

144354

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM - PHOTO/SITE PLAN SHEET
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
Bureau of Historic Preservation
BOX 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1026

89A

Survey Code/Tax Parcel/Other No.: _____ County: Dauphin
Municipality: Middletown Borough Address: Roughly bounded on the north by the Pennsylvania Turnpike, on the east by
Vine Street, on the south by E. High Street and Park Circle Road and on the
west by N. Union Street and N. Pine Street.
Historic Name/Other Name: Oak Hills Subdivision
SITE PLAN PHOTO INFORMATION



See Next Page



PHOTO LOCATION

NOT TO SCALE

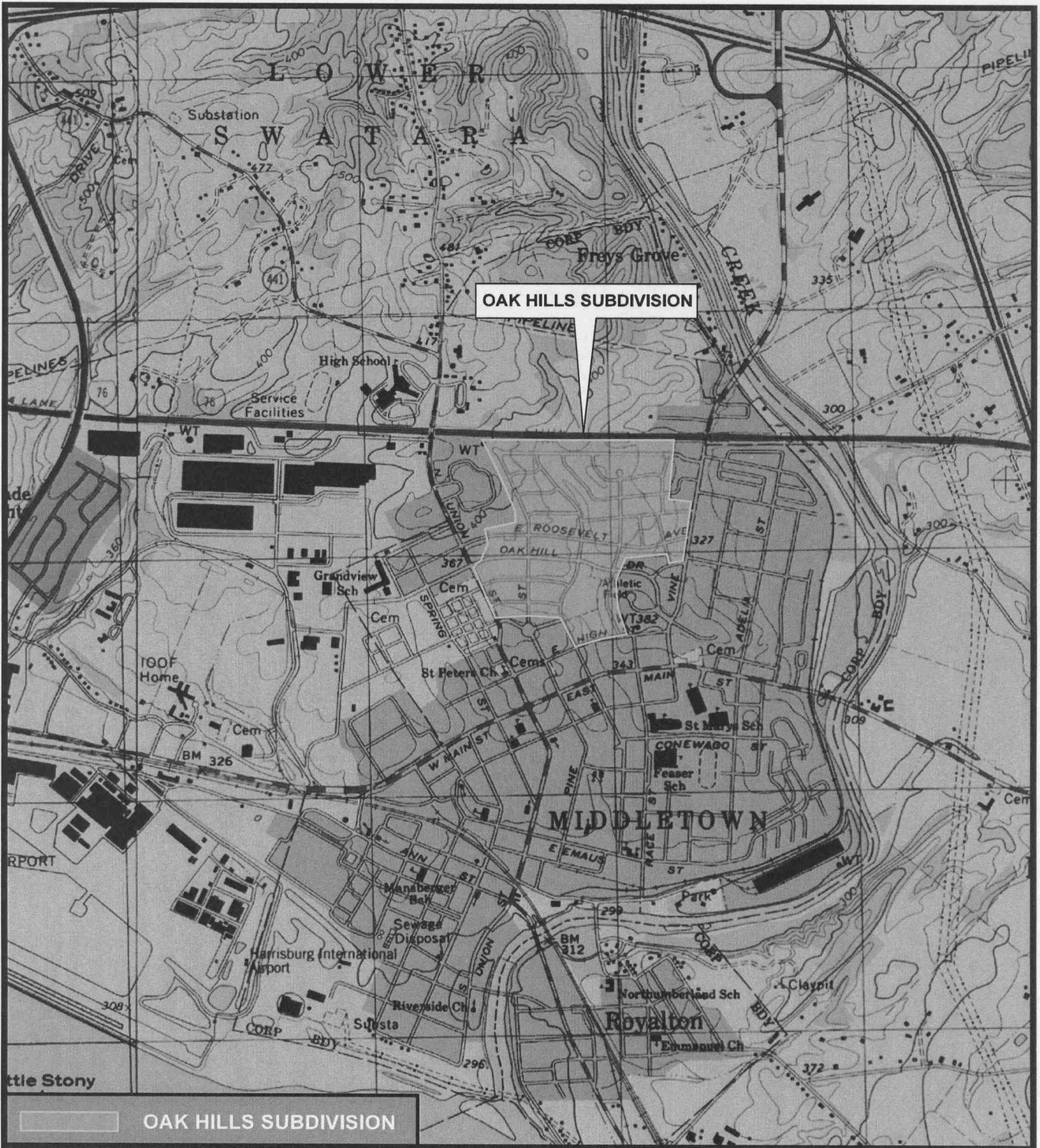
Prepared by CHRS, Inc.

Number 1 Description of View View looking along Aspen Street in the Oak Hills 3 section. Direction of Camera NW

Photographer Name: L. Black Date: Sept. 2007

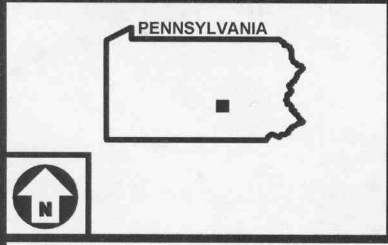
Negative Location: CHRS Inc.

See reverse for additional instruction

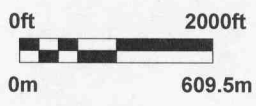


OAK HILLS SUBDIVISION

QUADRANGLE LOCATION



SCALE





SOURCE

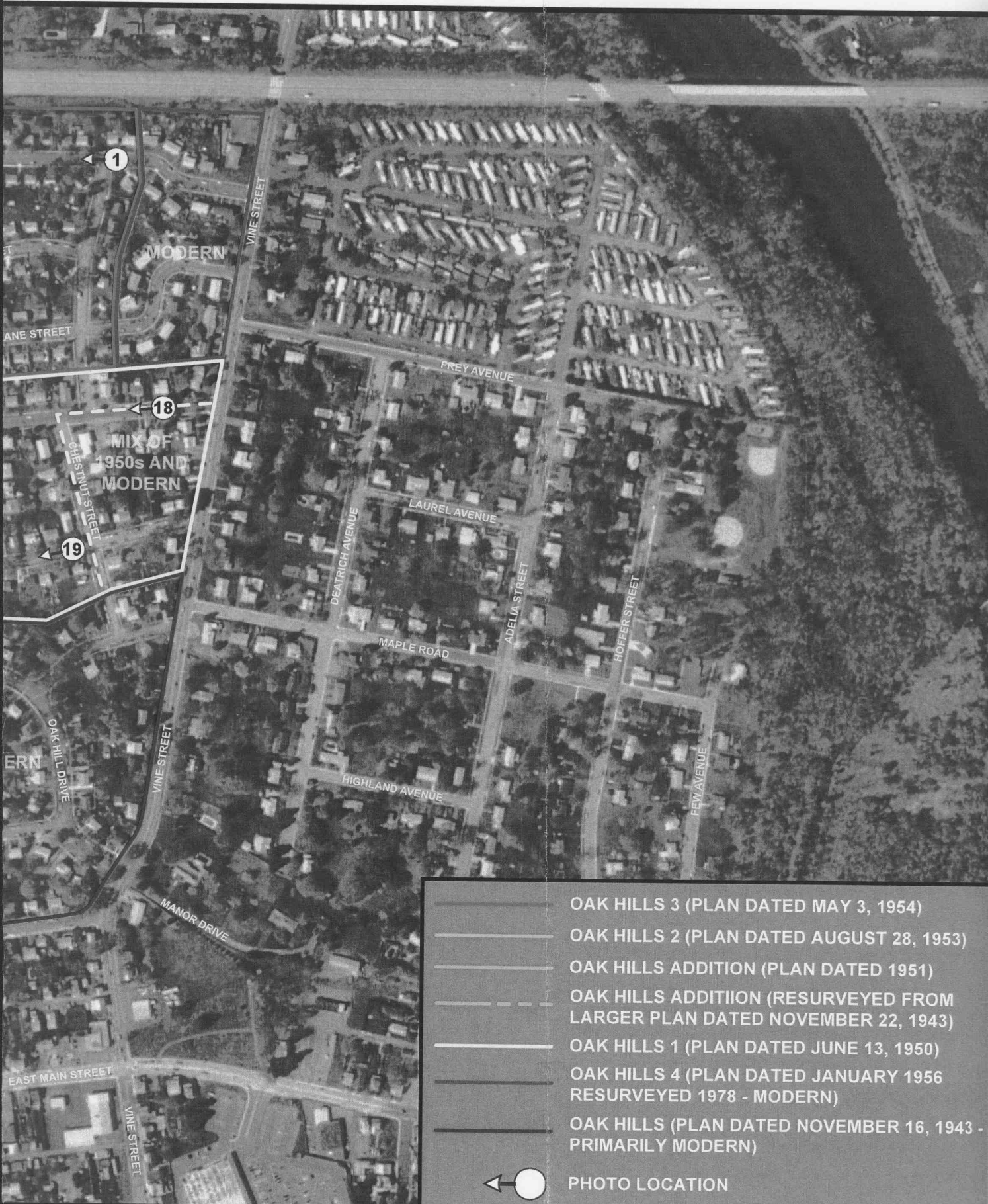
USGS 2001
MIDDLETOWN, PA

Prepared by CHRS, Inc.

RESOURCE LOCATION MAP



	SCALE	SOURCE
	<p>0ft 400ft</p>  <p>0m 121.9m</p> <p>Prepared by CHRS, Inc.</p>	<p>USGS 1999 MIDDLETOWN NW, PA</p>



MIX OF
1950s AND
MODERN

- OAK HILLS 3 (PLAN DATED MAY 3, 1954)
- OAK HILLS 2 (PLAN DATED AUGUST 28, 1953)
- OAK HILLS ADDITION (PLAN DATED 1951)
- - - OAK HILLS ADDITION (RESURVEYED FROM LARGER PLAN DATED NOVEMBER 22, 1943)
- OAK HILLS 1 (PLAN DATED JUNE 13, 1950)
- OAK HILLS 4 (PLAN DATED JANUARY 1956 RESURVEYED 1978 - MODERN)
- OAK HILLS (PLAN DATED NOVEMBER 16, 1943 - PRIMARILY MODERN)
- ⊙ ← PHOTO LOCATION

OAK HILLS SUBDIVISION

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE FORM - DATA SHEET

89B

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau for Historic Preservation

IDENTIFICATION AND LOCATION

Survey Code: _____ Tax Parcel/Other No.: Multiple

County: 1. Dauphin 0 4 3 2. _____

Municipality: 1. Middletown Borough 2. _____

Address: Roughly bounded on the north by the Pennsylvania Turnpike, on the east by Vine Street, on the south by E. High Street and Park Circle Road and on the west by N. Union Street and N. Pine Street.

Historic Name: Oak Hills Subdivision

Other Name: _____

Owner Name/Address: Multiple

Owner Category: Private Public-local Public-state Public-federal

Resource Category: Building District Site Structure Object

Number/Approximate Number of Resources Covered by This Form: Approximately 450

USGS Quad: 1. Middletown, PA 2. _____

UTM A. zone 18 0353328E 4452188N C. zone 18 0352564E 4451341N

References: B. zone 18 0352493E 4452231N D. zone 18 0353181E 4451482N

HISTORIC AND CURRENT FUNCTIONS

Historic Function Category:	Subcategory:	Code:
A. <u>Domestic</u>	<u>Single dwelling</u>	<u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>A</u>
B. <u>Domestic</u>	<u>Single dwelling</u>	<u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>A</u>
C. <u>Domestic</u>	<u>Single dwelling</u>	<u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>A</u>
D. <u>Recreation</u>	<u>Outdoor recreation</u>	<u>0</u> <u>8</u> <u>F</u>

Particular Type: A. House

B. House

C. House

D. Park

Current Function Category:	Subcategory:	Code:
A. <u>Domestic</u>	<u>Single dwelling</u>	<u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>A</u>
B. <u>Domestic</u>	<u>Single dwelling</u>	<u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>A</u>
C. <u>Domestic</u>	<u>Single dwelling</u>	<u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>A</u>
D. <u>Recreation</u>	<u>Outdoor recreation</u>	<u>0</u> <u>8</u> <u>F</u>

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: A: _____

B. _____ C. _____

D. _____ Other: None 0 1

Exterior Materials: Foundation	<u>Concrete</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	Roof	<u>Asphalt</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>
Walls	<u>Brick</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Walls	<u>Vinyl</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>
Other	<u>Faux stone</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>	Other	<u>Asbestos</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>

Structural System: 1. Timber-light frame 1 4 2. _____

Width: 3 bays C Depth: 2 rooms B Stories/Height: 1-1 1/2 A

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Year Built: X C. 1950 to X C. 1978 Additions/Alterations Dates: X C. 1970s ; X C. 1990s

Basis for Dating: X Documentary X Physical

Explain: Based on historic maps and aerial photographs, primary and secondary sources, conversation with a long-time resident, and an examination of the resource.

Cultural/Ethnic Affiliation: 1. N/A 2. _____

Associated Individuals: 1. N/A 2. _____

Associated Events: 1. N/A 2. _____

Architects/Engineers: 1. N/A 2. _____

Builders: 1. N/A 2. _____

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

PREVIOUS SURVEY, DETERMINATIONS

None.

EVALUATION (Survey Director/Consultants Only)

Individual NR Potential: _____ Yes X No Context(s): _____

Contributes to Potential District _____ Yes X No District Name/Status: _____

Explain: While Oak Hills is a planned subdivision, it lacks those characteristics that would make it a good example of a planned subdivision. There is no evidence of an architect or landscape architect being involved in the planning or construction phases. The development did not include schools or commercial facilities, and while there is a small park included in the development, it is not a good example of a designed landscape. There is no cohesive historical event or trend which shaped the development. It is not a good example of planned mid-twentieth-century suburban construction. The Oak Hills Subdivision lacks integrity of association, feeling and setting, is not known to be associated with any singularly significant individuals in history, and is recommended not eligible under Criterion A. No information was located on the developer or the builder and they do not appear to have been significant in the area. The Oak Hills Subdivision is recommended not eligible under Criterion B. The Oak Hills Subdivision contains a collection of mid-twentieth-century vernacular buildings that exhibit a similar plan throughout the six sections of the development, with alterations occurring in the number of stories, depth of the buildings, cladding materials and fenestration. While the general form of the buildings is consistent, the workmanship and materials have been altered. The Oak Hills Subdivision does not retain its integrity of materials or workmanship. The majority of the dwellings now feature modern aluminum or vinyl siding, replacement wood, aluminum and vinyl windows, and fenestration changes. The alterations, which are present on the majority of the dwellings, detract from the overall integrity of materials and workmanship, and the district as a whole fails to retain its integrity of feeling and association. The property is recommended not eligible under Criterion C. The Oak Hills Subdivision does not appear to be eligible for listing under Criterion D; however, an archaeological survey would be necessary to confirm this.

THREATS

Threats: 2 1. None 2. Public Development 3. Private Development 4. Neglect 5. Other

Explain: This resource is located within the Area of Potential Effect of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Project between Mileposts 250 and 252.

SURVEYOR INFORMATION

Surveyor Name/Title: Mary S. Alfson/Senior Project Manager Date: October 2007

Project Name: Pennsylvania Turnpike Project between Mileposts 250 and 252

Organization: CHRS, Inc. Telephone: 215-699-8006

Street and No.: 403 E. Walnut Street

City State: North Wales, PA Zip Code: 19454

Additional Survey Documentation: Site plan, photographs, and property location map appended.

Associated Survey Codes: _____

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM - NARRATIVE SHEET 89C
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau for Historic Preservation

Survey Code: _____	Tax Parcel/Other No.: <u>Multiple</u>
County: <u>Dauphin</u>	Municipality: <u>Middletown Borough</u>
Address: <u>Roughly bounded on the north by the Pennsylvania Turnpike, on the east by Vine Street, on the south by E. High Street and Park Circle Road and on the west by N. Union Street and N. Pine Street.</u>	
Historic/Other Name: <u>Oak Hills Subdivision</u>	Sheet <u>1</u> of <u>9</u>

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The Oak Hills Subdivision is located in Middletown Borough, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania. The subdivision encompasses approximately 42 city blocks and was constructed in six sections. The residential buildings are all vernacular in nature, designed and constructed by Olmsted Estates, Inc. Developed primarily in the mid-twentieth century, the Oak Hills Subdivision is a common example of a post World War II-era housing development similar to those that appeared throughout the region during this period. The subdivision consists of six individual sections. The first planned section of the Oak Hills Subdivision was approved on November 16, 1943 when it was filed as Oak Hills. This section was partially constructed in the early 1950s on either side of Briarcliff Road. The remainder of this section was not constructed until the late 1970s. The second planned section of the Oak Hills subdivision was filed on November 22, 1943 as the Oak Hills Addition. Construction in this area did not begin until 1951 when the area was resurveyed as a smaller subdivision. The third section of the subdivision to be filed, and the first to be constructed, was Oak Hills 1 for which the plans date to June 13, 1950. Oak Hills 2 followed shortly thereafter with plans being filed on August 28, 1953. Oak Hills 3, located east of Oak Hills 2, was filed on May 3, 1954. The final section of the Oak Hills Subdivision to be filed was Oak Hills 4 which was filed in January of 1956. This section was re-filed in 1978. All of the properties in the Oak Hills 4 section post-date 1978.

The subdivision as a whole is roughly bounded on the north by the Pennsylvania Turnpike, on the east by Vine Street, on the south by E. High Street and Park Circle Road and on the west by N. Union Street and N. Pine Street. A number of east-west streets criss-cross the area including Cypress Street, Plane Street, Ridge Avenue, E. Roosevelt Avenue, Oak Hill Drive, Juniper Street, Birch Street, Catalpa Street and Beechwood Drive. North-south oriented streets include Chestnut Street, Briarcliff Road, Spruce Street and Hickory Avenue. The majority of the streets are slightly curved and there is one cul-de-sac (the northern end of Briarcliff Road). The streets are all lined with sidewalks which are concrete. Curbs throughout the area are a combination of squared off concrete and rounded concrete. Trees line sections of the subdivision and the houses feature a similar 12-foot set-back.

The architecture within the subdivision is vernacular in nature and is best described in chronological order related to the six periods of construction specific to the Oak Hills subdivision. In chronological order of construction (not in order of when the sections were planned) are: Oak Hills 1 (1950), Oak Hills (planned in 1943, constructed in 1950), Oak Hills Addition (planned in 1943, constructed in 1951), Oak Hills 2 (1953), Oak Hills 3 (1954) and Oak Hills 4 (planned in 1956, re-filed in 1978).

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION (Continued):

Oak Hills 1 was the first section constructed in the subdivision. This section is bounded by Ridge Avenue on the north, Vine Street on the east, E. Roosevelt Avenue on the south and Spruce Street on the west. This section encompasses approximately ten blocks. Constructed in mid-1950, these dwellings are one-and-one-half-stories tall and measures three bays wide and two rooms deep. The houses are mainly constructed of brick and are set on concrete slabs without basements. The side-gables appear to have been originally clad in aluminum siding although many now feature modern vinyl siding. The side-gable roofs are clad in asphalt shingles. Interior brick chimney pierce the rear roof slope of the dwellings. The chimneys are consistently placed in the center of the roofs with a slight offset to the right. Optional features on the dwellings appear to be shed-roof carports located on either side of the dwelling and gable-front porticos spanning the center bay of the front of the dwelling. The original windows were one-over-one double-hung metal windows and the original door was a wood panel door with four lights. The original fenestration patterns of the front of the dwellings appears to have been a double window, centrally located door, and a triple window.

The second area to see construction was the section of the subdivision that was the originally planned Oak Hills. This area appears to have been constructed at the same time as Oak Hills 1. Originally plotted to include a larger area, this section was developed only along Briarcliff Road, from E. Roosevelt Avenue south to E. High Street, consisting of approximately two blocks. The remainder of the area depicted in this plan was not constructed until the late 1970s. The architectural details on the originally planned Oak Hills dwellings match those found in Oak Hills 1 with one key difference: the houses in this section generally feature two gable-front dormers on the front roof slope.

The properties throughout Oak Hills 1, and along Briarcliff Road (in the original Oak Hills section), feature small consistent setbacks of approximately 12 feet. The lots are narrow with the dwellings oriented perpendicular to the roadway. There is no cohesive pattern of vegetative plantings throughout this section of the subdivision. Some of the streets, such as Briarcliff Road and sections of Ridge Avenue, have trees that appear to have been planted when the subdivision was constructed. Other areas, such as along E. Roosevelt Avenue and Hickory Avenue, do not have a consistent pattern of trees. Both areas have concrete sidewalks. The curbs in Oak Hills 1 are square while the curbs along Briarcliff Road are rounded. Both sections have concrete driveways and walkways.

The majority of the dwellings in Oak Hills 1, and those along Briarcliff Road (originally-planned Oak Hills) have been altered over time through the addition of modern windows, doors, siding and additions. Few dwellings were found which retained original windows and doors. Many of the dwellings feature modern bay windows in place of the original double or triple windows. The doors have been replaced with modern aluminum doors with modern screen doors. There is little modern infill in this section.

The second planned section of the Oak Hills Subdivision dates to November 22, 1943 when it was listed as part of "Wall Map 1" and titled "Oak Hills Addition." This section was not built until 1951, when the area was re-filed for development. Today it occupies the area roughly bounded on the north by E. Roosevelt Avenue, the east by Spruce Street, the south by Hillside Road, and the west N. Union Street and consists of approximately 14 blocks. This was the third section to be constructed (after both Oak Hills 1 and Oak Hills). The houses in the Oak Hills Addition are consistent with those constructed in Oak Hills 1 with one major exception: there are very few brick dwellings. The dwellings in the Oak Hills Addition are mainly frame structures with a combination of aluminum, vinyl and faux stone cladding. Despite the differences in cladding the fenestration, patterns are consistent with those of Oak Hills 1. The houses sit on concrete foundations and the roofs are clad in asphalt shingles.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION (Continued):

As with Oak Hills 1, the area known as the Oak Hills Addition shows no consistent vegetation patterns. The setbacks are similar (approximately 12 feet) and the sidewalks are concrete. The curbs in Oak Hills Addition are square. There is a higher percentage of modern infill in this area than in Oak Hills 1, and the dwellings exhibit a higher percentage of alterations and additions. The Oak Hills Addition also features the inclusion of the Oak Hill Park, located between Spruce Street and Briarcliff Road.

Oak Hills 2, which consists of approximately eight blocks, is bounded on the north by the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the east by Plane Street, the south by Catalpa Street and the west by N. Pine Street. This section of the Oak Hills subdivision has a number of similarities with the earlier sections including a similar fenestration pattern, concrete foundations and asphalt shingle clad roofs. However, there are several deviations from the earlier sections found consistently throughout this area. Oak Hills 2 contains a mixture of one-and-one-half-story and one-story dwellings. The houses are frame; however, many feature faux brick fronts. Siding materials include aluminum, asbestos and vinyl. The dwellings in Oak Hills 2 all contain a single interior chimney; however, unlike the earlier dwellings, these chimneys pierce the front roof slope instead of the rear. The chimney are metal flue pipes that have been encased in brick to mimic the earlier brick chimneys. Secondary ventilation pipes are found adjacent to the majority of the chimneys. Some of the dwellings also feature a second brick chimney in the exterior gable ends. These secondary chimneys appear to be for fireplaces. Carports are also found on many of the dwellings; however, it is within this section of the subdivision that small, gable-front, one-car garages begin to appear.

The property settings in Oak Hills 2 differ from the earlier sections of the Oak Hills Subdivision in a number of ways. The streets are all curved slightly and the individual properties feature small setbacks, although many are larger (approximately 15 feet) than the setbacks in Oak Hills 1. The dwellings on the corner lots are oriented diagonally towards the corner as opposed to sitting at right angles to the streets. There is no comprehensive vegetation pattern in Oak Hills 2, although Beechwood Drive and Juniper Street appear to have had a consistent planting pattern. The sidewalks are concrete as are the square curbs. The driveways in Oak Hills 2 have been consistently covered with asphalt or blacktop, as opposed to the concrete seen in the earlier sections.

The majority of the dwellings in Oak Hills 2 have been altered over time through the addition of modern windows, doors, siding and additions. Few dwellings were found which retained original windows and doors. One property, located on the north side of Juniper Street, is the most intact dwelling found in the subdivision as a whole. This dwelling retains the original metal multi-pane casement windows and the multi-pane wood doors that were originally part of the dwellings. The house is also clad in asbestos siding which would have originally been found on all of the buildings. The majority of the dwellings in Oak Hills 2 feature modern siding, modern windows and modern additions.

Oak Hills 3, which consists of eight blocks, is located north of the Oak Hills 1 section and is bounded on the north by the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the east by Chestnut Street, the south by Plane Street and the west by Cypress Street. This section consists of approximately six blocks. Oak Hills 3 features all curved roads and the only cul-de-sac in the subdivision (the northern end of Briarcliff Road). This section of the development is remarkably similar to Oak Hills 2, which is located just west of Oak Hills 3.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION (Continued):

Like Oak Hills 2, Oak Hills 3 features both one-and-one-half-story and one-story dwellings. The houses are side-gable dwellings with similar fenestration patterns. Some of the houses retain the three-bays wide and two-room deep plan; however, others are one room deeper. Scattered houses on Aspen Street and Cypress Street are clad in the original asbestos shingles; however, the majority of the dwellings in Oak Hills 3 feature aluminum, vinyl or faux brick. The houses in Oak Hills 3 generally feature the interior metal flue on the front roof slope that has been encased in brick to mimic a chimney, as well as the secondary flue that was first seen in Oak Hills 2. Carports are present on some buildings; however, others feature small, one-car, gable-front garages set to the rear of the driveway.

The setting of Oak Hills 3 is similar to that of Oak Hills 2. The streets are curved and the individual dwellings have a set back of approximately 12 feet. The sidewalks are concrete as are the square curbs. The individual driveways are asphalt. The houses are all oriented parallel to the road, except for the corner lots which contain dwellings oriented diagonally to the corners. There is no consistent vegetation along the streets in Oak Hills 3.

The final section of the development is Oak Hills 4, which was filed in January of 1956. This area was re-filed for development in 1978. All of the properties within this section are modern, post-dating 1978.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE:

A USGS map of the area published in 1956 documents the construction of a section of the Pennsylvania Turnpike through the APE (USGS 1956). The 1956 map also reflects Middletown Borough's annexation of 200 acres south of the Turnpike corridor from Lower Swatara Township in 1953 (USGS 1956). This development was part of a residential expansion phase attributed to the opening of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, as well as the expansion of nearby Olmsted Air Force Base, described as follows in a 1959 *Local Planning Study* of Middletown:

In September 1917, the Ordinance section of the United States Army established a warehouse depot known as the Middletown Army Depot just west of the Borough limits. In 1923, this area became the Olmsted Air Field and, following World War II, it became the Olmsted Air Force Base, Air Materials Center. Recently the Air Force has secured additional land along the western limits of the Borough. The expansion of this base and the increased employment, both military and civilian, has been largely responsible for the tremendous growth of Middletown between 1940 and 1957. Middletown continued to grow through the years and as recently as 1953, annexed an area of almost 200 acres south of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. . . . The more recent prosperity can be attributed to its location on major transportation links but even more significant is its proximity to Olmsted Air Force Base.

Labor studies in 1959 showed that 37% of all the available civilian work force in Middletown, or 1,307 people, were employed at the Air Force base. Of this number, 85% were male. This still constitutes a small number of the 11,000 civilian employees at the base. . . .

[Middletown's] principal function has been to act as a dormitory for individuals employed outside of the Borough limits. The most significant source of employment is the air base which is adjacent to the Borough (Clifton E. Rogers and Associates 1959:7).

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (Continued):

The residential development effected in the 200 annexed acres south of the Pennsylvania Turnpike corridor was a continuation of the Oak Hills Subdivision commenced shortly after World War II by Olmsted Estates, Inc. Subdivision plans indicate that construction phases were pushed forward at Oak Hills virtually every year from 1950 through 1956. Of the 402 building permits issued by Middletown Borough for residential construction during this period, half were awarded in 1950 and 1951, after which “declining numbers reflected the lack of buildable vacant land” (Clifton E. Rogers and Associates 1959:16). As might be expected, Middletown’s population increased significantly during this building boom, from 6,085 inhabitants in 1950 to approximately 12,500 occupants in 1957. It was noted in the 1959 *Local Planning Study* that “Middletown has actually increased its population at a faster rate than either the Harrisburg Region, Dauphin County or the Metropolitan Area. . . . This growth is the result of new residential construction in the eastern and recently annexed northern section of the Borough plus a retention of the Borough’s natural increase, which is the excess of births over deaths” (Clifton E. Rogers and Associates 1959:9). The growth of Middletown in reference to the growth of the surrounding areas is easily seen in the table below (taken from Clifton E. Rogers and Associates 1959:9).

COMPARATIVE POPULATION TRENDS							
Pennsylvania Turnpike Project between Milepost 250 and Milepost 252 Lower Swatara and Londonderry Townships and Middletown Borough Dauphin County, Pennsylvania							
	1940	1950	Increase		1957	Increase	
			No.	%		No.	%
Middletown	7,046	9,184	2,138	30.3	12,500	3,316	36.0
Harrisburg Region	135,586	153,972	18,386	13.6	182,197	28,225	18.3
Dauphin Co.	177,410	197,784	20,374	11.5	229,600	31,816	16.1
Metro Area	252,216	292,241	40,025	15.9	364,490	54,249	18.6

Post World War II subdivisions were prominent throughout the country as the population continued to increase. Housing needs were at a crisis point in the decade following the war prompting the federal government to create a Veterans Administration mortgage program. This law did two key things: first, it gave credibility to the theory that every one of the U.S. soldiers who were in the war should return to a home of their own; and second, it accepted the developers and builders contention that they would not be able to build the number of homes needed unless the government ended their controls over new construction (Jackson 1985:233). This directly affected the number of builders, the number of single family homes constructed and the quality of the workmanship. According to Jackson:

The assurance of federal mortgage guarantees – at whatever price the builder set – stimulated an unprecedented building boom. Single-family housing starts spurted from only 114,000 in 1944, to 937,000 in 1946, to 1,183,000 in 1948, and to 1,692,000 in 1950, an all-time high. . . . In housing, as in other areas of the economy, World War II was beneficial to large businesses. Whereas before 1945, the typical contractor put up fewer than five houses per year, by 1959, the median single-family builder put up twenty-two structures (Jackson 1985:233).

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (Continued):

This trend—the construction of multiple dwellings by one builder—is the beginning of the large scale suburbanization movement characterized by developments and subdivisions.

The history of the Oak Hills subdivision is directly linked to the expansion of both the Pennsylvania Turnpike and the Olmsted Airforce Base. This is evident in the name of the development company formed for the Oak Hills Subdivision (Olmsted Estates, Inc.). The name is a clear attempt to associate the planned subdivision with the airbase. Ironically located on the site of the original Emaus Orphan House (which was originally founded to house the orphans of soldiers killed in battle) the Oak Hills Subdivision was originally planned in November of 1943 with the intention of using the housing for military personnel (Mrs. Margaret Gobble, pers. com., September 17, 2007). The first two sections of the planned subdivision were filed in 1943 with the local planning office, in an area then part of Lower Swatara Township. However, construction would not begin until 1951 when the plans for Oak Hills 1 were approved. The subdivision would undergo three additional periods of growth between 1950 and 1954. The final section, Oak Hills 4, was filed in 1956; however, it was not constructed until the late 1970s.

According to Mrs. Margaret Gobble (a resident of the subdivision since 1956) the area was originally developed for use mainly as housing for the nearby military base (although there were some civilian residents). The military used the housing between 1956 and 1959, at which time the housing was converted entirely to civilian housing. Mrs. Gobble and her husband were the second family to move into the neighborhood in 1956, at the time when most of the area was occupied by military personnel. The developer would come through and survey out ten plots of land at a time, staking out the lots and the streets. The next step was pouring the concrete foundations and roughing in the plumbing (which is located in the concrete foundation). The houses were then brought in on trucks with five sections for each house (the sections were pre-built). Once each house was assembled on its concrete pad and the plumbing was hooked up, the new owners moved in. Only the first floor, consisting of a kitchen, dining area, living room, bathroom and bedroom, were finished. The upper story was designed to be finished by the new owner. According to Mrs. Gobble, the property owners were eventually able to purchase the houses; however, they rent the land that the houses stand on. She still pays \$12.00 a year for the use of the land (Mrs. Margaret Gobble, pers. com., September 17, 2007).

NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATION:

The Oak Hills Subdivision was evaluated according to criteria set forth in *National Register Bulletin 15: "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation"* (National Park Service 1997) and the *National Register Bulletin: "Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places"* (National Park Service 2002). According to the second Bulletin, post World War II suburbs are:

. . . the result of one of the largest building booms in American history – represented a new and distinctive stage in the succession of suburban neighborhood types. They, furthermore, created an almost seamless suburban landscape in the extensive territory they occupied, the manner in which large numbers of homes were rapidly mass-produced, and the dispersed pattern of settlement made possible by the construction of modern freeways (National Park Service 2002:3).

NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATION (Continued):

The Bulletin goes on to state that several determinations must be considered and made when assessing the National Register Significance of a suburb, or subdivision:

- How the district illustrates an important aspect of America's suburbanization, and reflects the growth and historic development of the locality or metropolitan area where it is located; and
- Whether the district possesses 1) physical features characterizing it as a historic residential suburb, and 2) attributes of historic integrity conveying its association with important historic events or representing significant aspects of its historic design (National Park Service 2002:7).

The Oak Hills Subdivision is a direct result of the need for additional military housing following World War II. However, Oak Hills Subdivision served as military housing for only a brief period of time, and its construction, originally planned for 1943, was not begun until after 1950. Therefore, its contributions to the military housing shortage were short-lived. The subdivision is also an example of a development constructed for civilian housing based on the rapidly expanding population in urban areas (in this case Harrisburg, Pennsylvania) as it was quickly converted from military housing in the early 1950s.

While Oak Hills is a planned subdivision, it lacks those characteristics that would make it a good example of a planned subdivision (such as clear roles for the developer and contractor). In addition, there is no evidence of an architect or landscape architect being involved in the planning or construction phases. The development did not include schools or commercial facilities, and while there is a small park included in the development, it is not a good example of a designed landscape. The development of Oak Hills Subdivision does not appear to have had a significant impact on the local municipality (Middletown Borough) save as a source of tax revenue.

There is no cohesive historical event or trend which shaped the development. It is not a good example of planned mid-twentieth-century suburban construction. There was no advertising found for the development and no apparent marketing of features which might have attracted buyers. The length of time it took to complete the first three construction phases indicates that there was not a substantial need for the housing (which would have prompted faster construction). The final section, Oak Hills 4, was not built until the 1970s, which further indicates that either the housing needs had slowed, or that buyers were looking elsewhere. The Oak Hills Subdivision lacks integrity of association, feeling and setting and is recommended not eligible under Criterion A.

The subdivision is not known to be associated with any singularly significant individuals in history. No information was located on the developer or the builder and they do not appear to have been significant in the area. The Oak Hills Subdivision is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATION (Continued):

The Oak Hills Subdivision contains a collection of mid-twentieth-century vernacular buildings. The dwellings exhibit a similar plan throughout the six sections of the development with alterations occurring in the number of stories, depth of the buildings, cladding materials and fenestration. While the general form of the buildings is consistent, the workmanship and materials have been altered. According to the *National Register Bulletin: "Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places"* (National Park Service 2002):

Integrity of materials in an architecturally significant neighborhood requires that the **majority of the dwellings** retains the key exterior materials that marked their identity during the historic period. The retention of original materials in individual dwellings may be less important in assessing the integrity of a neighborhood significant for its plan or landscape design. Original plant material may enhance the integrity, but their loss does not necessary destroy it. Vegetation similar in historic species, scale, type and visual effect will generally convey integrity of setting although integrity of materials may be lost.

Workmanship is evident in the ways materials have been fashioned for functional and decorative purposes to create houses, other outbuildings, structures, and a landscaped setting. This includes the treatment of materials in house design, the planning and maintenance of vegetation, as well as the construction methods of small-scale features such as curbs and walls. (National Park Service 2002:105).

The Oak Hills Subdivision does not retain its integrity of materials or workmanship. Only one dwelling was located which appears to retain the original cladding, windows and doors. The majority of the dwellings now feature modern aluminum or vinyl siding. The metal casement windows have been replaced throughout the subdivision with wood, aluminum and vinyl windows. The overall fenestration patterns have changed with the insertion of modern bay windows and greenhouse windows. Paired and triple modern windows have also replaced the original metal casements. The alterations, which are present on the majority of the dwellings, detract from the overall integrity of materials and workmanship, and the district as a whole fails to retain its integrity of feeling and association. The property is recommended not eligible under Criterion C.

The Oak Hills Subdivision does not appear to be eligible for listing under Criterion D; however, an archaeological survey would be necessary to confirm this.

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Clifton E. Rogers and Associates

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PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM - NARRATIVE SHEET

89C

Historic/Other Name: Oak Hills Subdivision

Sheet 9 of 9

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1997 "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation." *National Register Bulletin 15*. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. Government Printing Office.

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2001 *Middletown, PA Quadrangle*. 7.5 minute series. Survey control current as of 1963. Topography compiled in 1999. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1999. Boundaries current as of 2001. Reston, VA: United States Geological Survey.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 2—Looking northeast along Aspen Street within the Oak Hills 3 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 3—Looking northeast along Aspen Street at the western edge of the Oak Hills 3 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 4—Looking northeast along Plane Street within the Oak Hills 3 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 5—Looking northeast along Plane Street within the Oak Hills 3 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 6—Looking northwest along Aspen Street within the Oak Hills 2 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 7—Looking northwest at the corner of Aspen Street and Pine Street within the Oak Hills 2 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 8—Looking south along North Pine Street within the Oak Hills 2 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 9—Looking northeast along Juniper Street within the Oak Hills 2 section. A corner house is visible in the background.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 10—Looking northwest at a house on Juniper Street within the Oak Hills 2 section. The house is a remaining intact dwelling, although it is deteriorated and condemned.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 11—Looking southeast along Spruce Street in the Oak Hills 2 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 12—Looking west along Birch Street in the Oak Hills 2 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 13—Looking southwest along Catalpa Street in the Oak Hills 2 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 14—Looking northwest along Plane Street in the Oak Hills 2 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 15—Looking south along Plane Street in the Oak Hills 2 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 16—Looking southwest along Ridge Avenue in the Oak Hills 1 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 17—Looking northeast along Ridge Avenue in the Oak Hills 1 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 18—Looking southwest along Ridge Avenue in the Oak Hills 1 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 19—Looking southwest along Roosevelt Avenue in the Oak Hills 1 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 20—Looking west along Roosevelt Avenue in the Oak Hills 1 section.



Oak Hills Subdivision: Photograph 21—Looking southeast along Roosevelt Avenue in the Oak Hills addition section.