles on lots to take advantage of the hilly terrain and so that



Figure 8: The modernist houses in Hollin Hills were set amid a forest and at varying angles on lots. [Dennis Carmichael, "A Landscape of Democracy," in Hollin Hills: Community of Vision, A Semicentennial History, 1949-1999, ed. Civic Association of Hollin Hills (Alexandria, VA: Civic Association of Hollin Hills, 2006), 71.]

the glass houses were less likely to look onto one another. The houses were also sited amid a second-growth hardwood forest cover. The views of the surrounding trees offered by the large expanses of glass further accomplished the long-held modernist goal of blending interior and exterior space.²⁸

Architect Charles Wagner

Charles F. Wagner, Jr., (1909-1998) was born in Hapeville, Georgia, and raised in Atlanta. He received a degree in architecture from the Georgia Institute of Technology in 1933. In the early 1930s, the school's architecture program, like many across the United States, still adhered to a Beaux Arts curriculum. Indeed, Wagner's class projects often depicted Italian Renaissance villages or captured details of neoclassical door surrounds. There was little trace in this early work of the modernism that would later define his career.²⁹

Wagner studied for a semester at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, where he befriended fellow student Hugh Stubbins, later a noted modernist architect. After only one semester, Wagner left Harvard

²⁷ John Burns, "The Postwar Housing Phenomenon," in *Hollin Hills: Community of Vision, A Semicentennial History, 1949-1999*, ed. Civic Association of Hollin Hills (Alexandria, VA: Civic Association of Hollin Hills, 2006), 41.

²⁸ Dennis Carmichael, "A Landscape of Democracy," in *Hollin Hills: Community of Vision, A Semicentennial History, 1949-1999*, ed. Civic Association of Hollin Hills (Alexandria, VA: Civic Association of Hollin Hills, 2006), 70-73.

²⁹ Holliday Wagner, interview with the authors, April 2019.

and returned to Atlanta to work on the drafting and field supervision of an addition to the city hospital. The young architect relocated to Washington, D.C., in 1934 to take a position at the Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury. Later, he was employed by the Resettlement Administration, where he worked for fifteen months on a community housing project in Roosevelt, New Jersey, under architects Louis Kahn and Alfred Kastner. Through his friendship with the sculptor Lenore Thomas, who was also employed at the Resettlement Administration, Wagner learned of Longview, the rural farmhouse in Accokeek, Maryland, owned by Alice and Henry Ferguson. Thomas and a friend were renting the house from the Fergusons, and, in November 1936, Wagner joined the two women to “help with the rent and get out of the city.”³⁰ In 1937, Wagner traveled throughout mainland Europe and Scandinavia studying the latest housing and planning techniques. He was perhaps influenced by Swedish cooperative housing, which, by the 1930s, reflected a modern interpretation of Scandinavian vernacular architecture. Such new homes, situated in planned communities, combined modern features, such as open floor plans and a liberal use of glass, with traditional materials like board-and-batten siding.³¹ At some point in the late 1930s, Wagner also traveled to Frank Lloyd Wright’s famed Taliesin West studio in Scottsdale, Arizona.³²

Upon his return, Wagner worked from 1938 to 1942 as an architect for the U.S. Housing Authority. In 1942, Wagner was commissioned as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy and was later promoted to Lieutenant Commander. He served as executive officer on the U.S.S. *Terry*, on which he fought in the African and Pacific campaigns until the end of the war in 1945.³³

³⁰ Charles F. Wagner, “A Rambling History of the Moyaone Reserve from Where I Have Sat on Bryan’s Point Road Since 1936: 1936-WWII,” unpublished manuscript, 1970s. Copy provided by Holliday Wagner.

³¹ Gournay and Sies, “Modern Movement in Maryland,” 44.

³² Holliday Wagner, interview with the authors, April 2019.

³³ Daniel Sams, “Wagner House,” Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form, December 2015; Charles Francis Wagner resume, File: 83-32, Charles Wagner House, Historic Preservation Section, Prince George’s County Planning Department, Upper Marlboro, Maryland; “Charles Francis Wagner, Architect,” *Washington Post*, June 4, 1998.

When he returned from the war, Wagner worked briefly with architect Charles M. Goodman, a prominent modernist in the Washington, D.C., region. He was also at some point employed with Joseph Saunders in Alexandria, Virginia, and in the office of African-American architect Hilyard Robinson.³⁴ Wagner and his wife Nancy returned to Accokeek in the winter of 1946-47 and lived temporarily with the Fergusons while they constructed a house. They were among the first of the Fergusons' friends who purchased land near Hard Bargain Farm. Wagner made sure to purchase a lot that was "above the hill not below it – we had more snow then – and [with] a southern exposure."³⁵ In July 1947, the Wagners moved into their new home, an innovative, modernist dwelling, which was initially modest in size, but grew to include several additions. (Figure 9) The Wagner House (PG: 83-32) featured many of the key elements of the modernist vocabulary of the day: low-sloped, butterfly and shed roofs and large expanses of window glass that



Figure 9: View of the Charles Wagner House, undated. [Provided by Holliday Wagner and on file at the Historic Preservation Section, Prince George's County Planning Department, Upper Marlboro, Maryland]

provided ample light and created a visual connection between interior spaces and the outdoors. The exterior was clad with board-and-batten siding, which would become a common feature of the architect's early houses. Wagner incorporated into his new house some salvaged materials, including older windows and doors with their original hardware.³⁶ Wagner's one-time employer, Charles Goodman, was also known to use salvaged materials in new construction.³⁷ The original house consisted of a living room, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and dining room. A children's wing was constructed in 1950.³⁸

³⁴ Charles Francis Wagner resume, File: 83-32, Charles Wagner House, Historic Preservation Section, Prince George's County Planning Department, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

³⁵ Charles Wagner, "A Rambling History of the Moyaone Reserve from Where I have Sat on Bryan's Point Road Since 1936: WWII-1977" (unpublished manuscript, 1977), 3. Copy provided by Holliday Wagner.

³⁶ Daniel Sams, "Wagner House," Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form, December 2015.

³⁷ Margaret M. Grubiak, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, "Charles M. Goodman House," April 2013.

³⁸ Daniel Sams, "Wagner House," Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form, December 2015.



Figure 10: View of the living room of the Wagner-designed Harris House in the Moyaone Reserve. [Robinson & Associates, 2019]

Soon after he completed the first iteration of his own house, Wagner had a chance encounter with a new property owner in Bond's Retreat, William J. Harris, that led to his first commission in what became the Moyaone Reserve. (Figure 10) Harris allegedly stopped by a Goodman-designed house on Bryan Point Road to ask for directions. Impressed by the house's modern design, Harris asked the house's owner, Robert Straus, by then the husband of Lenore Thomas, if he knew of an architect who could employ a similar approach when he built his own house. Wagner, who was

in the next room, introduced himself and the two made arrangements for the Harris House (PG: 83-33).³⁹ Wagner's design for the Harris House included many features he had employed in his own home, including window walls, a low-slope shed roof, and board-and-batten siding.

Wagner would go on to design approximately twenty additional modern houses for clients and friends in the Moyaone Reserve. His houses there displayed a great degree of consistency. They were typically modest in size, simple in composition, and built using low-cost, readily-available materials. (Figure 11) Modernist window walls were paired with natural materials like board-and-batten exterior siding, interior wood paneling, and terra-cotta tile flooring. The houses were efficiently designed to take advantage of the sun's energy for heating. Large expanses of glass



Figure 11: Plumer House, circa 2002, designed by Charles Wagner and built around 1950. [Courtesy David Cremer]

brought in the low, winter sun, and overhanging eaves shaded the interior from the high, summer sun. Starting in the 1960s, Wagner's residential designs became more site specific. Houses were built into slopes in the terrain to minimize the physical and visual intrusion of the architecture on the landscape. Also during this period he frequently combined natural materials, such as slate and brick, with standardized, prefabricated materials, including cinderblock and plywood paneling.

³⁹ Ibid.

Wagner was at some point commissioned to design a house for U.S. Ambassador to Laos Leonard Unger and his wife in Rockville, Maryland. He also had residential commissions in Saginaw Bay, Michigan, and in Puerto Rico.⁴⁰ Other architectural projects in Accokeek included the Moyaone Reserve community building and a multi-purpose center for Christ Church of Accokeek. The latter building mixed traditionalism and modernism to create a contextual, yet contemporary design. It featured symmetrical facades and a central pediment, but the pediment lacked the detailing or ornamentation associated with classical architecture and was supported by simple, thin posts on brick bases. The front door was set within a glazed wall – a distinctly modern feature. Wagner also designed several projects for the National Colonial Farm, which was situated in Piscataway Park. The work further showed his versatility as an architect, as the new buildings were expected to conform to the colonial theme of the site.

Aside from his private commissions, Wagner also worked for other architectural firms, where he designed hospitals and public facilities. In 1959, he was hired as an architect for the U.S. Public Health Service, where he was responsible for consulting with new and expanding medical schools in the United States and abroad, including the medical school at the University of Maryland. He also remained involved in his community. He was a co-founder of the Accokeek Foundation, which was established in 1957 to preserve the viewshed of Mount Vernon. The advocacy of the Accokeek Foundation led to the establishment of Piscataway Park in 1961. Following his retirement in 1980, Wagner volunteered with the University of Maryland School of Architecture.⁴¹

Architect Charles Goodman

Charles M. Goodman (1906-1992) was born in New York City and raised in Chicago. In 1934, he received a degree in architecture from the Armour Institute of Technology (the forerunner of the Illinois Institute of Technology) in Chicago. At a time when the Armour Institute still taught a Beaux Arts curriculum, Goodman's spare designs made him known as the "pipe-rail architect." Although his introduction to modernism is not known, his growing up on Chicago's North Side exposed him to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and he was known to read widely on the latest in national and international design.⁴² Goodman also drew influence from Mies van der Rohe's frank use of materials and structural honesty.⁴³

Goodman moved to Washington, D.C., following his graduation to work as an architect for the U. S. Treasury. His position at the Treasury involved designing public buildings, which included a post office in Evanston, Illinois, a federal office building in New Orleans, and a collection of federal buildings at the New York World's Fair in 1939.⁴⁴ Many of these buildings adhered to the stripped classicist style typical of

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ "Charles Francis Wagner, Architect," *Washington Post*, June 4, 1998.

⁴² Civic Association of Hollin Hills, *Hollin Hills: Community of Vision* (Alexandria, VA: Civic Association of Hollin Hills, 2000), 30.

⁴³ Elizabeth Jo Lampl, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, "Subdivisions and Architecture Planned and Designed by Charles M. Goodman Associates in Montgomery County, Maryland," January 2004.

⁴⁴ Martin Weil, "Charles Goodman Dies at 85; Architect for Hollin Hills," *Washington Post*, October 31, 1992.

public architecture at the time. While in his role at the Treasury, Goodman became the lead architect for Washington National Airport, for which he chose a streamline moderne design, complete with ribbon windows, land-side covered walkways with curved canopies and metal fascia, and an air-side wall of glass. Unlike his earlier federal projects, there was little trace of classicism. Goodman's modern design, however, was tempered by the addition of a stripped classicist portico on the land-side façade, allegedly at the insistence of President Franklin Roosevelt. His design also called for a much larger building than what was constructed.⁴⁵ The airport opened to passengers in 1941.



Figure 12: View of the Thomas-Straus House, designed by Charles M. Goodman. [Robinson & Associates, 2019]

Angered by the ways in which his ambitious design for National Airport was diminished, Goodman resigned and was replaced by architect Harban Chandler. The experience prompted Goodman to go into private practice as an architect. He opened a small office in downtown Washington, where he began receiving commissions for houses. Goodman was among the first architects in the Washington region to use a strictly modern vocabulary

for residential architecture. His houses typically featured large expanses of glass, exposed roof framing, and overhanging eaves. Goodman became known for the ways in which he sited houses to take advantage of different terrains and to optimize sunlight and views. Goodman houses also often had multiple terraces and roof decks, which he termed “outdoor living spaces.” His innovative custom houses earned him recognition among the national architectural press.⁴⁶ In late 1941, Goodman was commissioned by sculptor Lenore Thomas to build a house on her Accokeek property known as Carver’s Hill, which was located down the road from Hard Bargain Farm and Longview. (Figure 12) The house became a catalyst for modern design in the community. Later, in 1946, he designed an addition to the house, which was built into the hillside behind Thomas’ sculpture studio and workshop. By that time, Thomas had married Robert Straus, an important figure in the creation of the Accokeek Foundation.

⁴⁵ Lampl, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, “Subdivisions and Architecture Planned and Designed by Charles M. Goodman Associates in Montgomery County, Maryland,” January 2004.

⁴⁶ Richard Guy Wilson, “Hollin Hills Unit House,” in *The Making of Virginia Architecture*, eds. Calder Loth, Charles E. Brownell, and Richard Guy Wilson (Richmond: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1992), 396.

In 1942, Goodman took a break from his practice to become head architect for the Army Air Force's Air Transport Command (ATC), for which he designed a number of different building types, including officer's housing, mess halls, barracks, hospitals, chapels, libraries, heating plants, and ice plants. He resumed his private practice when the war ended in 1945. He served as a consulting architect to American University in the late 1940s and early 1950s, during which time he prepared a master plan for the campus and series of building plans for dormitories and academic buildings. He also designed a number of schools and churches in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., in the years after the war. Meanwhile, Goodman continued to receive commissions for modern houses in the Washington metropolitan region.⁴⁷ His work became so well known that he was selected to design a chancery for the U.S. legation in Reykjavik. It was to be, in the words of Foreign Buildings Office (FBO) chief Leland King, "the first truly modern building" to be constructed by the U.S. government abroad. However, as a result of a bidding collusion scheme, where contractors attempted to inflate the cost of the project, the FBO cancelled the contract and the project was never built.⁴⁸

In 1946, Goodman formed a partnership with developer Robert Davenport on what would become the defining project of his career – a community of modern houses near Alexandria, Virginia, known as Hollin Hills. Goodman saw the development as an opportunity to create affordable modern housing, which had long been an interest of the architect. (Figure 13) The houses in Hollin Hills followed many of the same principles Goodman had developed in his residential architecture in the early 1940s. Houses were sited for southern exposure views in a



Figure 13: The Goodman-designed houses that comprised the Hollin Hills development were sited to respond to the hilly terrain. [Hollin Hills: Community of Vision, A Semicentennial History, 1949-1999]

natural setting that was preserved as much as possible. Goodman designed several different house plans in different sizes, in an attempt to avoid what he saw as the monotony of the typical post-war suburban community. Costs were minimized through standardization, prefabricated millwork, and the use of

⁴⁷ Lampl, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, "Subdivisions and Architecture Planned and Designed by Charles M. Goodman Associates in Montgomery County, Maryland," January 2004.

⁴⁸ Jane C. Loeffler, *The Architecture of Diplomacy: Building America's Embassies*, second edition (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2011), 57.

modern technology and materials, such as steel sash windows, concrete slab floors, and by combining all utilities in central cores.⁴⁹

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, 463 contemporary houses were built in Hollin Hills according to designs by Goodman's firm. The houses were widely depicted in periodicals in the 1950s and received a number of awards, including citations from *Life* magazine and a design award from the American Institute of Architects (AIA). When the AIA celebrated its centenary in 1957, the organization chose Hollin Hills as one of the "Ten Buildings in America's Future." It became clear early on that Hollin Hills appealed to a certain kind of client, primarily well-educated and federal government-employed professionals. As Goodman explained, "We designed it to appeal to the kinds of activists who joined conservation associations and so on."⁵⁰

While he continued working on Hollin Hills, Goodman was commissioned to design other suburban communities of modern houses, including several in Montgomery County, Maryland. In 1953, he was invited to become consulting architect to the National Homes Corporation, which at the time was the country's largest manufacturer of prefabricated houses. In the 1960s, Goodman designed several office parks in northern Virginia. Goodman's firm continued designing houses for Hollin Hills until 1971. One of his last projects was the Dickenson Building in McLean, Virginia, in 1983. Three years later, Goodman went into semi-retirement.

IV. RESULTS OF FIELD INVESTIGATIONS

Over the course of the survey project, Robinson & Associates conducted fieldwork without any constraints related to access. Homeowners were contacted via telephone and email and were cooperative and supportive of the project. In some cases, homeowners provided valuable resources, such as drawings, photographs, and information regarding modifications to the house since the original construction.

The goal of the Prince George's County Mid-century Modern Survey was to document eleven houses in the Moyaone Reserve for the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties. This goal was achieved. Nine of the houses were designed by Charles Wagner, one by Charles Goodman, and one was built using a model home plan designed by architect John Normile of The Architects Collaborative and published and distributed by *Better Homes and Gardens* as "Five Star Home Plan No. 2608." Capsule Summaries for each property are included in Appendix A.

Each house reflects the unique heritage of architectural modernism in the Moyaone Reserve. All eleven houses generally demonstrate a characteristic modernist vocabulary, including low massing, low-sloped roofs, and large expanses of glass. Such large windows integrated the exterior and interior, offering residents generous views. The houses designed by Wagner, representing twenty-five years of his career, demonstrate the evolution of his design approach, as well as of the changing needs of the community (a shift from modest, weekend cottages to year-round houses for families). While some houses have been

⁴⁹ Wilson, "Hollin Hills Unit House," 396; Lampl, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, "Subdivisions and Architecture Planned and Designed by Charles M. Goodman Associates in Montgomery County, Maryland," January 2004.

⁵⁰ Wilson, "Hollin Hills Unit House," 396.

altered as a result of additions and/or interior renovations, most retain a moderate or high degree of architectural integrity.

V. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties forms for the nine houses designed by Charles Wagner were prepared as part of an effort to document more of his work in the Moyaone Reserve. Prior to the survey project only three of his nearly twenty houses in the Moyaone Reserve had been documented. As a result of the Prince George's County Mid-century Modern Survey, twelve Wagner-designed houses are now documented and included in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties.

Over the course of the project, one additional Wagner house was identified through research in the archive of Holliday Wagner, Charles Wagner's daughter. This is the North House at 14800 Bonds Retreat Road in the Bond's Retreat subdivision. It is recommended that an inventory number be assigned to this property and that it be documented at the intensive level. The following table lists the known Wagner-designed houses in the Moyaone Reserve in order of their construction.

Charles Wagner-designed Houses in the Moyaone Reserve⁵¹

Date	Historic Name	Address	MIHP Number
1947	Wagner House	1910 Bryan Point Road	PG: 83-32
1948	Harris House	2307 Rockwood Road	PG: 83-33
1949	North House	14800 Bonds Retreat Road	(none assigned)
ca. 1950	Plumer House	2002 Bryan Point Road	PG: 83-40
1950-51	Dunphy House	1804 Bryan Point Road	PG: 83-34
1952	Spratt House	1710 Bryan Point Road	PG: 83-35
1954	Crane House	2501 Rockwood Road	PG: 83-38
1956	Whyte House	3001 East Ridge Road	PG: 83-39
1956-57	White Hinckley House	1700 Bryan Point Road	PG: 83-36
1960	Finney House	1130 Apple Valley Road	PG: 83-41
1961	Withers-Bologna House	15101 East Auburn Road	PG: 83-45
1961	Sandine House	14908 West Auburn Road	PG: 83-42
1963	Robinson House	15300 Poplar Hill Road	PG: 83-43
1965-66	Vanderslice House	14801 West Auburn Road	PG: 83-44
1972	Hickerson House	1520 Laurel Drive	PG: 83-46
1974	Miles House	2407 Rockwood Road	PG: 83-47
1976	Odell House	14601 Bonds Retreat Road	PG: 83-48

Lastly, over the course of the project, the investigators learned that the Werner House at 1200 Laurel Drive in the Apple Valley subdivision is attributed to Charles Wagner. It is recommended that additional research be carried out to verify this attribution and that the property be documented if it is found to be a Wagner design.

⁵¹ The Donohue House (PG: 83-49), located at 16301 Old Marshall Hall Road, was built in 1978. While it is located in Accokeek, it is not located within the Moyaone Reserve and therefore is not included on the list. In addition, the White-Thornhill House (PG: 83-37), which once stood at 1902 Bryan Point Road, is not included on the list because it was destroyed by a fire in 2014.

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APPENDIX A: CAPSULE SUMMARIES

CAPSULE SUMMARY

PG: 83-33

Harris House

2307 Rockwood Road, Accokeek, MD 20607

1948

Private

The Harris House, designed by architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., is situated in a wooded setting in the Bond's Retreat subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. Completed in 1948, the Harris House was Wagner's first commission in Accokeek, Maryland. The original house featured a modest, L-shaped plan that consisted of an open living space (living room, bedroom, and dining room) in the main block and a kitchen, bathroom, and carport in a wing that projected from the front elevation. Two additions were made to the house in the 1950s.

The single-story modernist house exhibits many of the features that became characteristic of Wagner's approach to residential design. It has a low-slung, horizontally massed form, an open floor plan under a shed roof, and uses natural materials such as board-and-batten siding. Window walls of floor-to-ceiling plate glass blur the line between interior spaces and the house's surroundings. Original interior features include terra-cotta tile floors, wood-plank ceilings, glazed exterior doors, and clerestory windows.

CAPSULE SUMMARY**PG: 83-34****Dunphy House****1804 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek, MD 20607****1950-51; 1957-58****Private**

Designed by architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., and built in two phases in 1950-51 and 1957-58, the Dunphy House is located on a roughly 12-acre lot along Bryan Point Road in the Bond's Retreat subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. The one-story, frame house epitomizes the modest, modern homes designed by Wagner for the "pioneers" of the Moyaone Reserve. It has a compound slant roof and an open floor plan. An attached carport with a slant roof extends from the northwest corner of the house. Exterior materials include vertical wood siding and plate glass. Original interior finishes and features include wood paneled walls, wood plank ceilings, custom-designed closets, and clerestory windows. With only three owners since the original construction, the house features many original materials and design elements and retains a high degree of integrity.

CAPSULE SUMMARY**PG: 83-35****Spratt House****1710 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek, MD 20607****1952****Private**

The Spratt House, located at 1710 Bryan Point Road in the Bond's Retreat subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve, is a one-story, modern-era dwelling designed by architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., and completed in 1952. The house is located near the center of an irregularly shaped, 5.278-acre lot that includes two contributing outbuildings – a well house and a workshop. The Spratt House is oriented with its front door facing north toward the road, but the principal rooms are arranged along the south side of the floor plan to maximize their southern exposures. Characteristic of modern-era residential design, the Spratt House features slant and butterfly roofs, windows walls, and an open floor plan. Construction materials include board-and-batten exterior siding, interior wood paneling, plate glass, brick, and plaster.

The Spratt House is significant in the area of architecture and community planning as a Mid-century Modern house designed by Charles F. Wagner, Jr., and commissioned by Robert and Helen Spratt, “pioneers” of the Accokeek community that would become the Moyaone Reserve. In its form, style, and construction, the house epitomizes the late 1940s-early 1950s residential work of Wagner and demonstrates key design features characteristic of mid-century domestic architectural style.

CAPSULE SUMMARY**PG: 83-36****White Hinckley House****1700 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek, MD 20607****1956-57****Private**

The White Hinckley House was built in 1956-57 by psychiatrist Mary White Hinckley. It was designed by architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., and constructed on a 4.714-acre lot at 1700 Bryan Point Road in the Bond's Retreat subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. The house is significant in the area of architecture as a Mid-century Modern residential design by Wagner. In its form, style, and construction, the house effectively demonstrates the architect's late 1950s residential work and expresses key design features characteristic of mid-century architectural style.

Typical of Wagner's residential designs from the late 1940s and 1950s, the White Hinckley House is one level with a simple form and an open floor plan under a slant roof. The house was built using standardized and readily available materials evocative of the pragmatic approach to residential building that characterized early residential development in the Moyaone Reserve. Although the house has been altered since it was completed in 1957, the original form and layout are evident, and key design elements and materials remain intact.

CAPSULE SUMMARY**PG: 83-40****Plumer House****2002 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek, MD 20607****ca. 1950****Private**

Designed around 1950 by architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., the Plumer House is located on a roughly 5-acre lot in the Bond's Retreat subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. It is significant as an early example of the modest, modernist cottages designed by Wagner for the early residents of the Accokeek community that would become the Moyaone Reserve. The house has a spare, modernist form and an irregular plan composed of a combined living and dining room, a galley kitchen, a small office, and two bedrooms. Exterior materials include board-and-batten siding and large expanses of glass that flood the interior with sunlight. Original features include wood-plank ceilings, some kitchen cabinets, and sliding-sash, aluminum windows. Due to modifications over time that have altered the original plan and materials of the Plumer House, it has a moderate level of integrity.

CAPSULE SUMMARY**PG: 83-44****Vanderslice House****14801 West Auburn Road, Accokeek, MD 20607****1965-66****Private**

Built in 1965-66, the Vanderslice House is significant as a highly intact Mid-century Modern house designed by architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., and as one of only three Wagner houses in the Auburn subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. The house is located on a wooded, keyhole-shaped lot containing 5.708 acres and featuring three contributing outbuildings – a garage, a horse stable, and a shed/workshop. Wagner prepared plans for the house in July 1964, and construction was finished by April 1966. Built into a hillside and featuring a substantial, wraparound deck, the house exemplifies Wagner's embrace of the concept of "organic architecture." Construction materials include standardized, mass-produced items, such as Texture 1-11 siding, Homasote paneling, and cinderblock, elegantly combined with slate flooring, brick, and other natural finishes. The house has been home to only two families since its construction and retains a high level of architectural integrity.

CAPSULE SUMMARY**PG: 83-45****Withers-Bologna House****15101 East Auburn Road, Accokeek, MD 20607****1961****Private**

The Withers-Bologna House, designed by architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., in 1961, is located in a wooded setting in the Auburn subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. Designed in a modernist mode, the horizontally massed, single-story house features an open floor plan. Large, plate-glass window walls allow the low, winter sun to heat the house, while deep roof overhangs shade the house in the summer. The house rests on a concrete foundation and is sheltered by a compound roof. Exterior materials include Texture 1-11 siding, cast stone, and plate glass. Original interior finishes and features include terrazzo floors and cast-stone fireplaces. Due to alterations made to the house in the 2010s, it has a moderate level of integrity.

The house is significant as a modernist work by Charles Wagner. Its spare form, ample glazing, and use of modern materials make the house a representative example of the architect's design approach. The use of cast stone, which clads a portion of the exterior, however, makes the Withers-Bologna House unique among Wagner's work in the Moyaone Reserve.

CAPSULE SUMMARY

PG: 83-46

Hickerson House

1520 Laurel Drive, Accokeek, MD 20607

1972

Private

Designed by architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., in 1972, the Hickerson House was built into the hillside of a sloped, wooded site in the Bond's Retreat subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. The horizontally oriented house features a ground floor and a full basement that is exposed at the rear. It is a frame house that rests on a concrete-block foundation and is sheltered by a shed roof. The interior features an open floor plan. Exterior materials include Texture 1-11 siding and plate glass. Window walls allow the low, winter sun to heat the house, while deep roof overhangs shade the house in the summer. The Hickerson House exemplifies architect Charles Wagner's later architectural work and the evolution of the Moyaone Reserve from a weekend or seasonal retreat to a year-round residential community. The house was constructed using readily available, prefabricated materials, demonstrating that good modern design was possible without the use of custom components. The original ground-floor plan remains intact, and the house retains a high degree of integrity.

CAPSULE SUMMARY

PG: 83-47

Miles House

2407 Rockwood Road, Accokeek, MD 20607

1974

Private

Designed by architect Charles F. Wagner, Jr., the Miles House was constructed in 1974. The house is located on a 5.04-acre lot in a wooded setting in the Bond's Retreat subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. Built into a hill on a slope, the house features a ground floor and full basement that is exposed at the rear. It is of frame construction resting on a concrete-block foundation and has a shed roof with deep eaves. It is characterized by an open floor plan and ample natural light provided by window walls. Exterior materials include Texture 1-11 siding and plate glass. Original interior features include Texture 1-11 paneling in the entry hall, custom-designed closets, Homasote ceiling panels, and exposed rafters. In 1986, a small addition was built to accommodate a larger kitchen and dining room.

As one of Charles Wagner's last residential projects in the Moyaone Reserve, the house is characteristically modern with soaring ceilings and large window walls. The house exemplifies the architect's later work with its multi-level layout and use of contemporary materials.

CAPSULE SUMMARY

PG: 83-50

Thomas-Straus House

1611 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek, MD 20607

Late 1930s; 1942; 1946

Private

The Thomas-Straus House is located on a wooded, 3.34-acre site at 1611 Bryan Point Road in the Bond's Retreat subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. It is a Mid-century Modern house designed by master architect Charles M. Goodman and built in two phases. The first phase of construction, in 1942, added a one-level house behind an existing sculpture studio and workshop built in the late 1930s by New Deal artist Lenore Thomas. In 1943, Lenore Thomas married Robert Ware Straus, and, in 1946, the couple added a lower-level addition to the residence, also designed by Goodman.

At the time of its construction, the Thomas-Straus House represented a bold and innovative project that sparked a wave of modern design in Accokeek. An early residential design by Goodman, it featured an open floor plan, soaring ceilings, window walls on three sides, and an ample deck that blended interior and exterior living. The house passed out of the Thomas-Straus family in 1986, and changes since that time have included interior remodeling and new construction that enclosed part of the original deck.

Today, original surviving construction materials include board-and-batten siding, plate glass, knotty pine interior paneling, and brick. Two original outbuildings still standing on the site – the workshop and studio of Lenore Thomas – remain as important reminders of the early history of the property.

CAPSULE SUMMARY

PG: 83-54

Swick House

15100 West Auburn Road, Accokeek, MD 20607

1959

Private

The Swick House is located at 15100 West Auburn Road in the Auburn subdivision of the Moyaone Reserve. It was built in 1959 following a model home plan designed by architect John Normile of The Architects Collaborative and published and distributed by *Better Homes and Gardens* in 1956 as “Five Star Home Plan No. 2608.” In its form and style, the house exemplifies many key tenets of post-war, modern-era residential design. It is a one-story house with a long, horizontal form and a low-pitched, side-gable roof. Deep eaves shelter and shade large picture windows used to integrate the building with nature. The floor plan has a highly efficient, modular design that incorporates standard component parts, including wall panels and window units. The post-and-beam construction allows for spatial flexibility and easy expansion. Original materials include yellow pine interior paneling, parquet flooring, and plate glass.