

**CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT  
For  
July 15, 2010  
MEETING NO. 10-10**

**APPLICATION:** HDC2010-00514  
**ADDRESS:** 536 Anderson Avenue  
**ACCEPTED:** 06/14/2010  
**OWNERS:** Mahmoud Amin  
and Fakhri B. Vaziri  
**REQUEST:** Evaluation of Significance  
**STAFF:** Rosemary Faya Prola



**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The applicant requests Evaluation of Significance review by HDC, a step required by Article 25.14.01.d.1.(c) of the City's Zoning Ordinance if demolition is intended.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Commission finds the property ineligible for historic designation since it does not meet the established criteria for historic and cultural significance. Because the house does retain many original elements, staff recommends that the property owner salvage as many of elements as possible for re-use, either by the new owners or by others.

**[DRAFT MOTION OF APPROVAL:]**

Finding that the property at 536 Anderson Avenue does not possess significance, I recommend that HDC2010-00514 does not move forward for historic designation.

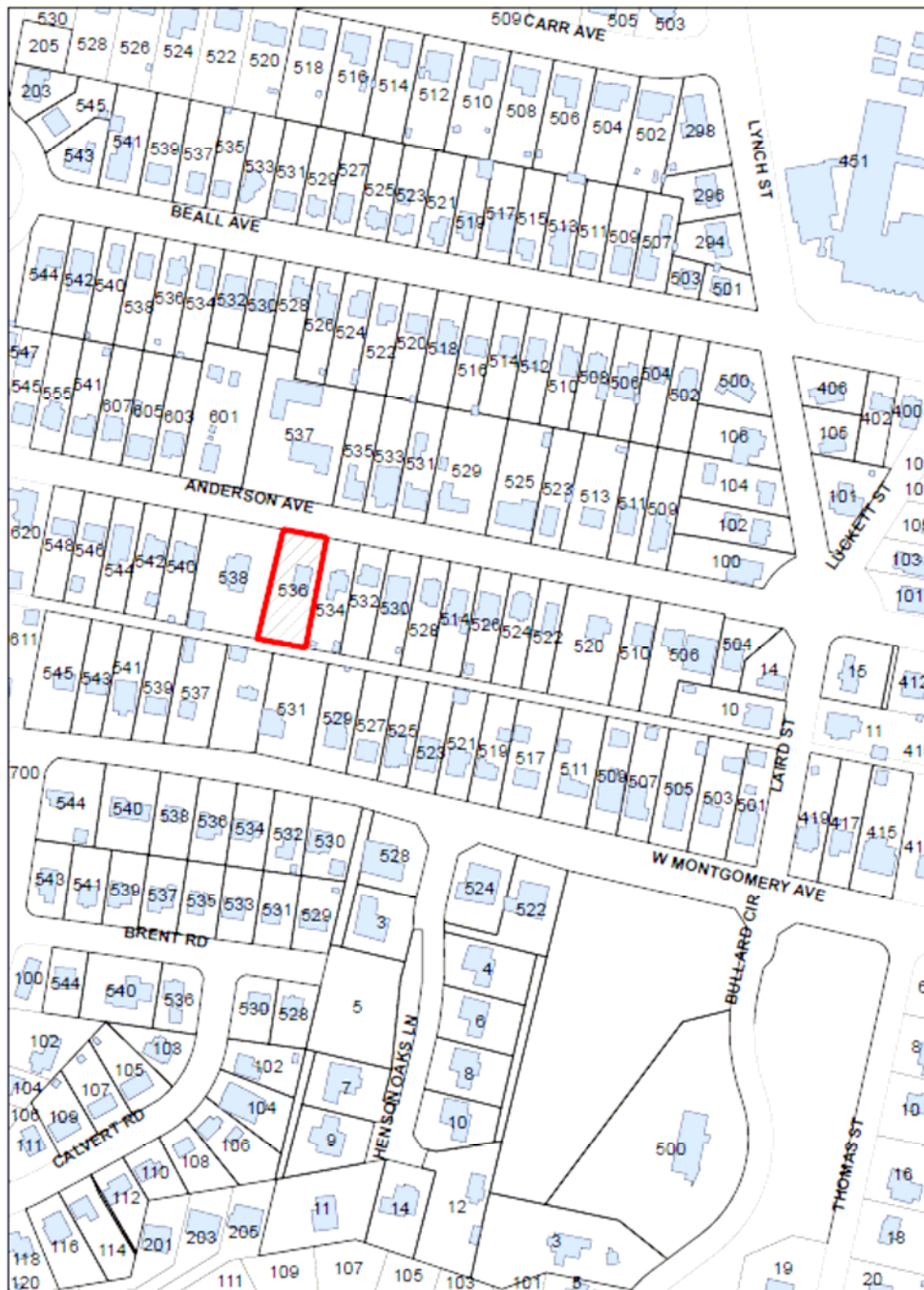
**BACKGROUND:**

The owners have a sales contract on the property and the buyers have plans to demolish the existing dwelling in order to build a new house.

The dwelling on the property is listed in the 2010 Historic Buildings Catalog, an update of the 1989 catalog prepared by HDC staff and currently in press. The 2010 catalog includes buildings identified by staff in a 2008 survey as possessing both the age and level of integrity necessary for future consideration as an eligible historic district. The preface to the catalog states that inclusion

of a building does not confer historic designation, and notes that further research is necessary to determine whether a building or site satisfies the City of Rockville's criteria for historic, cultural, architectural, and/or design significance.

### 536 Anderson Avenue HDC2010-00514



July 8, 2010  
Evaluation of Significance

**Previous Requests:**

**REN2006-03681** Rental Housing License  
**HBS2008-00838** Rockville Historic Building Survey  
**PLT2009-00495** Request for recordation of existing lot (combining Lot 44 and eastern half of Lot 45 as new Lot 63) NOTE: conditionally approved by Planning Commission but does not appear to have been recorded

**Property Area:** 13,500 sq. ft.

**Structure Area:** 936 sq. ft.

**Zone:** R-60

**City of Rockville Permits Required:**

Demolition Permit  
 Building and associated permits

**Deed Research:**

<b>Grantor</b>	<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Liber/folio</b>	<b>Date</b>
William Joseph Leeney (Jean Antoinette)	Mahmoud Amin and Fakhri B. Vaziri	27336/543	4 May 2004
Dorothy H. Leeney Bedell (AKA Dorothy H. Leeney)	William Joseph & Jean Antoinette Leeney (4417 Chestnut Lane, Rockville)	7320/45	30 September 1986
William J. Leeney	Dorothy H. Leeney	4509/855	3 April 1974
Mary Ann Beall, surviving tenant by entirety of J. Leonard Beall	William J. Leeney (4111 Leland Street, Chevy Chase)	4509/118	28 March 1974
J. Vinson Peter and Gertrude Peter, his wife; Frances P. Bouic and Albert M. Bouic, her husband; & Mary G. Peter	J. Leonard Beall (Mary Ann)	968/294	8 May 1945
John W. Benson	J. Leonard Beall (Mary Ann)	652/207	29 Dec 1936
American Security and Trust Co., executor, and T. Stanley Holland, executor of Hubbard estate	John W. Benson	PBR462/497	30 June 1928
Henry N. Copp (Mary)	Gardiner G. Hubbard	JA 40/265	25 October 1893

**Property Description:**

This is a 1 ½-story plus basement, two-bay dwelling, constructed in 1937 according to tax records. It stands about 50 feet from Anderson Avenue. A driveway runs from the street on the east side of the house. The rear yard is enclosed with a chain-link fence and is bordered with mature trees. An alley runs behind the property.

**North elevation**

Clad in stucco finished in the pebble-dash method, the house has a low-pitched side-gable roof. The front slope of the roof extends to cover the full-width porch on the façade. The porch appears to have its original square chamfered wood posts, railing, and deck. The roof has exposed rafter ends on the front and rear elevations. A brick chimney pierces the southern slope of the roof. On the rear (south) elevation, there is a one-bay bump out covered by a shed roof with exposed rafter ends. The bump out stands on brick piers and is clad in horizontal wood siding. Steps under the bump out lead to the basement entry.

**Detail of façade showing pebble-dash finish**



**Detail of west elevation showing rear bump out**

**View from northeast**

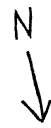
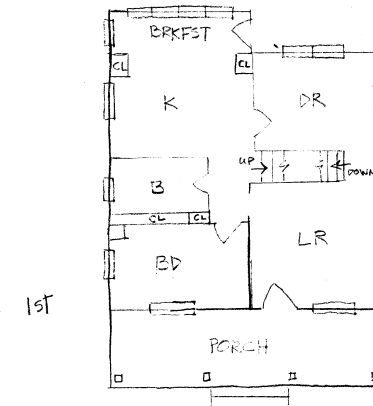
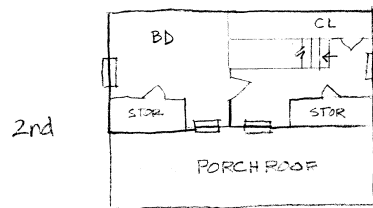




View of south elevation from alley

The dwelling windows are mainly 6/6 wood sashes and 6/6 vinyl replacement sashes, with original wood sashes on the first floor of the façade and the west elevation, and on the east and south elevations of the rear bump out. Both the wood and vinyl windows retain original wood trim and are covered with vinyl storm windows. The front entry door is a modern replacement. The central dormer has a shed roof with exposed rafter tails and contains a pair of 6/6 vinyl sashes. There are vertical wood ventilators in each gable pediment and metal casements in the basement.

The interior has a compact plan. Like all bungalow designs, the layout manages to create a significant amount of living space out of modest square footage. The front door opens directly into the living room. An arched opening in the corner of the south wall leads to the original dining room, presently used as a bedroom. Through a

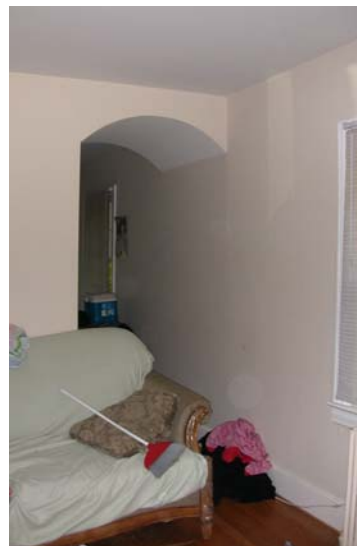


536 ANDERSON AVE  
(not to scale)

doorway in the east wall of the living room is a short hallway. Off of this hallway are a bedroom, bath, kitchen with breakfast nook bump out (pictured right), and stairway leading to the second level.



At the top of the stairs is an open space that may have been used originally as a sewing room or bedroom. A door on the left at the top of the stairs opens into a shallow closet that extends half the width of the house. A bedroom is located off of the open space. The interior of the house retains many original features including hardwood floors and trim on the first and second levels; five-panel wood interior doors, some with original Art Deco-influenced hardware; wall tile, tub, shower rod, and vanity cabinet (with replacement top) in the bath; a built-in storage cabinet in the first-floor bedroom, linen closet in the hallway, and broom closet in the kitchen; and built-in storage under the eaves on the second floor.

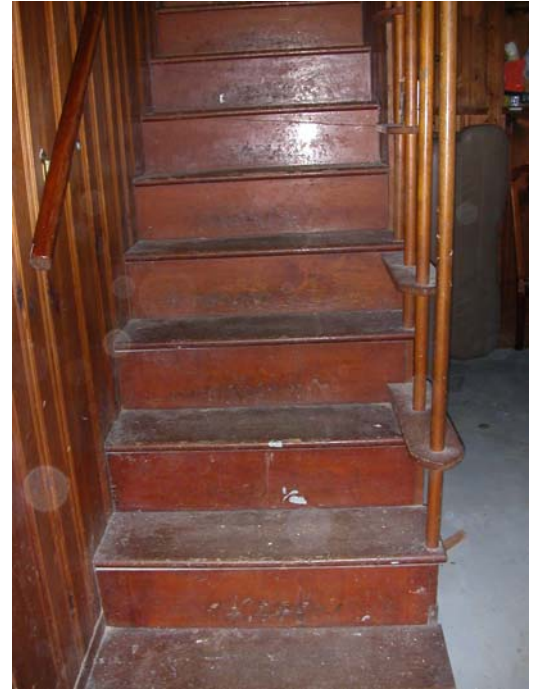


**Interior details.** Clockwise from top left: original door hardware; arched opening to dining room; under-eave storage; cabinet and closet in first-floor bedroom.

The basement is accessed by enclosed stairs located on the left side of the arched opening on the first level. The basement is divided into two main spaces: a small bedroom and “recreation room” with tongue-and-groove-pine paneled walls and painted linoleum floors in the north half; and an unfinished utility room in the south half. The paneling and stair rail design indicate that the space was likely finished in the 1940s or 1950s. A door in the rear of the utility room leads to the outside.



**Basement.** Views of recreation room (left) and step-to-ceiling stair railing.



## History

The dwelling was constructed in 1937 on land purchased by J. Leonard Beall and his wife, Mary Ann Beall, for \$250.<sup>1</sup> The Bealls were the third owners of Lot 44 located in the West End Park subdivision. In 1893, Gardiner G. Hubbard, a Washington, D.C., attorney, paid developer Henry N. Copp \$300 for the land.<sup>2</sup> It appears that, like many other buyers during this period, Hubbard purchased the lot in the new subdivision as an investment. In 1928, American Security and Trust Co., executors of the estate of Gertrude M. Hubbard, Gardiner Hubbard's widow, sold the lot for \$175 to John W. Benson.<sup>3</sup> It is unknown what Benson's plans were for the property, however, he owned lots 15, 16, and 17 in West End Park, lots that backed Lot 44.<sup>4</sup>

The builder of the house is unknown. There are at least two other bungalows in the 500-block of Anderson constructed in the 1930s: 509 Anderson (1939), and 523 Anderson (1934). The dwelling at 523 Anderson has the same pebble-dash stucco finish as the subject property. It is interesting to note that Mary Ann Beall's father, Paul M. Slater, was a house carpenter; however, no connection has been established between Slater and the house's construction.<sup>5</sup> The Bealls added to their property with the purchase of the eastern half of Lot 45 in 1945.<sup>6</sup>

### **536 Anderson Avenue**

1949 Sanborn Insurance Atlas of Rockville

J. Leonard Beall was the son of William L. Beall. No connection has been established between William L. Beall and the prominent family with the same name that resided in Rockville. William Beall is listed as a farm manager/dairy farm in the Olney District on the 1930 census.<sup>7</sup> J. Leonard Beall worked as a farm laborer as a teenager, but later operated a service station in Rockville known as Beall's Esso Servicenter (sic) located at 700 E. Montgomery Avenue (in 1969, listed as 700 Rockville Pike).<sup>8</sup> Beall operated the service station in



<sup>1</sup> Liber 652, Folio 207; 29 December 1936. This deed and all of the following are contained in the land records of Montgomery County, Maryland.

<sup>2</sup> Liber JA40, folio 265, 25 October 1893.

<sup>3</sup> Liber PBR 462, Folio 497, 30 June 1928.

<sup>4</sup> Liber 268, Folio 162, 6 October 1917. On the 1920 census, Benson is recorded as living in West End Park, but lists "None" for occupation. In both the 1910 and 1930 censuses, Benson is listed as a farmer: In 1930, he lived in Laytonsville. Lots 15, 16, 17 and the eastern half of Lot 18 in West End Park were re-subdivided as lots 57 and 58 in 1951 (Plat 2744). The apparent address of Benson's property is 531 W. Montgomery Avenue (former lot 16, now lot 58).

<sup>5</sup> Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930. Population Schedule, Part of District 4, Rockville.

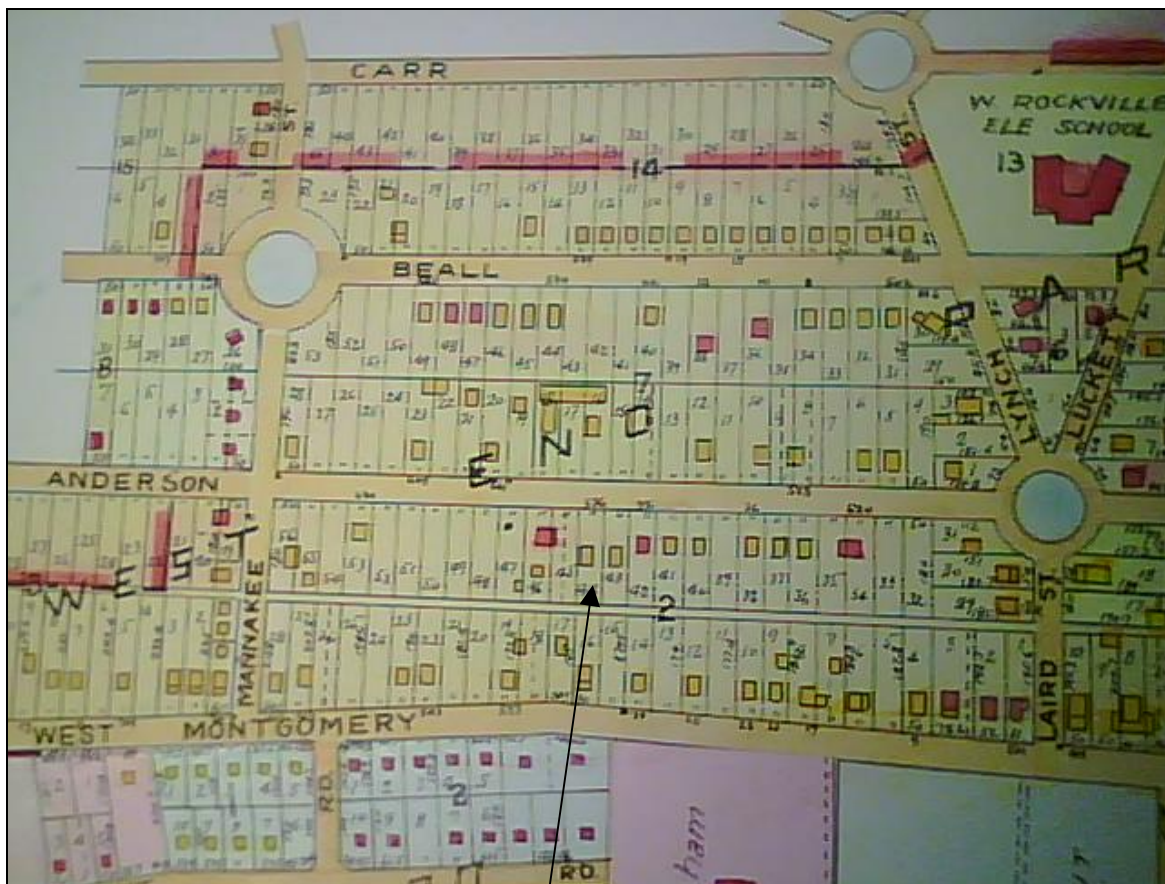
<sup>6</sup> Liber 968, Folio 294, 8 May 1945.

<sup>7</sup> Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930. Population Schedule, Olney District, Sheet 7B.

<sup>8</sup> J. Leonard Beall, Obituary (newspaper unknown, 18 February 1971). Biography files, Montgomery County Historical Society Library. The obituary states that Beall operated the station in Rockville "for many years" and was operating a service station in Cedar Grove at the time of his death. The station address is from the listing in Polk's Rockville City Directory, 1958, as is the name of Beall's co-owner, William O. Best.

Rockville until at least 1965.<sup>9</sup> He was a member of the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department in the mid-1940s, and was appointed a custodian of voting machines in Rockville by the Board of Election Supervisors in 1949.<sup>10</sup>

J. Leonard and Mary Ann Beall had five children, and resided in the house at 536 Anderson Avenue from 1937 until 1959 or 1960.<sup>11</sup> From later directories, it appears that members of Beall's extended family resided in the house through 1973. In February 1971, J. Leonard Beall died, and his wife sold the house to William J. Leeney of Chevy Chase in March 1974.<sup>12</sup> The property was transferred between Leeney family members in 1974 and 1986. In 2004, William J. Leeney conveyed the property to the present owners, Mahmoud Amin and Fakhri B. Vaziri.<sup>13</sup> Like Leeney, Amin and Vaziri maintain the house as a rental property; however, it has recently been conditionally sold, pending HDC review.



**J. Leonard Beall House, 536 Anderson Avenue**  
1949 Klinge Atlas (Rev.1953)

<sup>9</sup> There are no copies of the Polk directory for the years 1966-1968 at the historical society library. In 1969 the station has a new owner, Morris M. Lewis (Polk's Rockville City Directory, 1969, p. 290).

<sup>10</sup> *The Washington Post*, 31 January 1945, p. 5; *The Washington Post*, 25 May 1949, p. B1.

<sup>11</sup> There is no copy of the Polk directory for 1960 at the historical society library. In Polk's 1961 directory, Mrs. Marvel Hess resides at 536 Anderson.

<sup>12</sup> Liber 4509, Folio 855, 28 March 1974.

<sup>13</sup> Liber 27336, Folio 543, 4 May 2004.

**CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION CRITERIA**

Standing structures and sites, including archeological sites, must be determined to be significant in one or more of the following criteria to be found eligible for designation:

**I. Historical and cultural significance:**

A. Is the site of a significant historic event.

*No. The building is not the site of a significant historical event.*

B. Is identified with a person or a group of persons who influenced society.

*No. The building is not identified with a person or group of persons who influenced society.*

C. Pattern of events

*No. The building does not exemplify the cultural, economic, social, political or historic heritage of the County and its communities.*

D. Has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, County, State, or Nation.

*No. The building does not have character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, County, State, or Nation.*

**II. Architectural and design significance:**

A. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.

*No. While an example of the bungalow type of dwelling, it is not an outstanding example of the type. The building does retain its original layout and many original materials and design elements.*

B. Represents the work of a master.

*No. The building does not represent the work of a master.*

C. Possesses high artistic values.

*No. The building does not possess high artistic values.*

D. Represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

*No. As a single building, this criterion does not apply.*

E. Represents an established or familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or county

*No. There is nothing especially noteworthy about the site.*

**III. Structural Integrity:**

Since the building is not determined significant in any of the above criteria, the issue of integrity is not pertinent.

**IV. Level of site significance:**

The building is not determined to have significance.