

**PRESERVATION PLAN FOR MOUNT PLEASANT SCHOOL HOUSE  
BELLEVUE STATE PARK  
Wilmington, Delaware**

*prepared for the*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Mount Pleasant School House survives from two historic periods and uses – a rural school house for 35 years and then an estate cottage for 111 years. The first use and period, from 1830 to 1865, was a rural schoolhouse associated with the State of Delaware’s first successful initiative to provide free schools to rural populations. This use is recognized as the building name contained on the building plaque installed by Delaware Public Archives in 2007, as follows:



*Figure 1: Mount Pleasant School, 2015.*

### MOUNT PLEASANT SCHOOL

On February 12, 1829, the Delaware Legislature passed the “Act for the establishment of free schools.” To meet the educational needs of the area’s youth, local residents formed a committee that purchased a parcel of land from Joseph Orr in 1830 for the purpose of “erecting a school house thereon, for the benefit of the subscribers residing in said District.” The school was used until 1865 when the building was purchased by Philadelphia merchant Hanson Robinson to add to his Woolton Hall estate, in exchange for another lot and a new school building on the east side of Philadelphia Pike. The original school building was subsequently altered for use as a residence in Colonial Revival style by William F. du Pont, Jr., as part of his greater transformation of the Bellevue estate. The structure came into state ownership in 1976 with the original acquisition of Bellevue State Park.

The second period, from 1865 to 1976, saw the building transformed to an increasingly more embellished estate cottage, which reached its most elaborate Colonial Revival expression during the 1930s’ alterations completed by William Du Pont, Jr. With the demolition of the connected sports complex in 2015, the building lost its connection to the estate, and now visually belongs to neither the world of the rural schoolhouse nor a storied estate.

This report is a preservation plan for Mount Pleasant School House, and includes a historical evaluation, existing conditions documentation, condition assessment, architectural program, and preliminary design options for adaptive use. The historical evaluation provides a context for the building – its origins, its life as a public school, and its conversion to an estate cottage. Existing conditions drawings and photographs document the current form and appearance of the building. The architectural assessment identifies the physical condition of the building and its mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. The architectural program defines the current and future needs of the Park and the Friends group relative to Mount Pleasant School House. Finally, preliminary design options for adaptive use of the building are presented.

## **II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report addresses two major historic preservation and adaptive use questions: To what period should the building be restored and how should the interior be configured to achieve the primary goals of the architectural program.

### **Restoration Period**

It is the recommendation of this report that the building be restored to the 1830-1865 appearance, the period when it served the community as a one-room schoolhouse. This approach is recommended for the following reasons:

- Surviving one-room schoolhouses in New Castle are very rare — perhaps as few as two or three. Because of the open space surrounding Mount Pleasant School House, now that the sports complex has been demolished, a setting for interpreting a rural schoolhouse is now possible.
- The alterations to adapt the schoolhouse to an estate cottage that began in 1865 are in an extreme state of deterioration, so that restoring the building to its 1930s appearance would be as much a reconstruction as restoring it to its 1830-1865 appearance, and would be more expensive, as seen in the DuPont Era Cost Estimate.
- Restoring the building as a rural schoolhouse provides the opportunity for interpreting the Bellevue State Park property as farmland prior to its development as an estate.
- At the interior, an open schoolroom provides the most flexibility for the intended use. To interpret the exterior as an estate cottage and the interior as a schoolhouse would create a dichotomy that would be confusing to the visitor.
- If the building is restored to the estate cottage era the addition will need to have its first floor at grade in order for the original cottage windows to correspond to interior floor levels. Accordingly, ADA restrooms would be accessible at grade from the exterior but not from the schoolhouse interior.

### **Adaptive Use**

In order to achieve the possible programmatic goal of two offices and a recreated classroom space that can serve as exhibit space, both one- and two-story schemes were considered (see Part VI, Architectural Program Memorandum). The optional program goal of two workstations requires a two-story scheme; but without them the program can be achieved in one story. In Part VII, Preservation Plan, both one- and two-story schemes are explored.

The four options presented are summarized as follows:

Option 1 - Two-story scheme with two offices on the second floor: This option places code-compliant stairs in the middle of the original classroom space, in the general location it occurred during the estate cottage period.

Option 2 - Two-story scheme with two offices on the second floor: This option places the stairs in a reconstructed two-story wing in order to preserve the classroom space in the original schoolhouse.

Option 3 – One-story scheme with first floor divided into two gallery spaces, and a one-story service wing.

Option 4 – One-story scheme with recreated classroom and one-story service wing.

Of the four options, Option 4 is recommended because it recreates the most significant period in the building's history, allows the most flexibility of use, and minimizes the size of the addition. Further advantages of this option are as follows:

- The original classroom size and fenestration are recreated, providing the best interpretive, programming, and exhibition space.
- Reconstructing the front porch in the form of a schoolhouse porch rather than a Colonial Revival cottage porch will reduce the size of the porch, allow it to be in scale with the proportions of the original schoolhouse, and by adjusting the grade, allow ADA access to the building.
- Demolition of the 2-story rear addition and rear entrance vestibule will remove an architecturally non-contributing element that was heavily compromised by the construction and demolition of the attached sports complex and subsequent asbestos abatement.
- There is no interior fabric that contributes to the significance of the building, and therefore, the most significant feature of the building interior is the volume of space forming the original classroom.
- Of the 4 dormers that were added during the cottage estate period, only 2 survive, and these have been stripped of detail.
- Except for the shifted front elevation windows (moved to accommodate the enlarged porch during the cottage estate period), first floor window openings are original. The paired second floor gable-end windows were clearly added and can be removed.

### III. HISTORICAL EVALUATION

#### Historic Context

Mount Pleasant School House (hereafter called Mount Pleasant) is an early-nineteenth-century stone school building in New Castle County's Brandywine Hundred. The school house, which may take its name from its setting – a hill “three hundred feet above the Delaware” – draws its significance from its association with Delaware's ‘Act for the Establishment of Free Schools.’<sup>1</sup> This act, which was passed in 1829 by Delaware's General Assembly, represented the state's first meaningful legislation to provide free public education to all white male and female children between the ages of five and 21. Research indicates that the school house, which bears an 1830 date stone in its southwest gable, was established within New Castle County's School District No. 2 to fulfill the mandate of this legislation. Mount Pleasant is also significant for its subsequent use as a residence. This use occurred after 1865, when the school house was incorporated into a 50-acre country estate. The estate was later purchased by William Du Pont.

The present-day appearance of Mount Pleasant belies its original and intended use. Designed to accommodate a rural population, the building was one of many school houses constructed in Delaware during the years immediately following the ratification of the ‘Act for the Establishment of Free Schools’ (hereafter called the ‘Free School Act’) in 1829. The Free School Act was precipitated by lawmakers' concern that white children in Delaware had few opportunities for formal schooling. Prospects for children who lived in remote areas of the state were especially bleak. There, poverty and isolation encouraged and perpetuated illiteracy and encumbered efforts to provide children with even the most rudimentary education. For white children in Delaware, opportunities to attend school were usually only capacitated by local initiatives and resources. In some smaller towns and villages, residents hired itinerant educators to instruct the community's children during non-summer months. These instructors were often clergymen who procured classroom space in local churches, community buildings, local houses, or “improvised school-rooms.”<sup>2</sup> A small number of children in cities, including Wilmington and Dover, and in larger towns, including New Castle and Newark, had limited access to tuition-charging private schools, religious-based academies, or schools organized by charities. Admission to the latter type of school was usually restricted to orphans and destitute white children. James H. Groves, Delaware's superintendent of education during the late-nineteenth century, noted that before 1830, there “were not more than twenty school houses in the State and these were owned by private individuals.”<sup>3</sup> The Free School Act did not address the educational needs of black children. Until the late nineteenth century, most of the state's free black children were denied access to schools of any kind.<sup>4</sup>

The Free School Act was not the first legislation that addressed the responsibility of the government to provide the state's white children with a public-school education. In 1796, the state legislature attempted to fund public education with a tax on marriage and tavern licenses. The law was derided as a failure, however, because the funds that it generated were not available until 1817 and because it was seen to support poor children rather than the state's entire school-age population.<sup>5</sup> In 1821, the state made a second attempt to legislate public education in Delaware. This attempt produced “An Act for the Encouragement and Support of Schools.” Like the 1796 legislation, the 1821 act (which was reputed to benefit ‘paupers’) did not earn the support of the public.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Charles P. Dare, *Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Guide* (Philadelphia: George Charles, 1856), 95.

<sup>2</sup>John Thomas Scharf, *History of Delaware: 1609-1888* (Philadelphia: L.J. Richards, 1888), 992.

<sup>3</sup>Lyman Pierson Powell, *The History of Education in Delaware* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1893), 151.

<sup>4</sup>In 1881, Delaware began to enact state legislation that mandated the funding of free public schools for black children. During the following decades, the state enacted supplemental legislation, if inadequate, to finance black schools, most of which were severely underfunded. See Robert J. Taggart, *Private Philanthropy and Public Education: Pierre S. Du Pont and the Delaware Schools, 1890-1940* (Newark: The University of Delaware Press, 1988), 29.

<sup>5</sup>Lyman Pierson Powell, *The History of Education in Delaware*, 139-40.

<sup>6</sup>*Fifth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Free Schools of the State of Delaware* (Dover: The Delawarean, 1881), 45.

The 1829 Free School Act aimed to redress prior legislation failures by authorizing reliable and sufficient funding for public schools in the state. It also invested power in multiple local commissioners (appointed by the state's levy courts) to create school districts in each of Delaware's three counties – New Castle, Kent, and Sussex – and to build or procure a single school house for each district. The legislation also tasked commissioners with maintaining the school houses in their districts. Funding for the schools was addressed in an 1830 amendment that permitted districts to subsidize their schools with a local property tax.<sup>7</sup>

Mount Pleasant was one of multiple public school houses organized in response to the state's Free School Act. Some public schools were constructed immediately following the act's passage. Others were established in buildings that had previously served as private schools. The total number of school houses created under the Free School Act is not certain. An analysis of Kent County's response to the Act, however, may inform school-building endeavors in the rest of the state during this period. "Schools Districts of Kent County," an announcement that appeared in a September 1829 issue of the *Delaware Gazette and State Journal* indicates that Kent County responded to the General Assembly's directive by creating 45 separate school districts and establishing a single public school in each district. The announcement suggests that some districts in the county located their public schools within buildings that formerly operated as private schools. It directed district residents of District No. 3 in Smyrna (a town in central Delaware), for example, to assemble at the "Red School House," an existing building.<sup>8</sup> A late-nineteenth-century history of the state, in fact, indicates that old schools that had "been used for private school purposes were converted into common schools" during the years following the Free School Act.<sup>9</sup>

"School Districts of Kent County," however, also suggests that during the months after the Free School Act was passed, some districts in the county were compelled to identify temporary spaces to accommodate public school students. Residents of District No. 8 (near the Maryland border) for example, were instructed to meet at the house of Jesse Fisher. Residents of other parts of the county were directed to convene at various other venues, including a grist mill, a lawyer's office, and an inn.<sup>10</sup> This information indicates that many districts in Kent County were forced to build school houses to meet the mandate of the act. In its own efforts to establish public schools, New Castle County, where Mount Pleasant is located, may have been particularly challenged to comply with the Free School Act. In 1830, the county's population of 29,700 was nearly one-third larger than that of Kent County.<sup>11</sup>

## **Building Chronology of Mount Pleasant School House**

### **Choosing the Site**

Historic records partially document the establishment of Mount Pleasant, the school erected to serve the students of New Castle County's School District No. 2. District No 2, which was shaped roughly like a rectangle, measured approximately two miles from north to south and one-and-three-quarters miles from east to west. It was bounded on its east side by the Delaware River and on its west side by Marsh Road (current-day Route 3). The northern border of the district ran roughly parallel with Perkins Run, a tributary of the Delaware River. The boundaries of the district conformed with the Free School Act, which required that the commissioners "form each district so that the most remote parts shall be two miles or about that distance from the center." The district

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<sup>7</sup>*An Act for the Establishment of Free Schools in the State of Delaware*. Passed at the January Session of the General Assembly of the Said State (Dover: A.M. Shee, 1829); Steven B. Weeks, *History of Public School Education in Delaware*, Bulletin No. 18 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1917).

<sup>8</sup>"School Districts in Kent County," *Delaware Gazette and State Journal*. 5 October, 1829.

<sup>9</sup>John Thomas Scharf, *History of Delaware: 1609-1888* (Philadelphia: L.J. Richards, 1888), 992.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>William Darby and Theodore Dwight, *Gazetteer of the United States of America* (Hartford: Edward Hopkins, 1833), 136.



Figure 2: Jacob Price, “Map of New Castle County, Delaware,” 1849.  
Hash line indicated boundaries of the district.

was bisected by the Philadelphia and Wilmington Turnpike (present-day Route 13), which followed a north-south course. (Figure 2)

The half-acre parcel that Mount Pleasant occupies is near the middle of District No. 2. Property deeds indicate that in September 1830, approximately seven months after the Free School Act was passed, the “Committee in School District No.2” purchased “eighty-one perches of land” from Joseph Orr, a landholder in the Brandywine Hundred, for the purpose of “erecting a schoolhouse thereon for the benefit of subscribers residing in the said district...”<sup>12</sup> The school committee’s members, Edward Beeson and Joseph Grubb, neighbored Orr’s property.

The eighty-one perch school site was equal to a half-acre. The half-acre allocation was customary in 1829 and formally legislated by 1852.<sup>13</sup> This lot size remained standard until the 1920s, when the state education department began to advocate for larger school grounds.<sup>14</sup> The square parcel on which Mt. Pleasant sits is documented on an 1865 property survey.<sup>15</sup> (Figure 3) The survey indicates that the parcel measured nine perches by nine perches. Contemporary literature suggests that the setting of the parcel resembled that of most early-to-mid-nineteenth-century public school sites. Public schools of the period were said to be located in the “bleakest, nosiest, dustiest spot in the district, always on a public road, generally at the junction of two...”<sup>16</sup> The Mount

<sup>12</sup>Deed of Property, Joseph Orr to Edward Beeson and Joseph Grubb. 22 September, 1830. Bellevue Hall Land Papers, 1782-1920. Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, De.

<sup>13</sup>Education legislation enacted in 1857 permitted school commissioners to procure school sites that were not more than a half-acre in size. General Assembly of the State of Delaware, “An Act in Relation to Free Schools,” *Revised Statues Laws of Delaware*. Chapter 442, vol. 2 (Wilmington: James and Webb, 1852), 213.

<sup>14</sup>George D. Strayer and N.L. Engelhardt, *General Report on School Building and Grounds of Delaware, 1919* (Wilmington: Service Citizens of Delaware), 5.

<sup>15</sup>Undated survey of Hanson Robinson’s Land. Bellevue Hall Land Papers, 1782-1920. Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, De.

<sup>16</sup>A.H. Grimshaw, “Twentieth Annual School Convention of New Castle.” In *The American Journal of Education*, vol. 2. ed. Henry Barnard (London: Hartford, F.C. Brownell, 1856), 474.

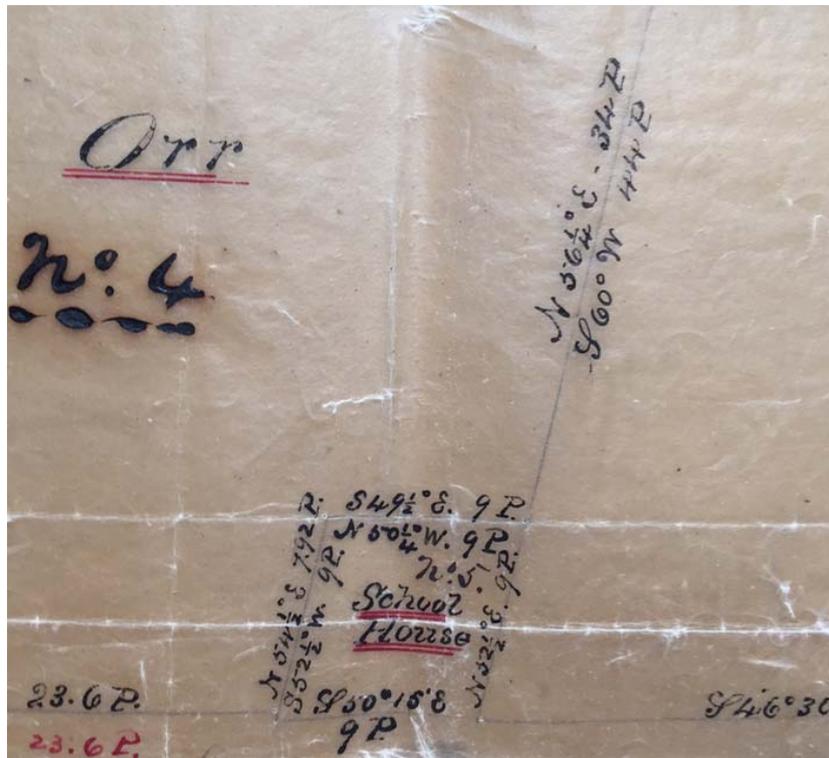


Figure 3: 1865 survey delineating the half-acre parcel of School District No. 2, "Lot No. 5" of Hanson Robinson.

Pleasant parcel met at least one of these criteria: it was located approximately 500 feet northwest of the Philadelphia and Wilmington Turnpike, one of the main routes between Philadelphia and regions to the south. The school was also less than a half mile south of the Bellevue Quarry. During much of the nineteenth century, Bellevue was one of the region's largest quarries and was acclaimed as the main source of stone for the Delaware Breakwater, a structure on Cape Henlopen engineered by the architect William Strickland.<sup>17</sup> The school's location near the quarry, as well as the presence of other nearby industrial infrastructure, including a siding to the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad, likely contributed to a chaotic learning environment for Mount Pleasant's students.

## Construction

Information about the construction of the Mount Pleasant School House is elusive. A date stone marked with '1830' and the initials 'M.P.' suggests that the school was established within approximately two years of the passage of the Free School Act. Documentary records, however, offer inconsistent information about when the school house was erected. An August 1830 land survey of School District No. 2 reveals, for example, that the school may have occupied its present site before 1830. This survey identifies the meeting location for District No. 2 residents as the 'Stone Creek School House.'<sup>18</sup> Stone Creek School House likely took its name from Stony Creek, a water course located approximately one-half mile to the northeast of Mt. Pleasant. The Stone Creek School house may have assumed the name Mount Pleasant after the school committee formalized the boundaries of District No. 2. Another contemporary document, however, suggests that the school may have been new and that work on its construction may not have commenced until at least the fall of 1830. This document, a Septem-

<sup>17</sup>Public Documents Printed by Order of the Senate of the United States of America, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1836), 264; National Register of Historic Places, Delaware Breakwaters and Lewes Harbor. Sussex County, Delaware, National Register # 76000586.

<sup>18</sup>"School District Boundaries, 1830-1880." Clerk of the Peace, New Castle County. Delaware Public Archives, Dover, Delaware.

ber 1830 deed, indicates that the school district purchased Joseph Orr's half-acre parcel with the intention of "erecting a schoolhouse thereon."<sup>19</sup>

Mount Pleasant's design largely reflects national trends in early school house architecture. Contemporary books, treatises on school house architecture, and reports issued by state education boards indicate that with few exceptions (notably, octagonal schools), one-story school houses of the early and mid-nineteenth century had rectangular floor plans and gabled roofs. Delaware school houses were much like school houses throughout the country. A *General Report on School Buildings and Grounds of Delaware [General Report]*, which, in 1919, documented the physical condition of extant schools in the state, noted that "the typical school building in Delaware is a most unattractive, store-box type of structure..."<sup>20</sup> The proportions of Mount Pleasant also closely conform with national norms of the early to mid-nineteenth century. A Pennsylvania school official of the period noted that "probably a room whose breadth is one-fourth less than its length, with the teacher's desk at one end, is the best form."<sup>21</sup> Measuring 35 feet long and 25 feet wide, Mount Pleasant's dimensions closely matched those of an ideal school house of the period, with a few exceptions; the orientation of the school house was 90 degrees off and it had a side entrance. It may also have been inadequately-sized for its enrollments; soon after it opened, residents of the district complained that the school was too small for its 100 registered students.<sup>22</sup>

Mount Pleasant's window arrangement also reflects national building trends for school house designs of the period. Henry Barnard, a nineteenth-century education reformer, observed that school windows were typically "inserted on three or four sides of the room."<sup>23</sup> Images and descriptions of early and mid-nineteenth century school houses illustrate this arrangement and help to establish Mount Pleasant's commonplace fenestration. On each side of the school's entrance (which is located on the northwest wall) there is a single window. Each of the school's end walls also has two windows on its first story and a paired window in its gable. The placement of Mount Pleasant's windows in relation to the floor of the school house also reflects a common building practice of the period. This practice favored locating the windows at a height that did not encumber a view of the outside. After the mid-nineteenth century, education reformers abandoned this convention and embraced designs that located windows high above the floor at levels where children could not be distracted by the pleasures of the outdoors.<sup>24</sup>

Contemporary design books suggest that Mount Pleasant's side-facing plan may have been relatively unusual. In early and mid-nineteenth century school-house plan books, side-facing entrances were not rare, but they were vastly outnumbered by gable-end facing entrances. School house architecture in Delaware may not have precisely reflected designs featured in plan books. School reformers of the period, however, did favor school house designs with an entrance on the gable end. A contemporary writer noted that this plan was preferable because it "keeps the whole school in front and in view of the teacher, and gives ample space across the end, before his desk, for classes."<sup>25</sup> (Figure 4) The mid-century Greek Revival movement in architecture, which favored pedimented roofs, may also have influenced communities' preferences for front-facing plans.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Deed of Property, Joseph Orr to Edward Beeson and Joseph Grubb. 22 September, 1830. Bellevue Hall Land Papers, 1782-1920. Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

<sup>20</sup>George D. Strayer and N.L. Engelhardt, *General Report on School Building and Grounds of Delaware, 1919* (Wilmington: Service Citizens of Delaware), 7.

<sup>21</sup>James Johonnot, *Country School-Houses: Containing Elevations, Plans, and Specifications* (New York: Vison and Phinney, 1859); Thomas H. Burrowes, ed. *Pennsylvania School Architecture: A Manual of Directions and Plans* (Harrisburg: A. Boyd Hamilton, 1855), 30.

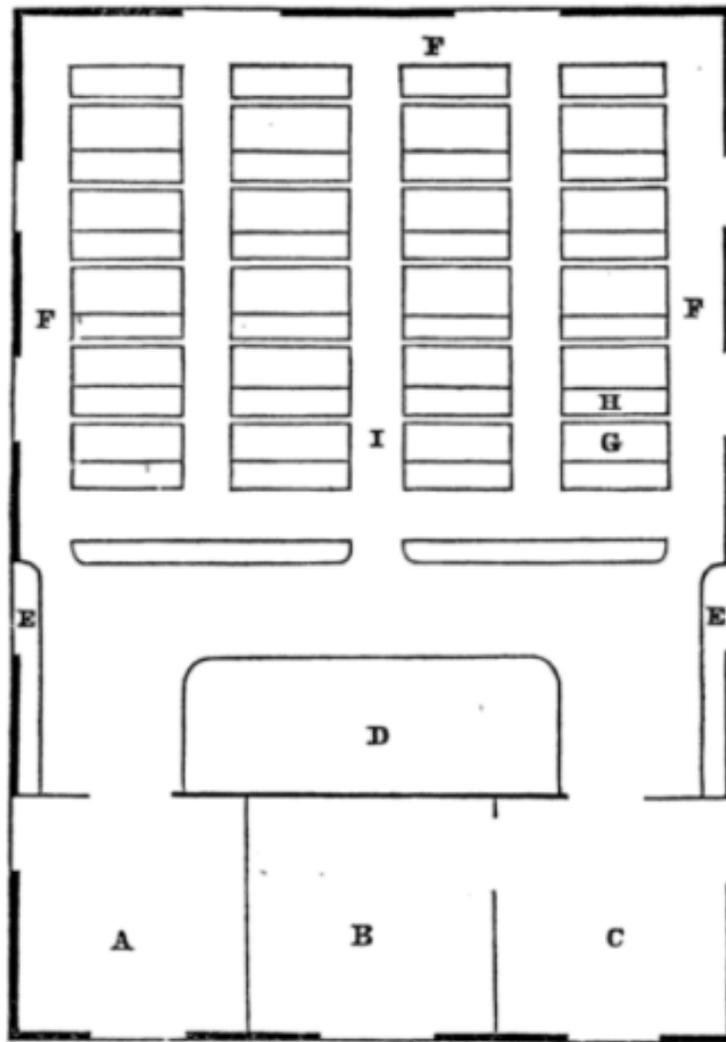
<sup>22</sup>"School District Boundaries, 1830-1880." Clerk of the Peace, New Castle County. Delaware Public Archives, Dover, Delaware.

<sup>23</sup>Henry Barnard, *Practical Illustrations of the Principles of School Architecture* (Hartford: Case, Tiffany and Company, 1851), 11.

<sup>24</sup>Henry Barnard, *School Architecture, or Contributions to the Improvement of School-Houses in the United States* (New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, 1848), 42

<sup>25</sup>Thomas H. Burrowes, ed. *Pennsylvania School Architecture: A Manual of Directions and Plans*, 30.

<sup>26</sup>William Andrus Alcott, *Essay on the Construction of School-Houses* (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins, 1832).



The building here presented should be 26 by 36 feet on the ground, or, at least, 25 by 35 feet inside. The plan is drawn on a scale of ten feet to the inch.

Figure 4: “Plan of District Room,” Henry Barnard, *School Architecture, or Contributions to the Improvement of School-Houses in the United States* (New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, 1848), 78.

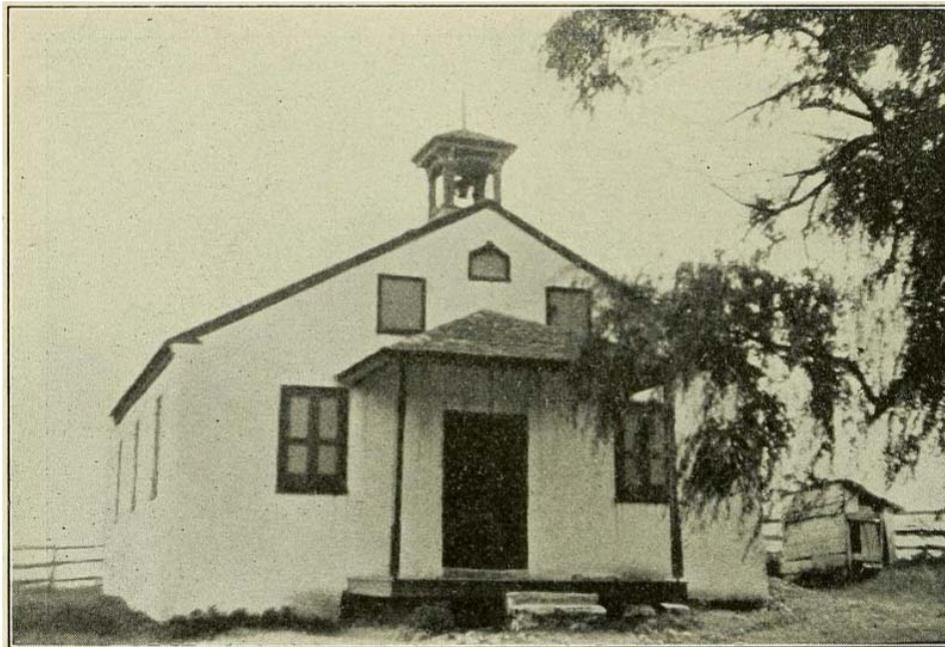
Although the plan and design of the school reflect national trends, Mount Pleasant’s building materials reflect regional preferences and practicalities. This is particularly true of the stone used in its walls. This stone has a quality that is consistent with stone cut from quarries near Mount Pleasant. One of these quarries was Bellevue, the site located one-half mile to the north of Mount Pleasant in the village of Quarryville. The proximity of Bellevue to the school was addressed in an 1831 appeal by certain property owners to redraw the boundaries of the district. These owners – members of the Lodge family – petitioned the school committee to redraw the boundaries of the district so that their children could avoid the dangers of the quarry. (In their petition, these residents also cited other perils that their children encountered during their two-mile-long walk to school, including encounters with “bushes, briers, rocks and creeks” and “innumerable ticks and reptiles.”)<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup>“Petitions and Reports on School Districts,” 1831. Clerk of the Peace, Delaware Public Archives. Dover, Delaware.

Plan books from the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s contain few designs for stone school houses. Rather, the pages of most books are occupied with illustrations of framed or brick buildings. The 1919 *General Report* suggests that contemporary design books both reflected and influenced the appearance of early and mid-nineteenth-century Delaware school houses. In advance of a 2.9 million-dollar state campaign to replace school buildings, the *General Report* concluded that old schools in Delaware are “commonly of wood frame construction.”<sup>28</sup>

Frame school houses were undoubtedly standard in many areas of Delaware. In the northern part of the state, however, early stone school buildings were common; their overrepresentation in New Castle County particularly reflected the ease and economy of acquiring building stones from local quarries. Photographic and written records document a significant number of early and mid-nineteenth-century stone school houses in New Castle County. In a chapter, “Representative One-Room School Buildings in New Castle County,” the *General Report* includes photographs of several rectangular, gabled-roof stone “block houses” with an outside “coat of concrete plaster.”<sup>29</sup> (Figures 5 and 6) The *General Report* indicates that one such school house, a 30-foot by 27-foot stone building, “conforms very closely to that of a large number of like buildings in New Castle.” The Delaware Public Archives also maintains a collection of photographs of early stone school buildings in New Castle County. These photographs document “old and dilapidated” schools that the Board of Education intended to replace with new buildings.<sup>30</sup> (Figures 7, 8, 9). Figures 6 and 7 depict the same school house. In Figure 7, the front porch of the school house has been enclosed.

Stone school houses had a longevity that exceeded that of framed buildings. This is demonstrated by the large number of early and mid-nineteenth-century stone schools that were still in operation during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Mount Pleasant, however, ceased its life as a school house prematurely, in 1865, when Hanson Robinson, a wealthy Philadelphia wool merchant, acquired the school property for one dollar from District No. 2 and incorporated it into his existing 50-acre estate, Woolton Hall. In exchange for the school proper-



*Figure 5: “North Star, District No. 30.” Photographed 1919. Constructed 1847. George D. Strayer and N.L. Engelhardt, General Report on School Building and Grounds of Delaware, 1919 (Wilmington: Service Citizens of Delaware).*

<sup>28</sup>George D. Strayer and N.L. Engelhardt, *General Report on School Building and Grounds of Delaware*, 1919, 7.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 71, 72.

<sup>30</sup>Board of Education Photograph Collection. RG 8005.015. Delaware Public Archives, Dover, Delaware.

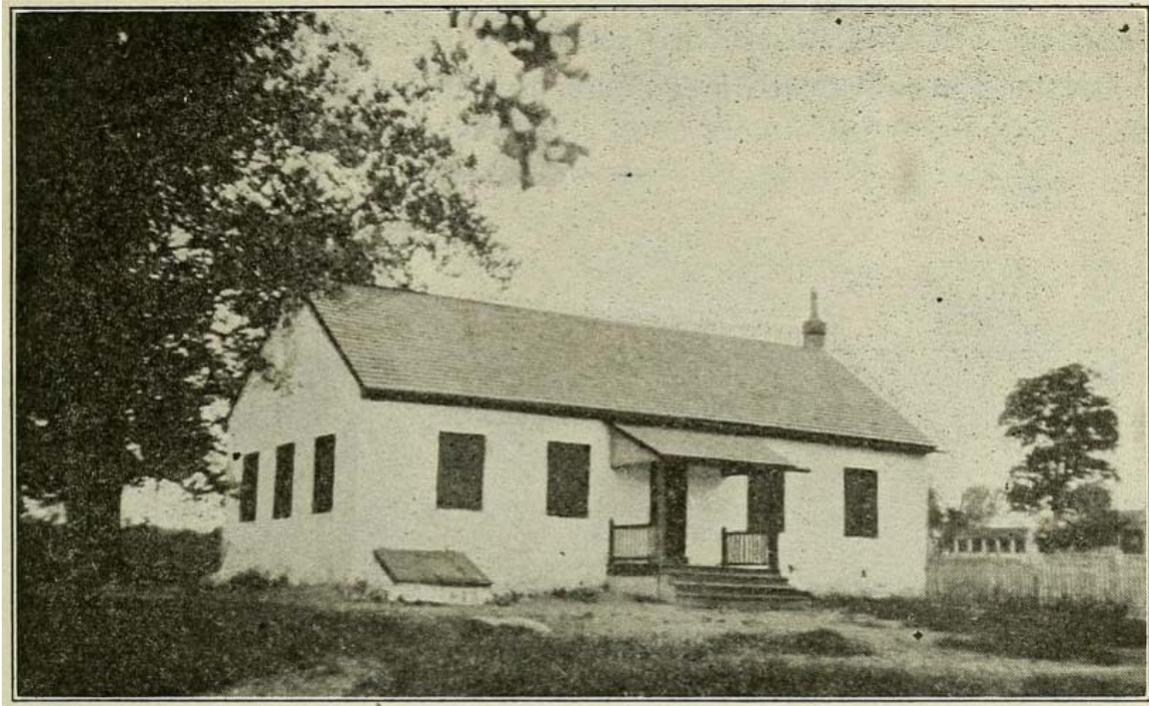


Figure 6: “Rockland, District No. 8” Photographed 1932. Constructed 1831. George D. Strayer and N.L. Engelhardt, *General Report on School Building and Grounds of Delaware, 1919* (Wilmington: Service Citizens of Delaware).

ty, the School Committee secured a piece of Robinson’s land on the opposite side of the Philadelphia Pike “for the purpose of erecting a school house thereon.”<sup>31</sup> (Figure 10)

Robinson’s Woolton Hall estate comprised multiple buildings, including a gothic revival stone mansion dating to 1855.<sup>32</sup> A *Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad* guide to points of interest along its route noted that Woolton Hall was “located in the centre of an extensive lawn, sloping in different directions, and elevated three hundred feet above the river. The view it commands is a magnificent one, embracing territory in three states, and more than twice as many counties, comprising every variety of scenery.”<sup>33</sup> (Figure 11)

In March 1871, Hanson Robinson died and Woolton Hall passed to his wife, Ann. In June of the same year, Ann Robinson sold the estate to Clark R. Griggs, of Champaign, Illinois.<sup>34</sup> Griggs retained the estate for fewer than five years; in 1875, he sold it to Joseph B. Conrow, a businessman who operated an ice and coal company in Philadelphia.<sup>35</sup> Conrow died in 1881 and in 1893 his heirs sold Woolton Hall to William Du Pont.<sup>36</sup> The use of the school under Robinson, Griggs, and Conrow is not known. Its use under William Du Pont and his son, William Du Pont, Jr. (who inherited the estate in 1928), however, is well documented. A voluminous collection of papers reveals that between 1917 and 1934, the Du Ponts altered the interior and exterior of Mount Pleasant.

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<sup>31</sup>Deed of Property, School Committee of School District No. 2 to Hanson Robinson. 30 March, 1865. Book B, Volume 8. New Castle County Recorder of Deeds.

<sup>32</sup>Charles P. Dare, *Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Guide: Containing a Description of the Scenery, Rivers, Towns, Villages, and Objects of Interest Along the Line of the Railroad* (Philadelphia, Fitzgibbon & Van Ness, 1856,) 95.

<sup>33</sup>Charles P. Dare, *Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Guide*, 95-96.

<sup>34</sup>Deed of Property, Ann P. Robinson to Clark R. Griggs, 1 June, 1871. Delaware Public Archives; Delaware Land Records; Roll Number: 93.

<sup>35</sup>Deed of Property, Clark R. Griggs to Joseph B. Conrow. 8 June, 1875. Delaware Public Archives; Delaware Land Records; Roll Number: 105; “Woolton Hall,” *North American* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 2 June 1875.

<sup>36</sup>Deed of Property, Executors and Trustees of Joseph B. Conrow to William Du Pont. 31 May, 1893. Delaware Public Archives; Delaware Land Records; Roll Number: 162.



Figure 7: “Rockland School District No. 8, exterior.” Photographed 1928. Constructed 1831. In the decade between 1919 and 1938, the school’s shed-roof porch was enclosed. RG 8005.015. Board of Education Photograph Collection, Delaware Public Archives, Dover, Delaware.



Figure 8: “Harmony School, No. 32, exterior.” 1932 RG 8005.015. Board of Education Photograph Collection, Delaware Public Archives, Dover, Delaware.



Figure 9: “Mt. Airy School, no 27, exterior, students.” Undated. RG 8005.015. Board of Education Photograph Collection, Delaware Public Archives, Dover Delaware.

The modifications, which occurred during two separate building campaigns, significantly obscured the original function, plan, and design of the school house.

After his 1893 purchase of the estate, William Du Pont, a scion of the prominent Delaware dynasty, gave Woolton the name Bellevue Hall. He presumably took the name from the nearby rail station, Bellevue. This station did not serve a village. Rather, it was built “for the convenience of residents in the vicinity.”<sup>37</sup> By 1914, Du Pont began to make modifications to the main house on the estate, Hanson Robinson’s 1855 gothic revival pile. Between 1917 and 1919, he turned his attention to the school house. The school house is located within the context of the estate property on an undated land survey.<sup>38</sup> (Figure 12)

<sup>37</sup>Charles P. Dare, *Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Guide*, 96.

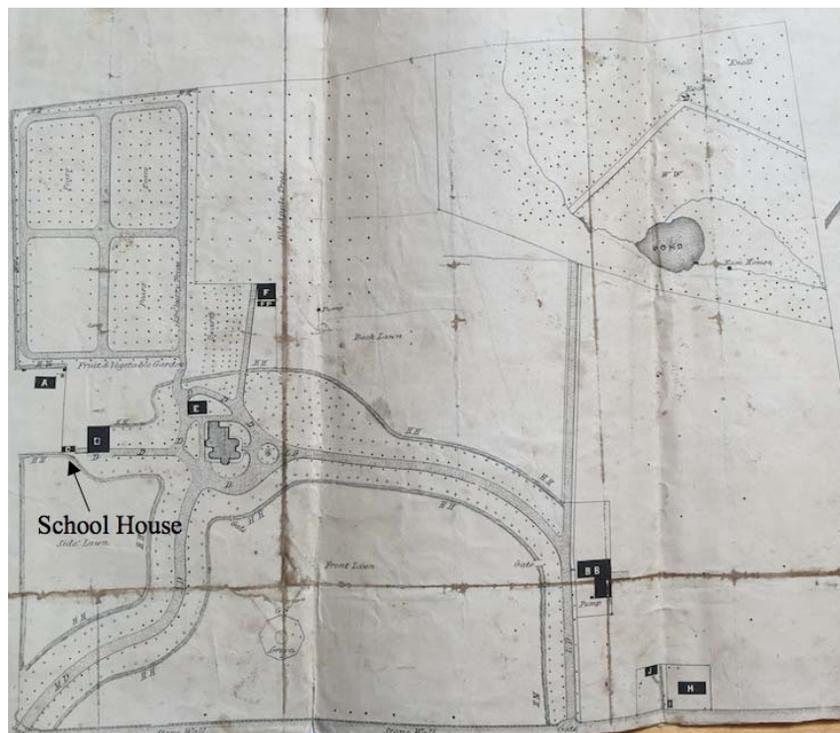
<sup>38</sup>“Undated survey of Woolton Hall,” Bellevue Hall Land Papers, 1782-1920. Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.



Building accounts indicate that Du Pont hired the Wilmington contractor, J. W. Barkley, to oversee the construction of a rear addition to Mount Pleasant and to make significant alterations to the interior and exterior of the original building. Barkley's work may have followed earlier endeavors to create residential space within the building. The scope of Barkley's work, however, was sweeping, and was directed toward transforming the school house from a humble outbuilding to a proper estate "cottage." This cottage is listed among the long inventory of properties on Du Pont's Bellevue estate.

The appearance of the school building following the 1917-1919 building campaign is not fully established. Building records indicate that during this period, J.W. Barkley enlarged the building with an addition. The design of the addition is not certain. Surviving documentary evidence indicates, however, that either the addition or the old building was furnished with two stories; building records reference a \$124.06 bill for "door and window frames for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> story."<sup>39</sup> The 1917-1919 building campaign may have introduced two sets of stairs to the building.<sup>40</sup> The location of these stairs is not known. Other building records dating to 1917-1919, including an order for dormer window sashes and casing frames, and a twin window frame, also help to establish that second-floor living space was added to the building during this period.<sup>41</sup> These dormers and frames were presumably located in the original stone building. An order that J.W. Barkley placed with the Wilmington Sash and Door Company for one newel post, four feet of stair rails, and four feet of foot rails reveals that the 1917-1919 alterations may additionally have included the construction of a set of stairs with a short run.

Barkley's 1917-1919 alterations to the school house also involved the installation of crown and base molding, 'Ready Wall,' electricity and heating, a brick chimney and new roofing. A roof on one section of the building



*Figure 12: Undated survey. Bellevue Hall Land Papers, 1782-1920. Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.*

<sup>39</sup>"Invoices and Receipts, Mount Pleasant School House," February 28, 1918. William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers. Accession 2317. Series 7: Business Papers. Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>40</sup>Records that document 1934 alterations to the school house indicate that laborers were charged with "tearing out 2 sets old stairs." William Du Pont, Jr., Old School House." William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers.

<sup>41</sup>"Invoices and Receipts, Mount Pleasant School House," April 8, February 28, 1918. William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers.

was sheathed with tin (addition?).<sup>42</sup> An order from Gregg Godwin, a Wilmington “Tin and Sheet Worker,” indicates that Barkley ordered 84 sheets of this material for the roof.

After William Du Pont’s death in 1928, Bellevue Hall passed to William Du Pont, Jr. By the early 1930s, the latter, a noted breeder of thoroughbred horses and an acclaimed designer of horse race tracks, started to recreate Bellevue Hall in the image of his childhood home (and the historic home of James Madison), Montpelier. Du Pont, Jr. erased the gothic expression of Hanson Robinson’s fortress-like house and replaced it with a Colonial Revival veneer that featured a symmetrical façade, a stucco finish, and a pedimented portico supported by round columns. He reserved several of the estate’s outbuildings, including Mount Pleasant school house, for the same treatment.

Building records copiously detail the 1930s alterations to Mount Pleasant. William Du Pont, Jr. employed John A. Bader, a Wilmington contractor and builder, to oversee extensive changes to the exterior and interior of the school house. Within the building, Bader’s work included removing old floor joists and flooring and then setting new joists and laying new floors. In addition, after removing “2 sets old steps,” Bader tore out walls to accommodate a set of new front stairs. A 1934 order for the stair materials includes rails, balusters, and landing newels. Bader also furnished the building with bathroom panels and framed new wall partitions and closets. He finished the partitions with plaster board. In the rear framed addition, Bader installed kitchen cabinets and enclosed an existing porch.

On the building’s exterior, Bader’s work included repairs to the existing fabric of the school house. Material orders and specifications indicate, for example, that Bader repaired the dormers on the old school house, removed and replaced roof slates, installed metal lath and stucco on the frame addition, and applied stucco “on stone front wall where old plaster has been removed.”<sup>43</sup>

Bader’s exterior work also included modifications that reflected Du Pont’s affection for a Colonial Revival aesthetic. These modifications reimagined the school house as a gracious outbuilding on an early-American estate. The redesign of an existing front porch on the stone school house illustrates the influence of the Colonial Reviv-



*Figure 13: “Cottage.” Bellevue Hall, Inc. Inventory 11-46, 1945, 1956, 1947.  
William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers.*

<sup>42</sup>“Invoices and Receipts, Mount Pleasant School House,” April 8, 1918. William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers.

<sup>43</sup>“Invoices and Receipts,” Mount Pleasant School House,” April 6, 1934. William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers.

al and, more particularly, the aesthetic of Montpelier, on William Du Pont, Jr. The porch is not documented in the records dating to 1917-1919, but it was probably constructed during this building campaign. To execute Du Pont's vision, Bader rebuilt the "old" porch with four supporting round columns and two engaged columns. He enclosed the porch, covered it with a copper roof, and crowned it with a Chinese fretwork railing. The railing, which Du Pont designed himself, was likely inspired by the roof railings on Montpelier's early-twentieth-century two flanking wings.<sup>44</sup> These railings were removed before Du Pont and his family occupied the famed Virginia house. In his redesign of Mount Pleasant, however, Du Pont, resurrected this lost feature of his childhood home.

Du Pont's affection for the colonial era is reflected in nearly all of the work associated with the 1930s building campaign. The redesign of the school house was guided by a simple mandate: strip the school house of its vernacular and utilitarian features and then embellish it with architectural treatments that had a colonial quality and that complemented the main house at Bellevue Hall. On the stone building, Bader documented "tearing off edges of roof" to build a corbelled brick cornice and "furnishing and installing dental blocks." On the addition, Du Pont's contractor also built a new cornice with returns. The walls of the old building experienced particularly significant alterations. To accommodate new windows and frames in the stone building, Bader knocked out walls. He then bricked around the frames.<sup>45</sup>

Du Pont's early-twentieth-century design of Bellevue Hall significantly compromised the architectural integrity of the original stone school house. His pre-war campaign to create a world-class sporting and equestrian facility on his estate, however, nearly swallowed the 1830 stone school in a "15,000-sq ft. enclosed steel sports complex, indoor tennis courts with lights and spectacular gallery, basketball, squash, badminton courts and a swimming pool."<sup>46</sup> This complex, which was appended to the east elevation of the school, was constructed during the 1930s. The State of Delaware, which acquired the estate in 1976, demolished the complex in 2015 and returned the school house to a stand-alone building.



*Figure 14: "Sports Building." Bellevue Hall, Inc. Inventory 11-46, 1945, 1956, 1947. William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers.*

<sup>44</sup>"John A Bader, Work Report." Invoices and Receipts, Mount Pleasant School House, August 3, 1934. William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers.

<sup>45</sup>John A. Bader II Collection. "William Du Pont, Jr., Old School House." William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers.

<sup>46</sup>"For Sale 273-acre Estate in Delaware." Brochure for Sale of William Du Pont's Bellevue Estate in Wilmington, ca. 1965-1975. William Du Pont, Jr. (1896-1965) Papers.

**IV. EXISTING CONDITIONS DRAWINGS**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS DRAWINGS**



**FRENS & FRENS, LLC**  
RESTORATION ARCHITECTS

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CONSULTANTS

**PRESERVATION PLAN  
FOR THE  
BELLEVUE STATE  
PARK SCHOOL  
HOUSE**

FOR  
DELAWARE DEPARTMENT  
OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
CONTROL  
DIVISION OF PARKS &  
RECREATION  
89 KINGS HIGHWAY  
DOVER, DE 19901

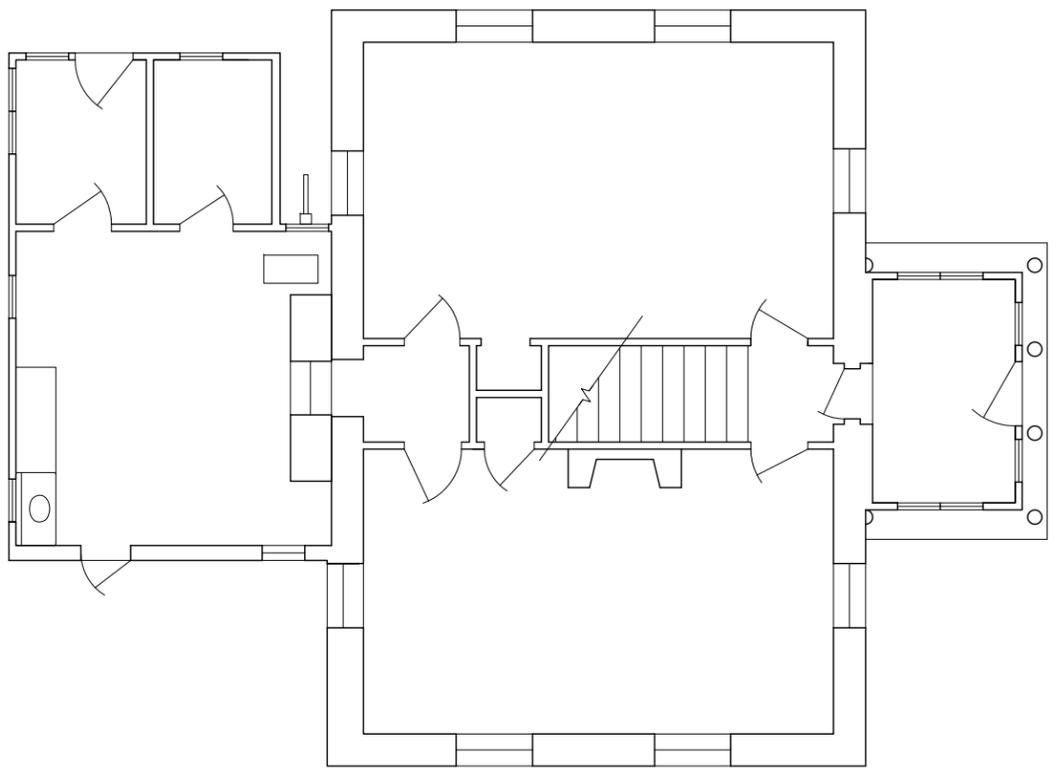
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ISSUE: 00/00/14  
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DRAWN BY: SF/CQ  
CHECKED BY: DHF

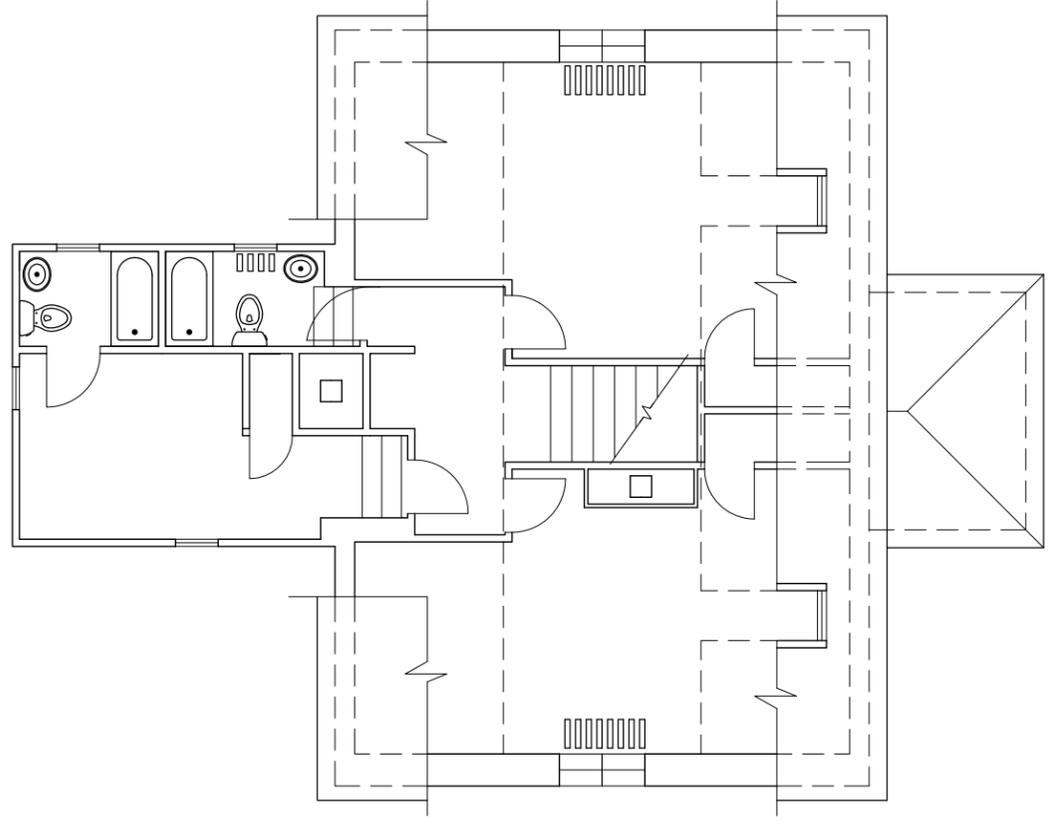
SHEET TITLE

EXISTING CONDITIONS  
FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR  
PLANS

**EC-1**



1 FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
EC-1 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



1 SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
EC-1 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

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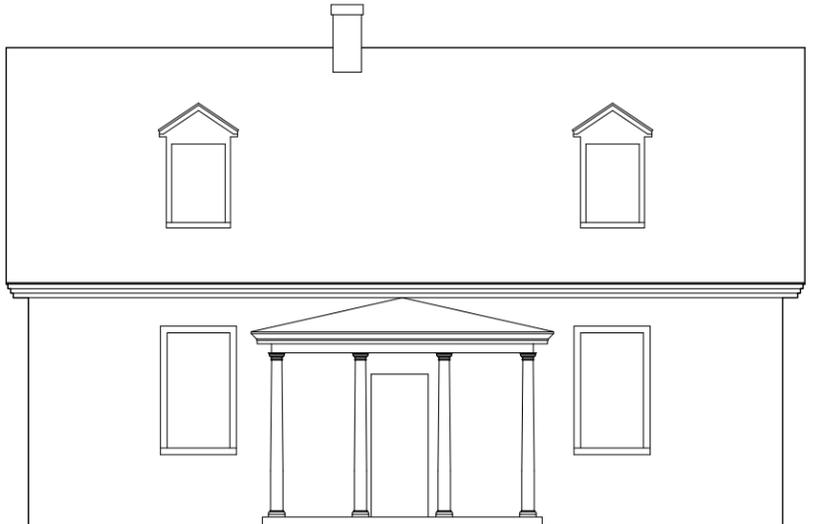
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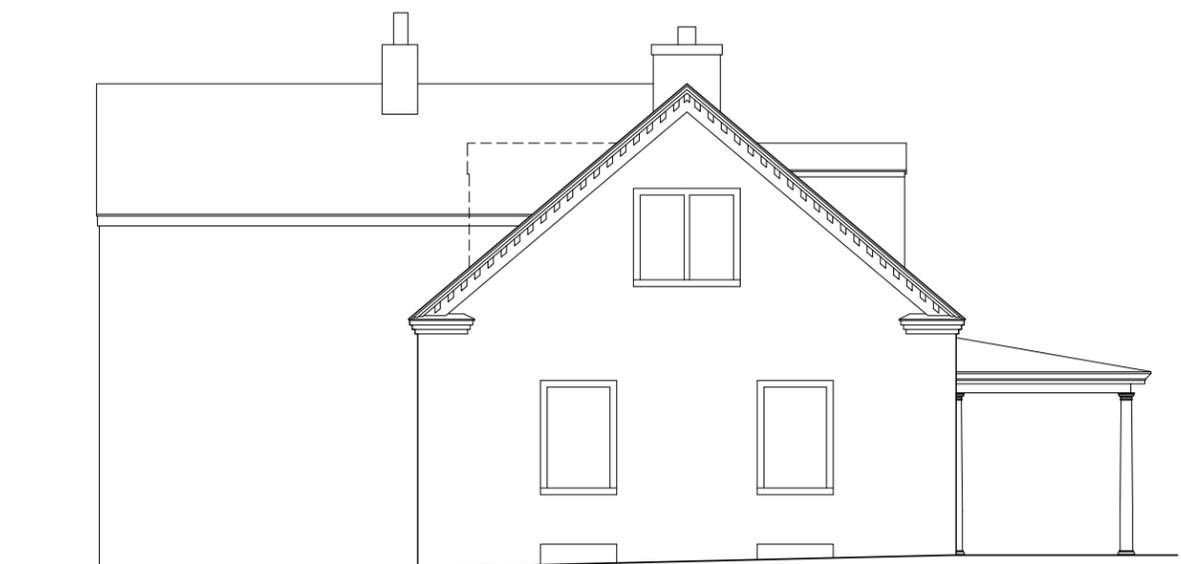
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EXISTING CONDITIONS  
 ELEVATIONS

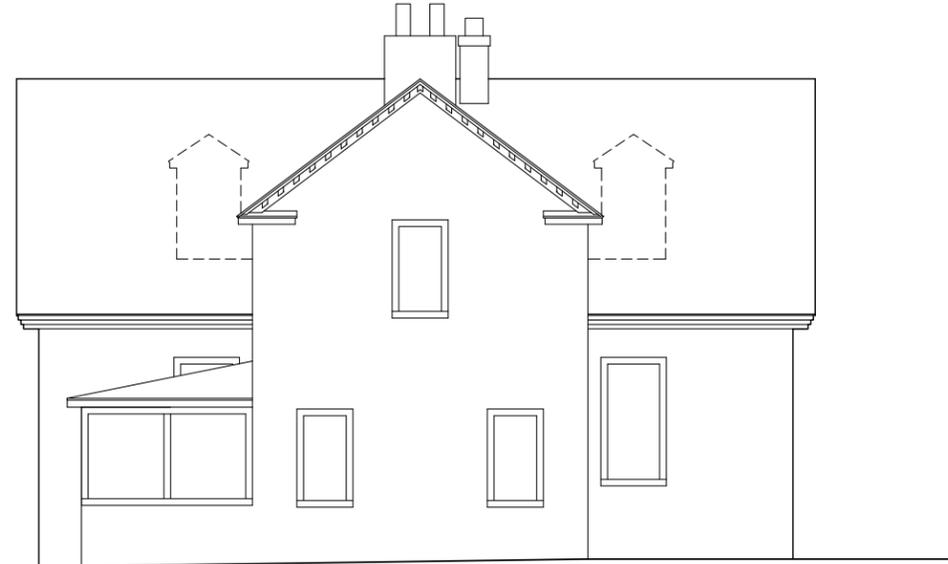
**EC-2**



1 NORTH ELEVATION  
 EC-2 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



2 EAST ELEVATION  
 EC-2 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



3 SOUTH ELEVATION  
 EC-2 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



4 WEST ELEVATION  
 EC-2 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



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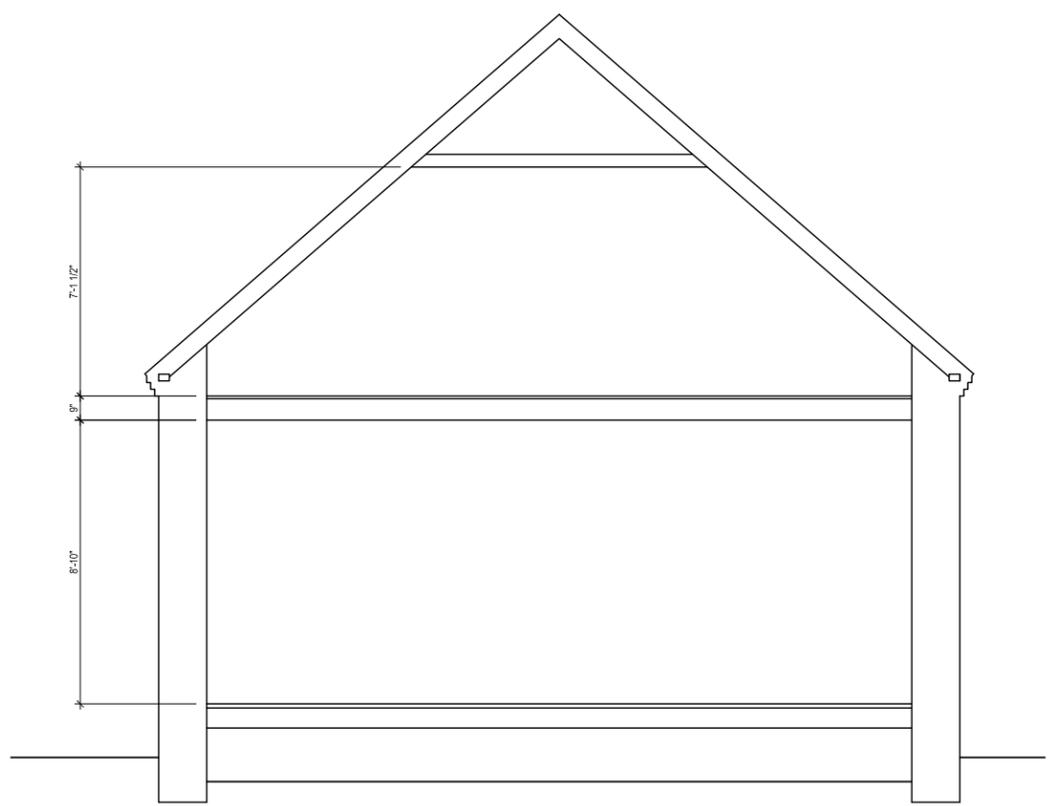
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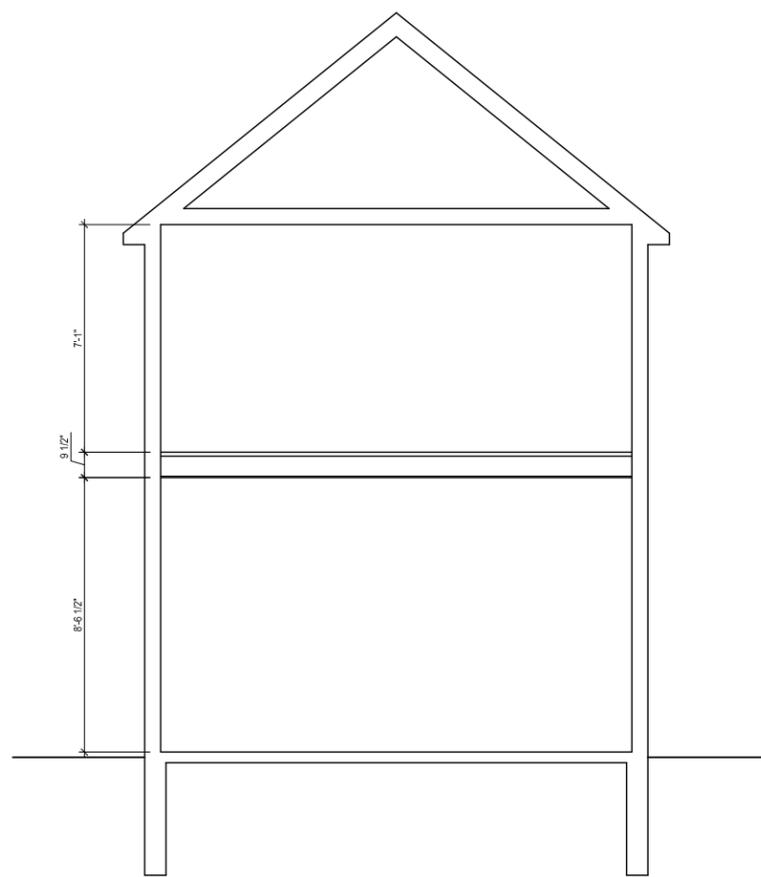
SHEET TITLE

EXISTING CONDITIONS  
BUILDING SECTIONS

**EC-3**



1 BUILDING SECTION THROUGH MAIN GABLE  
EC-3 SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



2 BUILDING SECTION THROUGH ADDITION  
EC-3 SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"

## V. CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Date of field survey: 11/6/2015, 12/16/2015

### **Building Summary:**

Dates: Original construction 1830 (Figure 16); interior and exterior alterations and addition 1917-1934

Summary Description: 1-1/2 story stone schoolhouse with wood-frame addition

### **Building Description**

*Overall Dimensions:* Schoolhouse: 25'-0" x 35'-3"; frame addition: 23'-6" x 15'-2"

*Gross Building Area (Square Feet):* 1,214 (first floor)

*No. Stories:* 1-1/2

*Foundations:* Stone schoolhouse: stone; wood frame addition: concrete (?)

*Walls:* Concrete and dimensional lumber framing

*Roofing:* Steep slopes: Previously asbestos-cement shingles (until 2015); presently asphalt shingle. Low-slope hipped roofs at front porch and rear entrance vestibule: standing-seam copper.

*Electrical:* Abandoned

*HVAC:* None

*Plumbing:* Abandoned

*Fire Detection/ Security:* None



*Figure 15: The northwest façade of the Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse, 2016.*



*Figure 16: A datestone noting "MP 1830" is set in the southwest gable of the schoolhouse.*

## **Building Status, 2016**

As a result of 1) fire from a lightning strike, 2) a general state of deterioration due to lack of maintenance, 3) the demolition of the adjoining sports complex, and 4) the asbestos abatement project that removed all roofing shingles, exterior stucco from both the schoolhouse and addition, and required removal of a portion of the first floor wood flooring to gain access to asbestos-wrapped heating pipes, the building has been mothballed. This mothballing includes temporary roofing, plywood panels with ventilation louvers at windows, plastic house-wrap over wood sheathing at the addition, and padlocks on exterior doors. This is a recognized and acceptable means of providing temporary protection for a historic resource until funds can be found for long-term stabilization, rehabilitation, or restoration.

Our recommendations for maintenance are not based on typical priority classifications of immediate, short-term, and long-term, because a building in a mothballed state requires only one of two levels of maintenance:

- Immediate repairs if the temporary protection installed during mothballing fails
- Long-term stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration.

## **ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION SURVEY**

### **A. SITE**

#### *A.1 SITE DRAINAGE*

Site is flat, with a slight slope to the southeast.

#### *A.2 PATHS/WALKS*

None

#### *A.3 WALLS AND FENCES*

None

#### *A.4 PLANT MATERIALS*

There are no trees directly impacting the building. Area to southeast and northeast of the building is newly planted lawn, following demolition of the sports complex.

#### *A.5 OTHER*

Not applicable

### **B. EXTERIOR CLOSURE**

#### *B.1 FOUNDATION*

Stone foundations of the schoolhouse are visible at the building exterior and in the crawl space (Figure 17). At the addition, the first floor is a slab on grade with no foundation exposure. Both show no symptoms of stress.



*Figure 17: The stone foundation of the schoolhouse is visible from the crawlspace.*

**B.2 EXTERIOR WALLS**

Schoolhouse walls are rubble stone, in good condition, originally plastered (Figure 19). To conceal changes made to window openings during the period 1917-1934, the plaster was replaced with a Portland cement-based stucco containing asbestos reinforcing fibers. The same plaster was also used to finish the exterior walls of the wood frame addition. As part of a 2015 asbestos abatement project, all stucco was removed from the stone and frame walls. The frame walls are temporarily protected with white plastic sheeting, secured with wood batten strips (Figure 18).



*Figure 18: The two-story frame addition to the schoolhouse is currently wrapped in white plastic sheathing with wood batten strips.*

Recommendations:

*Long-Term Preservation:*

1. Based on the restoration period selected, fill in masonry openings at attic.
2. Deep-point cracks in rubble stone masonry and repoint flush with stone surface.
3. Provide lime plaster (stucco) finish applied directly to exposed stone (without metal lath and without corner beads).



*Figure 19: The rubble stone walls of the schoolhouse were originally plastered.*

**B.3 ROOF**

The original roofing material of the schoolhouse was presumably wood shingle, but the reframing of most of the building during the 1930s removed evidence of the original roofing and lath. The existing roof structure is wood tongue-and-groove decking supported by dimensional lumber rafters. 1930's roofing may have been slate, or may have been the asbestos-cement shingle roofing that was removed in the 2015 asbestos abatement project. The current roofing, considered temporary, is 3-tab asphalt shingle roofing (Figures 21 and 22). The existing front (north) porch has a hipped, standing-seam copper roof with built-in gutters (Figure 21). The existing addition entrance vestibule has a hipped, standing-seam copper roof, originally with hung gutters (Figure 22).



*Figure 20: The raking modillion cornices at the gable ends of the schoolhouse were added in the 1930s.*

Also part of the 1930s work, DuPont’s contractor documented, “tearing off edges of roof” to build a corbelled brick cornice and “furnishing and installing dental blocks”. The “dental blocks” no doubt refer to the raking modillion cornices at the gable ends (Figure 20). A curious detail of the corbelled brick cornices is that at the gable-end cornice returns, the brickwork transitions to wood. When all surfaces, including both the corbelled brickwork and wood returns, were covered with stucco, this change of material would not have been visible.



*Figure 21: The schoolhouse block has a temporary asphalt shingle roof while the front porch retains its original copper roof from the 1930s.*



*Figure 22: The two-story addition is also roofed with asphalt shingles, but the one-story porch of the addition has a hipped copper roof.*

**Recommendations:**

*Long-Term Preservation*

1. Reconstruct box cornices at eaves to cover corbelled brick coursing and provide plain rake boards at gable ends.
2. Remove existing roof decking and provide new cedar shingle roofing (tapersawn shakes) on wood lath. (Or provide cedar shingle roofing on Cedar Breather spacer fabric over existing T&G wood decking.
3. Provide flat-seam metal roofing at reconstructed porch and standing-seam metal roofing at service wing addition.

**B.4 GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS**

There are no existing gutters and downspouts.

**Recommendations:**

*Long-Term Preservation*

1. Provide hung gutters or water diverters (pole gutters) at main roof, north porch roof, and south service addition roof.

**B.5 CHIMNEYS**

A stone chimney with two terra cotta chimney pots projects through the roof addition, supported by an arched chimney breast that forms the passage between the addition and the original building (Figure 23). A brick chimney serving the living room fireplace extends through the ridge of the schoolhouse.

Recommendations:

*Long-Term Preservation:*

1. Addition chimney: Because the first-floor passage through the chimney breast is only 2'-8" wide, it does not comply with ADA. If the restoration period selected is that of the schoolhouse, the chimney should be demolished along with the entire addition. If the restoration period is that of the estate cottage, the chimney is a character-defining feature of that period and the first floor support should be rebuilt to provide an accessible passage through the chimney mass.
2. Schoolhouse center chimney: The center chimney is in fair condition but if retained based on the restoration period selected, requires 100% repointing.
3. Schoolhouse gable end chimney: The removed plaster at the northeast gable end reveals surviving portions of the original schoolhouse chimney, which was built of brick, flush with the exterior face of the stone wall. If the restoration period selected is that of the schoolhouse, the original chimney could be readily reconstructed.



*Figure 23: First floor, addition, looking northwest through the arched chimney breast to the schoolhouse block.*



*Figure 24: The original schoolhouse had a brick chimney on the northeast gable end (left side), probably similar to the two chimneys visible in this 1928 image of "Rockland School District No. 8", built in 1831.*

**B.6 DORMERS**

Of the four dormers that were built during the estate cottage period, the two on the northwest slope of the schoolhouse survive. Very modestly detailed, the gable-roofed dormers have small box cornices, wood faces, and apparently stucco cheek walls, which were stripped during the 2015 asbestos abatement project.

Recommendations:

*Long-Term Preservation*

1. Treatment of dormers is dependent on the selected restoration period. If retained, all exposed woodwork and windows will require replacement.

**B.7 EXTERIOR DOORS**

Exterior doors, Colonial Revival in style and dating from the estate cottage period, have been removed and are stored in the building.

**B.8 WINDOWS**

All window openings are protected by plywood panels. At the first floor, a metal register is installed at each panel to provide passive ventilation to the interior. First floor window sashes have lost their muntins and glass, while attic window sashes are intact.

Recommendations:

*Long-Term Preservation*

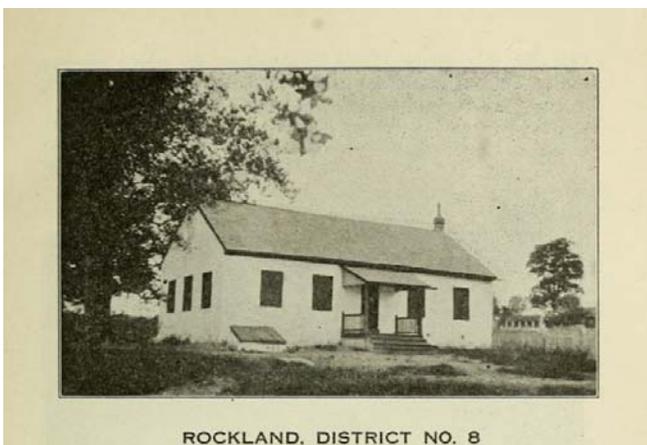
1. Because of the extent of physical damage to existing windows, all frames and sashes should be replaced as part of a restoration/reconstruction project.

**B.9 PORCHES, PENTS**

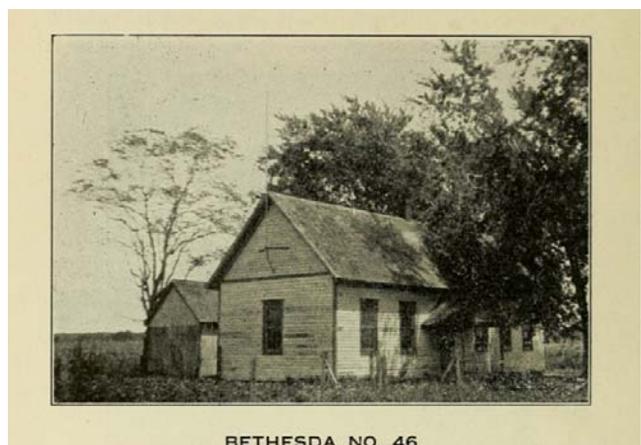
The front porch, centered on the northwest wall of the schoolhouse, was built during the estate cottage era, replacing an earlier, simpler porch (see Figures 25, 26, and 27). By 1934, the porch featured a flat roof supported by a full-entablature Tuscan columns and a roof railing. The porch is in poor condition.



*Figure 25: The existing front porch of the schoolhouse was constructed in the 1930s estate cottage era.*



*Figure 26: The existing front porch at Mt. Pleasant replaced a more simple original front porch, perhaps similar to the porch at Rockland District No. 8 Schoolhouse.*



*Figure 27: Another simple original schoolhouse porch was at Bethesda No. 46 Schoolhouse. Note the small gable at the rear which may have served as the outhouse.*

Recommendations:

*Long-Term Preservation*

1. The porch requires complete reconstruction or replacement with a simpler porch, depending on the selected restoration period for the building.

*B.10 EXTERIOR, GENERAL*

See Introduction.

**C. INTERIOR CONSTRUCTION**

*C.1 CELLAR*

Not applicable..

*C.2 FIRST FLOOR*

The first floor was entirely rebuilt during the estate cottage era of the building, including new floor framing and flooring, the addition of a fireplace, and dividing the school room into two rooms separated by a stair to the former attic. The first floor of the addition, which has a slab-on-grade, has been largely gutted. The interior is in poor condition and requires complete restoration.



*Figure 28: First floor, schoolhouse block, looking northwest.*



*Figure 29: First floor, addition, looking southeast.*



*Figure 30: First floor schoolhouse block, looking south-*

Recommendations:

*Long-Term Preservation*

1. Depending on the restoration period selected, reconstruct/restore the entire first floor interior.

*C.3 2ND FLOOR*

The second floor of the schoolhouse, originally an attic, was finished to provide two bedrooms for the estate cottage. At the addition, roof leakage has caused rotted floor joists and flooring along the north-east wall. The interior is in poor condition and requires complete restoration.

Recommendations:

*Long-Term Preservation*

1. Depending on the restoration period selected, adapt the original attic space to office space and demolish the addition.

*C.4 INTERIOR, GENERAL*

Regardless of the restoration period selected, the schoolhouse interior requires complete restoration/reconstruction and the addition should be demolished.



*Figure 31: Second floor, looking southwest.*



*Figure 32: Second floor, looking northwest.*



*Figure 33: Second floor, looking from the addition into the schoolhouse block.*

**D. MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS**

*D.1 HEATING SYSTEM*

The hot-water, cast-iron radiation system that was added in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was removed as part of the asbestos abatement project. A modern all-air system will be required as part of the restoration/reconstruction of the building.

*D.2 PLUMBING*

Plumbing fixtures survive in place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor bathroom of the addition, but nothing is salvageable. New site utilities (water, sewer) and a new plumbing system will be required as part of the adaptive use of the building.

*D.3 ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:*

A dismantled light panel exists in the entrance vestibule of the addition. Limited branch wiring, light fixtures, and devices exist in an abandoned state. As part of any upgrade to the building, a new electrical service and electrical system will be required.

*D.4 SECURITY SYSTEM*

None.

*D.5 FIRE DETECTION SYSTEM*

None.

## VI. ARCHITECTURAL PROGRAM MEMORANDUM

### GENERAL GOALS

As stated by the Office of Design and Development, Division of Parks and Recreation, Department of Natural Resources and Environment Conservation, State of Delaware, the primary goal for the Mount Pleasant Schoolhouse is to adapt it for use as an interpretive center for the Park. A second programmatic goal is to allow use of the building by the Friends of Bellevue State Park for meetings and possibly offices. To the extent possible, the Friends and the State would like to retain the character of the original school house.

### SPECIFIC AREA REQUIREMENTS

Space	Requirements	Area (Sq. Ft.)	Total area
Entry	An accessible entry must be provided at the front of the building. If possible, utilize existing entry for this purpose	69	69
Exhibit/ Meeting	Provide fixed exhibit area with appropriate lighting. A small amount of the exhibit area could be allocated to changing exhibits, but no different treatment is required if this becomes a reality. This space should provide area for small presentations of 10-12 persons.	650	650
Chair/ Table Storage	Provide area for storage of 1 table and 12 chairs.	15	15
Servery	Provide area for small server including sink, undercounter refrigerator, shelf with microwave, drawer for trash and small upper cabinet for storage.	8	8
Custodial Closet	Provide enclosed area for storage of custodial supplies	8	8
Restrooms	Provide area for two accessible restrooms and one accessible drinking fountain or bottled water station	114	114
Optional Office Area	Provide area for 2 workstations on the second floor of the building. This option will require the addition of a code compliant stair to the second level.	200	200
M/E/P	Provide area for mechanical, plumbing and electrical equipment.	50	50
Area Total			1,084
	+ 15% circulation factor		162
Program Total			1,246
Available area	School house only (not including entry or additions)		710
Program Deficit	(Indicates program size of required service wing addition)		536

## **VII. PRESERVATION PLAN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

As a result of 1) fire from a lightning strike, 2) a general state of deterioration due to lack of maintenance, 3) the demolition of the adjoining sports complex, and 4) the asbestos abatement project that removed all roofing shingles, exterior stucco from both the schoolhouse and addition, and required removal of a portion of the first floor wood flooring to gain access to asbestos-wrapped heating pipes, the building has been mothballed. This mothballing includes temporary roofing, plywood panels with ventilation louvers at windows, plastic house-wrap over wood sheathing at the addition, and padlocks on exterior doors. This is a recognized and acceptable means of providing temporary protection for a historic resource until funds can be found for long-term stabilization, rehabilitation, or restoration.

### **RESTORATION/RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD**

There are at least three viable futures for Mount Pleasant School House, including the following:

1. Exterior rehabilitation in its present form, without reconstructing missing elements, for use as a landscape element until a long-term viable use is found.

*Advantages:*

- a. This is the least-cost long-term option.

*Disadvantages:*

- a. The building in its present form contributes little to the landscape because it is unattractive and has the character of neither a school house nor an estate cottage. Also, exterior rehabilitation would not provide any interpretation or use of the building interior.

2. Exterior restoration/reconstruction of the 1934, Colonial Revival Style, estate cottage, for use as a landscape element until a long-term viable use is found.

*Advantages:*

- a. The restored/reconstructed estate cottage would be consistent with the time period of Bellevue Hall, at the period immediately prior to the construction of the sports complex.

*Disadvantages:*

- a. This is the most expensive exterior restoration/reconstruction, and will entail reconstructing all of the flourishes that gave the schoolhouse a Colonial Revival Style appearance, including reconstruction of the front porch, dormers, and slate and copper roofing.
- b. In this option the building interior would not be rehabilitated.

3. Restoration/reconstruction of the original Mount Pleasant School House, with no support facilities (including restrooms) and no utilities.

*Advantages:*

- a. This would allow the most accurate reconstruction of the original school house for the highest level of interpretation.

*Disadvantages:*

- a. Without heating, plumbing, and air conditioning, the building would be of minimal value to the Park as a whole, other than as an interpretive object.

4. Restoration/reconstruction of the original Mount Pleasant School House with the school room adapted for flexible uses, including an interpreted school room, a multi-purpose room, or exhibition space for interpreting the history of the Bellevue State Park property. This option would include demolition of the two-story frame addition and replacing it with a smaller one-story addition containing ADA restrooms, kitchenette, and mechanical space.

*Advantages:*

- a. This provides a balanced approach of historical interpretation and multiple adaptive uses that could change in function over time.

*Disadvantages:*

- a. Use is limited to the first floor.

## **ADAPTIVE USE OPTIONS**

Four adaptive use options are illustrated in Sheets Option 1 through Option 4, and are summarized as follows:

**Option 1 - Two-story scheme with two offices on the second floor: This option places the stairs in the middle of the original classroom space, in the general location it occurred during the estate cottage period.**

*Advantages:*

- a. Achieves the programmatic goal of two workstations.
- b. Minimizes the size of the service wing.
- c. Provides exhibition space.

*Disadvantages:*

- a. Breaks the large, historic classroom into the room divisions that occurred during the building's residential period, as an estate cottage.
- b. The first floor, divided into two rooms, has less flexibility for varying uses such as exhibition space, event space, meeting space, and multi-purpose use.
- c. For ADA compliance, the option may only be allowed if one office could be located on the first floor.
- d. The restoration period is forced to be the estate cottage period because the classroom was not divided until then. Along with this would be the requirement to reconstruct the north porch, dormers, and slate roofing.

**Option 2 - Two-story scheme with two offices on the second floor: This option places the stairs in a reconstructed two-story wing in order to preserve the classroom space in the original schoolhouse.**

*Advantages:*

- a. Achieves the programmatic goal of two workstations.
- b. Allows recreation of the original classroom space with maximum flexibility.

*Disadvantages:*

- a. Requires the addition to be enlarged to accommodate a stairs to the second floor. As a result, this is the most expensive option.
- b. For ADA compliance, the option may only be allowed if one office could be located on the first floor.
- c. The restoration period would be inconsistent: The need for light and air on the second floor dictates reconstruction to the estate cottage era, while the single space at the first.

**Option 3 – One-story scheme with first floor divided into two gallery spaces, and a one-story service wing.**

*Advantages:*

- a. Allows for flexible first floor space for exhibitions and events, with convenient chair storage.
- b. The option that is most aligned with the preferred restoration period – that of a one-room school house.
- c. Reconstructing the front porch in the form of a schoolhouse porch rather than a Colonial Revival cottage porch will reduce the size of the porch, allow it to be in scale with the proportions of the original schoolhouse, and by adjusting the grade, allow ADA access to the building.
- d. Demolition of the 2-story rear addition and rear entrance vestibule will remove an architecturally non-contributing element that was heavily compromised by the construction and demolition of the attached sports complex and subsequent asbestos abatement.

*Disadvantages:*

- a. Does not provide two offices; however, from an energy conservation standpoint, heating or cooling an entire building to provide an environment for two offices is not very cost effective.
- b. The first floor, divided into two rooms, has less flexibility for varying uses such as exhibition space, event space, meeting space, and multi-purpose use.

**Option 4 – One-story scheme with recreated classroom and one-story service wing.**

*Advantages:*

- a. Allows for the recreation of the original classroom, which can be interpreted as a classroom, or adaptively used as exhibition space, event space, or meeting space.
- b. The option that is most aligned with the preferred restoration period – that of a one-room school house.
- c. Reconstructing the front porch in the form of a schoolhouse porch rather than a Colonial Revival cottage porch will reduce the size of the porch, allow it to be in scale with the proportions of the original schoolhouse, and by adjusting the grade, allow ADA access to the building.
- d. Demolition of the 2-story rear addition and rear entrance vestibule will remove an architecturally non-contributing element that was heavily compromised by the construction and demolition of the attached sports complex and subsequent asbestos abatement.
- e. Except for the reduced-size front elevation windows (reduced to accommodate the enlarged porch during the cottage estate period), first floor window openings are original. The paired second floor gable-end windows were clearly added and can be removed.

*Disadvantages:*

- a. Does not provide two offices; however, from an energy conservation standpoint, heating or cooling an entire building to provide an environment for two offices is not very cost effective.

Of the four options, Option 4 is recommended because it recreates the most significant period in the building's history, allows the most flexibility of use, and minimize the size of the addition. Further advantages of this option are as follows:

- The original classroom size and fenestration are recreated, providing the best interpretive, programming, and exhibition space.
- Reconstructing the front porch in the form of a schoolhouse porch rather than a Colonial Revival cottage porch will reduce the size of the porch, allow it to be in scale with the proportions of the original schoolhouse, and by adjusting the grade, allow ADA access to the building.

- Demolition of the 2-story rear addition and rear entrance vestibule will remove an architecturally non-contributing element that was heavily compromised by the construction and demolition of the attached sports complex and subsequent asbestos abatement.
- There is no interior fabric that contributes to the significance of the building, and therefore, the most significant feature of the building interior is the volume of space forming the original classroom.
- Of the 4 dormers that were added during the cottage estate period, only 2 survive, and these have been stripped of all detail.
- Except for the reduced-size front elevation windows (reduced to accommodate the enlarged porch during the cottage estate period), first floor window openings are original. The paired second floor gable-end windows were clearly added and can be removed.

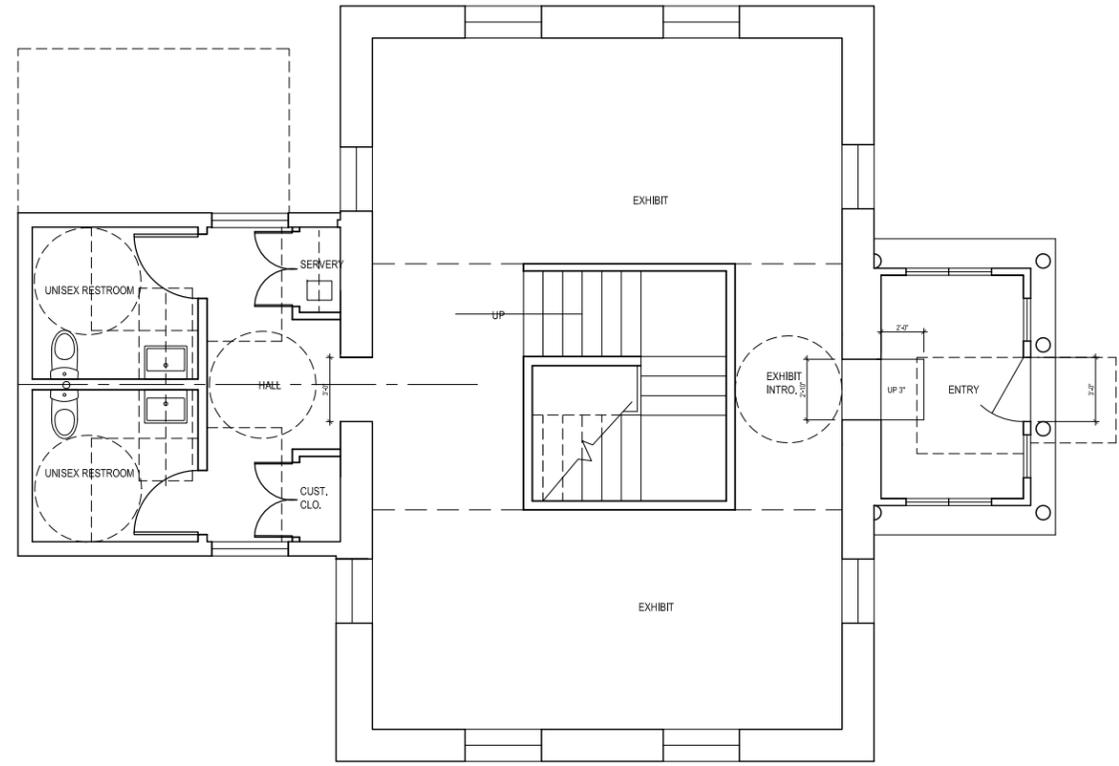
#### **OPTION 4 PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK**

##### **BUILDING ENVELOPE**

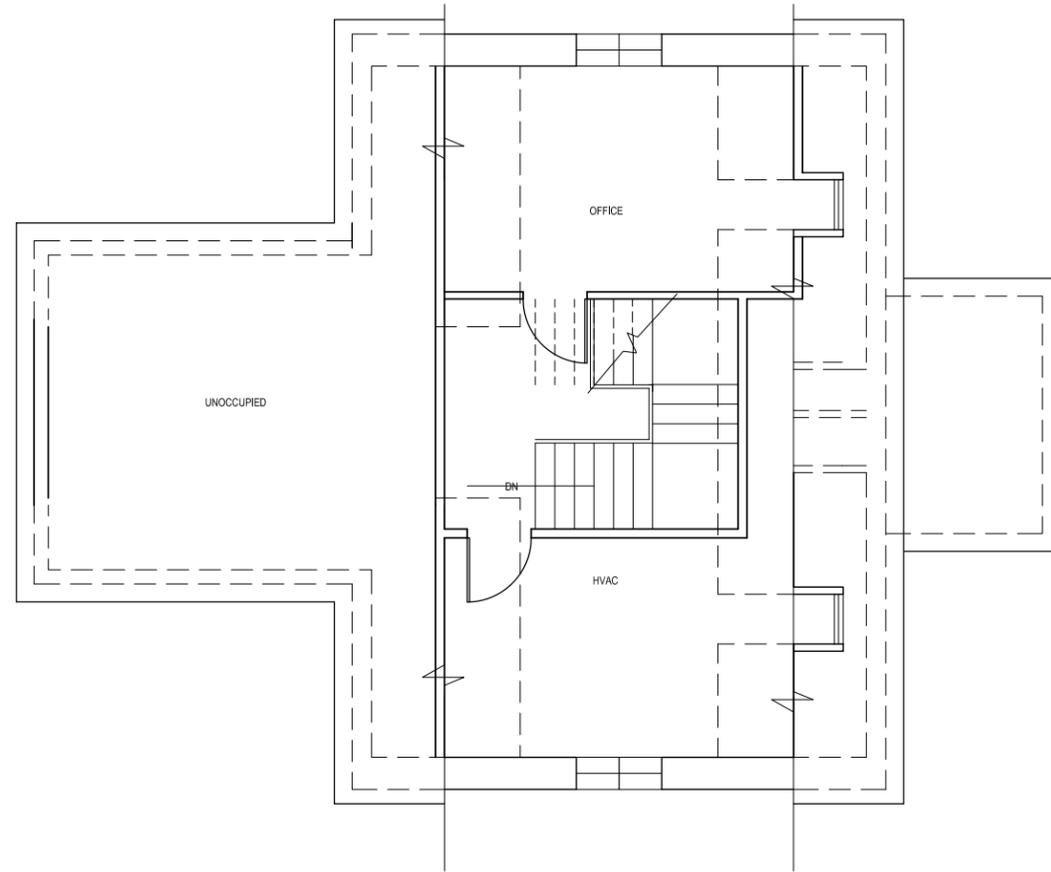
1. Demolish rear addition, front dormers, front porch, and modillion raking cornices at gable ends.
2. Fill in gable end 2<sup>nd</sup> floor masonry openings and enlarge front (north) façade openings to original size.
3. Raise grade at the north side of the building so that the north entrance is accessible.
4. Repair cracks in rubble stone masonry and provide lime plaster finish over rubble stone.
5. Recreate brick chimney at one gable end ridge line.
6. Provide new period window frames and sashes at existing or restored masonry openings.
7. Reconstruct open north porch based on physical evidence and historical photographs of other Delaware schools from the same time period.
8. Provide new wood shingle roof on wood lath on existing 20<sup>th</sup> century rafters.

##### **BUILDING INTERIOR**

1. Provide vapor barrier and concrete slab at existing crawl space.
2. Reframe entire first floor assembly and second floor framing to the extent required following removal of existing wood stairs.
3. Remove furred perimeter wall construction and ceiling drywall; repair/replace plaster perimeter wall finish; and provide new veneer plaster ceiling.
4. Provide antique heart pine or white oak flooring throughout classroom space
5. Provide modern, unobtrusive lighting system for multiple uses of classroom space.
6. Provide new service wing housing 2 ADA restrooms, servery, and chair storage.



**FIRST FLOOR PLAN**



**SECOND FLOOR PLAN**

**CONSULTANTS**

**PRESERVATION PLAN FOR THE**

**MT PLEASANT SCHOOL HOUSE**

**BELLEVUE STATE PARK**

DNREC  
 89 KINGS HIGHWAY  
 DOVER, DE 19901

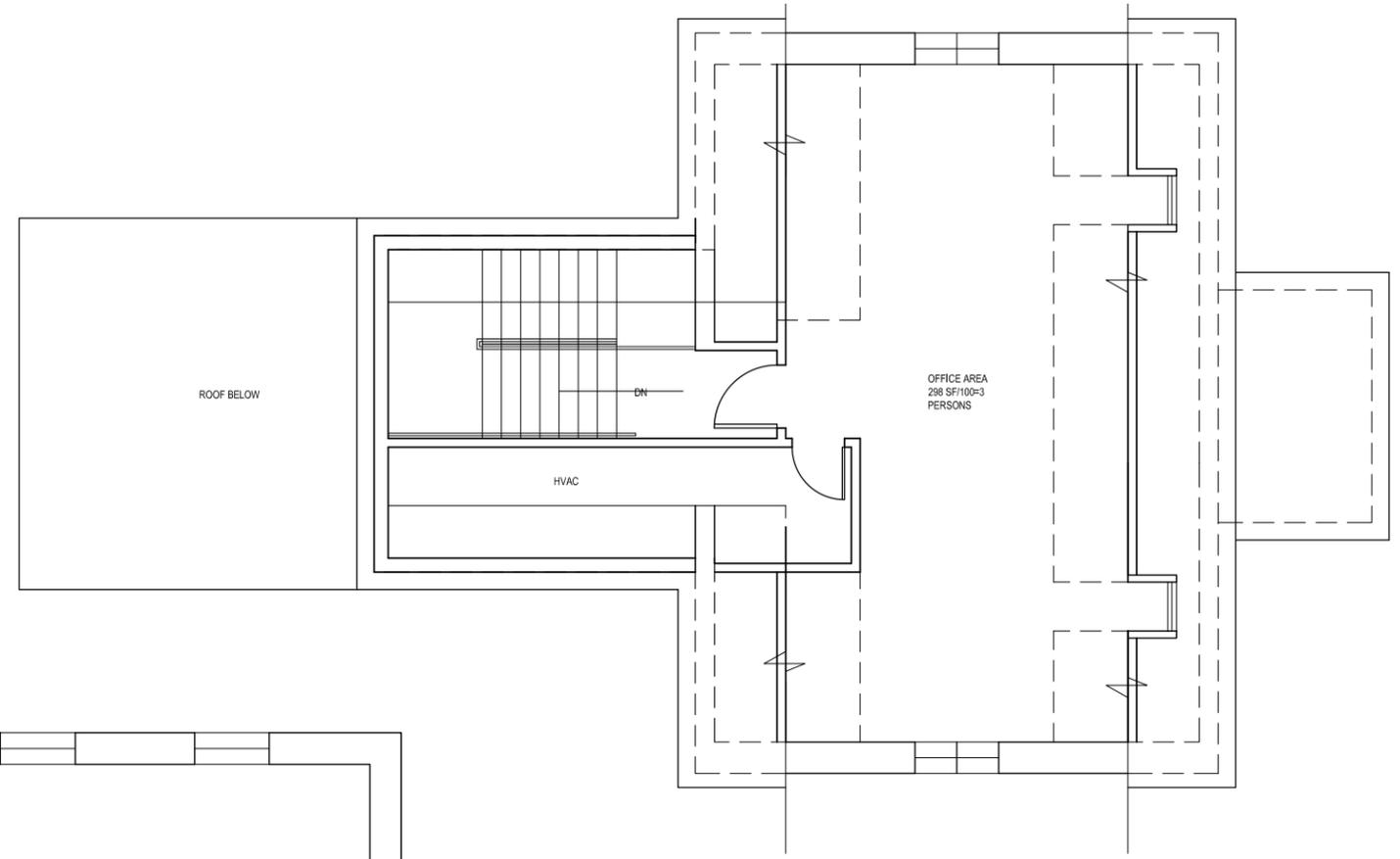
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REV	2.17.16	

ISSUE: JANUARY 15, 2016

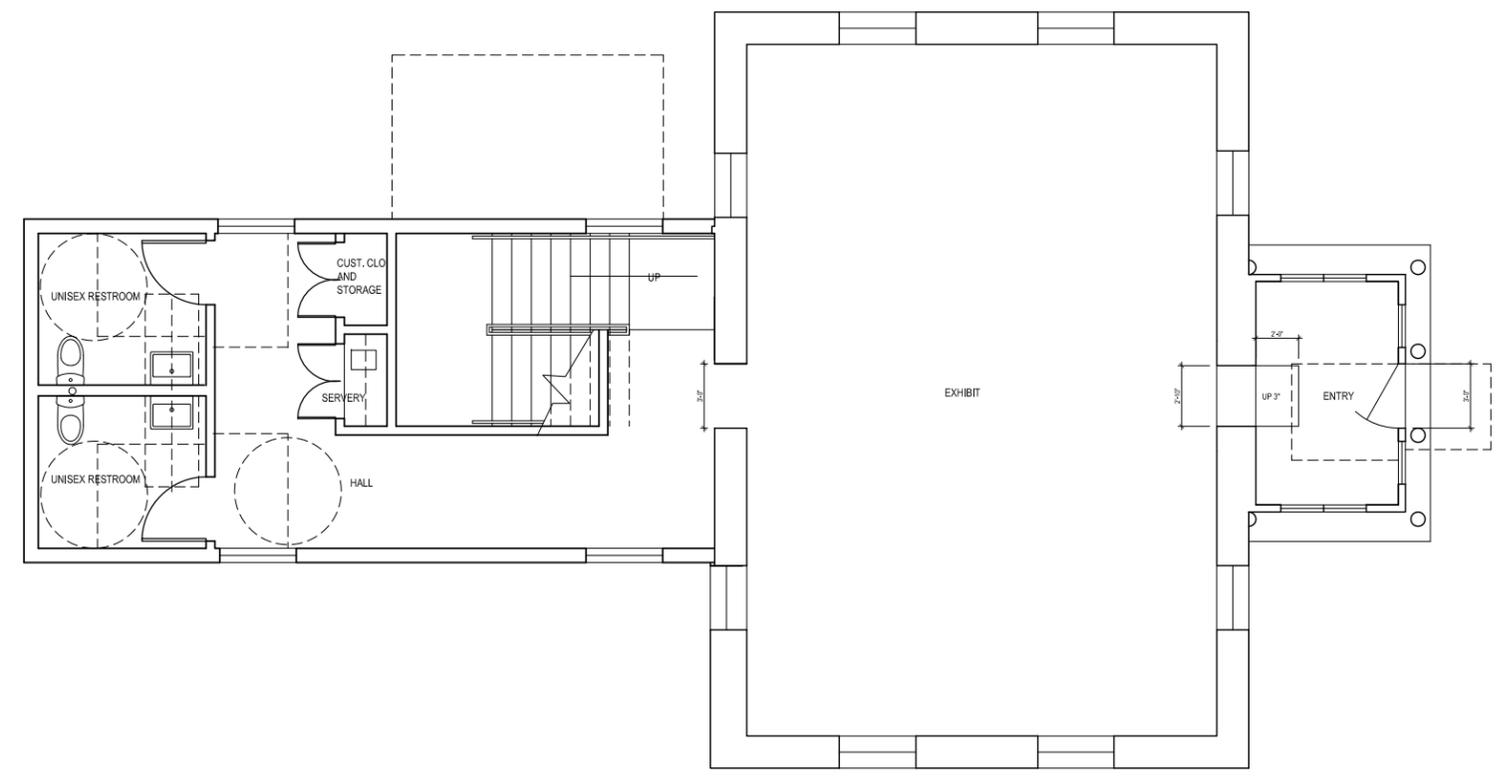
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**SCHEMATIC FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR PLANS**

**OPTION 1**



**SECOND FLOOR PLAN**



**FIRST FLOOR PLAN**

**CONSULTANTS**

PRESERVATION PLAN FOR THE  
**MT PLEASANT SCHOOL HOUSE**  
**BELLEVUE STATE PARK**

DNREC  
89 KINGS HIGHWAY  
DOVER, DE 19901

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ISSUE: JANUARY 15, 2016

PROJECT NO:  
CAD DWG FILE:  
DRAWN BY: SHF  
CHECKED BY: DF  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"  
SHEET TITLE

**SCHEMATIC FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR PLANS**

CONSULTANTS

PRESERVATION PLAN FOR THE

**MT PLEASANT SCHOOL HOUSE**

**BELLEVUE STATE PARK**

DNREC  
89 KINGS HIGHWAY  
DOVER, DE 19901

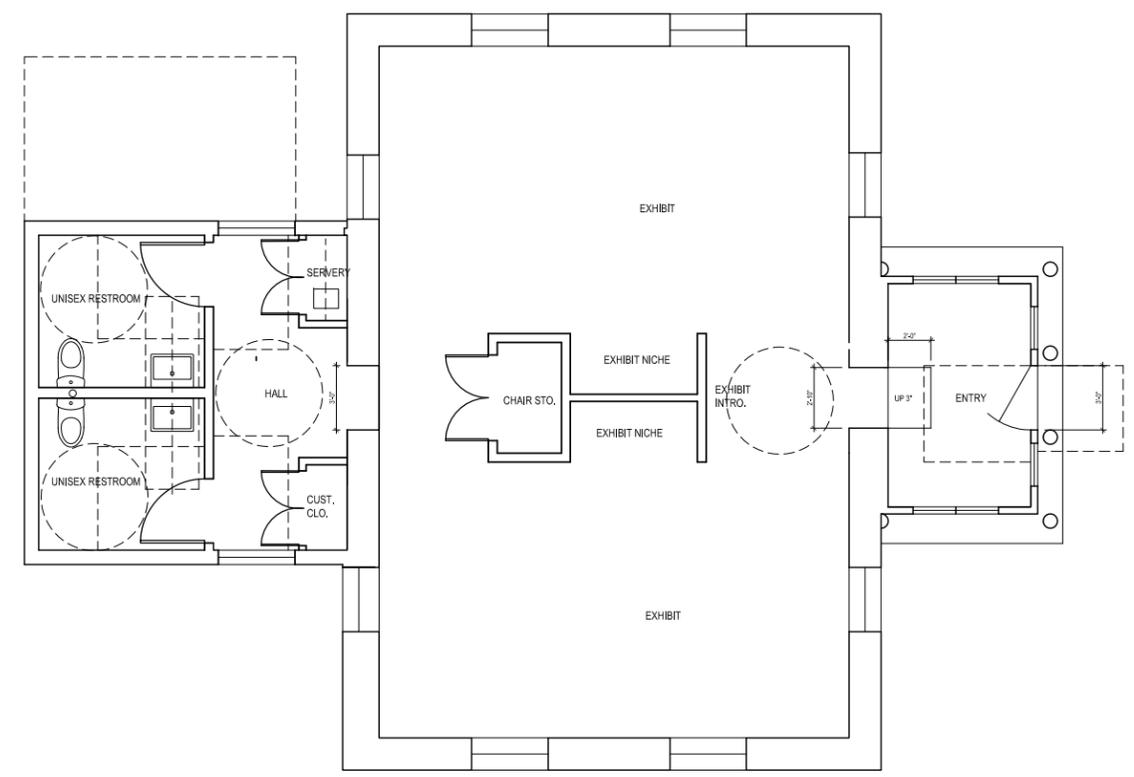
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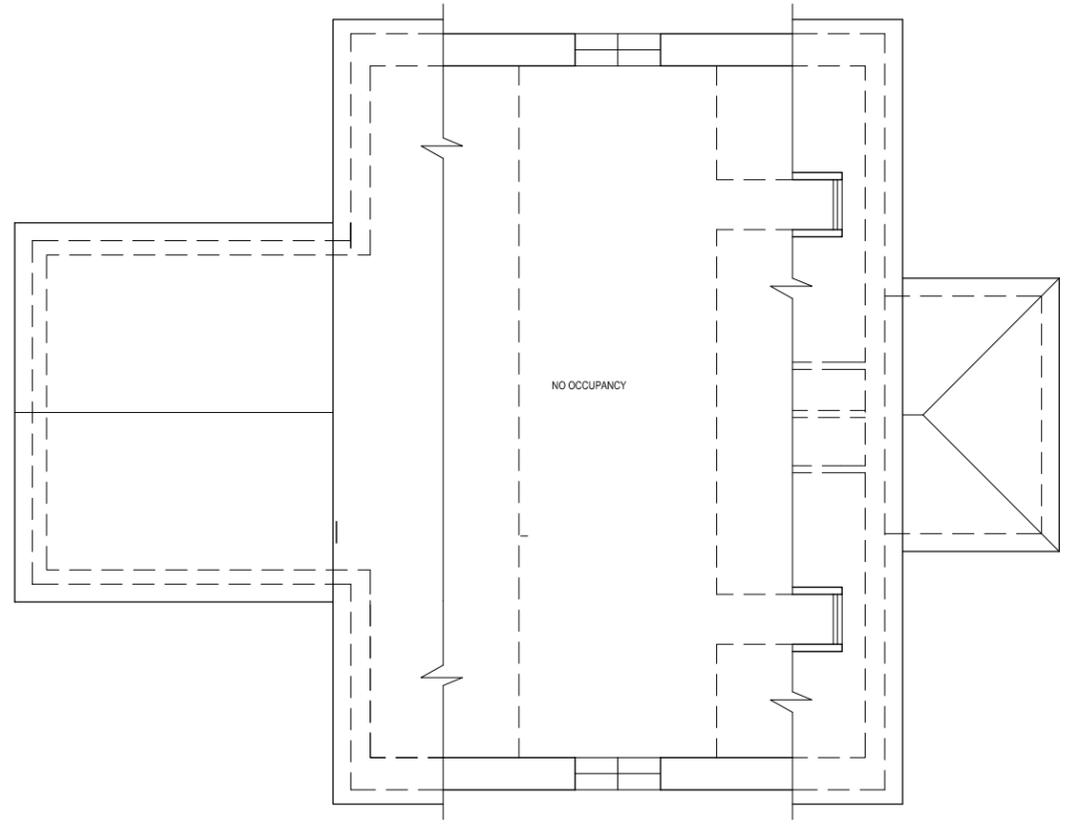
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**SCHEMATIC FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR PLANS**

**OPTION 3**



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

CONSULTANTS

PRESERVATION PLAN FOR THE

**MT PLEASANT  
SCHOOL HOUSE**

**BELLEVUE STATE  
PARK**

DNREC  
89 KINGS HIGHWAY  
DOVER, DE 19901

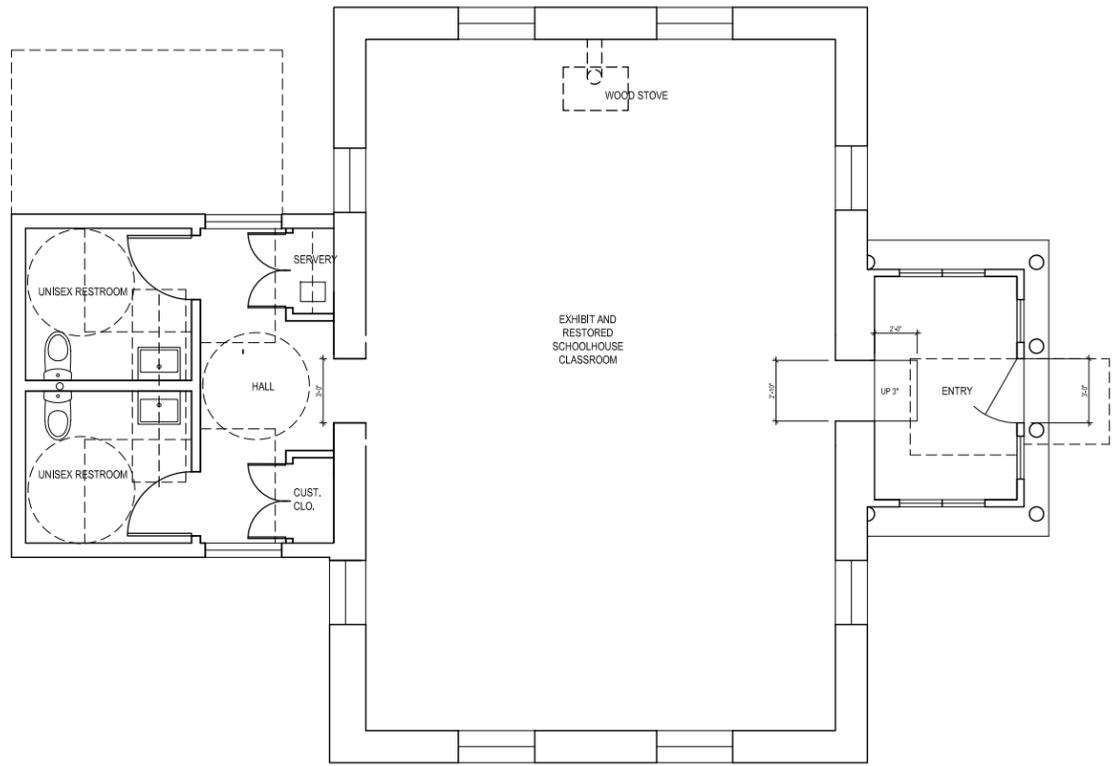
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REV	8.19.16	

ISSUE: JANUARY 15, 2016

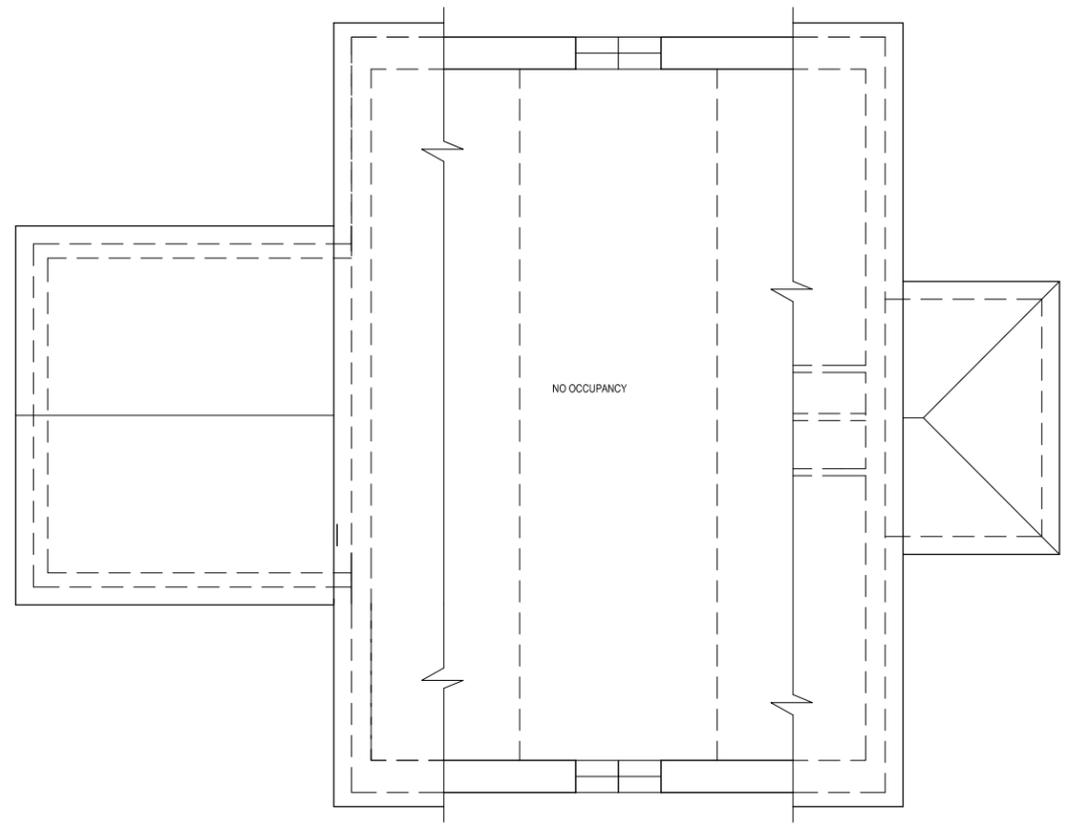
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**SCHEMATIC FIRST  
AND SECOND FLOOR  
PLANS**

**OPTION 4**



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

**VIII. COST ESTIMATES**

**COST ESTIMATES**

FRENS AND FRENS, LLC

PRESERVATION PLAN FOR MOUNT PLEASANT SCHOOLHOUSE  
BELLEVUE STATE PARK, WILMINGTON, DE

Prep: DHF  
Date: 8/15/2016  
Revised:

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE COST ESTIMATE for 1830-1865 RESTORATION / OPTION 4

Description	Quantity	Unit	Bare Unit Cost	Marked Up Unit Cost (15% + 15%)	Amount
<b>Demolition Costs</b>					
Interior Demolition as Required	740	SF	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.60	\$ 4,884
Demolish north porch and dormers	1	LS	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,640.00	\$ 2,640
Demolish shingle roofing and plywood decking	960	LS	\$ 3.00	\$ 3.96	\$ 3,802
Demolish south wing	1	LS	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 7,920.00	\$ 7,920
<b>Building Envelope Preservation</b>					
Roof Restoration - Wood shingles on lath	960	SF	15.00	19.80	19,008
Stone Masonry & Lime Plaster	1,570	SF	12.00	15.84	24,869
Windows and Doors	9	SF	\$ 2,500.00	3,300.00	29,700
Reconstruct front porch	120	SF	\$ 125.00	165.00	19,800
<b>Interior Rehabilitation</b>					
Restroom/Service Addition	240	SF	\$ 250.00	\$ 330.00	\$ 79,200
Rehabilitate schoolhouse room	740	SF	90.00	118.80	87,912
M/E/P - Schoolhouse room	740	SF	45.00	59.40	43,956
Subtotal - Building					<b>\$ 323,690</b>
					<b>\$ 323,690</b>
					<b>48,554</b>
					<b>372,244</b>
					<b>44,669</b>
					<b>\$ 416,913.24</b>
					<b>\$ 416,913.24</b>

FRENS AND FRENS, LLC

PRESERVATION PLAN FOR MOUNT PLEASANT SCHOOLHOUSE  
BELLEVUE STATE PARK, WILMINGTON, DE

Prep: DHF  
Date: 1/6/2017  
Revised:

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE COST ESTIMATE FOR RECONSTRUCTION TO THE DUPONT ERA ESTATE COTTAGE

Description	Quantity	Unit	Bare Unit Cost	Marked Up Unit Cost (15% + 15%)	Amount
<b>Demolition Costs</b>					
Interior demolition	1,080	SF	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.60	\$ 7,128
Demolish north porch and dormers	1	LS	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,640.00	\$ 2,640
Demolish shingle roofing	960	LS	\$ 2.00	\$ 2.64	\$ 2,534
<b>Building Envelope Preservation</b>					
Roof restoration - slate shingles	1,400	SF	35.00	46.20	64,680
Stone masonry and lime plaster	1,570	SF	12.00	15.84	24,869
Windows and doors	20	EA	\$ 2,200.00	2,904.00	58,080
Reconstruct front porch and roof balustrade	120	SF	\$ 400.00	528.00	63,360
Reconstruct dormers	3	EA	\$ 4,000.00	5,280.00	15,840
<b>Interior Rehabilitation</b>					
Addition rehabilitation and restrooms	340	SF	\$ 250.00	\$ 330.00	\$ 112,200
Rehabilitate schoolhouse room	740	SF	140.00	184.80	136,752
Subtotal					<b>\$ 488,083</b>
Contingency (15%) & OH& Profit (15%) Included in Marked Up Unit Costs					<b>73,212</b>
<b>Total Construction Cost</b>					<b>561,296</b>
Architectural/Engineering Design Fess 12%					<b>67,355</b>
<b>TOTAL OPTION</b>					<b>\$ 628,651.16</b>