

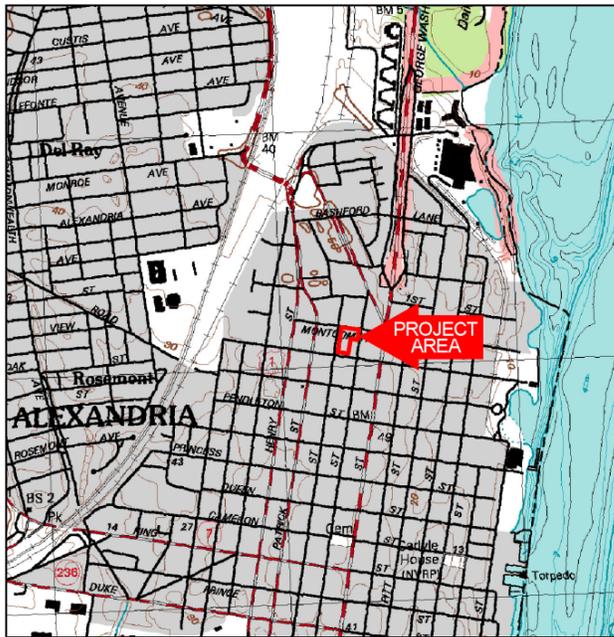
**JAMES BLAND DEVELOPMENT PROPERTY (BLOCK 2)
ARCHEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS OF SITE 44AX0212
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA**

WSSI #21548.05

DHR File # 2008-0695

Introduction

The north end of the City of Alexandria is currently being redeveloped on a large scale, with new mixed residential/commercial developments now replacing entire city blocks. Documentary research and archeological investigations were conducted in anticipation of the redevelopment of a large portion of the block bounded by Montgomery, N. Columbus, Madison, and N. Alfred Street. The work was conducted by Thunderbird Archeology, a division of Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc.



Location of Project Area

area is located within the historic African American neighborhood known as the Hump, and based on trends in later property history, it is likely that many residents of the project area during this period were African Americans.

To a lesser extent, the north end of the city has also historically been a mixed industrial and residential area. Residential development within the project area started in the third quarter of 19th century and continued in to the early 20th century.

During the colonial period, the lands may have been utilized for the cultivation of tobacco or other crops or as pasture; however, archival records provided little detailed information. By the third quarter of 19th century however, records show residential development in the vicinity of the project area. Approximately 20 dwellings are present across the five city blocks by 1877. As the project

In the latter part of the 1930s and 1940s, a greater public awareness of substandard housing (often called slums) and of the need for public housing had arisen. A number of public housing projects, which were generally segregated, were constructed in the City of Alexandria. Some of them include the "whites" only John Roberts Homes as well as the George Parker Homes and the Samuel Madden Homes for African Americans. In 1941, the original houses within the project area were condemned, and in 1954 the James Bland homes were constructed within the project area over the foundations of these aforementioned condemned and destroyed properties.

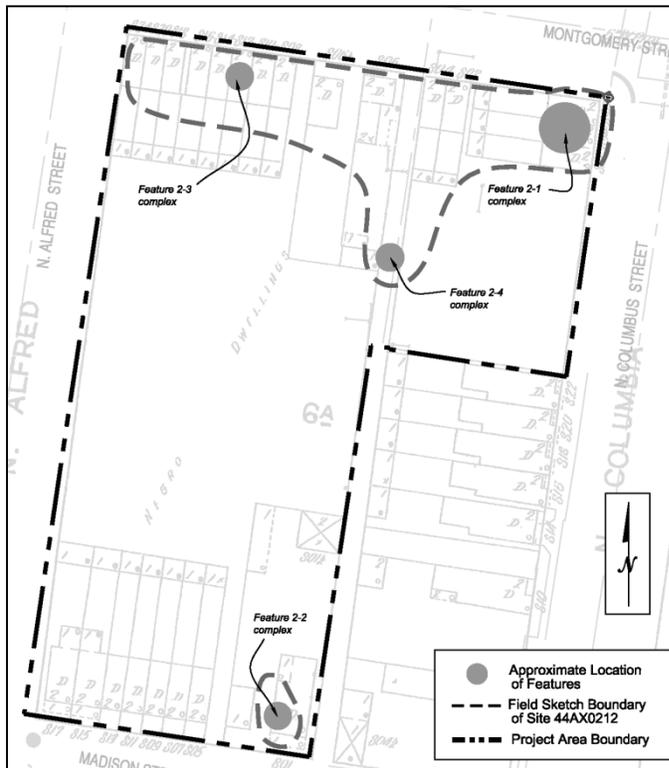


Condemned Housing: 800 Block of Madison Street

Archeological Investigations

Archeological investigations were conducted within the project area in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) as well as with the City of

Alexandria zoning ordinance. The work included a Phase I investigation in 2009, followed by archeological monitoring of the demolition and construction within the project area. One archeological site, 44AX0212, was identified; the alphanumeric designation indicates this site is the 212th archeological site (0212) recorded in the City of Alexandria (AX) in the Commonwealth of Virginia (44).



*Locations of Features within Site 44AX0212
With 1912 Sanborn Overlay*

Site 44AX0212 represents tangible evidence of the occupation of this city block prior to the 1954 construction of the James Bland Homes public housing development. The site included two non-contiguous portions of the block and encompassed architectural features associated with at least seven former dwellings and/or outbuildings.



The brick foundations and piers of three row houses originally located at 832, 834 and 836 North Columbus Street were exposed in the northeast corner of the site. Few artifacts were recovered from this portion of the site, but those that could be dated were consistent with an early 20th construction date and occupation.

Several partial foundation walls were also located along Madison Street, near the alley that currently divided the city block; they appeared to match the location of the dwelling shown on the 1912 Sanborn map at 801 Madison Street. Finally, at least three brick foundation remnants located in the northwestern corner of the site were likely associated with the circa 1908 dwellings at 808-822 Montgomery Street. No artifacts were directly associated with these foundations; however, a brass General Service military button that dates from 1902 was found near the Madison Street foundation.

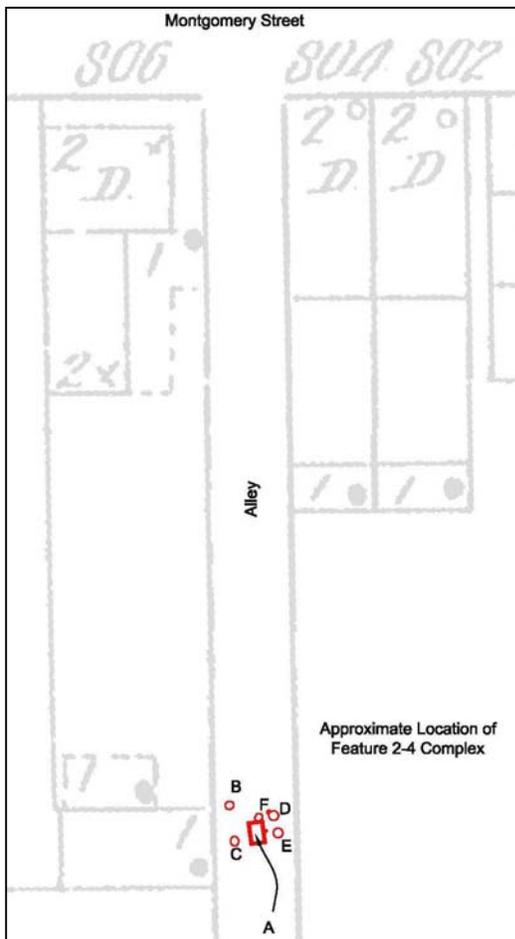
Finally, a probable brick lined privy or outhouse feature was located in the approximate location of the rear end of the lot at 806 Montgomery Street. Five post holes were found in association with the feature, but were not evenly spaced to suggest a building pattern; based on the artifacts, the post holes appear to be contemporaneous with the privy feature. 100% of the feature was excavated.



Brick Privy Feature and Surrounding Post Holes

The artifact assemblage from the privy was predominated by faunal and floral materials, but included ceramics, glass, metal and other miscellaneous artifacts. The glass artifacts included chilled iron mold and automatic bottle machine bottles and fragments, which date from the 1880s through the early 20th century. The majority of the bottles recovered from the feature were automatic bottle machine bottles that postdate 1907/1910. Smaller percentages of earlier manufactured bottle sherds (between 1875 and 1890) and later glass bottle sherds (post-1934 and post-1940) were also recovered. Based on the artifacts, the feature was likely used between 1900 and the 1940s.

Faunal materials including bone fragments, teeth or tooth fragments, fish scales, and egg shell fragments were recovered from the privy fills. Nearly 2000 bones and bone fragments were studied; however only 25% of the faunal assemblage could be identified. At least 13 different species - one crustacean, six fish, one reptile, one bird, and four mammals- were included. The domestic species included pig, cattle, and chicken, with chicken bone being the most identified species in the assemblage.



Because the number of identifiable bones recovered was not large enough for reliable statistical analysis, few conclusions could be drawn from the faunal analysis; however, the recovery of pig bones in the privy feature at least supports the idea that the site occupants were raising their own pigs. According to an interview with Henry Johnson, a resident of the 900 block of North Columbus Street in the early 1900s, it was common for residents of that neighborhood to keep and raise chickens in their back yards, and occasionally hogs. Johnson also mentioned in his interview that privies were located at the very end of each lot in this part of the city.

The rear lot of 806 Montgomery Street contained two one-story outbuildings by 1912 and it is very likely that the brick privy feature was within one of these structures. No building permits were located at this time for the outbuildings, but the dwelling may have been constructed circa 1900 along with the other nearby row houses.

Privy Location on 1912 Sanborn Map Overlay

The earliest city building permit located for this address (dated May 22, 1920) was issued to Lucy Kellum, whom based on federal census data, was an African American resident and property owner on the block. She is described as a widow in the 1900 census and was likely living in the neighborhood at that time.

Documentary Research into the Occupants/Owners of 806 Montgomery Street

The 1899/1900 Alexandria Directory lists Moses Rowe, an African American laborer, as the occupant of 806 Montgomery Street and Edward Rowe is listed at 802 Montgomery Street. By 1909, tax records indicate that Edward Rowe was now the occupant of Kellum's property at 806 Montgomery Street. He is also listed at that address in the 1915 city directory but by 1920, Edward purchased the adjacent lot (806 ½ Montgomery), which was valued at \$250. Lucy Kellum is still identified as the owner of the lot at 806 Montgomery Street in 1920 (valued at \$100).

The 1930 and 1940 federal census data for the City of Alexandria show that the house continued to be leased to African American occupants. Linwood and Indiana Jackson were renting the house at 806 Montgomery Street in 1930, while Nanny Lomax and her sister Hattie Bivens were renting the house for \$12 a month in 1940. The sisters had two boarders, Allen Boyd and John Thomas, who were both employed as laborers at a fertilizer mill.

Based on the documentary evidence, the privy may have been used as early as 1900, when the first occupants at this address are listed in the city directory and may have been in use through 1940, based on federal census data. The artifacts recovered also seem to span this time period.

Conclusions

The foundation remnants at site 44AX0212 were related to mapped structures and associated with slag and architectural artifacts with little interpretive value. While the privy feature had interpretive value, the surrounding area had been disturbed and no other features were identified. As a result, the site had no remaining potential to yield additional significant archaeological resources. For these reasons and because of the extensive disturbance surrounding the site, there was little remaining potential to yield additional significant archeological information about the occupants of this block. Site 44AX0212 was therefore not considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.