Built in 1941 for World War II workers at the Torpedo Factory on the Potomac River in Alexandria, the Chinquapin Village War Housing Project was designed with a series of courts radiating from the circular road present today. Four to six duplexes were arranged around each court for a total of 150 duplexes. The small, frame buildings became known as Chinquapin Houses. Each family had a semi-detached house with living room, kitchen, bath and one, two or three bedrooms. Brice Warthen grew up in the village where “You had very good neighbors because everybody, everybody, worked in the same place... It was a very friendly place to live.”

The remains of steps and sidewalks in Chinquapin Village can still be seen near here. Mildred Massa, a World War II resident, described the houses as “very plain, just temporary; they were built, but not sturdy.” A central feature of the interiors was a heater. Jerry Sare remembered, “The heaters of the houses were right in the middle of the floor between the bathroom, bedroom, and living room. There was a register in the floor, and you could see the fire. They were always breaking down. The houses were very cool, very drafty...”