The Architectural and Historical Resources of Riverdale, The Bronx, New York: A Preliminary Survey

Commissioned by

The Riverdale Nature Preservancy

October 1998
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Christina Halsey Way, Editor

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Fig. 1: Map of the City of New York showing location of Riverdale, The Bronx, New York. Reprinted from the National Geographic Society, *Atlas of the World*, 5th Ed.
I. INTRODUCTION

The Riverdale Nature Preservancy (RNP), a non-profit organization based in Riverdale, The Bronx, New York, is seeking to ascertain the location and significance of the historic, architectural, natural and manmade resources (defined here as "cultural resources") in the Riverdale area as an important part of a long-range planning process to guide future development.

Among the recognized resources are a number of properties designated as landmarks by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission or listed in the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places. Current development trends may have a significant adverse impact on these and other cultural resources that may be located in the area. Since these resources are important to the social and economic welfare of the community, their preservation is important to include in any plan for development or redevelopment of the area.

More specifically, the RNP seeks to preserve the historic and/or architecturally meritorious houses, public buildings, and structures of Riverdale. It further seeks to preserve the area's natural features—including the scenic views, trees, rock outcroppings, and topography—and manmade features such as street patterns, stone walls, and posts that can be interpreted as creating significant cultural landscapes.

This study defines "Riverdale" as the neighborhoods of Spuyten Duyvil, Riverdale, North Riverdale, and Fieldston. Its boundaries are: on the north, the political boundary between the City of New York and the City of Yonkers, New York; on the south, the waterway formerly known as Spuyten Duyvil Creek, now the Harlem River; on the west, the Hudson River; and on the east, Broadway to Van Cortlandt South, then west along West 240th Street, and southward along Irwin, Ewen, and Johnson Avenues to the Harlem River. (Figs. 1 and 2).

The Henry Hudson Parkway, a limited-access highway that runs north-south between the Henry Hudson Bridge and West 254th Street, bifurcates Riverdale. At 254th Street, the Parkway curves sharply eastward and enters Van Cortlandt Park about ten blocks south of the New York City-Yonkers border.

The New York City Planning Commission designated a large portion of the Riverdale Ridge a Special Natural Area District (SNAD) (Fig. 3) in 1975, due to its outstanding natural beauty. The SNAD is a zoning overlay designed to protect the natural features of the area, including steep slopes, rock outcrops, ponds, brooks, swampy areas, mature trees, marshes along the western foot of the ridge that are feeding areas for waterfowl, and the shoreline of
Fig. 3: Map of the Special Natural Area District, Riverdale, The Bronx, New York. Reprinted from Buckhurst Fish & Jacquesmart, Inc., Planning Study for the Riverdale Community's Special Natural Area District (December 1993).
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the Hudson River estuary, which contains the aquatic food web necessary to sustain life (Figs. 4 and 5).

The RNP is particularly concerned with the preservation of the natural and cultural features in the SNAD; therefore, this District was given special emphasis in this report.

This report is a preliminary assessment of the study area, and may be used as a base document for a more intensive cultural resource survey. Future work will require, among other things, that inconsistencies discovered among the resource materials be clarified, and information obtained from oral histories receive further documentation. Archaeological resources located within the study area are considered in only the broadest sense, and are not a focus of this report.

The purposes of this study are:

• to identify and locate primary and secondary research materials that relate to the history of the area

• to identify and locate the resources already designated as historically significant

• to identify other architecturally or historically significant resources that may warrant further investigation and documentation as part of a more intensive cultural resource survey

• to identify, in general terms, any other aspects of cultural significance that contribute to the character of Riverdale and that would warrant protection and enhancement.

The goal of this study is to facilitate a decision to seek Historic District designation of an area beyond the previously designated "Riverdale Historic District," thus preserving the cultural resources, including those architectural, historic, natural and manmade scenic values, that are unique to Riverdale.

Sections II, III and IV examine Riverdale's history, evaluate its resources, and list its significant properties.

Riverdale's patterns of European development are traced from the mid-17th century, when the northwestern portion of the Bronx was acquired by a Dutchman, Adraeen Van der Donck, to the present day. Of particular focus is the period beginning in the mid-19th century when Riverdale was transformed from rural farmland to a picturesque railroad suburb. The efforts of its citizens, from the early efforts of George W. Perkins at the turn of the century to those of present-day residents, to preserve Riverdale's unique features—its winding lanes, streams, rock outcroppings, steep slopes, wooded areas, and spectacular vistas—are well documented.
An evaluation of Riverdale's resources finds that Riverdale (A) has historically attracted as residents persons who were prominent in our history; (B) has associations with events important to our history—notably the growth of the romantic suburb as a significant development in American architecture and patterns of settlement; (C) has archaeological sites relating to Native American tribes and to the period of European settlement; (D) has natural and manmade features—steep slopes, rock outcrops, many verdant areas and striking vistas of the Hudson River, combined with narrow, winding streets, stone walls, and development that is sensitive to the steep and rocky terrain—that create a significant cultural landscape; and (E) has numerous architectural resources, including properties already designated as historic, properties proposed for city landmark designation, properties that appear to warrant further investigation, and contemporary structures. These are listed in section IV by geographic neighborhood.

For the purposes of this study, Riverdale's significant properties are divided into six geographic neighborhoods: Wave Hill, Riverdale Historic District, Mount St. Vincent, North Riverdale, Fieldston, and Spuyten Duyvil.

This report could not have been completed without the assistance of Robert Kornfeld, Sr., Robert Kornfeld, Jr., Gilbert Kerlin, Esq., and Peter Davies, who have given hours of their time, providing invaluable insights into the history of the Riverdale area, much of which is not documented in other sources.
II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Early Subdivisions

The northwesternmost portion of the Bronx, now comprising the neighborhoods of Riverdale, North Riverdale, Spuyten Duyvil, and Fieldston, and known generally as "Riverdale," was part of a large region inhabited by the Mahican tribe prior to 1646. In that year, it was acquired by Dutchman Adriaen Van der Donck, who was given permission to purchase these lands, which became known as Colen (colony) Donck, as a reward for negotiating a peace treaty between New Netherland and local tribes. Donck died in 1655, leaving Colen Donck to his wife, Mary Doughty. The estate was sold to her brother, Elias Doughty in 1666. He, in turn, sold the southernmost portion of the estate, an area included in this study of Riverdale, to George Tippett and his father-in-law, William Betts, in 1668. Tippett and Betts were farmers, and their lands remained agricultural into the 19th century.

The northern portion of the Colen Donck property was acquired by Frederick Philipse I, and in 1693 was royally patented as the Manor of Philipsburg. Frederick Philipse owned ship, lumber, and lime kiln businesses, and rented his lands to farmers for cultivation. Throughout the 18th century the Philipse lands remained largely agricultural.

In 1693 Frederick Philipse built the first bridge over the Spuyten Duyvil Creek-a toll bridge that was known as "the King's bridge." This later became known as "Kingsbridge," a name that was expanded to apply to a nearby section of the Bronx.

Local farmers resented the toll bridge, and finally in 1758 banded together to build the free Farmer's Bridge, which crossed the Harlem River at 225th Street.

During the American Revolution, the land owned by the Tippett and Philipse families became important to both the Americans and British because of its strategic location. The properties overlooked the Hudson and Harlem Rivers, and the two bridges over the Spuyten Duyvil Creek provided the only overland route between New York City and the mainland. A string of forts, including three on Tippett's Hill, now the site of the Frances Schervier Home and Hospital, was erected by the Americans, and later occupied by the British. The entire area was the scene of skirmishes between British and American troops throughout the war.

Following the war, Philipse's loyalist great-grandson fled with his family to England, and his lands were confiscated by the State of New York. In 1785 the former Manor property was divided into parcels and sold by the state as farmland. A local farmer, George Hadley, was one of the property owners of this period.
Beginning in the 1820s, several wealthy New York families-among them the Schermerhorns and the Delafields-acquired large parcels of property in the area. However, the first person to build a home in the area as a retreat from the stresses of urban life was William Lewis Morris, a prominent New York lawyer. In 1836, Morris and his wife, Elizabeth Babcock, purchased a tract from Hadley in what was then South Yonkers, just south of what is now 252nd Street. He built a two-story stone Greek Revival manor (1843-1844) there, that at some point he named Wave Hill (WH-1, infra). It was situated on a hillside that offered splendid views of the Hudson River and the rocky palisades of New Jersey beyond (Fig. 6). The only transportation to New York City was by boat down the Hudson River, but that apparently was of little consequence to Morris since he intended to retire to a life as a country gentleman. In 1843 Hadley sold another tract of 100 acres, just north of the Morris property, to William G. Ackerman.

The second villa estate built in the Riverdale area was Fonthill (MV-4, infra), constructed in 1848-1852 for the Shakespearean actor Edwin Forrest and his wife. Forrest never lived there, however. He reportedly lost interest in the property after a spectacular divorce. The Sisters of Charity acquired the property in 1856 for their New York mother house, and shortly thereafter began construction of its administration building (1857-1859) (MV-2, infra). That building and Fonthill are now part of the College of Mt. St. Vincent, the grounds of which retain much of the picturesque landscape of that early period (Cover illustration, and Fig. 7).

The Romantic Suburb Movement

American architecture and planning in the mid-nineteenth century were influenced by the transcendentalist philosophies of Thoreau and Emerson and the concept of the English picturesque landscape. The integration of domestic architecture into the beauty of a natural landscape resulted in cottage and villa forms that moved radically away from the classical influences of the previously dominant Greek Revival and Federalist styles of the new republic. Idealized Greek temple forms were no longer the preferred style; residences became asymmetrical in plan; executed in natural colors and materials that reflected the surrounding environment.

Landscape gardener Andrew Jackson Downing and architect Alexander J. Davis were two important proponents of the romantic suburb movement. Their designs fostered a spirit of "cozy domesticity" and a quest for a healthful life style that were to dominate suburban development throughout much of the 19th century.

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Fig. 6: Wave Hill, now owned by the City of New York, is visited throughout the year by many who enjoy the gardens and the vistas.
The development of the New York City suburbs was pushed forward by the cholera epidemics of 1832, 1849, and 1866. At the same time, the increase in rail networks during that period facilitated development of new areas in the outlying regions of cities. The Hudson River Railroad, proposed in 1842 and chartered in 1846, was completed in 1849 and ran along the western edge of the properties along the Hudson. Rail transportation between Riverdale and New York steadily improved after the construction of the first railroad bridge across Spuyten Duyvil Creek in 1853. In 1869, Commodore Vanderbilt merged two rail lines to form the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, and in 1871, a link was made that opened up rail travel down the west side of Manhattan to Grand Central Station (Fig. 8).

During the 1850s a number of suburban communities, including Riverdale, were founded that reflected the picturesque romantic tradition fostered by Downing and Davis All had common elements: picturesque sittings on hills or near water, verdant landscaping, names associated with natural features, and proximity to convenient transportation.

In 1852, William Ackerman sold his 100-acre farm to a syndicate of five wealthy and influential New York businessmen. This group was the investment nucleus of the villa development "Riverdale" along the slopes of the Riverdale Bluff, where the land dropped steeply away from the houses to a dock on the Hudson River at the bottom of what is now 254th Street. Its members included William Woodworth, a former U.S. Congressman and real estate developer; Samuel Babcock, a financier; Charles W. Foster, an auctioneer, and Henry L. Atherton and William D. Cromwell, both importers. This development has been designated a New York City historic district (R-1, infra) It has survived as an intact grouping of early residences and former carriage houses and stables, many of which still share the spectacular vistas that were enjoyed by their first owners.

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Fig. 7: Map of Yonkers, Westchester County, New York, 1868. Reprinted from Tieck, Riverdale, Kingsbridge, Spuyten Duyvil, New York City.
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In 1853, plans were filed for a second development on the land of Samuel Thompson. Although apparently never realized according to plan, "Hudson Park" remained on maps of the area at least through 1882 (Fig. 9).

In 1856, a third villa development emerged to the south of "Riverdale." Given the name "The Park-Riverdale," this development was founded by men reportedly of even greater prominence than those of the original grouping of villas. William Earl Dodge, Jr., a powerful man in New York commerce, commissioned James Renwick, Jr. to build a large Gothic Revival manor, which Dodge christened "Greyston" (1863-1864) (WH-7, infra). Percy Pyne, president of the National City Bank of New York, built "Alderbrook" (1863) (WH-11, infra), also in the Gothic Revival style. Woolens merchant Henry Foster Spaulding added the more modest Italianate structure, "Oaklawn" (1863) (WH-14, infra), followed by the residence for George H. Foster, "Parkside" (1871), both now part of the Riverdale County School, River Campus.

Other subdivisions followed later in the 19th century. These were also sited on curvilinear roads that continued the romantic traditions of the suburban movement as expressed by Downing, Davis, and Frederick Law Olmsted, noted landscape architect and co-designer of Central and Prospect Parks. This aesthetic consistently determined the development of lanes and roads in the Riverdale area along the slopes of the Hudson.

Local Industrial Influence

Riverdale was not only known for its residential development. A number of industries were located in the area. The most significant of these was the Isaac Johnson Iron Foundry, located on a peninsula that jutted into Spuyten Duyvil Creek. The foundry, and indeed the entire peninsula, were totally obliterated when Spuyten Duyvil Creek was straightened and transformed into the Harlem River Ship Canal, which was completed in the late 1930s.

The Johnson Foundry was established in 1853, one year after William Ackerman sold his property to the first Riverdale syndicate. The company originally made castings of gray, malleable and gun iron. During the Civil War the foundry produced shot, as well as the "Delafield cannon," named after its inventor, Major Richard Delafield, a relative of the Riverdale Delafield family. The foundry eventually ranked among the leading manufacturers in the field, continuing in business until 1923, when the New York Supreme Court ordered the release of the property to the state as a prelude to the straightening of the ship canal.


Fig. 8: Routes for local steam transit in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth Wards of New York City, 1877. Reprinted from original map by F.L. Olmsted, for the New York City Department of Public Works, dated 20 March 1877. Bronx Topographical Bureau.
The foundry employed a large number of workers in its peak years in the last half of the Nineteenth Century, many of whom lived in small houses close to the plant. "Puddlers' Row" (Fig. 10), no longer extant, was a small grouping of workers' houses near the intersection of Johnson Avenue and Kappock Street. Other modest houses were built along the steep banks of Spuyten Duyvil Creek above the present railroad station (SD-13, infra). The Riverdale Presbyterian Chapel, now Edgehill Church (SD-10, infra), was originally constructed to serve the many workers of the district. The Spuyten Duyvil area is now entirely residential, with some of the original single family homes and a number of apartment buildings. Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park offers wooded trails and spectacular views of the waterway, grassy playing fields across the canal, and the monumental arches of the Henry Hudson Bridge (Fig. 11).

Continued Environmental Preservation

Knowledge of the history of the road system in the study area is central to an understanding of Riverdale's aesthetic and cultural significance. The meandering lanes of Riverdale's western slopes followed the topography and the organic patterns of use. The integration of natural features—the streams, the rock outcrops, the steep slopes and the spectacular vistas over the Hudson River—into early development plans created for 19th century residents an especially attractive environment.

The section of the Bronx west of the Bronx River, including Riverdale, was part of Westchester County until it was annexed by the City of New York in 1874. As the city prepared for future growth and development in that area, the Department of Public Parks asked Frederick Law Olmsted and J. James R. Croes, civil and topographical engineer, to prepare a report on the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Wards (upper Manhattan and the West Bronx). Olmsted was struck by the beauty of the area:

*Generally, it is highly picturesque, with aspects of grandeur, and from nearly all parts, broad distant prospects are commanded of an extended, interesting, and even impressive character.*

Olmsted rejected the idea of extending Manhattan's gridded street pattern into Riverdale, recommending that it remain a picturesque suburb. He also pointed out that maintaining a road system that followed the topography would be more economical in the long run than would a road system that did not take the terrain into account. As he saw it:

Fig. 9: Map of Riverdale, 1882. Reprinted from Bromley, Atlas of 24th Ward, New York City (Bronx). New York Public Library.
Fig. 10: Puddler's Row, ca. 1900.
Fig. 11: View of Harlem River ship canal at Spuyten Duyvil, looking SE towards Columbia University’s playing fields.

Fig. 12: Palisade Avenue as it currently exists, just west of and below Hayden-on-Hudson apartments. It is mapped to be a substantially wider roadway.
It is not to be doubted that the promontory may, throughout its whole extent, be so laid out and occupied as to have an interest and attractiveness far excelling in its kind that of any other locality in America.

Olmsted and Croes were reportedly dismissed for political reasons one year later without developing these ideas further. The city proceeded with its plans for the development of Riverdale, which were finalized almost twenty years later in a comprehensive remapping of the streets. Prepared in accordance with an 1890 law, the plans were drawn up by Louis A. Risse, Chief Engineer, and dated June 17th, 1895.

To many of the old families of Riverdale, the new streets represented a threat to the rustic harmony of the area, especially in light of other developments: In 1898, the City of Greater New York was united into five boroughs, and the promise of a unified infrastructure combined with a booming population increased the probability that areas previously insulated from massive development would be rapidly transformed.

One concerned resident was George W. Perkins, a partner of J. P. Morgan. An early environmentalist, he served with Theodore Roosevelt on the Palisades Interstate Park Commission. He purchased Wave Hill House in 1903 (WH 1, infra) from William Henry Appleton. Perkins also acquired two adjoining properties to create the assemblage which now includes the property known as Wave Hill, transferred to the City of New York by Perkins's heirs in 1960, and the Riverdale Country School, River Campus. The new street plan for Riverdale mapped several streets through Perkins' property. He hoped to stave off their construction by building several substantial outbuildings on the site of those mapped streets.

As early as 1882, the Delafield family mapped streets in the easternmost section of their property, between Riverdale Avenue and Broadway, in a curvilinear pattern that precluded the development of the grid system that was moving inexorably northward from Manhattan. The street layout clearly reflected a preference for the picturesque rather than the urban. Beginning in 1910 streets were graded, plots were sold and the first homes begun. This area was formally partitioned in 1912, creating the residential enclave of Fieldston, reportedly named after the family's ancestral home in Ireland (Fig. 13).

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7New York city Landmarks Preservation commission, Riverdale Historic District, 15.


10Robert Kornfeld, Sr., Bronx historian, in letter to Mary Delaney Krugman, dated 18 November 1995, reporting oral history from the Delafield family.
Fig. 13: Map of Fieldston, 1912. Reprinted from Kline, Map of Fieldston, Borough of the Bronx, New York, commissioned by Delafield, 1912. Bronx Topographical Bureau.
Fig. 14: Map of the Special Natural Area District, Road Network: Slopes, Riverdale, The Bronx, New York. Reprinted from Buckhurst Fish & Jacquenart, Inc., Planning Study for the Riverdale Community's Special Natural Area District (December 1993).
Fig. 15: Map of the Special Natural Area District, Road Network: Pavement Widths, Riverdale, The Bronx, New York. Reprinted from Buckhurst Fish & Jacques-mart, Inc., Planning Study for the Riverdale Community's Special Natural Area District (December 1993).
Today the entire Riverdale area is an intricate interlacing of streets in various stages of existence—both public and private—that are mapped, but not built; mapped, but not built to the full mapped width; mapped and built to the full mapped width; and those streets that exist but are unmapped (Figs. 12, 14 and 15). Many resemble country lanes and are defined by stone walls that give the area a rural and picturesque feeling that is unique in New York City.

With the increasing popularity of the automobile at the turn of the century, outlying areas such as Riverdale came under ever increasing development pressure. Local residents took on more concentrated preservation activities. In 1906, a group of prominent land owners joined forces to protect the area from being altered in ways that would destroy its natural beauty and character. Known as the Park District Protective Agency, it included among its members the Delafield, Dodge, and Perkins families.

Beginning in the 1920s, it became difficult for property owners to maintain their large country houses and grounds. Rather than demolishing their homes, several property owners developed small residential enclaves on their estates, retaining the large country houses as centerpieces. In some instances large houses were divided by moving one or more wings to separate lots; as was the case with what now comprises 645, 639 and 633 West 252nd Street. Developers sensitively maintained the charm of the earlier era, while increasing the density of the area. Alderbrook (WH-11, infra), the Dodge and Delafield estates, "Blackstone" (Villa Paterno), and in the 1950s, "Hillside" (the Ladd estate), underwent this type of development.

The opening of the Henry Hudson Parkway in 1936 and the completion of the Henry Hudson Bridge across the waterway at Spuyten Duyvil in 1938 (Fig. 16) (SD-14, infra) opened the way for a new wave of development in Riverdale that responded to the pent up demand for housing after World War II. The parkway and bridge were both built under the leadership of New York City Parks Commissioner Robert Moses. As documented by Robert Caro in his biography of Moses, the enormous impact of this project on the woodlands of the Inwood Hill and Fort Tryon Park sections of Manhattan and on the settlement at Spuyten Duyvil, located just north across the Harlem River ship canal, inspired intense opposition from local environmentalists and the first formal censure of Moses by any one of the Good Government organizations that had long supported him.

11Mapped streets are defined as those formally adopted by the city and included on the official city street map. Situated, sometimes purposefully, in the middle of several of mapped but unbuilt streets are a number of culturally significant buildings and sites. The Wave Hill property, for instance, is transversed by a number of these planned streets. Many of the streets in the most historic and scenic areas are narrower than the mapped road widths, allowing the area to retain the ambiance of its earlier existence as a settlement of country villas. In some cases, important historic features such as stone walls, gutters, and fences are located in the middle of a mapped street.


13Caro, 548.
Fig. 16: Henry Hudson Bridge, looking NNW toward Spuyten Duyvil, ca. 1938.

Fig. 17: Development encroaching on the view from Wave Hill.
Over the next few years, high-density apartment buildings began to spring up along the Henry Hudson Parkway, hovering over the single family homes on the western slopes of Riverdale along the Hudson (Fig. 17).

Once again, concerned residents of that area united to oppose intense development that would forever change the character of the community. The Resident Homeowners of The Riverdale District, chaired by William Dunham, was one of the earliest groups to work for the protection of Riverdale's resources. The Riverdale Community Planning Association (RCPA) was founded by Gilbert Kerlin, Esq., Thomas Thatcher, Esq., and Robert Morgenthau, Esq. (later the District Attorney for the Borough of Manhattan) in the early 1950s. Joe Fox, Peter Davies, and Allen Dennison were also very active in this organization. The RCPA's leaders were determined to preserve the community's unique features while permitting controlled development to meet the burgeoning demand for housing.

Toward that end, the RCPA developed and successfully implemented a rezoning plan for the area from Spuyten Duyvil north to the Yonkers border that reserved the western slopes of that district for single family residential development, while allowing higher densities along the major traffic artery. Numerous existing institutions fit into this plan.

Thus, despite rapid growth, the entire zoned area would preserve the views, light and air for apartment dwellers along the ridge and householders on the slope; with public access to the parkland along the river.

The success of the RCPA rezoning preserved the character of Riverdale well before the community board system in New York City was created. The RCPA was disbanded after the community board system was established, although other initiatives to preserve the historic and natural resources of the area have been undertaken with many of the same leaders. The creation of the Special Natural Area District in 1975 and the Riverdale Historic District in 1991 were the results of such initiatives.

Community groups continue to monitor the application of preservation tools and advocate for increased protections. For example, the Friends of the Greenbelt, founded by J. Kord Lagemann and Gerald Manges in the mid 1970s, were key in helping to preserve the Special Natural Area District in several ways: fighting the NYC Department of Transportation plan to remove trees and make the Henry Hudson Parkway more like a thruway, defeating plans for high-density development in Chapel Farm, and defeating similar high-density plans for the Delafield Estate. The Riverdale Nature Preservancy (RNP) evolved from these earlier organizations. It serves as an advocate for enviromental and historic preservation, as well as the ombudsman and champion for careful, controlled planning, working closely with Community Board 8's Land Use Committee. These initiatives follow the local tradition for such action, which was first established in the nineteenth century.

14Gilbert Kerlin, personal interview with Mary Delaney Krugman, 29 September 1995; the personal files of Gilbert Kerlin contain much documentation and original correspondence concerning the activities of the RCPA, (1950 - 1980s).
III. EVALUATION OF RESOURCES

The following summary findings and evaluations are based on the research and documentation of the properties listed in Section IV. Those listings should be consulted for more detailed information.

A. **Associations with Persons Important to History**

Since the creation of the first villa development in the 1850s, Riverdale has attracted as residents persons prominent in our history. Among them are Mark Twain, conductor Arturo Toscanini; sculptor Elie Nadelman; Presidents of the United States Theodore Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy; Mayor of New York City Fiorello La Guardia; Secretary General of the United Nations U Thant; U.S. Congressman Jonathan B. Bingham; U.S. Attorney, Southern District of New York, and currently District Attorney of Manhattan Robert Morgenthau; and New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams. A more intensive study of this area would no doubt reveal the names of other noted individuals who have been associated with the community of Riverdale.

B. **Association with Events Important to History**

The growth of the suburb is one of the most significant developments in American architecture and patterns of settlement. There is much in Riverdale that remains as evidence of an early period of suburban development. Fine examples of the romantic villas and country estates of its 19th century beginnings, as well as layers of subsequent development, are clearly evident.

In addition, as waves of building activity continued in response to changing demographics and modes of transportation, the late 19th century, the early decades of the 20th century, and finally the post-World War II era all left their mark on the architecture and settlement patterns of the Riverdale area.

The presence of large institutions is also an important part of Riverdale's history. Some, such as the College of Mt. St. Vincent, (whose most famous graduate is Philippine former president Corazon Aquino), have roots that date back to the mid-19th century. The natural beauty and quiet life of the community, combined with the convenience of close proximity to the city, may well have been motivating forces for choosing this location. For the most part, the institutions and private residential neighborhoods have co-existed amiably. The grounds of many of the schools, hospitals, and religious orders-large, landscaped open spaces, elegant buildings, and the use of natural stone-retain the community aesthetic of the mid-19th century.
The aspects of Riverdale that have historically attracted its residents and enhanced their quality of life—its natural beauty, its history, its architecture—have also been a *cause célèbre* since before the turn of the century. Its citizens have fought hard in every decade to preserve that which is special to this area. Included are the efforts of George Perkins at Wave Hill and the Park District Protective League at the turn of the century; the Riverdale Community Planning Association; Bronx Community Board 8; the Kingsbridge-RiverdaleVan Cortlandt Development Corporation; and the Riverdale Nature Preservancy, among others. It is this tradition of guarding the history and the natural qualities of the landscape, and successfully guiding development in accordance with a rational plan, that distinguishes this community's cultural history.

The "broad patterns of development" that we identify here have been sculpted by a vigilant and thoughtful citizenry. The Riverdale that one sees today is evidence of that vigilance. This aspect of the history of Riverdale cannot be appropriately addressed in a study of walls, roads, and buildings. And yet, it is a piece of the history of this area that is central to the understanding of its development.

C. *Archaeological Resources*

The landscape in Riverdale provided Native Americans and early settlers with access to the Hudson River, a major transportation route, and with broad vistas advantageous for communication and defense. These features encouraged the creation of trails and settlements in the area. The Riverdale area, from Spuyten Duyvil to the Yonkers, N.Y. border has been designated by the New York State Museum as an area of "multiple site sensitivity". The "circles and squares" map provided by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (Fig. 18), defines general areas of sensitivity. For specific site identification, however, it is necessary to examine the map of individual sites maintained by the New York State Museum. There is some reluctance to make this information readily available, due to the vulnerability of such sites to collectors or profiteers in artifacts.

From an even earlier history, a mastodon's tusk was unearthed from the bed of an ancient bog near Spuyten Duyvil during the excavation for the Harlem River ship canal, and was later given to the Museum of Natural History.

D. *Natural and Manmade Features of the Cultural Landscape*

Cultural landscapes have recently been defined by the National Park Service as "a geographic area including both cultural and natural resources associated with a historic event,


"Tieck, 134."
Fig. 18: Detail: New York State Archaeological Sensitivity Map, 1992 showing Boroughs of Manhattan, The Bronx, and portions of Queens and Brooklyn.
activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values." In addition, there may be other legislation relevant to the protection of scenic resources. Like historic buildings and districts, these landscapes reveal aspects of our country's origins and development through their forms and features and the ways in which they were used. One of the most striking natural features of Riverdale is its topography. In the westernmost area, the steep slopes and rock outcrops have guided its patterns of development and the design of its buildings and structures, its infrastructure, and the preservation of many of its verdant areas. It is the topography that also creates one of the most striking of Riverdale's cultural resources: the many spectacular vistas of the Hudson River (Figs. 19 and 20).

Certain parts of Riverdale are united by a network of manmade features such as stone walls, cobblestone gutters, and narrow roads, many of which are historic. These landscape and estate features are found in the Riverdale Historic District and are documented in its Designation Report. They are also found in many other parts of the study area. Although some may be of a more contemporary period, they remain consistent with the historic design and use of natural materials. The map at Figure 21 does not distinguish between the historic and the contemporary, but rather analyzes the features as they contribute to the historic ambiance and continue the area's earlier landscaping tradition.

It is these natural and manmade features that the Riverdale Nature Preservancy seeks to protect: the scenic views, street patterns, stone walls and pillars, rock outcrops and other topographic features.

It is also the opinion of historic preservation consultant Mary Delaney Krugman that these features are such an important aspect of the historic significance of the western slopes of the Riverdale ridge, along with certain other areas of Riverdale, that they may be eligible for designation as a "scenic landmark" under New York City's landmarks law, and qualify as a "cultural landscape" as defined by the National Park Service.

The boundaries of such a site, however, need careful analysis. The interface between the topography, the sitting of structures, the infrastructure, landscaping, and development patterns that responded to that historic environment must all be taken into account. While note has been made of the features that contribute to the cultural landscape, no firm boundaries for such an area of significance, are suggested here.


19 New York City Administrative Code, Title 25-301 *et seq.*, Landmarks Preservation and Historic Districts.
Fig. 19: Viewscape from Spuyten Duyvl promostory, looking SSW along Hudson River.

Fig. 20: View looking NW from Wave Hill.
E. Architectural Resources

As a result of this study, a number of properties have been found to possess architectural or other cultural significance. These are listed in Section IV. The letter-number combination in front of each listed property is a key by which the reader can locate these properties, both in this document and on the folded map enclosed in this report as Appendix B.

The properties are grouped and listed by geographic neighborhood as follows:

- **WH** - Wave Hill Neighborhood
- **RD** - Riverdale Historic District
- **MV** - Mount St. Vincent Neighborhood
- **NR** - North Riverdale Neighborhood
- **FD** - Fieldston Neighborhood
- **SD** - Spuyten Duyvil Neighborhood

Further, the properties are given the following designations:

- **"D"** - Designated landmarks and landmark districts. These properties have already been designated as historic by listing in the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places and/or by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.

- **"P"** - Proposed landmarks. These are structures that were proposed for landmark designation in a report authored by Robert Kornfeld, Sr. which was co-sponsored by the Bronx County Historical Society and the Bronx Landmarks Task Force. The proposed landmarks were compiled in the book *Landmarks of the Bronx*, by historians Gary Hermalyn and Robert Kornfeld, Sr. (1989, 1990).

- **"F"** - Further investigation and documentation recommended. These are buildings, structures, and districts that have been neither proposed nor designated as landmarks, but appear to historic preservation consultant Mary Delaney Krugman to be of a level of significance and integrity to warrant further investigation and documentation.

In some cases, significance has been noted in written sources, in others, it has been suggested in oral interviews, in still others, significance has been suggested from site surveys by the historic preservation consultant.
Fig. 21: Map of Features that Contribute to the Cultural Landscape, Riverdale, The Bronx, New York. Reprinted from Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart, Inc. and Mary DeMey Krugman. Preliminary Cultural Resource Assessment: Riverdale, The Bronx, New York (December 1995).

LEGEND

- Contributing Roads
- Contributing Landscape
- Contributing Manmade Features (walls, gutters, etc)
For the most part, the structures and neighborhoods recommended for further investigation and documentation are measured against a criterion of architectural, as opposed to cultural, historic or other significance. In addition to the buildings and structures that have been noted by visual survey, there are many others located in and around the study area that have been designed by significant architects that may not be as readily apparent, but are of architectural significance nonetheless. For example, Dwight James Baum, among other notable architects, is known to have designed a substantial number of residences and public buildings in the Riverdale-Fieldston area, the specific locations of which have not been investigated in this overview.

• “C” - Contemporary Architecture. These are contemporary structures that have been noted in Willensky and White's AIA Guide to New York City (1988), or have been noted elsewhere as possessing a level of significance to warrant further investigation and documentation.
IV. SIGNIFICANT PROPERTIES

Wave Hill Neighborhood

The neighborhood which encompasses Wave Hill, the historical and cultural heart of the Riverdale community, is rich in cultural, architectural and natural resources. The Wave Hill neighborhood is contiguous to the Riverdale Historic District to the north, and extends east to Arlington Avenue and south to W. 240th Street. The Wave Hill property might be considered as forming the core of a historic district which would directly abut the present Riverdale Historic District.

WH-1 (D) [*] Wave Hill (Fig. 22), 675 West 252nd Street (1843-1844; architect unknown; north wing, late 19th century; Armor Hall (1928?/1932?,20 Dwight James Baum, Architect); south wings, after 1933; general renovation (1970; Stephen Lepp, Architect). Desig. 6/21/1966, Dkt # LP 0131). Originally constructed for wealthy New York jurist William Lewis Morris, it was the first country estate of Riverdale. It was originally a two-story Greek Revival house built of local Fordham gneiss. The center section of this building now operates as part of the Wave Hill Center for Environmental Studies. In 1866 it was purchased by publisher William Henry Appleton, who sold it to George Waldridge Perkins in 1903.21

Perkins, a J.P. Morgan partner, was an early environmentalist. Faced with the threat of new development in Riverdale at the turn of the century, Perkins worked to preserve the vistas and the ambiance of that community. Toward that end he purchased two adjoining lots, which now form the Riverdale Country School, River Campus, and the Wave Hill Center for Environmental Studies.


21There is a discrepancy in the date of purchase of Wave Hill by Perkins. Although Andrew Dolkart's Guide cites 1893 as the year of this event, materials from Wave Hill, the non-profit cultural organization that now runs the facility, and Robert Kornfeld, Sr. both mark 1903 as the date of purchase. Kornfeld cites his recollection of correspondence written by Mark Twain, who rented the property from William Henry Appleton, 1901-1903; Twain mentions that Perkins purchased the property during Twain's tenancy, Robert Kornfeld, Sr., correspondence with Mar' Delaney Krugman dated 18 November 1995.

Listed on the N.Y, State and National Registers of Historic Places and a designated NYC Landmark
Perkins also served with Theodore Roosevelt on the Palisades Interstate Park Commission. Choosing to live in "Nonesuch," the former residence of Oscar Harriman (later destroyed by fire; see reference under "Glyndor House," WH-2, infra), Perkins rented the Wave Hill house to many distinguished tenants. Among them were eminent zoologist Bashford Dean (1920s), conductor Arturo Toscanini (1942-1945), and chief members of the British Delegation to the United Nations (1950-1956). In this Perkins was continuing the tradition of an earlier owner-publishing scion, William H. Appleton—who rented to such guests as William Makepeace Thackeray, John Tyndall, T.H. Huxley, Herbert Spencer, Mark Twain (1901-1903), and the family of Theodore Roosevelt (1870-1871). One of Perkins's tenants, Bashford Dean, built the armor hall at the north end of the house. The Perkins Family donated the property to the City of New York in 1960, after which the side wings and main entrance enframedment was constructed, and the grounds relandscaped (Fig. 22).

**Designated a NYC Landmark**

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**WH-2** (F) Glyndor House (Fig. 23), 675 West 252nd Street (ca. 1929, George Butler, Architect). This southern building at the Wave Hill Center for Environmental Studies is currently used for gallery space. The predecessor of this neo-Georgian residence was Oscar Harriman's villa "Nonesuch," which was destroyed by fire in 1928. George Perkins (see Wave Hill, supra, at WH-1) purchased the property from Harriman in 1895. Perkins greatly enhanced the property by the addition of greenhouses, a swimming pool, terraces and a recreational facility that the Wave Hill Center for Environmental Studies has named the Ecology Building. The metal downspouts reportedly still bear the initials of George Perkins.23

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**WH-3** (D) **[*]**Campagna House (Fig. 24), 640 West 249th Street 21 (192925; Dwight James Baum, Architect) Originally constructed as a residence for Count Anthony

22Bashford Dean was the noted curator of arms and armor for the Metropolitan Museum of Art and also curator of reptiles and fishes at the American Museum of Natural History. Between 1906 and 1910, he held the two posts simultaneously. He married Mary Alice Dyckman, daughter of Isaac M. Dyckman of the prominent Dutch family of Marble Hill. She and her sister restored the original 1793 family dwelling and presented it to the City in 1915 as the Dyckman House Park and Museum. Their family mansion, located at 218th Street, was demolished ca. 1949 to make way for the present field house of Columbia University. In Tieck, Riverdale, Kingsbridge, Spuyten Duyvil, New York City, 130.


24 This address is incorrectly listed in Hermalyn as "240 West 249th Street".

25 The Riverdale Historic District designation report (New York City Landmarks Preservation commission) dated October 16, 1990, cites 1922 as the date of construction for the Campagna House. clarification is needed.

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Fig. 22: Wave Hill House, originally the residence of William Lewis Morris (1843-44).

Fig. 23: Glyndor House (ca. 1929), former residence of George Perkins, environmentalist.
Campagna, a wealthy Manhattan builder of the 1920s, this imposing building is situated on a rise overlooking the Wave Hill estate, at the corner of West 249th Street and Independence Avenue. A cobblestone drive from the entry gate forms a main axis perpendicular with the front facade, opening at the front entrance into a forecourt with a central fountain. The main entry is framed by a portico of three round arches.

The architect, Dwight James Baum, resided in the Fieldston section of Riverdale and designed numerous buildings in Riverdale and Fieldston. These include 5200 Sycamore Avenue in the Riverdale Historic District (1923-1924), the Riverdale Country Club (1920; demolished), Christ Church Parish House (1923), and the Armor Hall addition (1928) to Wave Hill house, as well as houses for Cleveland H. Dodge, Charles Evans Hughes, Jr., and Dr. Wade W. Wright. Baum also designed the Riverdale Firehouse, P. S. 81 and the Monument/Belltower at West 239th Street. He is also known for many significant buildings in other areas of the country, notably a villa in Newport for Count Alphonso, John Ringling’s home in Sarasota, Florida, and a parish house in Montclair, New Jersey.

WH-4 (F) 600 West 249th Street. Located just to the east of the Campagna House (WH3, supra), this residence appears to be of approximately the same period as that designated landmark. The rear portion of this residence and two residences located just behind it appear to be former outbuildings, including a pool house and garage, of the Campagna House.

WH-5 (D) [∗ ] H. F. Spaulding House (Coachman's Residence) (Fig. 25), 4970 Independence Avenue, northeast corner West 249th Street (1879, Charles W. Clinton, Architect; Desig. 7/28/1981, Dkt # LP-1083). Cottage reflecting elements of the Stick Style of the 1870s. Designed as a coachman's residence for Parkside (WH-15, infra), the estate of Henry Foster Spaulding, which is now part of the Riverdale Country Day School. It originally stood on the west side of Independence Ave., but was moved across the street in 1909. Spaulding's estate was part of a private community planned in 1856 on the banks of the Hudson River called "The Park-Riverdale".

WH-6 (F) Dodgewood Road. A limited access residential enclave immediately to the southeast of Alderbrook, includes Greyston, the former William E. Dodge, Jr. house (WH-7, infra), carriage house, and gate house (WH-9, infra), as well as the second

Information on Baum’s work cited here is taken from the Riverdale Historic District Designation Report, supra. These properties should be investigated for their location, if unknown, and their worthiness for inclusion in any inventory of historically-significant properties.

*Listed on the N.Y. State and National Registers of Historic Places and a designated NYC Landmark
Fig. 24: Count Anthony Campagna House (1929; Dwight James Baum, Arch.).

Fig. 25: H.F. Spaulding House (Coachman's Residence) (1879; Charles Clinton, Arch.).
estate house, Naumkeag (WH-8, infra) and the homes created from former wings of Naumkeag grouped around the cul-de-sac of Dodgewood Road. Just to the east, smaller vernacular structures along Independence Avenue that now serve as residences appear to have been outbuildings for these properties. This is one of several examples in Riverdale of preserving large estate houses by creating a residential enclave centered on the original residence.

**WH-7 (D) [^1] Greyston** (Figs. 26 and 27), 690 West 247th Street (1863-1864; James Renwick, Jr., Architect; Desig. 10/13/1970, Dkt 4 LP-0672). Originally the William E. Jr. and Melissa Phelps Dodge House. One of the first homes to be built in the second villa development along the Hudson River, "The Park - Riverdale," this stone villa is distinguished by its angular detail, quirky silhouette, and polychromatic slate roof that mark this as one of Renwick's earliest High Victorian Gothic designs. "Greyston" was constructed during the Civil War, while Renwick was waiting for work to resume on his St. Patrick's Cathedral. The Dodge family was instrumental in the establishment of Teachers College in 1887, and in 1961 Cleveland Dodge donated the property to Columbia University, whereupon it became known as the "Greyston Conference Center, Teachers College." It was later sold to a Zen community, and is currently a private home.

**WH-8 (F) Naumkeag (ca. 1880s).** The second estate house to be built on the property belonging to C.H. Dodge (WH-7, supra), Naumkeag is a gracious brick neoGeorgian with impressive rounded portico at the front entry. It originally was constructed with two large side wings, which were later detached and moved away from the main house, today forming an intimate grouping of homes of related design around a cul-de-sac at the end of Dodgewood Road.

**WH-9 (P) Dodge Estate Gatehouse,** Independence Avenue at West 247th Street (ca. 1860s). This timber-frame cottage was built in the picturesque style for the Dodge estate. The house is composed of two asymmetric units set irregularly side-by-side, each topped by a jerkin-head roof with decorative polychrome slate laid in a distinctive pattern. Large barge boards with flat drops define the eaves, and the exterior wooden siding consists of a variety of textures and patterns.

**WH-10 (F) Alderbrook Residential Enclave.** A focal point of this private residential enclave with a shared swimming pool is the villa "Alderbrook" (WH-11, in fr*, Fig. 28). The properties visible at the entrance appear to be ca. 1925, and are consistent with the revival styles prevalent during the period. While not of the scale or caliber of the original villa, they preserve the country estate ambiance of the district. The

[^1]: Listed on the N.Y. State and National Registers of Historic Places and a designated NYC Landmark
Fig. 26: Greystone (1863-1864; James Renwick, Jr., Architect), southern elevation. Originally the residence of William E. Dodge, Jr.

Fig. 27: Greystone (1863-1864; James Renwick, Jr., Architect), western elevation.
significance of this area is derived not only from the extant historic structure, but from the history of its development as a means to preserve the main estate, at a time when there was little market for such a large residence and grounds. The properties at the entrance are # 4725, 4726, and 4730 Independence Avenue. Robert Morgenthau resided in this enclave in the 1950s.

**WH-11 (P) Alderbrook** (Fig. 28), 4715 Independence Avenue (ca. 1880? / ca. 1863 ?27). Originally built as the residence of Percy R. Pyne, president of the National City Bank of New York. Later it became the home of the noted sculptor Elie Nadelman (1882-1946). Constructed across the street from William E. Dodge Jr.’s "Greyston," it was part of "The Park Riverdale," the second villa development. This Gothic Revival brick house has a multitude of crockets and intersecting gables inspired by the designs of Andrew Jackson Downing. The estate was kept intact by redeveloping the site so that it now forms the centerpiece of a private residential enclave with a shared swimming pool (see discussion at WH-10, supra).

**WH-12 (D) Riverdale Presbyterian Church**, Duff House, (formerly The Manse), 4765 Henry Hudson Parkway (1863; James Renwick, Jr., architect; Designated 4/19/1966). Combination of Gothic Revival and French Second Empire mansard roof tucked behind Gothic gables and dormers.

**WH-13 (D) Riverdale Presbyterian Church**, 4765 Henry Hudson Parkway. (1863; James Renwick, Jr., architect; Designated 4/19/1966, Dkt # LP-0218). Gothic Revival stone church recalls the English parish church tradition.

**WH-14 (P) Oaklawn** (Fig. 29), now part of Riverdale Country Day School, River Campus, Spaulding Lane between Independence and Palisade Avenues (ca. 1863; Thomas S. Wall, architect). The northernmost of two former residences on the campus remaining from the 19th century, this structure was designed in the Italianate style for Henry Spaulding and was part of his estate. Today it is clad in stucco. Fire escapes and other alterations necessary for its use by the school have significantly changed the facade.

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"There are two conflicting citations for a construction date: ca. 1880 is the date offered by Hermalyn and Willensky; ca. 1863 is offered in Robins. The date should be verified.

*Listed on the N.Y. State and National Registers of Historic Places and a designated NYC Landmark*
Fig. 28: (Right) Alderbrook (c. 1875-80), originally built as residence for Percy R. Pyne, as part of The Park-Riverdale, a development near Greyston; later the home of sculptor Elie Nadelman.
(Photo: M.D. Krugman, 1995)

Fig. 29: (Below) Oaklawn (1875), orig. residence of H.P. Spaulding, now Riverdale Country School, River Campus. View looks SW toward George Washington Bridge, Hudson River.
(Photo: M.D. Krugman, 1995)
THE ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES OF
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WH-15 (P) Parkside", now part of Riverdale Country Day School, River Campus, Spaulding Lane between Independence and Palisade Avenues (ca. 1871). More modest than "Greyston" and "Alderbrook," although part of the same development, this brick structure was originally a private residence for George H. Foster, and is one of two remaining 19th Century structures on the campus. It is asymmetrical, 2 1/2 stories, and has an enclosed porch along two sides. At the meeting corner, the porch swings out into a wide curve, and is topped by a round turret with conical roof with round window. The mansard roof of the main portion is pierced with dormer windows.

WH-16 (F) 4600 Palisade Avenue (ca. 1925; Frederick Augustus Godley, architect). Once part of the Delafield Estate. Dutch Colonial residence with red asphalt shingle gambrel roof. The main facade is of fieldstone on the first floor, with wood shingles on second floor and north wing. The front entrance has sidelights and transom with lights, and a porch with simple wrought iron railing.

WH-17 (F) Northern Palisade Avenue Waterfront Enclave ("Ferryman's Bush"). This neighborhood appears to have no official street; access to riverfront properties is by means of two identical and unconnected crescent drives that enter into a small grouping of six residences, located just opposite 4600 Palisade Avenue. The two houses fronting on the street that are included in this grouping are 4660 and 4675 Palisade Avenue. The Palisade Avenue waterfront enclave appears to have been a residential development of the 1920s (further investigation may reveal an interesting history, i.e., this is one of only two enclaves of approximately the same period located west of Palisade Avenue, on a point lower in the topography than most of the homes in Riverdale).

WH-18 (F) 691 West 247th Street. Random fieldstone on front elevation with stucco; variegated slate roof, bracketed dormer over main entry; decorative scalloped metal flashing over entry; contemporary deck on West elevation.

WH-19 (F) 697 West 247th Street ("Meadowlawn"), (Aymar Embry, architect). Built for a Dr. Webster, this Georgian Revival is made of red brick. There is a limestone frieze with rosettes at cornice; grey slate roof and gable ends; cobblestone drive, with fieldstone gateposts with ornamental lanterns; and a sweeping lawn that extends from the house west down the slope to Palisade Avenue.

WH-20 (F) 700 West 247th Street. Consistent with the estate tradition, this residence is located on the former grounds of the Dodge Estate.

There is a discrepancy in the citations among the historians relied upon for this preliminary report as to the original owner of the property. Hermaly cites it as being the "George H. Foster House," whereas Robins and Dolkart cite the first owner as being woolens merchant Henry Foster Spaulding. This discrepancy should be clarified in future studies.
THE ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES OF RIVERDALE, THE BRONX, NEW

**WH-21 (F) 615 West 252nd Street** (ca. 1925). Formerly known as the "Villa Paterno," residence of one of the sons of New York City builder John Paterno, who carried on the work of their father after his death in 1899. The Paternos were well known for the elegant apartment houses they constructed in the early decades of the Twentieth Century. The stone entry posts were once marked with "Villa" on the western post, and "Paterno" on the eastern post. Only the western post has retained the original marking.

**WH-22 (F) 4606 Independence Avenue.** Timber frame. Although compromised by a modern addition to the south, the original features of this former outbuilding can still be perceived.

The following three properties (WH-23, 24, and 25) are opposite Wave Hill between 249th and 252nd Streets, adjacent to the H.F Spaulding Coachman's house at 4970 Independence, a designated landmark. They appear to be of approximately the same date of construction (ca. 1910) and evidence a quality of design and placement on their lots very much in keeping with the ambiance of the area as a site of country estates.

**WH-23 (F) 5000 Independence Avenue** (ca. 1910). Stucco with cream colored brick window surrounds, and other trim and porch posts, with Italianate balusters. This was the home of Congressman Jonathan B. Bingham for many years until his death. Independence Avenue from 254th Street to 249th Street is designated Jonathan B. Bingham Road.

**WH-24 (F) 5020 Independence Avenue** (ca. 1910). Fieldstone first floor, sweeping veranda across S and W corners; large paired brackets and paired porch posts.

**WH-25 (F) 4904 Independence Avenue.** Stucco and fieldstone, with low fieldstone wall across SE of entry; variegated slate roof with chimney angled 45 degrees to the facade, center gable of fieldstone, and stone foundation, side wings of stucco. This property appears to be of a later period than its neighbors to the north and more formal in aesthetic, yet still in keeping with the feeling of the area as one of substantial estates.

The following properties (WH-26, 27) are opposite the eastern boundary of Riverdale Historic District. While clearly of a later period than those in the historic district across the street, they still contribute to the country atmosphere of the area. Set well back from the street, the lawn areas and landscaping are in keeping with the earlier period.

**WH-26 (F) 5264 Independence Avenue** (ca. 1910). Stucco, with red tile roof, broken pediment with center cartouche surmounting the main entry; casement windows.

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WH-27 (F) 5270 Independence Avenue (ca. 1890). Stucco, with massive squared stone posts with primitive capitals supporting the porch and porte cochère, large center gable, red asphalt roofing; extant barn/carriage house with entry from West 254th Street. Appears to have original fieldstone entry gates on West 254th Street.

WH-28 (F) 5040 Independence Avenue. Originally the residence of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes (1862-1948), this house was occupied by the Joseph P. Kennedy family while John F. Kennedy was attending Riverdale Country School, Fieldston Campus, during the years 1926-1928. The house has been extensively altered and enlarged and is unlikely to qualify for historic designation on the basis of architectural merit.

WH-29 (F) Delafield Estate, located south of West 246th Street and extending roughly from west of Independence Avenue to Douglas Avenue. Originally called "Fieldston Hill," Edward C. Delafield residence and estate, later Delafield Botanical Estates, Columbia University. The Delafield property extended from Broadway to the Hudson River, and a partition map of 1882 shows that the land to the west of Riverdale Avenue was also considered to be part of "Fieldston." The Delafield manor (ca. 1865; residence altered 1916, Dwight James Baum, architect), formerly located on the south side of the street at the bend in West 246th Street just to the west of Independence Avenue, was destroyed by fire and is no longer extant. The grounds have been recently redeveloped with a grouping of attached housing units (1986, James Stewart Polshek & Partners, architects). Several of the original outbuildings from the estate have survived intact, including the Hunting Lodge (WH-30, infra) and a small house just southeast of the entry to the property. The Delafield family arrived in Riverdale early in the 19th century. They were important to Riverdale's history, and were a significant force in Hudson River Valley history as well. Some aspects of the lush grounds of the original estate are still evident, and many of the houses that now surround the remaining property lines were built by the Delafields.

Fig. 30: Former Delafield Estate Hunting Lodge ("The Incubator") (ca. 1870), Ploughman’s Bush.
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**WH-30 (F) 6 Ploughman’s Bush.** Former Delafield Hunting Lodge (Fig. 30) (ca. 1865). Originally part of the Delafield Estate, which stretched from the Hudson River to what is now Van Cortlandt Park, this modest vernacular residence reportedly served as a lodge for excursions into the surrounding woodlands to hunt wild boar. According to oral history, the little house was known to the Delafields as "The Incubator," in which their descendants were "incubated." This property is now part of a private residential enclave known as "Ploughman's Bush." It was given that name by its owner, Robert M. Field—a name his son denied had any historical or family connections—when it was subdivided in the 1930s.\(^{31}\)

**Contemporary Architecture/Landscape Design**

The following contemporary structures are notable for various reasons. Most are cited in Willensky's *AIA Guide to New York City*. Others were suggested in interviews by Mary Delaney Krugman with Gilbert Kerlin and Robert Kornfeld, Jr. (October 1995).

**WH-31 (F) Perkins Study Center,** part of the Riverdale Country School, River Campus, Spaulding Lane between Independence and Palisade Avenues (1967; R. Marshall Christensen, architect). Specially noted is the study center's roof, which consists of two concave surfaces that approach one another but do not quite meet, leaving a skylight at the ridge.

**WH-32 (F) Edward A. Ames Residence,** 709 West 246th Street, west of Independence Avenue, north side (1971, Hobart Betts & Assocs., architects). This residence, noted as an architectural "gem," is sheathed in natural cedar and glass, and is located down a private drive.

**WH-33 (F) Eric J. Schmertz Residence,** 4550 Palisade Avenue, south of West 247th Street, east side (1971; Vincent A. Claps, architect). Turned diagonally to the quiet road, this two story stained-wood sheathed house has been described as one of Riverdale's best contemporary houses.


Riverdale Historic District

RD-1 (D) ["""] Riverdale Historic District, West 252nd to West 254th Streets between Independence Avenue and Riverdale Park (Desig. 10/16/1990, Dkt # LP-1663). Approximately 15 acres of sloping land overlooking the Hudson River, this district consists of 34 buildings on landscaped sites. It is the nucleus of the parcel purchased from William Ackerman in 1852 by five wealthy and influential businessmen for a summer community named Riverdale. It includes seven original estates linked by a carriage alley (now Sycamore Avenue) and one parcel subdivided from the adjacent Wave Hill estate. All estates were developed in the 1850s. Later properties reflect the changing nature of suburbanization from that time to the present. Included within the district are a number of barns along Sycamore Avenue, ca. 1853, including the William S. Duke barn, 5286 Sycamore Avenue ca. 1856; altered into a carriage house, ca. 1888 by Frederick C. Withers.

RD-2 (D) ["""] Stonehurst, 5225 Sycamore Avenue (1856-1858; Desig. 10/13/1970, Dkt # LP-0673). Originally built for William D. Cromwell, one of the members of the original syndicate that purchased the land that now comprises the Riverdale Historic District. After Cromwell's death in 1859, the property was acquired by Robert Colgate, an entrepreneur in lead and paint and the eldest of three sons of William Colgate, the founder of the well-known soap business. It was he who gave it the name "Stonehurst." This residence is one of the most elegant country houses along the Hudson. The villa has a classical quality and symmetry that is unusual within the romantic, picturesque, and asymmetrical Anglo-Italianate villa tradition. The property was later owned by Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, former U.S. attorney general and under secretary of state.

Contemporary Architecture/Landscape Design

The following contemporary structures are notable for various reasons. Most are cited in Willensky's *AIA Guide to New York City.* Others have been suggested in interviews by Mary Delaney Krugman with Gilbert Kerlin and Robert Kornfeld, Jr. (October 1995).

RD-3 (F) H. L. Abrons Residence, 5225 Independence Avenue, northwest corner of West 252nd Street (1980; Horace Ginsbern & Assocs, architect).' The complex form of this house has been given credit for interesting interiors.

" Designated a NYC Landmark

' Listed on the N.Y. State and National Registers of Historic Places and a designated NYC Landmark
Mount A Vincent Neighborhood

MV-1 (F) College of Mt. St. Vincent Property, Riverdale Avenue and West 261st to West 263rd Streets, west side. Located on the property are a number of historic buildings, both designated and proposed: Administration Building, (MV-2, infra), (Fig. 31); the stable and cottage, now Boyle Hall, (MV-3, infra), (Figs. 32 and 33); and administrative offices, formerly "Fonthill," (MV-4, infra) (Fig. 34). Marillac Hall, originally in part the E. D. Randolph residence (ca. 1855) also warrants further investigation and documentation for its significance. The 75-acre campus was acquired by the Sisters of Charity for their New York mother house and academy on December 20, 1856. At that time Fonthill (MV-4, infra) and the cottage and stable (MV-3, infra) were already present. Although this property has been devoted to institutional uses for most of its history, it is on the grounds of this property that one can still appreciate the great natural beauty of the area enjoyed by its early residents. The rolling lawn, rocky outcroppings, rustic landscape near the river, and scenic vistas have retained much of the character of the original development, giving the property its special significance. The buildings too have maintained their picturesque profile in keeping with the romantic setting.

MV-2 (D) College of Mt. St. Vincent, Administration Building (Fig. 31), formerly Mount St. Vincent Academy. Riverdale Avenue and West 261st Street (1857-1859, Henry Engelbert, architect; Additions in 1865, 1883, and 1906-1908, E. Wenz, architect; Desig. 2/08/1979, Dkt # LP-1014). Dramatically situated on a high hill, this building commands a sweeping view of the Hudson River and the Palisades. Construction of the Administration Building began in May, 1857, five months after the property was acquired by the Sisters of Charity (see MV-1, supra). The building, with its square tower, was designed by H. Engelbert in the Early Romanesque Revival style.

MV-3 (D) College of Mt. St. Vincent, Cottage and Stable (Figs. 32 and 33), Riverdale Avenue and West 261st Street (ca. 1850; Desig. 7/28/1981, Dkt # LP1085). Mid-19th century picturesque structures, intended as outbuildings for Fonthill (MV-4, infra). They are among the finest picturesque cottage-type structures surviving in New York City. Currently called "Boyle Hall," they are now used for office space.

* Listed on the N.Y. State and National Registers of Historic Places and a designated NYC Landmark

** Designated a NYC Landmark
Fig. 34: (Right) Fonthill, College of Mt. St. Vincent, former residence of Edwin Forrest (1848-1852).
Reprinted from Willensky, AIA Guide to New York City.

Fig. 31: Administration Building, College of Mt. St. Vincent, (1857-1859)
Reprinted from Willensky, AIA Guide to New York City.
MV-4  
(D) College of Mt. St. Vincent, Fonthill (Fig. 34), Riverdale Avenue and West 261st Street (1848-1852; Thomas Smith, builder; Desig. 3/15/1966, Dkt 4 LP0133). Sited on a bluff overlooking the Hudson River, it consists of six crenellated octagonal towers of varying heights radiating around a central core. It was erected for the famed Shakespearean tragedian Edwin Forrest by a local builder after consultation with the noted architect A. J. Davis. It was named after William Beckford's famous English castle, "Fonthill Abbey." Forrest never lived here, however; he built Fonthill to share with his wife, Catherine Sinclair, daughter of a famous Scottish vocalist, from whom he was divorced prior to its completion. In 1856, the property was purchased by the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul. Fonthill, formerly the college library, now houses the college administrative offices.

Note: according to Benson J. Lossing, The Hudson, from the Wilderness to the Sea, Edwin Forrest brought his bride to Fonthill in 1838. They lived there until 1844, when they traveled to England, and were ultimately divorced. The Sisters of Charity opened their school for young ladies in 1859, and enlarged it to accommodate boarders in 1865.33

MV-5  
(P) College of Mt. St. Vincent, Louise Le Gras Hall (Fig. 35), West 261st Street and Netherland Avenue (1875). Originally St. Vincent's Free School. A distinctive feature of this compact building is the large mansard roof supported by bracketed eaves. Several dormers pierce the roof. It was opened as a free school operated by the Sisters of Charity in 1875. Its significance is derived from both its architecture and from the fact that it was the only free school in the thinly-populated section of Riverdale for many years, and is considered the first public school in this area.

MV-6  
(F) 576 West 261st Street (ca. 1920). Beige brick with red tile hipped roof, large gable over front entrance. Balcony with wrought iron railing over doorway.

MV-7  
(F) Sigma Place Residential Enclave, off Palisade Avenue, directly east of the Passionist Monastery. This narrow winding street has the distinct charm of an earlier era. It contains several examples of turn-of-the-century residences and outbuildings, including one timber-frame pitched-roof garage structure with a finial at the ridge line as a ghost of the earlier period. A contemporary structure hovers above the older residences, but does not disturb the quiet seclusion of the other buildings. At the upper end of the street, a masonry structure that was apparently a carriage house for a larger residence appears to have been recently demolished to make way for several new homes. Properties included in this area are 5, 7, 9, and 10 Sigma Place; the masonry building may have an Independence Avenue address.

* Listed on the N.Y. State and National Registers of Historic Places and a designated NYC Landmark

32 McNamara, 158.
33 Benson J. Lossing, The Hudson From 'The Wilderness to The Sea' (Virtue and Yorston, NY 1866)
Fig. 33: Former Stable (ca. 1850), College of Mt. St. Vincent.

Fig. 32: Stone Cottage (ca. 1850), College of Mt. St. Vincent.
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MV-8  (P) Cardinal Spellman Retreat House, 5801 Palisade Avenue (ca. 1895) This structure, originally built as a private residence, has been occupied by the Passionist Fathers of the Roman Catholic Church since 1924. It is 3 1/2 stories, and makes use of classical architectural details. Notable features include the porch extending across the front facade with bracketed posts, a picturesquely varied roof profile of projecting gables, and an exterior of rough-cut shingles on the first and second floors. A notable feature is the polygonal conservatory with multi-paned windows commanding a spectacular view of the Hudson River and the New Jersey Palisades.

MV-9  (F) Monastery of the Visitation, entered from Arlington Avenue at West 256th Street, and extending down the hill to Palisade Avenue. A chapel and dormitory are set in a natural landscape of rolling lawns and rocky outcroppings on one of the highest promontories of the Riverdale area.

MV-10 (F) 5501 Palisade Avenue (ca. 1900). Stucco with red brick surrounds at front entry. Roof with overhanging eaves supported by extended purlins, two-story bay on north elevation.

MV-11  (P) Hillside, 5525 Independence Avenue (ca. 1860). Another of the large, eclectic homes of Riverdale, Hillside was constructed of brick and designed in the Italianate style, with a corner tower overlooking the Hudson River. It has been altered in recent years. It is the former estate of Dr. William Sargent Ladd, and was once home of the National Bureau of Economic Research. It is now a part of a limited access residential enclave created by the sub-division of the estate in 1954. (MV-12, infra).

MV-12  (F) Hillside Residential Enclave, north of West 254th Street, bounded by Palisade Avenue on the west and Independence Avenue on the east. This 1950s development on 14 building lots, plus the Dr. Ladd mansion and carriage house, consists of 14 post-war residences on 8 acres that formed the estate of Dr. William Sargent Ladd. The original stone gateposts still stand at the entrance to the enclave, and the estate's well-maintained stone walls extend along Palisade Avenue. The development was built in 1954 by several members of the Riverdale Community Planning Association. They formed the Hillside Property Owners Association for the purpose of promoting the continued development of single-family housing units on the western slopes of Riverdale at a time when much of the area was threatened with development of higher density apartment house construction. Engineer Albert Wheeler laid out the streets and utilities as he had done for Fieldston A limited access enclave, the residences that are visible from Ladd Road and the extension of Independence Avenue appear to be good examples of contemporary designs of mid1950s, with wide use of natural materials and fieldstone. They have continued the
Fig. 35: Louise Le Gras Hall (1875), College of Mt. St. Vincent; first free school in Riverdale.

Fig. 36: Post-World War II development: Right: Phyllis Steele residence (ca. 1957); Left: James Strain residence (1970; Keith Kroeger, Arch.).
traditions of Riverdale's early development into the post-war period. Among the notable buildings are the residences of Ms. Phyllis Steele, Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Davies, Mr. James McFadden, Mr. Barry Willner, Ms. Marian Howard, Mr. Zachary Rosenfield, and the more contemporary residence built for Drs. James and Gladys Strain (MV-18, infra) (Fig. 36) in 1971, which is a focal point for this enclave and faces the original estate's swimming pool. This development may be worth investigating as a possible historic district of a more contemporary period. The files of Mr. Davies, an early member of the RCPA and Hillside Property Owners’ Association, may reveal an interesting perspective and documentation of this area.

MV-13  (F)  5450 Palisade Avenue  (ca. 1925). Former pitched roof garage, now converted to residence. Original wood entry doors to garage have been retained, which adds to the charm of this otherwise simple vernacular building. First floor is fieldstone, with wooden shingles on the second floor.

MV-14  (F)  5421 Palisade Avenue  (ca. 1880). Southwest corner of 255th Street. Stone and stucco, center portion of roof is hipped, with hipped gables on front elevation, massive fieldstone chimney; octagonal turret on northeast corner; second turret with finial on southwest corner. Side yard falls steeply away from the residence on the north elevation, rustic retaining wall creates a grotto-like garden and lawn area.

MV-15  (F)  775 West 254th Street. Former gate house for the Villa Pauline (now demolished) located on the grounds of the S.A.R. Academy. Original stone entry posts are still extant. Villa Pauline was the home of Arturo Toscanini (1867-1957), Italian operatic and symphonic conductor.

MV-16  (F)  Riverdale Yacht Club (part)  (ca. 1880), West 254th Street on the Hudson River, west of Amtrak-Metro North railroad line. Almost hidden under later additions, a portion of this private facility served as the second railroad station for Riverdale, just south of the original station and dock at the base of 254th Street. Made of brownstone cut into massive blocks (now painted), there is evidence of polychrome stonework typical of the period. The original ticket window in north wall now serves as a concession stand for the members. Much of the special feeling of the original waiting room has been retained, although substantial alterations have been made to create a dining room with a spectacular view of the George Washington Bridge, the Hudson River, and the Palisades.
Fig. 37: Salanter Akiba Riverdale Academy (S.A.R.) (1974; Kaudill Rowlett Scott Assocs., Archs).
Contemporary Architecture/Landscape Design

The following contemporary structures are notable for various reasons. Most are cited in Willensky's AIA Guide to New York City. Others have been suggested in interviews by MaryDelaney Krugman with Gilbert Kerlin and Robert Kornfeld, Jr. (October 1995).

MV-17 (F) Salanter Akiba Riverdale Academy (S.A.R) (Fig. 37), 655 West 254th Street, between Independence and Palisade Avenues and the Hillside Residential Enclave on the north, (1974; Caudill Rowlett Scott Assocs., architect). Situated on a steep slope that typifies Riverdale's western topography, this stepped building is a series of open classroom floors with skylighted roof tiers unified by a roof structure that follows the angle of the slope. This institution is located on the site of the Villa Pauline, former home of Arturo Toscanini, which was demolished in the 1960s. Some of the original stone gateposts are still in existence, as is its gatehouse, at the corner of Palisade Avenue and 254th Street (MV-15, supra).

MV-18 (F) James Strain Residence (Fig. 36) 731 Ladd Road (1970; Keith Kroeger Assocs., architect). Although constructed later than the ca. 1950s houses in the Hillside Residential Enclave (MV-12, supra), it has been noted as having a geometrical clarity that gives the enclave a focal point.

MV-19 (F) Passionist Fathers and Brothers Monastery, New Residence and Chapel, 5801 Palisade Avenue, west side, opposite Sigma Place (1967; Brother Cajetan 113 . Baumann, O.F.M., architect). Although the new dormitory was not said to be noteworthy according to Willensky, the chapel, almost hidden from the road, was given high marks as a dramatic expressionistic architectural/sculptural work.

MV-20 (F) The Hebrew Home for the Aged at Riverdale, 5901 Palisade Avenue, south of West 261 st Street, west side. Additions: Goldfine Pavilion (south building) (1968; Kelly and Gruzen, architect); Palisade Nursing Home (north building) (1975, Gruzen and Partners, architect); East Pavilion (1987; Gruzen Partnership, architect).

North Riverdale Neighborhood

NR-1  **(F) Riverdale Neighborhood House**, 5521 Mosholu Avenue (ca. 1925). Founded in the 1920s by prominent, community-minded citizens who followed the progressive tradition of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, this served as a gathering place for community functions and as a children’s center. It housed a theater and a library, among other things. In the 1960s, its activities shifted focus to providing social services for a more diverse urban population.34

Contemporary Architecture/Landscape Design

The following contemporary structures are notable for various reasons. Most are cited in Willensky's AIA Guide to New York City. Others have been suggested in interviews by Mary Delaney Krugman with Gilbert Kerlin and Robert Kornfeld, Jr. (October 1995).

NR-2  **(F) Diplomatic Residence**, former United Nations Mission for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 355 West 255th Street, northeast corner Mosholu Avenue / One Sharansky Square (1975; Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, architect).1 Nineteen stories of apartments built from the top down on two cast-in-place concrete masts which form the building’s cores—a patented construction system known as "lift-slab" construction. Each floor was fabricated on the ground and jacked up to its position in the structure along the masts. The method was chosen after an earlier, more conventional design was estimated to cost an additional one million dollars. The name of the address was changed in 1982 by the Bronx borough president to honor the then-imprisoned Russian dissident, Anatoly Shcharansky (although the spelling of the Square and the person differ).

NR-3  **(F) Riverdale Branch**, N.Y. Public Library, 5540 Mosholu Avenue, opposite West 256th Street (1967; Robert L. Bien, architect).1 An A-frame construction mounted on a brick base, its large, fully-glazed front gable fills the interior with daylight.

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34 Robert Kornfeld, Jr., interview with Man Delaney Krugman, 5 October 1995.

Fieldston Neighborhood

FS-1  (F) Fieldston, located east of the Henry Hudson Parkway in an area bounded on the east by Tibbett Avenue and Post Road, on the north by West 253rd Street and on the south by the Manhattan College Parkway. This area, owned in the late 19th century by the Joseph Delafield family, was partitioned during the years 1906-1910, and marketed in 1912 as an early planned suburban development. In an effort to curb the overlay of a grid system on the area, the Delafield family commissioned engineer Albert Wheeler to lay out gently curving streets in the tradition of Frederick Law Olmsted, echoing the ambiance of earlier development to the west of Riverdale Avenue.

During Fieldston's early days Dwight James Baum was one the few architects permitted to build there, making him, to a great extent, responsible for the look of the community. In addition to those listed below, there are numerous fieldstone and brick residences of the 1920s and 1930s in Fieldston that may be worth further investigation.

FS-2  (P) Bicknell House, Post Road at West 253rd Street (ca. 1872, although may predate Civil War). Built as a residence for the Joseph I. Bicknell family, this 2 1/2story Gothic Revival homestead's notable features include deep overhanging eaves supported by jigsaw brackets and ornamented with barge boards. The house was rented in 1910 by the Riverdale Country Day School, now the Riverdale Country School, Main Campus, for which it served as the main school building until 1917. The house was moved in 1924 and placed on a new stone foundation. The hillside was later leveled for a playing field and the property is now marked by a tall retaining wall running along the Post Road.

FS-3  (F) Riverdale Country School, Main Campus, Fieldston Road, southeast corner of West 253rd Street. Several buildings, among them an early dormitory that was a prominent landmark on the Riverdale skyline as one approached from the north,

FS-4  (P) Tower House, 5223 Fieldston Road (ca. 1880). Timber-frame Victorian Gothic dwelling, 2 1/2 stories, with a massive five-story tower topped with an octagonal lantern and bell-cast roof with dormers. Owned in the late 19th century by Webster Woodman, a Manhattan bookseller. Constructed perhaps as early as 1872.

FS-5  (F) 5050 Iselin Avenue, at West 250th Street (ca. 1920s). Large brick mansion behind and just to the north of Christ Church Parish House on the grounds of the Henry Ittleson Center for Child Research (also see FS-16, infra).

35 Robert ICornfeld, Jr., interview.

FS-6  **(D)**[']  **Christ Church (Episcopal)**, 5030 Riverdale Avenue (1865-1866; Richard Upjohn & Son, architect; Desig. 1/11/67, Dkt # LP-0126). High Victorian Gothic of stone and brick, reminiscent in style and setting of an English parish church. This church is reported to be among the most beautiful early designs of R. M. Upjohn, son of the better known Richard Upjohn. According to local historian Robert Kornfeld, Sr., this church was built as a memorial to Samuel Babcock, a member of the original syndicate that formed what is now the Riverdale Historic District. Babcock was killed by guerrillas on a Mississippi River boat during the Civil War.

FS-7  **(P)**  **Christ Church Rectory**, 5030 Henry Hudson Parkway (ca. 1872). This 1 1/2 - story frame residence combines Georgian details with elements of French Second Empire Style.

FS-8  **(F)**  **Christ Church Parish House**, 5030 Riverdale Avenue (1923; attributed to Dwight James Baum, architect).

FS-9  **(F)**  **5020 Henry Hudson Parkway** (ca. 1860). Located to the south of the Christ Church rectory. Although set close to the street, this structure is somewhat hidden from view. It has bracketed eaves that are very much of the period of the rectory located just to the north.

FS-10  **(F)**  **4670 Waldo Avenue**, between West 250th Street and Livingston Avenue, east side (ca. 1923; Julius Gregory, architect). Originally the C. E. Chambers residence, a picturesque residence reflecting English country house design; one of a number designed in Fieldston by Gregory, whom the AIA Guide describes as a master of the genre.

FS-11  **(F)**  **Manhattan College**, Manhattan College Parkway at Waldo Avenue. Beaux Arts scheme in original campus plan, ca. 1920s.

FS-12  **(F)**  **3875 Waldo Avenue (apartments)**, southwest corner of Manhattan College Parkway to Dash Place (1928; Horace Ginsbern, architect). Neo-Tudor apartment building is very much in keeping with the Fieldston enclave nearby, and reflects the aesthetic of Riverdale architecture in the 1920s.

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36 Robert Kornfeld, Sr., correspondence with Mary Delaney Krugman dated 18 November 1995.

37 Willensky, 535.

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FS-13  (F) Fieldston Schools, Manhattan College Parkway, southwest corner of Fieldston Road. (Original buildings, 1926; Clarence Stein and Robert D. Kohn, architect). Tate Library (1971; Murphy & Mackey, architect).

FS-14  (F) Belltower/Monument, West 239th Street at intersection of Riverdale Avenue and Johnson Avenue (Dwight James Baum, architect). Large stone monument marks the intersection.

Contemporary Architecture/Landscape Design

The following contemporary structures are notable for various reasons. Most are cited in Willensky's AIA Guide to New York City. Others have been suggested in interviews by Mary Delaney Krugman with Gil Kerlin and Robert Kornfeld, Jr. (October 1995).

FS-15  (F) Horace Mann High School, 231 West 246th Street, northeast corner of Tibbett Avenue. Pforzheimer Hall (1956; Victor Christ-Janer, architect); Prettyman Gymnasium (1968; Charles E. Hughes, III, architect); Gratwick Science Wing Addition and Pforzheimer Hall renovation (1975; Frost Assocs., architect). While built in the post World War II era, many of the stone school buildings reflect the architectural traditions of the Riverdale-Fieldston areas.

FS-16  (F) Henry Ittleson Center for Child Research, Jewish Board of Guardians, 5050 Iselin Avenue, north of West 250th Street (1967; Abraham W. Geller; M. A. Rubenstein, design associate, architect). Described as a "neatly arranged and dramatically designed community of tan block pavilions capped by standing-seam metal roofs."

**Spuyten Duyvil Neighborhood**

**SD-1**  
**F 3101 Independence Avenue** (ca. 1925). northwest corner of West 231st Street at Independence Avenue. Stucco with tile roof, currently for institutional use; clean lined, ornamental pierced stucco balconettes on two elevations.

**SD-2**  
**F 720 West 231st Street** (ca. 1925). Stucco and half-timber Tudor cottage.

**SD-3**  
**F 725 West 231st Street** (ca. 1920). Stucco, bracketed overdoor with balcony; leaded glass sidelights, French doors on balcony surmounted by round headed window; eyebrow window in roof over entry.

**SD-4**  
**F Southern Palisade Avenue Waterfront Enclave.** This southernmost of two waterfront enclaves (see WH-17 supra) appears to have been a residential development of the 1920s (further investigation of this area may reveal an interesting history, i.e., this is one of only two enclaves of approximately the same period that are located to the west of Palisade Avenue, on a point lower in the topography than most of the homes in Riverdale). It includes those properties along the streets of Park Drive, River Drive, and Scenic Place - approximately 15 Structures. Several houses front on Palisade Avenue that seem to give a feeling of the remainder of the homes. These properties are: 3020, 3024, 3035, 3045, and 3117 Palisade Avenue.

**SD-5**  
**F 736 West 231st Street** (ca. 1900). Stucco half-timbered, partial hexagonal turreted side porch, with fieldstone base.

**SD-6**  
**F 714 West 231st Street** (ca. 1925). Georgian Colonial, red brick, open gabled porch entry supported by square posts; fan light and side lights, delicate dentil molding ornamenting cornice.

**SD-7**  
**F 716 West 231st Street** (pre-1850). Vernacular timber frame cottage, fieldstone facade on first floor front elevation.
(P) Henry Hudson Memorial Column and Statue (Fig. 38), Henry Hudson Park, Independence Avenue near West 230th Street (1912; Babb Cook & Welch; column designed by Walter Cook, of Cook Babb and Willard, architects. Sculpture of Hudson (1938) by Karl Bitter and Karl Gruppe). This monument to Henry Hudson is composed of a pedestal, a hollow Doric column, and the statue. The 20-foot pedestal and 100-foot column were completed in 1912, financed by public donations following the Hudson-Fulton Celebration of 1909, which honored the 300th Anniversary of Hudson's visit. The 16-foot statue, cast in bronze, was installed in 1938, after the Henry Hudson Parkway Authority undertook the reproduction of the original design of Karl Bitter from a photograph of a model which had disappeared. Karl H. Gruppe, associate of Karl Bitter, was commissioned to do the work. Bronze bas-reliefs are mounted on the base of the monument: on the north face, a depiction of the first fur-trading post on Manhattan Island, and on the south, a depiction of Henry Hudson receiving his commission from the Dutch East India Company.

(P) Villa Charlotte Bronte (Fig. 39), 2501 Palisade Avenue (1926; Richard Gardner, architect). This 16-unit garden apartment house overlooking the Hudson River is divided into four sections. The entrances are joined by balconies reached by staircases. The eclecticism of the structure is reinforced by a variety of chimneys windows and doors. The exterior is clad in stucco, and its red Spanish tile roofs are particularly distinctive because of their steep pitch and large-scale tiles.

(D)[*] Riverdale Presbyterian Chapel (Fig. 40), now Edgehill Church of Spuyten Duyvil (United Church of Christ), 2550 Independence Avenue (1888-1889; Francis Hatch Kimball, architect; Designated 11/25/1980, Dkt # LP-1086). Small Shingle Style chapel, with both Romanesque Revival and Tudor elements; asymmetrical. Organized in 1869 as a mission chapel affiliated with the Riverdale Presbyterian Church, the present building was built in 1889. The chapel served the workers at the nearby Johnson Iron Foundry and its history is closely connected with the family of Isaac G. Johnson who leased the land, rent-free, and later sold it to the church. The Edgehill Church was one of Francis H. Kimball's smaller commissions, but it is, nonetheless, one of his most beautiful and is constructed on a steep-sloping site. The building is fully visible only from the south; from other directions it is partly hidden by the slope.

* Listed on the N.Y. State and National Registers of Historic Places and a designated NYC Landmark

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Fig. 40: Riverdale Presbyterian Chapel (1888-1889; Francis Hatch Kimball, Arch.), now Edgehill Church; built by estate owners for foundry workers and families of Puddler's Row.
Fig. 39: Villa Charlotte Bronte Apartments (ca. 1926; Richard Gardner, Arch.), Sputyen Duyvil, The Bronx, New York.
Fig. 41: Spuyten Duyvil workers’ housing (ca. 1885), at the corner of Edsall and Johnson Avenues.
THE ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES OF
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SD-11  (F) 2475 Palisade Avenue. Small apartment house, five stories plus attic, of brick, rubble stone, and shingle designed around casement windows. Together with the Villa Charlotte Bronte (SD-9, supra), this building occupies the southwestermost edge of the Spuyten Duyvil escarpment overlooking the confluence of the Harlem and Hudson Rivers, one of the city's finest sites.

SD-12  (F) 2395 Palisade Avenue (ca. 1925). Similar in aesthetic to the Villa Charlotte Bronte. Located on a southern promontory that commands a spectacular view of the Henry Hudson Bridge, Spuyten Duyvil, and the Hudson River to the south.

SD-13  (F) Spuyten Duyvil Working Class Housing. This intact grouping of small vernacular structures (Figs. 41 and 42) clinging to the hillside at the meeting point of Johnson and Edsall Avenues appears to be all that remains of the working class community that sprang up around the Johnson Foundry at Spuyten Duyvil in the middle of the 19th century. Located on the flat peninsula that jutted out from the base of the Riverdale outcropping into the turbulent waters of the Spuyten Duyvil Creek, the foundry, owned by Elias Johnson, took advantage of the nearby train and water transportation facilities. By the Civil War, the foundry employed approximately 300 people on a facility that occupied some 170 acres of land, on which were also located a school and worker housing ((Figs. 43 and 44). The small chapel, now known as Edgehill Church (SD-10, supra; Fig. 40), located at the intersection of Independence Avenue and Kappock Street on land leased by the Johnsons, was sponsored by wealthier residents of Riverdale to serve the small worker community. The properties included in the grouping are:

2284, 2286, and 2288 Johnson Avenue;
2251 (ca. 1883), 2253, 2255, 2257, 2259, 2263, and 2265 Edsall Avenue.

These properties all appear to have been constructed in the late 19th century. Some of their features have been altered or obscured, however, many of them have retained character-defining features such as original eave brackets and windows that permit passers-by to appreciate their historic identity. Several properties at the eastern end of the grouping have garages either adjacent to, or down the steep slope from, the buildings they service. These appear to have been constructed after the turn of the century.

Fig. 43: Spuyten Duyvil Creek and Peninsula, ca. 1865 looking SE from the mouth of Spuyten Duyvil Creek, with The Isaac Johnson Foundry on its banks.
Fig. 44: The Isaac Johnson Foundry, Spuyten Duyvil, ca. 1900.
Fig. 45: Henry Hudson Bridge (1938), looking SE from Spuyten Duyvil Railroad Station
SD-14  (F) Henry Hudson Bridge (Fig. 45) (1938). The views of this impressive span from Spuyten Duyvil are indeed spectacular. It stands not only as a scenic landmark, but also as a symbol of the intense wave of development that poured into Riverdale in the post-World War II period. It was built by Robert Moses as part of his plan to unite the metropolitan area with a network of parkways. This bridge, and construction of the Henry Hudson Parkway through the area, did more than any other project to open up Riverdale to intensive development and dramatically change the look of this area. Riverdale engineer Albert Wheeler devised the plan to convert the bridge from one to two levels.

SD-15  (F) 721 West 231st Street (ca. 1910). Stucco, half-timber Tudor cottage.

Contemporary Architecture/Landscape Design

The following contemporary structures are notable for various reasons. Most are cited in Willensky's AIA Guide to New York City. Others have been suggested in interviews by Mary Delaney Krugman with Gilbert Kerlin and Robert Kornfeld, Jr. (October 1995).

SD-16  (F) Spuyten Duyvil Branch, N.Y. Public Library, 650 West 235th Street between Independence and Douglas Avenues, south side (1971, Giorgio Cavalieri, architect). Noted as a dignified building in an area characterized by chaotic and unrelated building development.

SD-17  (F) Seton Park Playground, NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, West 235th Street, southwest corner Douglas Avenue (1975, M. Paul Friedberg & Assoc.s, landscape architect). The playground occupies part of the heavily overgrown former site of the Seton Hospital for Consumptives, a Roman Catholic institution dating from 1873.

SD-18  (F) Hayden-on-Hudson (Fig. 46), 4455 - 4465 Douglas Avenue (ca. 1967; Wechsler and Schimenti; Henry Kibel, Assoc., architect). Fan-shaped apartment building of brown brick between concrete piers. The western elevation has large expanses of plate glass and balconies with metal railings from which the residents enjoy a spectacular view north and south along the Hudson River. Low-rise maisonettes flank the main building on the north and south. Reportedly the winner of an architectural award after completion.

Fig. 46: Hayden-on-Hudson apartment development (ca. 1970); Wechsler and Schimenti; Henry Kibel, Assoc., Arch.
V. METHODOLOGY

Background research for this study included a number of tasks, each of which contributed to an understanding of the historical context, extant architecture, topography, and development patterns in the Riverdale area.

Field Visits. Field visits and "windshield surveys" were conducted by Mary Delaney Krugman, Historic Preservation Consultant, on a number of occasions during the months of August through November 1995. Assisting in these visits was Christina Way, a historian with degree in Art History, and vice chair of the Montclair Historic Preservation Commission. During these surveys, extant architectural resources were identified and located on current lot maps, topographical features were noted, as were other structures and sites that appear to have cultural significance. Long-time local resident and activist, Gilbert Kerlin, Esq., participated in two such field visits.

Documentary Research. Primary and secondary source materials were reviewed to establish the history of the area. Particularly helpful to this process was the work of Bronx historians Robert Kornfeld, Sr. and Gary Hermalyn, Landmarks of the Bronx. In addition, two other architectural guides were consulted and compared in the preparation of this study: Willensky and White's AIA Guide to New York City (1988) and the compilation of Andrew Dolkart for the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, A Guide to New York City Landmarks (1994). The works of historians Stephen Jenkins, Rev. William Tieck, and John McNamara were also consulted, and are valuable to any inquiry concerning the history of the Bronx. The designation report for the Riverdale Historic District, compiled by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, provided excellent underlying documentation of sources that have guided this research. An overview of the files of Gilbert Kerlin were an important resource for further study, particularly with regard to the development history of the study area. Other repositories of Riverdale history were located in the archives of the C.H. Dodge Foundation, and files in the possession of Peter J. Davies, Riverdale resident and member of the Hillside Property Owners Association, although neither of those sources were reviewed or inventoried as part of this study.

Cartographic Analysis. Historic maps of the study area were obtained from the Main Branch of the New York Public Library in Manhattan, and the Topographical Bureau of the Borough of the Bronx. Maps contained in histories of the Bronx were also consulted. Those maps were studied for early ownership, development trends, street patterns, and topography. Also relied upon were maps of zoning history in the possession of Riverdale resident Gilbert Kerlin, Esq. Current use and street patterns were studied using current street maps and a map created by Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart, Planning Consultants. A map provided by the New York State Museum that outlined sensitivity sites for archeological resources was also consulted.
Oral Histories. Mary Delaney Krugman conducted several interviews with local resident and historian Robert Kornfeld, Sr., and his son, Robert Kornfeld, Jr. She also interviewed Gilbert J. Kerlin, Esq. and Peter J. Davies, who have been active in Riverdale for many years, and who provided invaluable insights into the development history of the study area.

Criteria for Evaluating Significance. The criteria used in this study for evaluating the significance of buildings, structures, objects, districts, and sites are the same criteria used by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Generally, buildings, structures, objects, districts and sites have cultural significance if they possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- are associated with the lives of persons significant to our past;
- embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.  

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APPENDIX A

List of Historic Maps

The following list of maps has been compiled for this assessment from a number of sources. Not all have been copied for use with this study, but can be found at the locations described.

I. Map Materials housed in the Topographical Map Bureau, Bronx County Courthouse, Grand Concourse and 161st Street, Bronx, New York (those in boldface have been photocopied for this study, August-October, 1995):

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¹ Hudson Park is shown on map listed below as Bromley, *Atlas of the 14th Ward. New York City (Bronx)*, 1882
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<td>Spuyten Dvyl &amp; Fort Morris RR Co</td>
<td>Map and Profile of Route at Spuyten Dvyl also showing proposed change of channel of creek</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>NYC Sep 18 1869</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24 with RR 609 in red</td>
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<td>Sheridan &amp; Seagrave</td>
<td>Subdiv.: E side of Rivend Av to Old Post Rd bet. Mosholu Av &amp; Beech St, &quot;Lots at Mosholu&quot;</td>
<td>F.S. Cook</td>
<td>Sept 26 1891</td>
<td>NYC Sept 30 1891</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24 130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheridan &amp; Seagrave</td>
<td>W of Broadway S of Mosholu</td>
<td>F.S. Cook</td>
<td>Nov 15 1892</td>
<td>NYC Dec 28 1892</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24 129</td>
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<td>Land</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Vol.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spuyten Duyvil, Property at</td>
<td>Outline survey bet. Johnson Av &amp; Pierce St showing ___ &amp; old lot lines</td>
<td>Maclay &amp; Davies</td>
<td>May 1891</td>
<td>NYC Aug 24 1893</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>24 137</td>
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<td>Spuyten Duyvil, Property at</td>
<td>Subdiv. at intersect'n of Johnson Av &amp; Kappock adj to Pub Sch 46</td>
<td>T. B. Haring</td>
<td>May 20 1895</td>
<td>NYC June 10 1895</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>24 137</td>
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<td>Schenckhorn &amp; Scott, Plot 26</td>
<td>Mosholu &amp; Fieldston Rd</td>
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<td>Feb 5 1900</td>
<td>NYC Feb 5 1900</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>24 251</td>
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<td>Samler, Mary, Heirs of</td>
<td>E of 254 St, Fieldston Rd, E 256 St &amp; Bradwy</td>
<td>Garrett J. Byrne</td>
<td>Dec 30 1908</td>
<td>NYC Apr 13 1909</td>
<td>1324</td>
<td>24 265</td>
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<td>Samler, Mary, Heirs of</td>
<td>E of 254 St, Fieldston Rd, E 256 St &amp; Bradwy</td>
<td>George F. Fairchild</td>
<td>Aug 30 1909</td>
<td>NYC Sept 28 1909</td>
<td>1368</td>
<td>24 271</td>
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<td>Warner, John, Heirs of Dec'd</td>
<td>On Hudson Rvr bet. Rivrd Av &amp; Mt St Vincent</td>
<td>Andrew Findlay</td>
<td>Dec 16 1837</td>
<td>WP Nov 16 1838</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>66 98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warner, John, Heirs of Dec'd</td>
<td>On Hudson Rvr bet. Rivrd Av &amp; Mt St Vincent</td>
<td>Andrew Findlay</td>
<td>Apr 2 1838</td>
<td>WP Feb 8 1841</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>24 99</td>
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<td>Whiting, James R., Dec'd</td>
<td>Tikkett Brook, Hudson River, W of Spuyten Duyvil</td>
<td>Compiled by Austin D. Ewen</td>
<td>Oct 30 1877</td>
<td>NYC Dec 27 1877</td>
<td>1443, p. 201</td>
<td>24 133</td>
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<td>Wetmore, John Mc E. vs Benj C. Wetmore</td>
<td>Tikketta Crk to Hudson Rvr, W of Spuyten Duyvil</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NYC Nov 21 1889</td>
<td>1046</td>
<td>24 133</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wardrop Co, Inc.</td>
<td>Independence Av to Ward Terr. &amp; W 230 St, Rivdl</td>
<td>G.C. and A.E. Wheeler</td>
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<td>319</td>
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APP. A - 5
Also found at Bronx County Courthouse, Topographical Map Bureau:

Routes for Local Steam Transit in Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Wards of New York City [signed by Secretary, DPP and Fredk. Law Olmsted]. Dated 20th March 1877.


APP. A - 7

III. MAPS OF THE RIVERDALE AREA IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER (Landmarks Preservation Commission, City of New York, New York).'

The following maps were cited in the designation report for the Riverdale Historic District, 1992.


Sidney & Neff Map of Westchester County N.Y from Actual Surveys by Sidney & Neff White Plains: Newell S. Brown, 1851.


Corner, RF.O. Map of the Southern Part of Westchester County, N. Y. New York: M. Dripps, 1853.

"Town and City of Yonkers...Town of East Chester, Westchester Co. N.Y." Plates 21 and 22 from an atlas (1870?) in the Map Division, New York Public Library.


III. ROBERT KORNFELD, SR., SYCAMORE AVENUE, RIVERDALE, BRONX,

Mr. Kornfeld has accumulated a number of copies of historic maps in connection with his own research of the history of Riverdale, although a full listing of these maps has not been compiled to date, to my knowledge, except perhaps as reflected in the designation report for the Riverdale Historic District, filed by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission. These maps would be valuable to a future more intensive study of the area.

IV. MAPS IN POSSESSION OF THE RIVERDALE NATURE


V. ADDITIONAL MAPS RELIED UPON: