

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The architectural development of the Kenton Road, College Road, and Walker Road project area began shortly after 1912. Residential development within the general vicinity of the project area occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1892, the State College for Colored Students was established at the intersection of the Dupont Highway (Route 13) and College Road. Also associated with the development of the school was the College Settlement Company, which was established in 1897 by the college Board of Trustees under the leadership of the school's president, William C. Jason. This corporation purchased a farm tract adjacent to the school for the purpose of subdividing it and selling smaller lots to African American landowners for the construction of dwellings. Much of the development that occurred from 1900 to 1930 along College Road in the general vicinity of the college and east of the project area was associated with the College Settlement Company. Within the project area, 10 homesteads were established between 1912 and 1930. Census data reveal that at least four of the homes within the project area were owned by African Americans during the 1920s (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1920). Among these property owners was William C. Jason, who owned a farm on the corner of McKee Road (Route 15) and College Road.

The architectural survey of the Kenton, College, and Walker roads project area identified 12 resources 50 years or older within the area of potential effect. All of these resources were constructed between 1911 and 1948. Four of them (Abernathy House, Brady Ridgeway House, Jason Property, and William H. Morgan House) are known to have been associated with African American owners in the 1920s and 1930s.

Despite the early twentieth-century African American associations, the Kenton, College, and Walker roads project area does not constitute a National Register-eligible historic district. Although early twentieth-century Delaware society was segregated and African Americans lived together in distinct parts within and surrounding the city, the residential section of the present study area does not appear to be a distinctive example of this phenomenon. Of the 12 resources 50 years or older identified in this survey, only four were conclusively determined to have been built or owned by African Americans. Two properties, the Zurkow House and the Wasylkowski Property, are known to have been occupied by Euroamerican families during the early twentieth century.

It appears that there are more significant locations associated with African American settlement within the vicinity of Dover. Recent studies by Heite and Blume (1995) have provided more information on the Moores, a distinct group with African American ancestry who settled in the area. The present study has also identified the likely location of the College Settlement Company's development along College Road to the east of the project area, of which all or nearly all of the seven buildings located at this site in 1930 are still extant (see Figure 3). The project area contains large concentrations of post-1950 housing, including two modern circa 1980s developments called the Hamlet and Foxhall. The 1993 Dover USGS quadrangle map shows that there are just over 30

dwellings located in the project area along Kenton, College, and Walker roads, and only 12 were determined to be over 50 years old (see Figure 4). The area therefore does not possess a sufficiently cohesive concentration of contributing resources to be considered as a National Register-eligible historic district.

None of the surveyed resources appears to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Of the 12 properties, only the Jason Property was determined to possess enough significance to be potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion B. Historical maps and deed records indicate that William C. Jason established a small farm on the property located at the northwest corner of McKee Road (Route 15) and College Road between 1912 and 1920. Jason served as the first African American president of the State College for Colored Students (now Delaware State University) from 1895 to 1923. During his tenure, Jason helped to increase both student enrollment and the number of faculty at the college. Jason was also the primary figure in initiating the College Settlement Company which subdivided an adjacent farm tract to create affordable lots for housing to be purchased by African Americans. The College Settlement Company is responsible for much of the early twentieth-century African American settlement around the state college. Because of Jason's significant contributions to the African American community in the Dover vicinity, his home would seem to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion B. However, extensive alterations to the Jason Property have diminished its integrity of design, materials, and setting, making it unlikely to meet integrity standards for the National Register. Of the remaining 11 properties identified in this survey, none were found to be associated with important individuals or events that would make them eligible under Criterion A or B. Also, the remaining 11 resources are examples of common early to mid-twentieth-century domestic dwellings (Bungalow, Craftsman, and Garrison Colonial property types, as well as vernacular forms of Hall House, Front-gable, and Cross-gable property types) which do not possess distinction. Many also lack integrity of design and materials. Because of this, none of the 11 properties appear to be architecturally significant resources eligible under Criterion C.

The research and the field survey program undertaken for this study have been sufficient to accomplish the stated objective of identifying historic properties within the area of potential effect of proposed improvements on Kenton, College, and Walker roads.