

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

30 North Market Street, Third Floor Frederick, Maryland 21701 (301) 600-1147



CASE NO. 23-02

NOMINATION TO COUNTY REGISTER

STAFF REPORT

SUMMARY

Property: Stevens House aka Pearre-Metcalf House
9084 Albaugh Rd. New Windsor, MD 21776

Applicant: Amanda and David Halla

Public Hearing for consideration of placing the property located at 9084 Albaugh Rd, Stevens House, on the Frederick County Register of Historic Places. Submitted by Amanda and David Halla, property owner of record.

The public hearing for designation to the Frederick County Register of Historic Places will be held at 6:30 p.m., or thereafter, on August 9, 2023.

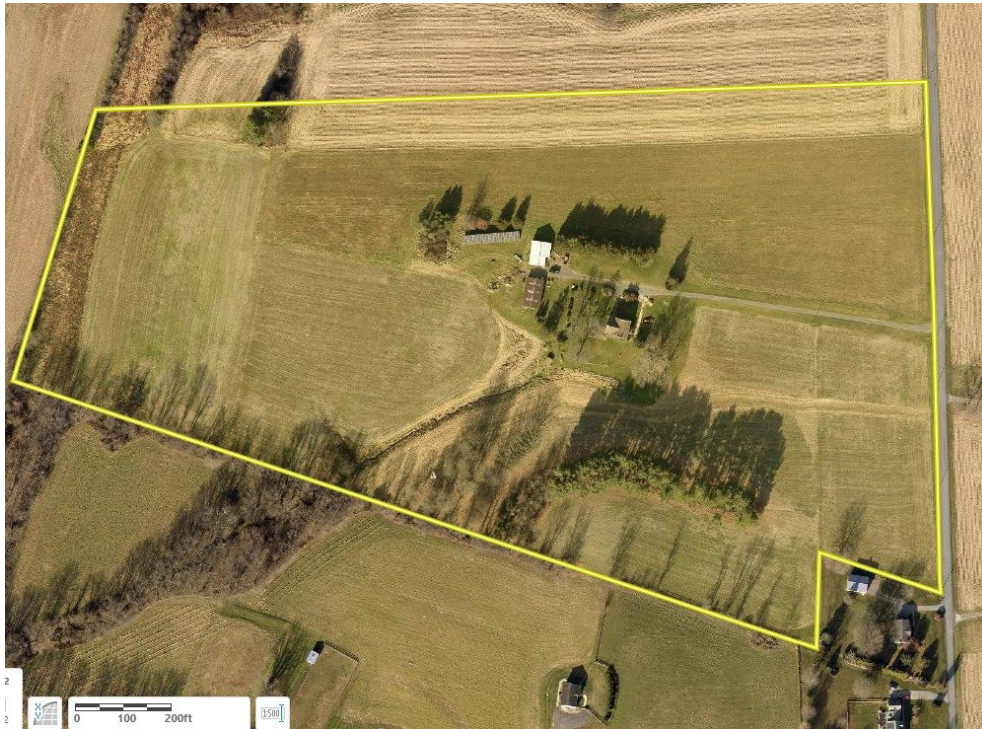


Figure 1: Subject Property

DESIGNATION STATUS

The property is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as the Pearre-Metcalf House and as F-8-51. The property contains the historic house, a historic springhouse, and two non-contributing farm outbuildings. The nominated property encompasses 35.3 acres of land.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

The applicant submitted a completed County Register nomination form, written historical and architectural narratives for the house, a summary of property ownership, historic and modern maps, and digital photographs.

SITE VISITS

Staff scheduled site visits on July 27th and 28th, 2023. Commissioners were notified of the pending nomination and encouraged to visit the site on these dates.

REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

1) Analysis

The documentation submitted by the applicant regarding the history and significance of the property clearly establishes the historical and architectural significance of the Stevens House, aka Pearre-Metcalf House, indicating that the property is eligible for listing under Criteria 6B(2A). The period of significance for the property is 1859, the construction date for the house.

2) History Summary

The house is built on a tract of land called "Pearre's Retreat," "Addition to Pearre's Retreat," and "Mistake Rectified." The Pearre family had large landholdings in eastern Frederick County. John and Joanna Stevens purchased the land from Henry and Margaret Worman in 1857 and built the house in 1859. One of the roof rafters has "Built 1859 Francis L. Biefdler," written in white paint.

According to the 1860 census, the Stevens household included two African Americans, and there are residual signs in the attic of occupation. John and Martha Davies were the son and daughter of Albion and Ann Davies. Prior to living in the Stevens House, the Davies lived with their family in a small African American community located between Unionville and New Windsor, along Sams Creek, centered around a small church called Mt. Zion. There are no known extant structures related to this community. John Davies is listed as a farm laborer and Martha Davies is listed as a servant.

While local tradition says that the house was built for the Stevens' daughter, Emma Stevens, this does not appear to be the case. The house was built almost twelve years before Emma was born. The house and land did transfer to her in 1895, when she was 24, but unfortunately Emma passed

away in 1900. Her husband, William H. Hixon Pearre received the house after Emma's passing and continued to live with his mother-in-law Joanna Stevens until her passing in 1915. William H. Hixon Pearre was the Postmaster for Unionville. At some point before 1920, Pearre moved away from the farm to live with his brother, James Pearre, in Unionville. Pearre sold the property to William and Laura Williams, who soon sold the farm to Isaac and Mary Gillespie from Virginia.

The Gillespies, along with their seven children and one grandchild, moved into the farmhouse but the Great Depression was devastating to the small farm. They took out an emergency mortgage for \$3,400 in 1934 as part of the *Emergency Farm Mortgage Act* of 1933. However, this was not able to save the farm and the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation purchased the foreclosed farm in 1937.

Joel and Frances Emerson moved to Maryland from North Carolina and purchased the farm in 1944 from the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation. Joel Emerson had been a machinist for various textile mills in Tennessee and North Carolina before taking up farming in Maryland. The Metcalfe family bought the farm from the Emersons in 1961 and the property has been in their family to the present day.

A bank barn used to exist on the property, but the building burned down in 1968, possibly connected to a series of barn arsons in Frederick and Montgomery Counties.

3) Architectural and Design Significance Criteria

The property is also eligible under this category for meeting criterion 6B(2A) as outlined in Chapter 1-23-6B(2) of Frederick County Code:

- 6B(2A): *The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or architecture.*

The mid-nineteenth century Stevens House is an example of the typical central Maryland farmhouse form but with variations in plan and ornamentation. A rural interpretation of the Greek Revival style is found in the ornamentation of the house. The Greek Revival elements of the main façade include the plain stretcher, the dentil cornice, the gable roof entrance porch, the flat, horizontally molded wood lintels, and the window mullions which emphasize the square window panes. The builder has used architectural ideas prevalent during the mid-nineteenth century to give the main façade a blockish, monumental quality, but the retention of the farmhouse characteristics intrudes upon this impression.

The property retains its integrity and architectural significance.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Stevens House (Pearre-Metcalf House) for designation to the Frederick County Register of Historic Places pursuant to 6B(2A) as described in Section 1-23-6B of the County Code.

If the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) recommends the property for local designation, the HPC will submit a letter of recommendation to the County Council for final action.