



June 5, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Rollin Stanley, Director
Montgomery County Planning Department

FROM: Clare Lise Kelly, Research & Designation Coordinator
Historic Preservation Section, Countywide Planning Division

VIA: Scott Whipple, Historic Preservation Supervisor
Gwen Wright, Chief, Countywide Planning Division

SUBJECT: Falkland Apartments Research

On June 12, 2008, the Planning Board is scheduled to evaluate the Falkland Apartments for designation on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*. The Falkland Apartments were previously evaluated for historic designation in the 1980s (see attached timeline). There are several outstanding factors that have changed in the intervening years, including:

1. scholarly research on garden apartments and suburban development,
2. survey and research on Silver Spring resources,
3. research on Falkland Apartments,
4. loss of significant Silver Spring resources, and
5. increased perspective with the advancement of time.

Garden Apartments Research

Over the last 25 years, considerable scholarly research has been conducted on garden apartments, suburban development, and related topics. Extensive study that has been done on national, state, and local levels has resulted in a much greater understanding of the historical and architectural significance of these resources. The attached list is by no means comprehensive, but provides a summary of these and other significant studies done in recent years. Following are highlights of this research:

- The Maryland State Highway Administration funded a comprehensive study of Maryland suburban development in 2002.
- The National Register published guidelines for evaluating historic residential suburbs, including garden apartments.

- David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland completed a Multiple Properties Documentation Form for residential suburbs providing the historic context for FHA-approved garden apartment communities.
- Andrea Rebeck analyzed multi-family dwellings in the context of early 20th century resources in Montgomery County.

Silver Spring Study

The understanding of Silver Spring historic resources has increased with survey and research conducted over the last two decades. Most recently, the Historic Preservation Section of the Planning Department contracted with a consulting firm in 2002 to evaluate the historical and/or architectural significance of resources in the Silver Spring CBD. As a result of this study, a number of individual properties and three thematic historic districts were identified by the consultant as being of potential historic and/or architectural significance. One of the thematic historic districts discussed in the study was “Silver Spring Garden Apartments,” and Falkland Apartments was identified as having architectural and historical significance within that context. As explained in the Historic Sites Survey Report:

Silver Spring’s garden apartments span the years from the early use of the Garden City ideals as articulated in garden apartment design during the 1930s, to the height of the movement in its most mature, if not somewhat distilled formulations of the 1950s. It exemplifies not only the significant ideals of architectural design, landscape architecture and community planning as they evolved within this concept, but it also presents a microcosm of the larger planning issues, unparalleled growth, and conflicts occurring in Silver Spring and Montgomery County during the first half of the twentieth century...

Garden apartments gained popularity in the United States during the Great Depression in response to the need for moderate-income housing... Many of the first garden apartments in the United States were promoted and insured by the FHA. These included Colonial Village in Arlington Virginia – the first FHA backed garden apartments in the nation, Buckingham also in Arlington, and the Falklands in Silver Spring.¹ ...

Early examples of the Garden Apartment in America date to the 1920s, and the movement began to take hold in Silver Spring with the construction of the relatively early Falkland Apartments. The Spring Gardens East complex, which arrived on the heels of the completion of the Falklands, was a truly bold departure from the Colonial Revival Style of Falklands with the use of the Art Deco styling.

Falkland Apartments Research

In 1999, the Maryland Historical Trust determined the Falkland Apartments to be eligible for the National Register. In 2003, EHT Traceries and the Silver Spring Historical Society completed a National Register nomination form for the Falkland Apartments. This

¹ Gail Baker, “Garden Apartments: Three Preservation Case Studies in Virginia”, in *CRM*, No. 5, Vol 22, 1999:23.

research documents the history of the garden apartment movement in detail and establishes the historic and architectural significance of the Falkland Apartments.

Loss of Resources

As other historic buildings in the community have been lost, the significance of remaining potentially historic resources increases. Preservation and planning decisions need to take into consideration the existing stock of historic resources. Over the last 20 years, the Board has evaluated historic resources and made conscious decisions about which to protect under the Preservation Ordinance. Many of those the Board has chosen not to have protected have been demolished. In the 1980s-90s, these included the Eig Building, 8641 Colesville Road; the Greyhound Bus Station, 817 Ellsworth; the Hewitt Building, 8585-89 Fenton Street; and the Wolfe Building, 8621 Georgia Avenue. More recently, the decision was made to allow the demolition of the Silver Spring Armory for redevelopment of its site. These choices have been made in conjunction with the revitalization of Silver Spring, yet the loss of historic fabric in the community has also increased the value of the resources that remain.

Even more significant has been the loss of garden apartments. In 2005, when the Planning Board placed the Falkland Apartments on the *Locational Atlas* it also made the decision not to list the St Charles Apartments on the *Atlas*. While both resources were identified in the 2002 survey as significant resources, the Board opted to protect the Falkland Apartments and not the St. Charles. The St Charles Apartments, on Cameron Street, have since been demolished.

Increased Perspective

Finally, the Falkland Apartments are now 80-82 years old. It is an established preservation principle that a sufficient age, generally accepted as 50 years, is needed in order to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. When the Planning Board determined that Falkland Apartments were not suitable for designation in 1983, the first buildings constructed were 47 years old.

Research:

Joan Randall, *An Historic Preservation Assessment of the Falkland Apartments Complex in Silver Spring, Montgomery County, Maryland*, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Prepared for Maryland Transit Administration, December 2007

Judy Reardon, Silver Spring Historical Society; and Laura Trieschman and Kristie Baynard, EHT Tracerics, Inc. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Falkland Apartments*, 2003

David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places*, *National Register Bulletin*, September 2002.

David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, *National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1960*, 2002

Potomac-Hudson Engineering, *Historic Resources Survey Report: Silver Spring Central Business District*, December 2002

Clare Lise Cavicchi [Kelly]. *Places from the Past: The Tradition of Gardez Bien in Montgomery County*. M-NCPPC, 2001

Maryland Historical Trust, *National Register Eligibility Review Form: Falklands Apartments*, 1999

Gail Baker, "Garden Apartments: Three Preservation Case Studies in Virginia", in *Cultural Resources Management*, No. 5, Vol 22, 1999:23.

PAC Spero, *Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology*, State Highway Administration, Maryland, 1999

James M. Goode, *Best Addresses: A Century of Washington's Distinguished Apartment House*, 1988

Andrea Rebeck, *Early Twentieth Century Resources in Montgomery County*, 1987

Timeline of Silver Spring Historic Designation and Evaluation Actions

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1975 | Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan adopted. Did not address historic preservation. |
| 1976 | <i>Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites</i> published--identified a Silver Spring Historic District without defined boundaries and two individual sites: the publically-owned Acorn Park and Jesup Blair House. |
| 1979 | Adoption of Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 24A-10) and <i>Master Plan for Historic Preservation</i> |
| 1981 | HPC recommends designation of Falkland Apartments complex |
| 1983 | Planning Board evaluates Falkland Apartments and recommends against designation |
| August 1984 | Demolition begun on Silver Theatre |
| Sept 1984 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HPC Recommends designation of Silver Spring Historic District and 8 individual sites to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation • Planning Board transmits to County Council recommendations against designating Falkland Apartments on the MPHP • Planning Board places HPC recommended resources on the Locational Atlas • County Council passed legislation for tax incentives for preservation of historic sites |
| Oct 1984 | County Council public hearing on designation of Falkland Apartments. Council votes to designate Cupola Building, and not to designate the remainder of complex |
| Nov 1984 | <p>Planning Board defers action on HPC recommendations. Authorizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • symposium of preservation experts • study of Silver Spring CDB resources <p>Mark Walston study of Silver Spring: historical and architectural context</p> |
| Feb/ March 1985 | Expert panel seminar and public symposium |
| May 1985 | <p>Planning Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm boundaries for the Silver Spring Atlas HD • Recommends designation of four individual sites: Acorn Park, Jesup Blair House, Silver Spring Post Office, Silver Spring Armory • Planning Board to Permitting Services: Retain Silver Spring HD on Atlas--value of historic sites to be examined in context of development and other public interests. |
| June 1985 | Council approves and adopts Amendment to Master Plan for Historic Preservation to designate Cupola Building. |
| Dec 1985 | Council designates Four Sites on Master Plan: Acorn Park, Jesup Blair House, Silver Spring Post Office, Silver Spring Armory |

Timeline of Silver Spring Historic Designation and Evaluation Actions

| | |
|------------|---|
| Aug 1988 | Demo permit filed on Silver Theatre, then withdrawn |
| Oct 1988 | Silver Triangle development project approved |
| July 1991 | Montgomery Arms designated on Master Plan for Historic Preservation |
| April 1993 | Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan Adopted |
| May 1993 | Planning Board votes to designate Silver Theatre/Shopping Center and Tastee Diner |
| Feb 1994 | Silver Theater/Shopping Center and Tastee Diner designated on Master Plan |
| 1998 | Redevelopment of Silver Spring. Silver Spring Armory demolished. Mitigation called for survey of historic resources in Silver Spring CBD |
| 2002 | Silver Spring CBD Study identifies properties of potential historic and/or architectural significance |
| 2003 | Four Resources placed on the <i>Locational Atlas</i> : Spring Garden Apts, Fire Station, National Assn Dyers and Cleaners, North Washington Shopping Center |

Timeline of Silver Spring Historic Designation and Evaluation Actions

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Feb 1981 | HPC evaluated Falkland Apartments for inclusion on the <i>Master Plan for Historic Preservation</i> . HPC recommends designation based on criteria 1d, 2a, 2b, 2e. |
| Aug 1983 | M-NCPPC generates Prelim Draft Amendment for MPHP: Falkland Apartments, with HPC recommendations for designating all three parcels |
| Sept 27, 1983 | Planning Board has public hearing on Falklands Prelim Draft Amendment. Votes not to designate any part of Falklands. |
| Sept 5, 1984 | Christeller transmits Planning Board recommendations to Council to not designate Falklands on the <i>Master Plan for Historic Preservation</i> . Notes Falkland Apartments are not listed on the <i>Locational Atlas</i> |
| Oct 23, 1984 | County Council public hearing on Falklands Final Draft Amendment |
| June 1, 1985 | Council adopts amendment to designate the Cupola Building on the MPHP. The balance of the Falkland Apartments were evaluated and found not suitable for designation. |
| 1992 | Buildings west of Draper Lane demolished for Lenox Park Apts (six two-story buildings demolished) |
| 1993 | The North Parcel was rezoned CBD-R1, pursuant to the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan |
| 2000 | CBD-R1 zoning was reaffirmed in the updated Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan |
| 2002 | Silver Spring CBD Historic Resources Survey identifies the Falkland Apartments as one of several properties of potential historic and/or architectural significance |
| 2003 | Planning Board placed Falkland Apartments on the <i>Locational Atlas</i> |
| 2003 | Falkland Apartments found eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the Maryland Historical Trust |
| 2007 | -Owner filed project plan application to demolish buildings on North Parcel -Under Chapter 24 A-10, Moratorium on Demolition, Falkland Apartments all three parcels found eligible for designation by the HPC & Planning Board -Planning Board directed staff to generate Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation |
| 2008 | February: HPC reviews Falkland Amendment and recommends all three parcels be designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation |