A HISTORIC OVERVIEW AND
COMPREHENSIVE LANDSCAPE MASTER PLAN
OF MEOWN FARM

by

Sarah Minnich

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Plant and Soil Sciences

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Sarah Minnich

Approved:

Jules Bruck, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of thesis on behalf of the Advisory Committee

Approved:

Blake Meyers, Ph.D.
Chair of the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

Approved:

Mark Rieger, Ph.D.
Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Approved:

James G. Richards, Ph.D.
Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education
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ABSTRACT

This study examines three design process issues consequential to occupied residential historic landscapes: (a) how a historic landscape could be modified to meet the needs of a modern family, (b) how the history of a landscape can influence the design of a new master plan, and (c) how significant changes to a landscape are incorporated while maintaining historic character and integrity. A single historic estate was analyzed using historic archives, photographs, site and building plans, and site measurements and observations. In addition, current homeowners were interviewed and surveyed. Based on this data, the researcher followed a formalized design process that included an inventory, site analysis, functional analysis, two-dimensional conceptual designs, and three-dimensional representations of specific design concepts. Results, including a master conceptual design, suggest a more holistic approach to designing occupied residential landscapes of historic value.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the induction of the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the field of cultural landscape preservation has grown significantly. Today, many government and professional organizations exist to promote the education, identification, and the preservation of cultural landscapes, sites that are regarded as physical connections to our past.

In support of their protection, the United States Secretary of the Interior defines four standards for the treatment of cultural landscapes: rehabilitation, restoration, reconstruction, and preservation – approaches that can be employed alone or in combination in the management of cultural landscapes. Of the four treatments, rehabilitation is the only method that accounts for alterations or additions to a landscape. While the guidelines collectively acknowledge a necessary balance between change and continuity in cultural landscapes, the recommendations regarding landscape modifications are stringent and do not account for significant changes or alterations to a site. This study demonstrates a process for the contemporary design of a cultural landscape when necessary modifications fall beyond the scope of established treatment guidelines, including those of rehabilitation.

While standards and guidelines exist for landscape restoration, preservation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, there is a lack of research regarding the modernization of historic landscapes to meet present-day needs. This study demonstrates the ways in which an in-depth analysis of a historic site can inform a
design process that meaningfully accommodates change while paying tribute to the past.

An exploration of Meown Farm, a historic residential estate located in Centreville, Delaware, provides a case study for this approach. This case study follows a formalized landscape design process that includes three phases: (1) inventory, (2) analysis, and (2) conceptual design. The culmination of this research is a contemporary landscape design for Meown Farm that incorporates modifications to the landscape while maintaining the site’s historic character and integrity.
Chapter 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural and Historic Landscapes

Cultural landscapes are regarded as physical connections to our heritage in that they are connected to a specific piece of history. Specifically, a cultural landscape is defined by Birnbaum (1994) as “a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values” (para. 2). According to Birnbaum (1994), the four subcategories of cultural landscapes include (1) historic sites, (2) historic designed landscapes, (3) historic vernacular landscapes, and (4) ethnographic landscapes.

More specifically, Birnbaum (1994) defined a historic site as “a landscape significant for its association with a historic event, activity, or person” (para. 6). Through studying “form and features and the ways they were used,” historic sites “reveal much about our evolving relationship with the natural world” (Birnbaum, 1994, para. 8). Over the past several decades, efforts to maintain and protect historic landscapes have dramatically increased. They are worthy of preservation to ensure their existence for continued education and study.
History of National Preservation Efforts

In 1935, Congress passed the Historic Sites Act, the first legislation to address historic preservation on a national level. The Act created policies for the preservation and protection of historic sites, buildings, and objects and appointed the National Park Service, through the Secretary of the Interior, to carry out specific duties and responsibilities, including: (a) collecting, preserving, and retaining all documents related to historic sites, (b) surveying and assessing sites to determine their historic value, (c) restoring, reconstructing, rehabilitating, preserving, and maintaining historic or prehistoric sites, buildings, objects, and properties of national historical or archaeological significance, as well as declaring educational programs and services be created to promote the study of historic sites (1935).

Preservation efforts continued with the signing of the National Trust for Historic Preservation Act (1949), which created the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This organization became responsible for the following: (a) receiving donations of sites, buildings, and objects significant in American history and culture, (b) preserving and administering them for public benefit, and (c) accepting, holding, and administering gifts of money, securities, or other property of whatsoever character for the purpose of carrying out the preservation program (U. S. Congress, 1949).

Although these important efforts had increased over each decade, by the 1960s, Congress acknowledged the increasing loss and alteration of historic sites and expressed the importance of their protection with the passing of the National Historic Preservation Act (1966). The act was a continuation of The National Trust for Historic Preservation Act (1949) that established federal support for the preservation of historic buildings, landscapes, and artifacts. The legislation created three new entities in
support of the national preservation effort: (a) the State Historic Preservation Officer position, (b) The Advisory Council of Historic Preservation, and (c) The National Register of Historic Places. The Historic Preservation Officer’s responsibility is to work with the Advisory Council in carrying out the mission of the Act. The Advisory Council collaborates with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and advises the president and national government on historic preservation issues.

While the preceding legislation worked to promote national awareness of historic preservation as a whole, efforts in practice continued to focus primarily on the preservation of historic buildings. In fact, in 1976, the United States Secretary of the Interior published *The Standards for Historic Preservation Projects*, that defined protocols and guidelines for the acquisition, protection, stabilization, preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of historic buildings. State Historic Preservation Officers and the National Park Service used the standards to guide preservation projects.

In 1987, Congress acknowledged that the “implementation of Federal historic preservation laws with respect to historic landscapes lags far behind the effort expended on historic buildings and archeological sites” (p. iii). It was at this time that historic landscapes began receiving recognition as “legitimate cultural artifacts worthy of the same curatorial attention as the architecture they functionally support” (Shopsin, 1977, p. 27). As a result, efforts to preserve historic landscapes increased.

In 1992, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior published a revised version of the 1976 *Standards* in response to the acknowledged importance of historic sites and landscapes. *The Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* outlined four approaches for handling historic sites. These approaches are referred to as treatments
and include: (1) restoration, (2) rehabilitation, (3) reconstruction, and (4) preservation (Grimmer & Weeks, 1995). In addition to being applicable to the treatment of historic buildings, the standards could also be applied to historic sites, structures, and landscapes.

Four years later, the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (1996) were published as a supplement to the 1992 Standards. This document served as a guide to apply the four treatments to landscapes in ways that were in accordance with the Standards. The guidelines were the result of a large group of collaborators, including the National Park Service, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Heritage Preservation Services, and the Historic Landscape Initiative. Today, the treatments still function as the authoritative resource for landscape preservation projects.

Since the publication of guidelines, efforts to support landscape preservation have increased. According to the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), the concept of historic preservation has expanded “beyond protecting a single building or urban district to include the historic landscape that provides a setting and context for a property as well as much larger landscapes that have regional and national significance” (2013, para. 1). Many organizations have since been formed with the intent to carry out the mission of the guidelines.

In 2000, the Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) was established with the mission to “record historic landscapes in the United States and its territories through measured drawings and interpretive drawings, written histories, and large-format black and white photographs and color photographs” (National Park Service, 2013, para. 1). HALS operates in collaboration with the National Park Service (NPS),
Library of Congress, and the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). With continued effort and support, it became recognized as a federal program in 2010.

Since the induction of the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the field of cultural landscape preservation has grown significantly. Today, many government and professional organizations exist to promote the education, identification, and the preservation of cultural landscapes, sites that are regarded as physical connections to our past.

The Treatment of Cultural Landscapes

The four recognized treatments from the *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (1996) include restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and preservation.

Specifically, *restoration* is the practice of repairing an object, structure, or landscape to be as it appeared during a particular time in history. In addition to identifying, protecting, and maintaining character-defining features, restoration focuses on repairing features that are in decline. The replacement of extensively damaged features is encouraged with the aid of documentation to ensure the recreation is an accurate reflection of the time period. Historic details, construction techniques, and materials must remain consistent to the historic time period. If the site reflects multiple periods of historical significance, this process recommends that the landscape be restored to its most significant time period in history. In this scenario, features from other time periods of significance must be removed. Any character-defining features that were lost must be recreated.
Rehabilitation is defined “as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values” (National Park Service, 1996, para. 1). In rehabilitation projects, the site is to reflect its historical use. Historic character is to be maintained with the preservation of significant materials, construction techniques, and design. While the removal or alteration of character-defining features is be avoided, new additions may occur as long as they are clearly defined as contemporary designs and do not destroy existing character-defining features. The site may be adapted for a new purpose so long as disruptions to it are minimal.

“The act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location” is considered reconstruction (National Park Service, 1996, para.1). This treatment relies heavily on the existence of documentary and/or physical evidence to aid in an accurate recreation of the site or feature. Sites, features, or objects that have undergone reconstruction are clearly identified as recreations and should maintain historically accurate materials, designs, colors, and textures.

Finally, preservation is defined as “the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property” (National Park Service, 1996, para. 1). This treatment focuses on the repair and ongoing maintenance, rather than reconstruction, of the site. The site is to reflect its use during a given historical time period and location in history. Additions or
modifications to the site that have since contributed to its historical significance are also preserved.

From protection and maintenance to complete recreation of historic sites, the guidelines allow a variety of approaches to the treatment of historic landscapes. Although each process bears unique considerations, historic research is a necessary step in the evaluation of historic landscapes. The Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes may be applied alone or in combination to offer the best set of treatment(s) for a historic site. The primary goal of the guidelines is the continued existence of character-defining features and historic integrity.

Modification of Historic Landscapes

Case study research by Sisson (2004), Wood (2007), and McLaughlin (2011) demonstrated various methods for the modification of historic landscapes. In each study, an in-depth historical analysis was completed for a public landscape. Research and data collected were used to inform contemporary design solutions. Proposed designs incorporated new elements and maintained certain aspects of the site’s historic character and features.

Sisson (2004) studied a public park to determine how its legacy can inform a design process that incorporated both change and continuity. His methods included the study of land-use patterns adjacent to the park, the evolution of the park’s design over time, and personal impressions of the current landscape. Sisson (2004) found that designing with “an understanding of both the forces of change and continuity provides the best hope for extending the legacy of a place in ways that remain relevant in the living present” (p. 59). His design process placed an emphasis on maintaining a
balance between change and continuity within the landscape (Sisson, 2004). The culmination of his research was a proposal for the redesign of Monroe Park in Richmond, Virginia.

The primary goal of Sisson’s research was to propose a plan for the park that incorporated elements of its history while embracing the present and planning for the future. Proposed design solutions were based on interpretation of the site’s history. To support the repositioning of the park’s primary entrance, he relocated a historic fountain from its former location at the center of the park to the new entrance plaza. The relocation of the fountain to plaza “draws on the historic role of the fountain as the central element of the park” (Sisson, 2004, p. 48). Its presence in the new entrance plaza symbolized “the shift in the perceived center of Monroe Park” (Sisson, 2004, p. 45).

Sisson’s contemporary design paid tribute to the park’s legacy while accounting for its future use. His research demonstrated specific ways in which existing historic elements can be incorporated into a new design for a site. Sisson preserved several of the park’s existing pathways and monuments and integrated them into the design in a manner that showcased both their presence and historic value: “These monuments are thoroughly incorporated into the design, giving them a sense of belonging. However, the uniqueness of these elements amidst the repeated elements of the plaza sets them apart, clearly defining their connection to another time” (Sisson, 2004, p. 48).

Research by Wood (2007) used a step-by-step approach to the redesign of a historic college campus. To determine how historic integrity could be preserved while fulfilling a landscapes’ present-day site functions, Wood studied the evolution of two
historic college landscapes: Stanford and Rockefeller Universities. Her case study analysis focused on how the landscapes evolved over time as a response to changes in the universities’ site functions. In both cases, Wood found a combination of historic preservation techniques and contemporary redesign to be the ideal approach to the design of historic sites (Wood, 2007). Based on her research, Wood (2007) proposed a step-by-step design process for the redesign of historic landscapes (p. 22):

1. Identify the intent and concept of the historic design.
2. Identify contemporary and future needs.
3. Devise a plan to reconcile contemporary needs and historic intent.
4. Restore integral elements in the landscape based upon their original design.
5. Design contemporary spaces that incorporate the original design intent.

Wood applied this procedure in the redesign of the Central Campus at Iowa State University. To help her identify the intent and concept of the historic design, she studied the evolution of the Central Campus from 1869 to present-day. To identify the contemporary and future needs of the campus, she conducted an in-depth site analysis that included the study of university demographics, original campus master plans, and existing site conditions. A design program was formulated for the redesign of Central Campus. She developed a master plan that incorporated a “combination of preservation techniques that allows for integral components of the historic landscape to be preserved while other spaces are treated with contemporary designed based upon the historical concept” (Wood, 2007, p. 45).

Similarly, research by McLaughlin (2011) also focused on the redesign of a historic landscape. McLaughlin studied a portion of the Biltmore estate, the residence
of George Washington Vanderbilt, known as the Ramble. His goal was to determine whether a proposed rehabilitation plan of the Ramble could simultaneously reflect Frederick Law Olmsted’s original design intent and incorporate contemporary design (McLaughlin, 2011).

McLaughlin’s methods included a literature review, historic site research, and field observations. He studied the history of landscape preservation, Victorian garden design styles, and the developmental history of Biltmore and the Ramble. To evaluate the landscape’s character-defining features, he used a comparative analysis between Olmsted’s original plans and the Ramble’s current conditions (McLaughlin, 2011).

He completed an evaluation of the Ramble’s current conditions based on field observations and informal interviews with maintenance staff (McLaughlin, 2011). To formulate a plan that was in accordance with the garden’s existing management strategies, documents pertaining to “employee regulations, standards, and prerequisite training for performing maintenance duties” were studied (McLaughlin, 2011, p. 6). McLaughlin incorporated input from Ramble staff and professionals to ensure that his proposal was practical and feasible (2011).

McLaughlin’s results demonstrated the importance of historic research and client input in the design process for a historic landscape. While a plan could have been proposed based on either historic research or client input alone, the incorporation of both factors into the design process resulted in a feasible plan that could be implemented given the level of support from Ramble staff.
Design Process for Residential Landscapes

Research by Sisson (2004), Wood (2007), and McLaughlin (2011) established the importance of the research and preparation phase of the design process for historic public landscapes. While the design of these landscapes required an in-depth approach, the redesign of historic residential sites merits different considerations. A contrasting approach is necessary based on fundamental differences between public versus private site design.

The practice of landscape design can be divided into two categories: public-sector projects and private-sector projects (Rogers, 2011). Rogers (2011) discussed the difference between public versus private design projects: “In almost all cases, landscape architect’s work for a public-sector client involves a third-party user – the general public. Whereas it is also true for private-sector clients, the third-party-user relationship is generally more prevalent in public sector work” (p. 53). When designing landscapes, it is important to consider the primary users of the space. In most cases, a large and diverse population of users must be considered in order for the design to be usable. Specific design criteria may include handicapped accessibility and ADA compliance.

Rogers (2011) provided an example: “The site plan and design of site improvements and plazas for a new county courthouse, for example, will be used by the public employees such as judges, attorneys, and administrative staff, as well as members of the general public having business with the court” (p. 54). The research conducted by Sisson (2004), Wood (2007), and McLaughlin (2011) focused on three different types of public landscapes: a park, a university campus, and a museum and garden. In each case, the primary users of the space were the general public.
While the design of public spaces considers a large and diverse population, private spaces are generally designed to reflect the needs and sensibilities of a single individual or household. In most private-sector projects, the “client and user are one and the same” (Rogers, 2011, p. 54). The result is spaces that are personalized to meet the specific needs of the client. Even though differences exist between public and private landscape design, a design process exists that guides this work.

In addition to catering to a different client-base, residential landscapes themselves fulfill several functions that distinguish them from public landscapes. The landscape surrounding a home has a direct relationship to a homeowner’s residence, acting as “the context or surrounding within which one views the architecture of the house” (Booth & Hiss, 2005, p. 1). In addition to being a backdrop for the architecture, the landscape functions as a space for outdoor living. It can be considered “an exterior extension of the functions that occur inside the home” and as “a refuge from the routine and pressures of daily life” (Booth & Hiss, 2005, p. 1). The residential landscape is a display and reflection of the homeowner(s). Its appearance can communicate “the lifestyle and values of the residents” and “reflect their personality and attitude toward their own environment” (Booth & Hiss, 2005, p. 1). Because the residential landscape is so unique, it should be “designed with the utmost care and sensitivity so it indeed fulfills its vital role in the overall residential environment” (Booth & Hiss, 2005, p. 1).

Although residential site design is one of twenty-one categories of landscape architecture listed by the ASLA, this area represents a significant portion of the job market within fields related to land use, planning, and design. According to Garden Design (2006), residential design is the “largest market for landscape architects in the
private sector” and residential work “accounts for about 40% of their billable hours” (Thompson, 2006, p. 10).

Booth and Hiss (2005) define the process of residential landscape design as a “sequence of problem-solving and creative steps used by the designer to develop an appropriate design solution for a given client and site” (p. 93). They asserted that the design process is critical to “organize information and thoughts” in order to develop an “appropriate solution for the unique needs of the client and particular conditions of the site” (2005, p. 93). Booth and Hiss (2005) outlined the following phases of a standard landscape design process for a residential site: (1) research and preparation, (2) design, (3) construction documentation, (4) implementation, (5) maintenance, and (6) evaluation.

Booth and Hiss (2005) characterize the research and preparation phase as a gathering and collecting of all information necessary for the designer to develop a full understanding of the site. They outlined five sub-steps of the research and preparation phase, including (1) meeting the clients, (2) signing the contract, (3) preparing the base map, (4) conducting a site inventory and analysis, and (5) developing a design program.

A site inventory and analysis is for collecting and evaluating conditions that “may influence the design” (Booth & Hiss, 2005, p. 96). Examples of methods include site observations, property surveys, site plans, client interviews, and site inventories (Booth & Hiss, 2005). In their discussion of the research and preparation phase, Booth and Hiss emphasize the importance for the designer to become as familiar with the site as possible and to “thoroughly understand the site’s character” (2005, p. 96).
Similarly, the design process outlined by Simonds is divided into six steps: (1) commission, (2) research, (3) analysis, (4) synthesis, (5) construction, and (6) operation. Simonds defines the research phase as an “exercise in gaining awareness” about the site (1983, p. 106). The author outlines specific methods that can include surveying, observing, and photographing the landscape, and interviewing the clients.

Simonds proposes that the analysis phase begin with an exploration of the region surrounding the site. The area’s “immediate vicinity and its interrelationships with the property” should be studied in order for the designer to gain a full understanding of the landscape (1997, p. 100). In order for the design to be successful, he asserts that the designer “must have a full understanding of the specific site’s nature, constraints, and possibilities” (Simonds, 1997, p. 100).

Although the design processes outlined by Booth & Hiss (2005) and Simonds (1997) are defined differently, Motloch states that all design processes seek to accomplish three main goals: (1) identify a problem to be resolved, (2) generate solutions to the problem, and (3) implement design ideas (2000). In order for the designer to understand the problem, “key components and relationships are often identified to gain insight” (Motloch, 2000, p. 287). The processes outlined by Booth & Hiss and Simonds emphasize the importance of preliminary site research to develop an in-depth understanding of the site.

Regardless of the project type, research and preparation is a necessary component of landscape architecture and design work. Given the importance of historic landscapes and the unique nature of residential landscape design, a compound effort in research must occur when a historic residential design is under analysis. While standards and guidelines exist for landscape restoration, preservation,
rehabilitation, and reconstruction, there is no category or standards to guide the modernization of occupied residential historic landscapes. This calls for an additional subset of the research and preparation phase that considers the historic elements on site and gives the designer criteria to weigh the value of the historic element against the current homeowners’ desire to “modernize.” This would allow for the answer to the research question: How can we modify a historically significant landscape to meet the needs of a modern family without sacrificing its character and integrity?

Specifically, this study examines three design process issues consequential to occupied residential historic landscapes:

- How a historic landscape could be modified to meet the needs of a modern family
- How the history of a landscape can influence the design of a new conceptual design
- How significant changes or additions to a landscape are incorporated while maintaining historic character and integrity
Chapter 3
DESIGN PROCESS

In order to propose a plan that incorporates modifications to Meown Farm while respecting its historic character and integrity, research methods targeted information necessary to develop an in-depth understanding of the site. Research methods included client interviews, a questionnaire and a case study analysis. Data collected was then analyzed and used in a formalized design process that included the following phases: (1) inventory, (2) analysis, and (3) conceptual design. Although each phase of the design process is distinct, movement through the process is not a linear one (Booth & Hiss, 2005). While the researcher attempted to complete each phase individually, some phases overlapped or occurred simultaneously.

Inventory

As previously stated, the purpose of the research and preparation phase of the design process is to gather information about the site (Booth & Hiss, 2005; Simonds, 1997). For the landscape at Meown Farm, the goals of the site inventory were to (1) determine how the function of the landscape could be improved for the current homeowners and (2) develop a historic and regional context for the site. Data collected fell into one of three research areas: (1) the history of the property Meown Farm, (2) the current conditions of the site, and (3) the current homeowners (Client) of the property, Eli and Molly Sharp.
A multifaceted approach was used to gather data in the site inventory. To develop a comprehensive historiography of Meown Farm, historic research and data was gathered over a period of eighteen months. Data took the form of historic site photography, architectural drawings and construction documents, site plans, and a conservation easement. Supplemental topics that provided relevant background information and historic context to the site were also explored, including (1) the history and culture of the Brandywine Valley, (2) the nature of conservation easements, (3) the relevance of a related home, the Gibraltar estate, and (4) biographical information on Meown Farm’s first and second generation owners, Hugh Rodney Sharp and his son Bayard Sharp.

Data collected that was relevant to the current site conditions was gathered over a period of eighteen months. The researcher conducted eleven site visits, collecting data collected in the form of notes, field observations, photographs, and site measurements. Hillcrest Associates, Inc. professionally surveyed the site.

The researcher utilized two methods of data collection in order to learn about the Client’s needs and desires for their landscape, including: (1) an informal questionnaire and (2) a personal interview. The client questionnaire was formulated and distributed to Eli and Molly Sharp approximately two weeks prior to the client interview. The goal of the questionnaire was to gauge the way in which the Client viewed the historic aspects of their property prior to discussing the current needs of the landscape. The questionnaire consisted of five questions and was distributed and collected via e-mail. (A copy of the questionnaire with Client’s responses is included in the Appendix A.)
To determine specific areas of the site that needed improvement, the researcher conducted a formal interview with the homeowners. The goals of the interview were to (1) collect information regarding the way(s) in which the landscape currently functioned and (2) gain insight into how the landscape could be improved based on the needs and desires of the Sharp family. The findings of the interview were summarized in a design program that outlined specific items to be considered in the analysis and design phases.

**The Brandywine Valley Landscape**

As stated by Simonds, the study of local and regional character is one method that can be employed during the inventory phase to develop an understanding of the site. Meown Farm is located in the heart of the Brandywine Valley and less than one mile from Centreville, Delaware, a town that is on the National Register of Historic Places (Figure 3.1). An overview of the Brandywine Valley’s history and culture served as a basis for understanding the character and historical significance of Meown Farm as it relates to the local landscape.

The Brandywine Valley is located at “the southeastern corner of Pennsylvania and the northernmost part of Delaware” (Macinko, 1964, p. 319). According to Macinko, the majority (90 percent) of the area is in Pennsylvania, while the remainder is in Delaware (1964). Macinko describes the region as a “land marked by covered bridges, stone barns and farmhouses set in gently rolling countryside” (1984, p. 319).

Originally inhabited by Lenni-Lenape Native Americans, the Brandywine Valley is “rich in history, culture, and natural beauty” (Silverman, 2004, p. 6). The area is named for the Brandywine River, which flows from Chester County,
Pennsylvania and across the Delaware line into downtown Wilmington (Silverman, 2004). From the 1620s to 1630s, it was settled by Swedish, Dutch, and Finnish immigrants who recognized the rich natural resources the area had to offer, including “rich soil, a wealth of building materials including the greenish stone known as serpentine, thick forests, bountiful hunting and fishing, and the power generated by the Brandywine River” (Silverman, 2004, p. 6).

In the Brandywine Valley, “history and landscape blend” (Goodheart, 2013, p. 77). Architectural features that characterize the rural landscape include historic stone houses, barns, and mills. In the words of Goodheart, “colonial stone houses, neat and dignified, stand amid rolling cornfields. They look almost like natural out-croppings of rock, cut from the same stone – ash gray gneiss and granite, tinged here and there with a rusty orange – as the Brandywine gorge itself” (2013, pp. 76-77). The landscape is “characterized by heavily wooded terrain, rolling hills and steep slopes” (Centreville Civic Association, 2001, p. 7). According to the Centreville Civic Association, the region has “heavily retained both its rural charm and scenic beauty” (2001).

In the words of Wamsley, “for a century and a half, notable American artists have felt the Brandywine’s elusive appeal” (1992, p. 9). The valley has been home to many artists, including William T. Richards, Horace Pippin, Jefferson David Chalfant, and three generations of Wyeths. The area exhibited a large influence on the “movement in American art often known as the Brandywine school of painting” (Goodheart, 2013, p. 77). Landscape paintings such as William T. Richards’ *The Valley of the Brandywine* (Figure 3.2) and Andrew Wyeth’s *Christina’s World* (Figure 3.3) illustrate the relaxed tone and temperament of the region.
In the heart of the Brandywine Valley is the historic town of Centreville, located less than one mile from Meown Farm. Developed in the nineteenth century as a “rural, agricultural village,” it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as “significant to the architectural and commercial history of New Castle County in that it represents a well-preserved example of the small rural villages which once typified settlement in New Castle County” (1983, Statement of Significance section, para. 1). According to the nomination, the town is “surrounded by open fields, meadows, pastures, and low-density suburban development that only minimally disturbs its rural setting” (1983, p. 1). The conservation easement for Meown Farm argues that the “village of Centreville is a National Register Historic District and preservation of the Conservation Easement Areas provides an open space buffer to the village’s historic eighteenth century structures” (Brandywine Conservancy, 1994, p. 4). The geographic relationship between Centreville and Meown Farm underlines the estate’s role within the Brandywine Valley landscape.

The Brandywine Valley Country House: A du Pont Family Legacy

Perhaps the most significant feature of the Brandywine Valley landscape is the country house type. According to Marshall (2002), the “country house landscape forms the basis for the beauty and cultural history of the greater Brandywine Valley” (p. 153) and the Brandywine country house “constitutes a two hundred year old Brandywine tradition” (p. 133). The Brandywine Valley country house embodies five core characteristics:

1. “The Brandywine Valley country house landscape is derived from English and French architectural traditions that have been reinterpreted based upon strong regional vernacular architectural traditions. A pastoral, genteel county house
tradition utilizes the fieldstone farmhouses and attendant outbuildings of preexisting properties as the basis for the residence. These homes exist in harmony with the eclectic and often stately country houses that were built beginning in the late nineteenth century. Each property is evidenced by tremendous personal interpretation. Each home is singular, each setting unique, even when architectural and landscaping disciplines are followed.

2. Properties reflect significant driveways with a clear degree of complexity between the public road and the home. There is a high degree of maintenance of grounds and buildings. Gracious trees, large expanses of open mowed fields and evident architectural detail and design reflect an emphasis on the improvement of each property. The residence, outbuildings, gardens, parks, fields, and forest are incorporated into the landscape with an eye to optimal view shed and scenic topographic qualities.

3. Clusters of country house properties have been formed around significant topographic features, such as the White Clay and Red Clay creeks and the Brandywine River. The effect is to create what appears to be a seamless open landscape, but which is in fact composed of a number of individual residences and owners.

4. The Brandywine country house is outwardly focused yet intensely private. Land exists in a very high ratio to built structures. There is clear evidence of outdoor recreation, most frequently equestrian sports, tennis, swimming, and a particular emphasis on gardening by the du Pont family. In addition, almost all properties are partially devoted to cultivation either through farming or the raising of livestock and even this is managed with artistry. . .With very few exceptions, the country houses surveyed were difficult if not impossible to see clearly from the road.

5. The country house landscape has preserved an array of archaeological sites, rural vernacular residences, outbuildings, and infrastructure dating from America’s colonial roots addition to offering a wealth of architectural and landscape interpretation from the past century. . .properties have been eased or become part of land trusts ensuring that the landscape will remain undeveloped” (Marshall, 2002, pp. 122-123).

The development of the Brandywine Valley landscape and the country house ideal has been significantly influenced by the settlement of the du Pont family (Lidz, 2009; Silverman 2004). According to Lidz (2009), “no American family has dominated the
industrial and residential architecture of a state longer than the du Ponts of Delaware” (p. 13).

For nearly a century, the Brandywine Valley has been commonly called “chateau country,” a nickname that has been “aptly applied to the area because of the du Pont mansions that dot the countryside” (Silverman, 2004, p. 7). Lidz (2009) elaborated on the meaning behind the moniker: “Since the 1930s, the region in which the du Ponts have settled has been called Chateau Country, a term that rankles the family…To outsiders the phrase keys into at least three characteristics that distinguish this particular place. First, the French word chateau conjures up the heritage apparent in the family, the houses, and the old railroad-stop names. However inaccurate a stylistic or architectural description, the phrase also suggests the du Ponts’ outsize houses and properties. Finally, the term Chateau Country brings to mind a grouping of estates that, until after World War II, fit together as neatly as a jigsaw puzzle” (p. 13).

The presence of the du Pont family in Delaware began in 1802 with the arrival of French immigrant Eleuthère Irénée du Pont. At the time, the economy of the Brandywine Valley was “rooted in the traditional milling trades of flour, cotton, paper, and leather,” but the settlement of du Pont marked the beginning of the gunpowder industry in Delaware (Wamsley, 1992, p.12). His early success “generated immense wealth and influence” in the Brandywine Valley (Silverman, 2004, p. 6).

In the early 1800s, E. I. du Pont purchased a 67 acre millsite on the banks of the Brandywine Creek and built the gunpowder operation (Akerman, 1968). He also constructed a “handsome residence” on the compound in order to oversee the day-to-day operations of the company (Akerman, 1968, p. 69). Du Pont named the estate Eleutherian Mills.
The family’s gunpowder fortune placed them in an elite upper class within Delaware society, a position where “one acceptable expression of wealth was a country house” (Lidz, 2009, p. 18). According to Lidz (2009), the du Pont estates were elaborate compounds that typically “included gardens, attached conservatories, and greenhouses as well as laboratories, workshops, stables, and dairies” (p. 22).

As the company grew, “family members bought additional land in Christiana Hundred and built American Country House estates.” (Centreville Civic Association, 2001, p. 9) The majority of them settled along Kennett Pike (Route 52) in Centreville, Delaware and southern Pennsylvania (Centreville Civic Association, 2001). As the family expanded, the du Ponts chose to stay close to their wealth. As a result, the family estates were concentrated in the center of the Brandywine Valley, forming the “seamless open landscape” that is characteristic of the Brandywine country house (Marshall, 2002, p. 123). Due to their scale and proximity to one another, the development of the family’s country houses essentially “limited suburban migration northwest from Wilmington, contributing to the open space enjoyed by all today” (Centreville Civic Association, 2001, p. 47). A map of the northern portion of Delaware (Figure 3.4) highlights individual du Pont family estates developed from 1900 through 1950 and illustrates the massive influence that the family exerted on the region. By the 1950s, members of the family had “at least 70 country houses of 20 acres or more in the Brandywine Valley” (Lidz, 2009, p. 22).

The du Pont’s geographic control of the Brandywine Valley played a significant role in shaping the landscape character of the region. Protecting the future of their estates was also somewhat of a family tradition, as well as a characteristic of the Brandywine country house itself (Marshall, 2002). Although the majority of them
are currently in their second or third generation of ownership, many original family members have “provided for their perpetuity by establishing museums, parks or easements, which continue the appearance, if not the use, of the properties” (Centreville Civic Association, 2001, p. 31). Lidz (2009) illustrated this notion in her book *The du Ponts: Houses and Gardens on the Brandywine*, where she chronicled the history of twenty-three du Pont estates. At the time of her publication, nearly half of the homes and gardens that had been established currently function as public institutions, including Longwood Gardens, Winterthur, Greenville Country Club, Mt. Cuba Center, Bellevue State Park, Hagley Museum, Nemours, Gibraltar, and an Episcopalian church. Of the homes that remain in private ownership, six have been sold to private owners outside of the family. Five estates, including Meown Farm, are still in the hands of du Pont family members. Only three – Pelleport, St. Amour, and 808 Broom Street and Old Mill – of these twenty-three estates have been demolished (Lidz, 2009). The legacy of the du Pont family is evident in the survival and preservation of their mansions and gardens.

The Brandywine Valley has retained its historic character and integrity for over a century. Early settlement patterns of estate development, particularly by members of the du Pont family, have had a significant influence on the region. Over recent decades, generations of landowners have taken measures to protect the landscape’s integrity and sense of place through conservation easements. The extent to which landowners have placed their properties under easement agreements is indicative of their dedication to the preservation of the Brandywine Valley landscape and its historic character. These factors contribute to the uniqueness of the Brandywine
Valley. The legacy of the du Pont family, landscape painters, and the ideal of the country house are reflected in the Brandywine Valley.

**Conservation Easements**

During the course of the inventory, the researcher learned that Meown Farm had a conservation easement agreement with the Environmental Management Center at the Brandywine Conservancy. In order to determine any legal limitations that could impact the implementation of the proposed concept plan, general knowledge regarding conservation easements was reviewed and the easement agreement for Meown Farm was studied.

The Brandywine Conservancy (1984) defines a conservation easement as “a legal agreement in which certain rights, or interests, in property are conveyed from one party (the donor) to another (the recipient)” (p. 95). More simply, an easement is a landowner's voluntary covenant to restrict the use and development of his or her property (Brandywine Conservancy, 1984). According to the Brandywine Conservancy (1984), conservation easements are created to serve many purposes, including: (1) to conserve and protect historic structures and landscapes, (2) to define future changes and/or additions to a structure or landscape, (3) to establish responsibility for historic preservation, and (4) to benefit the local community. In order for an easement to be legally binding, the agreement must be permanent. Therefore, lands are protected in perpetuity once an easement is established.

Since they conserve and protect historic structures and landscapes, the creation of conservation easements guarantees landowners that their property “will not be improperly altered and will be maintained and appropriately used in the future”
(Brandywine Conservancy, 1984, p. 106). The conservancy lists many benefits to the formation of conservation easements, including “continued public visual enjoyment of the site... without burdening the public with outright acquisition” (Brandywine Conservancy, 1984, p. 106).

An easement document is typically formatted into three sections that includes the following information: (1) statement of facts, (2) restrictions and duties, and (3) enforcement guidelines (Brandywine Conservancy, 1984). The statement of facts lists the names of the donor and the recipients, the location and area under easement, the term of the easement, and the date that it was established. This section outlines specific details describing exactly what portions of the site or landscape are covered under the easement. For example, an easement may cover an entire building or may only cover a building’s exterior façade (Brandywine Conservancy, 1984). It also includes information about the site or landscape to provide justification for the easement. For example, in the easement document for Meown Farm, the Brandywine Conservancy (1994) stated attributes of the landscape that qualify it as worthy of preservation, including: (1) “the general public travelling these public roads enjoy sweeping views of rolling grasslands, open meadows, emergent wetlands, mature woodlands, and the historic stone farm complex, (2) it possesses “natural, scenic, historic, agricultural, open space, and water resource values worthy of conservation protection,” and (3) it contains “two stands of mature oak-beech-tulip forest” (pp. 2-4).

The restrictions and duties section outlines the rights of the owner. Guidelines for the addition or alteration to the building or site are specified in detail. The restrictions are detailed in order to prevent any activities that could “damage the historic structure’s integrity” (Brandywine Conservancy, 1984, p. 111). Expectations
regarding maintenance and upkeep are also outlined. Since it remains in perpetuity once it becomes established, the restrictions of the easement apply to any and all future property owners.

Although participation in conservation easements is completely voluntary, a significant portion of the land in the Brandywine Valley is in conservancy. The Brandywine Creek watershed consists of approximately 208,408 acres (D. Shields, personal communication, April 17, 2013). According to the Brandywine Conservancy (2013), 29 percent of the land in the Brandywine Creek watershed is protected.

In addition to the efforts by the Conservancy and private landowners, there are other organizations that have focused effort towards preserving the historic resources of the Brandywine Valley. The Centreville Civic Association (2001) states: “Brandywine Conservancy and Delaware Nature Society, both dedicated to preserving open space and a fragile ecosystem, have been instrumental in creating preservation easements in the Centreville area. The State of Delaware’s Department of Parks and Recreation also manages property for the purpose of maintaining open space and providing public recreation areas. Brandywine Creek State Park, Flint Woods, Burrows Run Preserve, and portions of Oberod, Meown, and Granogue, as well as several other private properties, have been permanently preserved” (p. 30).

The conservation easement agreement for Meown Farm was established on December 20, 1994, between the then property owner, Bayard Sharp, and the Brandywine Conservancy. At the time of establishment, the document protected 106.98 acres of land in Christiana Hundred that was subdivided into three portions: (1) “easement area ‘A,’” which contained approximately 33 acres, (2) “easement area
‘B’,” which contained approximately 71 acres, and (3) an area of 2.64 acres called ‘remaining lands’ (Brandywine Conservancy, 1994).

Figure 3.5 shows easement area “A.” The area is located to the south of Center Meeting Road and to the west of Pyles Ford Road. At the time the easement was created, the structures and buildings that comprised the estate included: (1) one primary residence, (2) two secondary residences, one with an attached garage, (3) two tenant houses, (4) one garage, (5) one greenhouse, (6) one trench silo, (7) one shed, (8) one bathhouse, (9) one wellhouse, (10) one swimming pool, (11) one Jacuzzi, (12) one pond, (13) access drives, and (14) fences. Easement A is currently owned and lived in by Eli and Molly Sharp. This portion of the property was the focus of this case study.

Figure 3.6 shows easement area “B,” the portion of property to the north side of Center Meeting Road. In the easement document, the area is identified as being “adjacent to Canby Park, located on the east edge of the village of Centreville” (p. 4). The property contained (1) three sheds, (2) one wellhouse, and (3) one bridge. Following the death of Bayard Sharp in 2002, easement area B was sold to a private owner.

The activities and restrictions for the site include the following: (1) no industrial or commercial activities, with the exception of those related to charitable use and agricultural, farming, or livestock activities that are in accordance with the best management practices defined in Section 3A(i-iv), (2) no signs, billboards, or outdoor advertising structures may be placed on site, (3) “no quarrying, excavation, depositing, or removal or rocks, minerals, gravel, sand or topsoil,” (4) no mining or removal of
groundwater, except for agricultural or horticultural use, (5) no alteration of identified wetland areas, and (6) no construction of pond, lakes, or other water bodies (p. 7).

More specifically, the requirements regarding ornamental landscaping are outlined in Section 6-C, “Landscape Requirements” (p. 16):

“Grantee [Brandywine Conservancy] may require Grantor [homeowner] to submit for review and written approval a landscaping plan, which when implemented, will reduce the visual impact of any proposed Improvement permitted under Paragraph 4 (title of paragraph 4), upon the scenic character of the landscape from public roadways. Landscaping measures need not completely conceal the Improvement, but should serve to break up its visual mass during both summer and winter. A variety of native deciduous species shall be used predominantly.”

In regards to landscape maintenance, the easement restrictions allow the cutting and/or removal of trees without permission from the Conservancy (Section H).

During the course of this case study, the researcher referred to staff at the Conservancy with questions and clarifications related to the easement document, which contained dense legal and technical language. The final conceptual design for Meown Farm will need approval from the Conservancy in order for it to be implemented. The easement had a significant impact on the design process for Meown Farm. Additional research was required in the inventory phase in order for the researcher to understand and become familiar with the easement’s requirements so that they could be taken into consideration during the design phase.

**The Gibraltar Estate**

Gibraltar is a historic estate that was the primary residence for Hugh Rodney and Isabella du Pont Sharp from 1909 to 1968. In contrast to Meown Farm, Gibraltar
is a formal residence with a large mansion and elaborate gardens. Given its connection to the Sharp family, a brief study of the Gibraltar estate provided historic context to Meown Farm.

Gibraltar is located approximately seven miles from Meown Farm in Wilmington, Delaware at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Greenhill Avenue (Figure 3.7). The property was the family home of Hugh Rodney and Isabella du Pont Sharp. The estate was built in the mid-1840s by businessman John Rodney Brinkle (Preservation Delaware, 2013). Hugh Rodney Sharp purchased the estate in 1909. Shortly after it was purchased, the Sharps began extensive additions and renovations to the property. Between 1916 and 1923, Sharp worked with accomplished landscape architect Marian Coffin to design the formal gardens (Lidz, 2009). In the words of Gestram, Coffin’s design approach was to “keep the plan simple and in axial relation to the main house, carefully proportioning house, garden and architectural elements. The layout consisted of a series of garden rooms, designed and built over a period of seven years” (1997, p. 27).

The concept of “garden rooms” was the basis of Coffin’s design scheme for the landscape. According to Gestram (1997), the outdoor rooms “served a particular function in response to its anticipated use by the owners, including a conveniently placed swimming pool, shady seating and strolling areas, and spaces for entertainment as well as for seclusion and privacy” (p. 28). The design for the garden included a “Flagstone Terrace, large staircase, Evergreen Terrace, Pool Terrace, Vestibule, Formal Flower Garden, Bald Cypress Allée, Lower Lawn, Pennsylvania Avenue entrance driveway, and Upper Lawn” (Gestram, 1997, p. 27). The concept of garden
rooms is evident in the design for the bald cypress allée and tea house, which illustrates a long, rectilinear lawn space connecting two garden rooms (Figure 3.8).

As a whole, the Gibraltar estate is a prime example of a du Pont family estate in the Brandywine Valley. Following Sharp’s death in 1968, Gibraltar was inherited by his son Hugh Rodney, Jr., who “did not have a strong interest in keeping up the gardens” (Gestram, 1997, p. 50). As a result, the gardens declined significantly and upon Sharp’s death in 1990, Gibraltar was passed on to Sharp’s grandchildren. In 1997, the family sold Gibraltar to Preservation Delaware Inc. The estate was later acquired by the Gibraltar Preservation Group. The gardens are a prime example of the work of Marian Coffin, and have been deemed worthy of preservation for their association to the Sharp family. The property is currently listed on the National Register for Historic Places (Preservation Delaware, 2013).

“Sharp’s role as philanthropist and preservationist, his benefactions to the University of Delaware and achievements in the preservation of the state's historical landmarks, as well as his contributions to the legacy of du Pont family gardens underline the importance of Sharp's personal estate, Gibraltar, as a historically and horticultural significant site in Wilmington, Delaware” (Gestram, 1997, p. 18). Given his ownership of Gibraltar and Meown Farm, an in-depth look at the life of Hugh Rodney Sharp provided additional context to both estates.

**Hugh Rodney Sharp**

Hugh Rodney Sharp was born on July 30, 1880, in Sussex County, Delaware, to Eli Rodney and Sally (Brown) Sharp. He grew up in Lewes where he attended a small, all boys private school in Lewes. (Raley, 1980, p. 1). At the age of sixteen,
Sharp enrolled in Delaware College to begin his college education. Sharp excelled in his academics and was a member of Sigma Nu fraternity. He graduated on June 20, 1900, with a Bachelor of Science degree.

Following graduation, Sharp moved to Odessa, Delaware, where he became a teacher and principal at “the three-room brick schoolhouse” (Raley, 1980). While living and working in Odessa, Sharp developed friendships with many families, including the well-known Speakmans and the Corbits. He also developed a fondness for eighteenth century Delaware architecture, a passion that brought him back to Odessa many times over the course of his life.

In 1903, Sharp moved to Wilmington, Delaware to begin his career with E. I. Du Pont de Nemours and Company, working in the accounting department. During his tenure at Du Pont, he developed a close relationship with Pierre S. du Pont. Sharp was also introduced to Pierre’s sister, Isabella, whom he married in 1908.

Following their marriage, the couple searched for a home where they could raise a family. The Sharps found their future home during a visit with the Brinkle family, who had built the Gibraltar estate in the mid-1840s. Gibraltar is located in Wilmington, Delaware, at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Greenhill Avenue. Although Sharp later recalled his impression of Gibraltar as “quite desolate,” he knew that it was where he wanted to raise his children. The Brinkles sold the 6.1 acre estate to the Sharps in 1909. It became the primary home for the Sharps and their four children: Hugh Rodney, Jr. (1909), Bayard (1913), Anne du Pont (1915), and John Mathieu (1916).

Shortly after purchasing Gibraltar, the Sharps began extensive additions and renovations to the property with the help of architect Albert Ely Ives. As mentioned,
between 1916 and 1923, Sharp worked with accomplished landscape architect Marian Coffin to design the estate’s formal gardens (Lidz, 2009). Gibraltar became Sharp’s first restoration project.

Over the course of his professional life, Sharp dedicated significant time and financial resources to his alma mater, Delaware College (Raley, 1980; Gestram, 1997). He was instrumental in the execution of the campus master plan that united the former mens’ and womens’ colleges and established the University of Delaware (Raley, 1980). He was also responsible for the hiring of Marian Coffin to design the landscape master plan for the new campus (Raley, 1980; Gestram, 1997). The implementation of the master plan was made possible through funds provided by Pierre du Pont. In 1915, Sharp became a member of the university's Board of Trustees. Two years later, he became a member of the university's Building and Grounds Committee. He later became the chairman of the committee.

In addition to his work with the University of Delaware, Sharp completed several other building and restoration projects. He fought the demolition of Wilmington's Old Town Hall on Market Street by raising funds to purchase the building for restoration (Raley, 1980). Years later, the building became home to the Historical Society of Delaware. Sharp served on the Historical Society both as a vice president and a member of the Board of Directors. In 1919, Sharp oversaw the planning and construction of the glass conservatories at Pierre du Pont's estate, Longwood.

The beginning of 1920 marked a turning point in Sharp's life. He relinquished his position at the Du Pont Company and turned his position as chairman of University of Delaware's Building and Grounds Committee over to Henry Francis du Pont. He
remained a member of the university’s Buildings and Grounds Committee for the remainder of his life. From the late 1920s through the 1930s, Sharp's time was devoted to traveling and developing “various houses he was to build for his family” (Raley, 1980, p. 13). His plans included homes in Boca Grande, Florida; Rebobeth Beach, Delaware; and Meown Farm in Wilmington.

Although he was focused on personal projects, Sharp remained loyal to the University of Delaware. In 1927, he made the first of many significant donations to the university. His donation funded the construction of Mitchell Hall, which was “designed as an auditorium and cultural center” (Raley, 1980, p. 15). The building, which cost over $300,000, was completed in 1929 and named in honor of Sharp's friend and former university president Samuel C. Mitchell.

Beginning in the 1930s, Sharp embarked on several restoration projects throughout Delaware. He acquired the Brick Hotel in Odessa and later donated it to the Winterthur Museum. In 1938, upon learning that an old mansion from one of the heirs of Daniel W. Corbit was to be sold and converted into apartment homes, Sharp purchased the building. He restored it and named it the Corbit House. Sharp later gave the building to the Winterthur Museum along with a generous endowment to assure its future. Over the next thirty years, he completed multiple notable restoration projects in Odessa, including the Academy (1938), the Pump House (1940), the Moore House (1942), the January House (1952), the “Leftover” House (1955), and the Collins-Johnson House (1964).

In addition to his work in Odessa, he continued to support restoration projects in northern Delaware. In 1931, he served on the committee for the relocation of the Bank of Delaware Building from 6th and Market Streets to Lovering Avenue in
Wilmington. The relocated building was later established as the Academy of Medicine. He worked on the restoration of the Old Dutch House in New Castle (1937) and the reconstruction of the Henderickson House in Wilmington (1958).

Sharp received wide recognition for his work as a philanthropist and preservationist. In 1964, he was awarded a plaque that was placed on the wall of the Corbit-Sharp house that read “For Preserving the Cultural Life of the Town, The Citizens of Odessa Here Express Appreciation to H. Rodney Sharp” (Raley, 1980). Sharp was given an Award of Merit by the American Association for State and Local History in 1966. In 1968, The Corbit-Sharp House was designated as a Registered National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service.

In the words of Gestram (1997), Hugh Rodney Sharp was “devoted to the advancement of education in Delaware and the preservation of the state’s architectural heritage. For more than fifty years, he served as a trustee and benefactor of the University of Delaware, and was instrumental in the restoration and protection of Delaware’s historic landmarks” (p. 9).

**Bayard Sharp**

With the passing of Hugh Rodney Sharp, Meown Farm was inherited by Sharp’s eldest son, Bayard. Bayard Sharp resided at Meown with his family from 1946 through his death in 2002. An in-depth look at the life of Bayard Sharp gave insight to the evolution of Meown Farm during his period of ownership.

Bayard Sharp was born on January 27, 1913, in Wilmington, Delaware. He grew up at the Gibraltar estate and was the second eldest son of the Sharp family. He was a graduate of the University of Virginia. Throughout his life, Sharp was actively
involved in government and politics (O’Sullivan, 2002, p. A1). According to O’Sullivan (2002), he was regarded as a “philanthropist, politician, Republican political activist and sportsman.” Sharp was a former Wilmington City Council President, a lieutenant commander for the U.S. Navy, and an adviser to presidents, congressmen, and governors (Gerber, 2002). He had an especially close relationship with the Bush family (O’Sullivan, 2002).

During his adult life, Sharp divided his time between Meown Farm and his home in Boca Grande, Florida. In addition to his work in government and politics, he shared his father’s passion for preservation and philanthropy. He was responsible for the restoration of the St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Newark, Delaware, which was renamed Bayard Sharp Hall. In 2005, he established a foundation to endow the Historic Houses of Odessa.

In Florida, Sharp was an active member of the Boca Grande community where he “owned and operated the Gasparilla Inn and Cottages, a resort and spa on Gasparilla Island” (O’Sullivan, 2002, p. A1). He made a donation of “113 acres and a mile of beachfront property” to create a Florida state park (Gerber, 2002, p. D1).

Perhaps Sharp’s biggest passion was horseracing. At Meown Farm, he raised thoroughbred horses and had a training farm in Middletown, Delaware (Gerber, 2002). In addition to producing several champion horses, Sharp served as Chairman of the Board of the Blood Horse Inc. magazine, was a member and steward of the Jockey Club, and a Trustee Emeritus of The Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (Gerber, 2002). He received national recognition for his success in the horseracing.
History of Meown Farm: 1932-2013

As mentioned, Meown Farm has been an important family estate since the time of Hugh Rodney Sharp. According to the Centreville Civic Association (2001), the property dates back to the early part of the nineteenth century when it was owned by Titus Mousely, “whose father fought in the Battle of the Brandywine” (p. 98). Mousely sold the farm circa 1860 to W. R. Seal. Deed records for the property reveal that the land was purchased by Hugh Rodney Sharp in 1926.

Meown Farm is located in Centerville, Delaware off of Route 52 at the intersection of Center Meeting and Pyle’s Ford Roads. In the late 1920s, Sharp commissioned an estate to be built for his wife, Isabella du Pont Sharp, “an avid horsewoman who had a great appreciation for the outdoors” (E. Sharp, personal communication, May 31, 2011). Meown, located five miles north of Gibraltar, the Sharp’s primary residence, served as a retreat for Hugh Rodney’s wife Isabella. According to Lidz, it was a “place where she could stable her horses, play bridge, and have tea with friends. It was a place all her own: hence, Meown” (2009, p. 156).

The estate, designed by architect Albert Ely Ives and built by A. L. Lauretsen, was completed in the early 1930s. An aerial photograph shows the estate shortly after it was constructed (Figure 3.9). The estate included a cottage, a caretaker’s residence, tenant residences, a barn, stables, and garage “constructed in a medieval building style” (Brandywine Conservancy, 1994, p. 4).

As mentioned, the objective of the inventory was to gather information about the history and current conditions of Meown Farm in order to determine how the landscape could be improved without sacrificing its historic character and integrity.
Data collected in the inventory included (1) the history of Meown Farm, (2) current site data, and (3) current Client data.

Since its construction in 1931, the estate has evolved as it has passed through three generations of the Sharp family. Historic photographs, architectural drawings, field observations, and oral history illustrate its transition from a secondary retreat to a primary residence for a family. The history of Meown Farm can be separated into three development periods based on its ownership: (1) Hugh Rodney and Isabella du Pont Sharp (1932-1945), (2) Bayard and Mary Sharp (1946-2002), and (3) Eli and Molly Sharp (2003-Present).

**First Development Period: Hugh Rodney Sharp, 1932-1945**

Meown Farm’s first period of development occurred from 1932 to 1945. During this time, the property was purchased and the estate was designed and constructed to function as Isabella’s retreat from the city of Wilmington. After its construction, the complex included: (1) one cottage, (2) one caretaker’s residence, (3) two tenant residences, (4) a guest residence, (5) a barn, (6) a garage, (7) a dovecote, and (8) a water tower.

**Cottage**

The cottage was a modest one-and-a-half story, symmetrical building with a westward facing front façade (Figure 3.10). The front door was centered on the front façade between two windows. The cottage was constructed of Brandywine granite and had a gable roof with slate shingles. A single chimney passed through the ridge of the northern end of the roof. The floor plan was a single room layout.
The cottage functioned as a leisure space for Isabella and her guests. According to Lidz (2009), the interior was “simply one large room for entertaining, with a covered back porch overlooking the pasture, a tiny bathroom, and a kitchenette for drinks and sandwiches” (p. 156). The cottage was quite modest in comparison to the Sharps home at Gibraltar. Figure 3.11 shows the front façade of their Gibraltar residence, which was much larger and grander in style and design than the small, one-room cottage. The difference in the residences could be attributed to the fact that Gibraltar functioned as the Sharp’s primary residence, while Meown was Isabella’s secondary home retreat.

**Caretaker’s Residence**

The caretaker’s residence was located to the west of the main residence and to the north of the barn. The home was a two-story, Tudor revival style dwelling with an attached garage (Figure 3.12). It had a Brandywine granite stone foundation. The façades were finished with half-timbering filled with plaster. The residence was the only building on the property that reflects the Tudor style.

In comparison to the cottage, the caretaker’s home is larger in scale and more unique in style. In the absence of further historic research, it would be possible to interpret the home as the owner’s residence. According to Eli Sharp, the caretaker and his family occupied the residence. The difference between the scale and style of the caretaker’s residence and that of the cottage is attributable to the fact that the home functioned as a primary living quarters, while the owner’s cottage served a recreational, rather than residential, function (E. Sharp, personal communication, April 13, 2012).
Tenant Residences

The two tenant residences were located on the southernmost portion of the property adjacent to the intersection of the driveway and Pyles Ford Road. One residence was a two-story frame house with an attached carriage house. The other was a two-story, frame house with an attached covered porch.

The tenant residences are located on a portion of the property that was not considered in the conceptual design, however, they were an integral part of the original construction. Their location within the landscape is noteworthy, as they were placed on a lower elevation and at a significant distance away from the remainder of the buildings on the property. There are few records documenting the function or use of the residences.

Barn

The barn was the largest, and arguably, most prominent building on the estate. Isabella Sharp and her son Bayard, the second generation owner of Meown, had a passion for horses. The barn at Meown is indicative of the Sharp family’s equestrian interests. It was a two-and-a half story, symmetrical building with an eastward facing front façade. An asphalt ramp led to the barn’s main entrance that was flanked on either side by granite masonry (Figure 3.13). The main entrance to the barn was through a large set of double doors centered on the front façade of the building (Figure 3.14). A loggia extended from the barn’s gable end towards the south (Figure 3.15). The barn was used to board the horses that were kept on the property.
Garage

The garage was located directly across from the loggia to the southeast of the barn. It was constructed of Brandywine granite masonry and a slate shingled roof. The ridge line of the garage was parallel to that of the barn. The front façade had six sets of double wooden doors that face the front façade of the barn (Figure 3.16).

The specific use of the garage during this time period is unknown. Given the nature of the estate as a working farm, and its proximity to the barn and stables, it can be inferred that the garage functioned as a storage space for farming equipment.

Dovecote

Dovecotes are small buildings that were used to house doves and pigeons. These buildings were popular during the Middle Ages in Europe when dove and pigeon meat were considered a valuable food source (Manco, 2008). Most dovecotes were designed to be “functional buildings, almost always built in vernacular styles using local materials. . . however some of the later ones, particularly those belonging to large country houses, were consciously designed to be a feature in the landscape” (Manco, 2008, para. 6).

The dovecote was located directly across from the northern end of the barn and adjacent to the garage. It was an octagonal-shaped building constructed of Brandywine granite and has a slate shingled roof with a red brick trim at the eaves (Figure 3.17). There were two points of entry to the building: one door was located on the east side of the building and faces the cottage, while the other door was located on the southwest façade of the building and faces the barn.
The dovecote was used to house pigeons that were kept on the property. A historic photograph from a Sharp photo album depicts Isabella on the front steps of the cottage feeding pigeons (Figure 3.18). The handwritten caption underneath the photo describes the picture: “Bella with pigeons.”

An eight-foot tall masonry wall connected the barn, dovecote, and garage to one another and the area in the center forms rectangular courtyard space (Figure 3.19). The courtyard is currently defined by asphalt paving and has three points of access. A single set of gates is located between the garage and dovecote, centered directly across from the ramp to the barn entrance (Figure 3.20). A second set is situated to accommodate the entrance drive that bisects the property between the attached loggia and the northern end of the garage (Figure 3.21). The third set of doors is located across from the entrance to the barn between the garage and the dovecote (Figure 3.22).

**Guest Residence**

The guest residence was a split-level house constructed of Brandywine granite and has a gable roof. It had an attached screened-in porch with a pavilion-style, standing seam copper roof (Figure 3.23). Figure 3.24 illustrates the dense plantings that surround the home. Large tree species include tulip poplars (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis*), and white pines (*Pinus strobus*).

**Water Tower**

The water tower was a tall, square shaped outbuilding with a pyramidal roof. It is located adjacent to the barn and to the west of the garage. A comparison of historic
photographs from 1931 and 1932 reveal that the tower was the last building constructed at Meown during this time period (Figures 3.25 and 3.26).

**Landscape Features**

Historic research did not indicate the existence of any formal gardens during this period of ownership. Findings did not suggest a formalized landscape or garden plan had been commissioned for the estate. However, notable landscape features from this time period included (1) a horse track and (2) orchards.

**Horse Track**

A comparison of aerial photography from 1937, 1954, and 1961 reveals that a horse track was present on the property through 1954 (Figures 3.27-3.29). The track was elliptical in shape and was located on the grounds to the east of the cottage. It was centered on the main entrance to the barn. An aerial photograph from 1937 depicts a straight pathway connecting the barn to the track (Figure 3.27). Figure 3.29 illustrates that the horse track was removed from the property prior to 1961.

**Orchards**

During the first period of ownership, orchard-style plantings were present on the property. An aerial photograph from 1937 shows a grid of small trees located to the west of the caretaker’s residence (Figure 3.27). A comparison of historic photographs indicates that this area operated as an orchard through the early 1950s. An aerial photograph dated 1954 depicts sparse plantings and mown field in place of the former orchard (Figure 3.28).
Second Development Period: Bayard Sharp, 1946-2002

Following the death of Hugh Rodney Sharp, Meown passed to his son, Bayard Sharp. The estate’s second period of development occurred between 1946 and 2002 when Meown was occupied by Bayard Sharp, his wife Mary, and their daughter. During this time, the function of the estate transitioned from a leisure home to a primary residence for the family. The change in function had a significant impact on the estate’s architecture and landscape. The main residence underwent significant renovations and there were many additions to the landscape, including (1) a pool and Jacuzzi, (2) a new entrance drive, (3) a greenhouse, (4) a boxwood garden, (5) a pond, (6) hay pastures, and (7) an orchard.

This time period was also the most influential for the future of the estate. Under Bayard Sharp’s ownership, a conservation agreement was established in 1994 with the Brandywine Conservancy. The site plan for the easement shows the 106-acre estate divided into two portions by Center Meeting Road, easement areas “A” and “B” (Figure 3.30). In 2002, the 71 acres defined as easement area “B” were sold to a private owner.

Main Residence

The one-room cottage was renovated to create additional living space for the family. The new plans for the home were designed from 1945 to 1946 by Homsey Architects of Wilmington, Delaware. A 1951 floor plan shows the results of the renovation that transformed the single-room, symmetrical cottage into an L-shaped dwelling (Figure 3.31). A one-story kitchen wing was added to the north end of the home, followed by a servants’ quarters and a larder for food storage to the
northernmost end. Projecting from the south end of the home and extending to the rear (east), a three-room wing was added to incorporate, from west to east: a guest wing, a lanai, and a master suite. The upper floor of the original cottage was finished for the Sharp’s daughter. Figure 3.32 shows the elevation of the front façade of the residence.

The renovation created two outdoor living spaces. A terrace was installed in the backyard that connects the two wings of the L-shaped home (Figure 3.33). It is located off of the east façade and is constructed of slate stone and red brick. Figure 3.34 shows the design for the terrace.

A brick patio was installed on the west façade of the home off of the front door entrance. A straight brick walkway provided a circulation path from the front door to the entrance drive that is parallel to the front façade of the home.

*Pool and Jacuzzi*

The pool was located adjacent to the southern façade of the main residence. A 1961 aerial photograph shows that it had an irregular, kidney-bean shape and was surrounded by a patio (Figure 3.29). It was also labeled on the site plan for the conservation easement (Figure 3.35). A comparison of aerial photography reveals that the pool remained on the property through its second period of ownership.

The Jacuzzi was located adjacent to the gable end of the east wing of the main residence. It was labeled on the site plan for the conservation easement (Figure 3.35).

*Main Entrance Driveway*

During this period of ownership, the driveway entrance from Center Meeting Road was relocated and the driveway was reconfigured. The drive was redesigned in
the shape of a gentle ‘S’ curve by landscape architect Elizabeth N. du Pont (B. Frederick, personal communication, May 23, 2012). A comparison of aerial photography shows that the reconstruction took place between 1968 and 1992. Figure 3.36 shows the original straight drive that intersected Center Meeting Road and connected the estate to easement area “B”. An aerial photograph from 1992 depicts the new entrance to the west of the former entrance (Figure 3.37).

**Greenhouse**

The greenhouse was designed by Pope, Kruse, and McCune Architects of Wilmington, Delaware, and was built by prominent greenhouse builder Lord and Burnham, Inc. (Figure 3.38). The plans for the greenhouse were dated February 1969 through March 1971 (Figures 3.39-3.40). A 1992 aerial photograph shows the greenhouse on site (Figure 3.37). It is located to the west of the main residence and is aligned between the guest residence and the barn.

The greenhouse has a Brandywine granite foundation and a curved, glass-framed roof. It is rectangular in shape and is approximately 73 feet long by 28 feet wide. The building has a central entryway through double doors that lead down several steps into an interior greenhouse space that was divided into three main areas. A fourth room connects the main spaces to a potting shed. Inside the potting shed are sinks, shelving, and gardening equipment.

**Hay Fields**

Hay pastures occupy the east and west areas of the property. One field is located on the west side of the estate and the other field is located on the northeast
corner of the property. A comparison of aerial photography from 1968 and 1992 shows that the fields were established sometime during that period (Figures 3.36 and 3.37). The fields remained on the property through this period of ownership.

Pond

The pond is located on the southwest portion of the estate. It extends northeastward from the property line and intersects the southern hay field (Figure 3.41). A comparison of aerial photographs from 1937 (Figure 3.27), 1954 (Figure 3.28), 1961 (Figure 3.29), 1968 (Figure 3.36), and 1992 (Figure 3.37), indicate that the pond was likely manmade. The first evidence of the pond is a 1992 aerial photograph (Figure 3.37). It is also documented in the conservation easement.

Orchard

An aerial photograph from 1961 shows that an orchard was planted in the area to the south of the main residence and adjacent to the garage (Figure 3.42). The orchard is labeled on the 1994 site plan for the conservation easement (Figure 3.43). A comparison of aerial photography depicts the orchard through 2002 (Figure 3.44).

Horse Track

The horse track remained on the property through 1954. A comparison of aerial photography from 1954 and 1961 reveals that the horse track was removed prior to 1961 (Figures 3.28 and 3.29).
Boxwood Garden

A 1961 aerial photograph depicts the oval-shaped garden located to the east side of the property (Figure 3.29). The center point of the garden is aligned to the main entrance of the barn. The location of the garden is noteworthy, as historic photographs reveal that it is the former location of the horse track. The shape of the garden is also synonymous with the shape of the former horse track.

Third Development Period: Eli Sharp, 2003-2013

Meown’s third development period began in 2003 when the estate was acquired by Eli Sharp, the great-great-grandson of Hugh Rodney and Isabella Sharp. Eli, his wife Molly, and their two children currently occupy the estate. Since 2003, the main residence has been renovated. With the exception of the main residence, the additional residences, outbuildings, and landscape features from former periods of development have remained intact.

Main Residence

In 2006, the main residence was renovated a second time, according to a design by John Milner Architects of Montchanin, Delaware. To the east end of the home, two new wings created additional bedrooms for the family. Figure 3.45 depicts the addition that was added to the north end of the home, adjacent to the old servants’ quarters. This wing created a secondary entry parlor with an ancillary front door entrance and a mud room (Figure 3.46).

The primary front door entrance was relocated from the center of the original cottage footprint and aligned with the hallway that extends through the southern wing
of the home. On the outside of the home, a landing was installed that connected the existing brick patio and walkway to the new front door (Figure 3.47).

The renovation created outdoor spaces, including a loggia, a patio, and a front entrance landing. A loggia was constructed on the southern side of the home off of the existing lanai (Figure 3.48). A patio constructed of slate and brick was installed off of the loggia (Figure 3.49).

**Current Site Data**

Figure 3.50 shows the area of the property that was considered in the case study design. This case study did not include the southernmost portion of property that contains the two original tenant residences (Figure 3.51). Per the Client’s preference, this area was not included in the scope of the conceptual design.

Researcher used field observations, site surveys, and site measurements to complete an inventory of Meown Farm. Findings and evaluations were used to create an existing site plan using AutoCAD 2013 (Figure 3.52) that was then rendered to better illustrate the site’s current conditions (Figure 3.53). The existing site plans served as a baseline drawings for a site inventory, shown in Figure 3.54. Site-specific conditions, such as worn areas of lawn, wind patterns, and diseased trees, were documented.

**Current Client Data: Design Program**

Table 1 shows the design program for Meown Farm. A design program is “a written list or outline of all the elements, spaces, and requirements that should be incorporated into the design solution” (Booth & Hiss, 2005, p. 179). The design
program for Meown Farm outlines the Client’s needs and desires for their landscape. It was created based on written notes from the Client interviews. The design program was reviewed with the Client prior to the conceptual design phase.

| Back of main residence | • Maintain view from solarium to the back yards  
|                        | • Maintain look of the hay fields |
| East side of property  | • Maintain open views from the east side of house from living room/kitchen to back yards  
|                        | • Screen view from those driving westbound on Center Meeting Rd. with a mix of evergreen and deciduous plantings  
|                        | • Maintain the large holly trees adjacent to Pyle’s Ford Rd.  
|                        | • Maintain and renovate the boxwood garden |
| North side of property | • Evaluate large trees adjacent to Center Meeting Road (near old driveway location) to determine which are healthy  
|                        | • Maintain/renovate existing abelia hedge along Center Meeting Road; fill in gaps in the hedge |
| West side of main residence | • Screen the view to neighbor’s estate |
| South side of property  | • Evaluate existing perennial beds to determine what to keep/take out, relocate/adjust  
|                        | • Create a stronger connection between master bedroom patio/pergola nook with the surrounding garden space/patio  
|                        | • Maintain and enhance view to orchard |
| Pond                   | • Enhance the view  
|                        | • consider more vegetation around it |
| Front of main residence | • Emphasize location of front door (vs. mud room door)  
|                        | • Create more structured parking  
|                        | • Remove diseased hemlock trees and overgrown boxwoods |
**Table 1 (continued)**

| Caretaker’s residence | • Document and demolish  
|                       | • Maintain the stone foundation and incorporate the ruin into the design  
|                       |   • pros: open westward vista  
|                       |   • cons: expose driveway entrance  
| Greenhouse            | • Take down in order to construct the pool  
| Pool                  | • Design a pool and patio area  
|                       | • Reflecting pool style – long, narrow  
|                       | • Shallow space with steps to deeper area, incorporate umbrella hole  
|                       | • Convert potting shed into pool house  
|                       | • Long & deep enough to swim laps  
|                       | • Incorporate greenhouse “ghost structure” (stone foundation) into the design  

*Analysis*

According to Booth and Hiss, the objective of the analysis phase is to evaluate data collected during the inventory in order to propose a design solution that is tailored to the site (1994). Data collected in the inventory, including (1) the history of Meown Farm, (2) current site data, and (3) current Client data was analyzed and interpreted in order to (1) identify and assess character-defining features, (2) determine how the function of the landscape could be improved to meet the needs of the Client and (3) evaluate the landscape’s problems and potentials based on present-day site conditions. The results of this phase included an analysis of character-defining features and a graphic site analysis.
Identification of Character-defining Features

In order to determine how the function of the landscape could be improved without sacrificing its historic character and integrity, background information and the history of Meown Farm provided the basis for an identification and analysis of the estate’s character-defining features. According to the National Park Service, a character-defining feature is “a prominent or distinctive aspect, quality, or characteristic of a cultural landscape that contributes significantly to its physical character” (1994, para. 1). Features from Meown’s first, second, and third periods of development were identified as character-defining features based on specific criteria. Recommendations for their future were made based on their historic value, current condition, or Client’s preference.

1. **Main Residence, Guest House, Tenant Residences, Caretaker’s Residence, Barn, Garage and Stables, Dovecote, & Water Tower:** These buildings and structures were determined to be character-defining features of Meown Farm based on the following criteria:
   - Their association to Hugh Rodney and Isabella Sharp
   - They were designed in a uniform, Medieval style by Albert Ely Ives, a notable architect who designed for Gibraltar, Winterthur, and many other du Pont family estates
   - They are the estate’s original construction from its first period of development and their presence collectively forms the essence of Meown Farm
• They were built using high-quality materials and exhibit a high level of craftsmanship

2. **Entrance driveway from Center Meeting Road:** The entrance driveway was determined to be a character-defining feature of Meown Farm based on the following criteria:
   • It was redesigned some time between 1968 and 1992 by Elizabeth N. du Pont, who was a relative of the Sharp family and a landscape architect
   • The curvature of the driveway is aesthetically pleasing and mimics the landscape’s topography (Figure 3.55)

3. **Greenhouse:** The greenhouse was determined to be a character-defining feature of Meown Farm based on the following criteria:
   • It was built by Lord & Burnham, a prominent greenhouse design and construction company
   • Its presence on the property is indicative of the Sharp family’s interest in horticulture which, (1) defines Meown as a country house according to the characteristics stated by Marshall (2002) and (2) alludes to the longtime tradition of horticulture amongst the du Pont family
   • It was built with materials consistent with the original construction and exhibits a high level of craftsmanship
   • It was designed in an architectural style that is similar to the existing architecture, and therefore provides visual continuity among the original residences and outbuildings
   • It is centrally located on the property and provides visual appeal (Figure 3.56)
• Its presence provides a connection to the estate’s original use as a farmstead

4. **Orchards:** The orchards were determined to be a character-defining feature of Meown Farm based on the following criteria:
   • Similar to the greenhouse, they are indicative of the family’s interest in horticulture
   • They help define Meown as a country house, according to the criteria previously outlined by Marshall (2002)
   • They provide a connection to the estate’s original use as a farmstead

5. **Hay Fields:** The hay fields were determined to be a character-defining feature of Meown Farm based on the following criteria:
   • Their natural aesthetic contributes to the rustic character of Meown and the surrounding Brandywine Valley region
   • The practice of mowing and baling the hay is one that provides a connection to the historic intent of the estate as a farmstead
   • They provide a transition between the mown turf and woodland edges of the property and a visual backdrop to the woodland edges (Figure 3.57)

6. **Pond:** The pond was determined to be a character-defining feature of Meown Farm based on the following criteria:
   • It provides a connection to the Brandywine Creek watershed
• It has been identified by the Brandywine Conservancy as an important ecological component of the estate and is protected under the conservation easement

7. **Boxwood Garden:** The boxwood garden was determined to be a character-defining feature of Meown Farm based on the following criteria:
   • It is the only formal garden that has been recorded on the property
   • Its style provides a connection to the formal gardens at Gibraltar and landscape architect Marian Coffin
   • The center of the garden is aligned with the main entrance to the barn, thus it visually connects and adds prominence to the barn
   • It is situated in the former location of the horse track, which provides a connection to the estate’s history

8. **Topography:** The topography was determined to be a character-defining feature of Meown Farm based on the following criteria:
   • It has never been significantly altered, and therefore has maintained its integrity since the 1930s
   • It is inherently unique to the property
   • Its steep slopes and valleys contribute to the rustic nature of the estate and is characteristic of the surrounding Brandywine Valley
   • It provides visual and aesthetic appeal (Figure 3.58)
• It gives emphasis to the buildings that are located on the estate’s higher elevations

9. **Woodland edges**: The woodland edges were determined to be a character-defining feature of Meown Farm based on the following criteria:

• They provide a visual backdrop to the landscape
• They have been an integral part of the landscape since its original period of ownership
• They contribute to the rustic and natural character of Meown Farm and the surrounding Brandywine Valley region
• They have been identified by the Brandywine Conservancy as an important ecological component of the estate and are protected under the conservation easement
• They provide a sense of privacy from the traffic on Center Meeting and Pyles Ford Roads (Figure 3.59)

**Analysis of Character-defining Features**

The objective of the analysis phase is to evaluate and interpret the information gathered in the inventory (Booth & Hiss, 2005). An interpretation of the history of Meown Farm, the Client data, and current site data led to an analysis of Meown Farm’s character-defining features. Based on data collected in the inventory and their identification, recommendations to (1) maintain, (2) modify, or (3) remove character-
defining features were made based on data collected in the inventory. Table 2 shows the analysis of Meown Farm’s character-defining features.

Table 2 Analysis of Meown Farm’s character-defining features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character-defining Feature</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Residence, Guest House, Tenant Residences, Caretaker’s Residence, Barn, Garage, Stables, Dovecote, &amp; Water Tower</td>
<td>Researcher recommends that these residences and outbuildings be maintained.</td>
<td>It was established in the Client interview that the removal of the main caretaker’s residence would improve the function of the landscape based on maintenance costs. Researcher did not recommend the removal of the residence given its status as a character-defining feature of Meown Farm. Prior to demolition, researcher recommended that it be professionally documented. Since the residence is included in the conservation easement, its removal is dependent upon future approval from the Brandywine Conservancy and the New Castle County Historic Review Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance driveway from Center Meeting Road</td>
<td>Researcher recommends that the entrance driveway be maintained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2  (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character-defining Feature</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greenhouse</strong></td>
<td>Researcher recommends that the greenhouse be <strong>modified</strong> to install the new pool.</td>
<td>It was established in the Client interview that the function of the landscape could be improved by the installation of an in-ground pool. While many locations for the pool were considered, Client preferred that the pool be installed in place of the greenhouse, directly across from the main residence. Although the greenhouse is a character-defining feature of Meown Farm, Client’s desire to remove the structure was based on practical reasons, including functionality and maintenance. Based on Client preference, it was decided that the stone foundation and front stone façade of the greenhouse would remain intact and be incorporated into the new pool design. Since the greenhouse is included in the conservation easement, its removal is dependent upon future approval from the Brandywine Conservancy and the New Castle County Historic Review Board.</td>
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Table 2  (continued)

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<tr>
<th>Character-defining Feature</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orchard</strong></td>
<td>Researcher recommends that the orchard be <strong>modified</strong>.</td>
<td>The orchard located on the lawn to the south side of the main residence was assessed and determined to be in decline. Only a small number of crabapple (<em>Malus sp.</em>) trees remain from the original planting circa 1960 and many are infected with powdery mildew. In order to improve the function of the orchard, it was recommended that the existing crabapple trees be removed and the orchard be replanted with new disease-resistant fruit tree varieties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hay fields</strong></td>
<td>Researcher recommends that hay fields be <strong>maintained</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pond</strong></td>
<td>Researcher recommends that the pond be <strong>modified</strong>.</td>
<td>Figure 3.60 shows the current view from the greenhouse to the pond. The edge is currently overgrown with cattails (<em>Typha latifolia</em>), an invasive aquatic plant species (“USDA Plant Database”). It was recommended that the pond be controlled for cattails and other invasive plant species. Based on the data collected in the client interview, the conceptual design will enhance the westward view to the pond.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table 2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character-defining Feature</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boxwood Garden</strong></td>
<td>Researcher recommends that the boxwood garden be <strong>modified</strong>.</td>
<td>Figure 3.61 shows the current condition of the boxwoods. Many of the shrubs are weather-damaged and overgrown. In order to improve the function of the garden, it was recommended that the current boxwoods be removed and the garden be replanted with a new species of <em>Buxus</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topography</strong></td>
<td>Researcher recommends that topography be <strong>maintained</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Woodland edges</strong></td>
<td>Researcher recommends that the woodland edges be <strong>modified</strong>.</td>
<td>It was recommended that the woodland edges be controlled for invasive plant species and that their overall presence be enhanced in the conceptual design. In order to improve the function of the woodland edge, plantings will be added to the edge that the area that borders the west side of the property to screen undesirable views.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis phase concluded with a graphic site analysis of the landscape.

Figure 3.62 shows the graphic site analysis for Meown Farm. It is an illustrative
interpretation of all data collected in the inventory, including: (1) the existing site conditions, (2) the Client’s needs and desires for the landscape, and (3) the recommendations for character-defining features.
Figure 3.1  Aerial photograph showing location of Meown Farm (Source: The Delaware DataMIL)
Figure 3.2  *The Valley of the Brandywine*, a painting by landscape artist William T. Richards (Source: C. Quillman. (2010). *100 artists of the Brandywine valley*, Atglen: Schiffer Publishing)
Figure 3.3  *Christina’s World*, a painting by landscape artist Andrew Wyeth  
Figure 3.4  Map of du Pont family estates developed between 1900 and 1950  
Figure 3.5  Site plan of conservation easement area “A” (Source: The Brandywine Conservancy)
Figure 3.6  Site plan of conservation easement area “B” (Source: The Brandywine Conservancy)
Figure 3.7  Map showing distance between Meown Farm and Gibraltar (Source: Google Earth)
Figure 3.8 The Gibraltar estate’s bald cypress allée leading to the tea house
(Source: Karen Stevenson)
Figure 3.9 1932 aerial photograph of Meown Farm. (Source: The Sharp family)
Figure 3.10  Meown Farm’s original cottage designed by Albert Ely Ives and built by A. L. Lauretsen. (Source: The Sharp family)
Figure 3.11 The Gibraltar mansion from Greenhill Avenue in Wilmington (Source: John Milner Architects)
Figure 3.12  Front entrance to the caretaker’s residence (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.13  Barn with asphalt ramp flanked by granite masonry (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.14  Wooden doors to the main entrance to barn (Source: Maggie Lidz)
Figure 3.15  Loggia that is attached to the southern end of the barn (Source: Maggie Lidz)
Figure 3.16    Front façade of garage (Source: Maggie Lidz)
Figure 3.17  Dovecote with attached masonry walls (Source: Maggie Lidz)
Figure 3.18  Isabella Sharp on cottage porch with pigeons (Source: The Sharp family)
Figure 3.19  Aerial image of asphalt courtyard space formed by barn, dovecote, garage, and loggia connected by a masonry wall with three gated points of access (Source: Google Earth)
Figure 3.20  Gated access to paved courtyard between the dovecote and the barn
(Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.21  Gated access to paved courtyard between the garage and the loggia. The drive connects to Pyles Ford Road. (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.22  Gated access to paved courtyard across from barn entrance (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.23 North façade of the guest residence with screened in porch (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.24  Large trees and plantings surrounding the guest residence (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.25  Aerial photograph of Meown Farm circa 1931 prior to water tower construction (Source: The Sharp Family)

Figure 3.26  Aerial photograph of Meown Farm in 1932 showing water tower (Source: Hagley Museum and Library Archives)
Figure 3.27  1937 aerial photograph of Meown Farm (Source: The Delaware DataMIL)
Figure 3.28  1954 aerial photograph of Meown Farm (Source: The Delaware DataMIL)
Figure 3.29  1961 aerial photograph of Meown Farm (Source: The Delaware DataMIL)
Figure 3.30  Site plan showing conservation easement areas (Source: The Brandywine Conservancy)
The plan of the house

The upper floor of the original house was finished off for the Sharps' two young children. The stairs over the fireplace were a problem. Solution: The chimney flues were parted and stairs tunneled between them.

The house ells around a flagstone terrace facing out to a view of the pastures where Mr. and Mrs. Sharp's race horses graze. Heavy lines indicate the original house.

Figure 3.31  1951 floor plan showing the results of the home renovation by Homsey Architects (Source: The Sharp family)
Figure 3.32 Entrance elevation drawing by Homsey Architects (Source: Hagley Museum and Library Archives)
Figure 3.33 Plan by Homsey Architects for the terrace connecting the lanai to the living and dining room areas (Source: Hagley Museum and Library Archives)
Figure 3.34  Design for the slate and brick terrace (Source: Hagley Museum and Library Archives)
Figure 3.35 Detailed view of easement plan showing locations of the pool and Jacuzzi (Source: The Brandywine Conservancy)
Figure 3.36 1968 aerial photograph showing straight entrance driveway from Center Meeting Road (Source: The Delaware DataMIL)
Figure 3.37  1992 aerial photograph showing redesigned entrance driveway from Center Meeting Road (Source: The Delaware DataMIL)
Figure 3.38  Front façade of greenhouse with attached potting shed (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.39  Greenhouse construction plan showing front and back elevations
(Source: Archives of The New York Botanical Garden)
Figure 3.40  Plan of greenhouse showing space layout with potting benches (Source: Archives of The New York Botanical Garden)
Figure 3.41  View of pond from west border of property (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.42  1961 aerial photograph showing orchard on the south side of main residence (Source: The Delaware DataMIL)
Figure 3.43  Detailed view of easement site plan showing orchard location (Source: The Brandywine Conservancy)
Figure 3.44  Detailed view of 2002 aerial photograph showing orchard (Source: The Delaware DataMIL)
Figure 3.45 West elevation drawing showing mud room addition (left) (Source: The Sharp family)

Figure 3.46 Photograph showing mud room addition with landing and walkway (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.47  Front door entrance to main residence with curved walkway (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.48  Photograph of loggia off south side of residence (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.49  Design for slate and brick patio off loggia (Source: The Sharp family)
Figure 3.50 Plan showing area that was included in the case study design (Source: The Brandywine Conservancy)
Figure 3.51  Plan showing area that was included in the case study design (Source: The Brandywine Conservancy)
Figure 3.52: Existing site plan with contour lines drafted using AutoCAD 2013 (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.53  Rendered site plan showing existing conditions (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.54  Graphic site inventory (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.55 View from west property line showing curvature of entrance driveway from Center Meeting Road (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.56  View from front door of main residence to greenhouse (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.57  View from entrance driveway to hay field on the west side of property
(Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.58 View from entrance driveway towards Center Meeting Road showing landscape’s topography (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.59  Photograph of woodland edge on east property line bordering Pyles Ford Road (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.60  Photograph of pond with vegetation along water edge (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.61  Boxwood (*Buxus sp.*) shrubs in boxwood garden (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 3.62
Graphic site analysis (Source: Sarah Minniech)
Chapter 4

RESULTS

According to Booth and Hiss, the conceptual design phase can be subdivided into three phases: (1) functional diagrams, (2) preliminary design, and (3) conceptual design (2005). Functional diagrams are graphic representations of “freehand” symbols and shapes that are connected and arranged on the site plan. The goal of functional diagrams is to illustrate the relationships between different spaces and the way in which they are organized on the site. The preliminary design is a refinement of the functional diagram and illustrates distinct spaces that have form and character (Booth & Hiss, 2005). Finally, the conceptual design includes all aspects of client feedback and approved preliminary design ideas. In this case study, Client feedback from the preliminary design was incorporated into the conceptual design.

Based on the site inventory and analysis, researcher created functional diagrams, a preliminary design, and a conceptual design for Meown Farm. Figures 4.1-4.6 show a series of process drawings that led to the development of the conceptual design.

Design Inspiration

The Client’s vision for the design of the Meown Farm was for it to embrace the estate’s rustic and natural character. In keeping with the regional context, the character of the Brandywine Valley served as an inspiration for the conceptual design. Figure
4.7 depicts a pictorial collage that was created as a source of inspiration during the design process. Images included landscape paintings of the Brandywine Valley, site photographs of Meown Farm, and maps of the Brandywine Creek. The creek and the concept of moving water became a metaphor for the conceptual design.

In contrast to the natural aesthetic of the overall design, Client preferred a more formal treatment for the gardens surrounding the main residence. The design style of landscape architect Marian Coffin served as inspiration for this aspect of the design. Figure 4.8 depicts a pictorial collage that was created as a source of inspiration. Images included landscape plans designed by Coffin, photographs of Gibraltar’s gardens, and photographs of formal garden rooms.

**Three-dimensional modeling**

During Client review of the preliminary design, it was decided that a three-dimensional model of the front façade and front yard area of the main residence would be created to aid in the visualization of the design concepts. The model was created using Google SketchUp 8.0. Figures 4.9-4.10 show perspective views of the model.

**Conceptual Design: Meown Farm**

Figure 4.11 shows the final conceptual design for the landscape at Meown Farm. Figure 4.12 shows a detailed plan for the gardens surrounding the main residence. The design is a response to (1) the history of Meown Farm, (2) the regional character of the Brandywine Valley, (3) the needs and desires of the Client, (4) the guidelines of the conservation easement, and (5) an evaluation of the site’s current conditions. It is a graphic representation of the conclusion to the research.
Figure 4.1
Process drawing for conceptual design (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 4.2-4.3 Process drawings for conceptual design (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 4.5
Process drawing for conceptual design (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 4.7  Pictorial collage showing inspirational images of the Brandywine Valley (Source: Sarah Minnich)

Figure 4.8  Pictorial collage showing inspirational images of formal garden rooms and elements (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figures 4.9  Three-dimensional model perspectives of front garden concepts  
(Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figures 4.10  Three-dimensional model perspectives of front garden concepts
(Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 4.11  Final conceptual design for Meown Farm (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Figure 4.12  Final conceptual design for gardens surrounding main residence (Source: Sarah Minnich)
Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis sought to answer the research question: How can a historically significant landscape be modified to meet the needs of a modern family without sacrificing its character and integrity? To answer this question, a historic estate called Meown Farm was studied and analyzed. The goal of the research was to propose a conceptual design for Meown Farm that incorporated changes to the landscape and maintained the site’s historic authenticity.

By following the design process outlined by Booth and Hiss (2005), which included an inventory, analysis, and a conceptual design phase, the proposed plan for Meown Farm was developed. During the design process, it was determined that a combination of preservation and contemporary design was necessary to meet the goals of the conceptual design. In the proposed plan, integral components of the landscape were preserved, while contemporary design was incorporated based upon the site’s historic context. The conceptual plan for Meown Farm is functional for the Client, aesthetically pleasing, and historically authentic.

What have we learned from studying this historic landscape? The evolution of its landscape and architecture over the course of three distinct periods of development embodies Marshall’s (2002) concept of “personal interpretation.” Its architectural features are supported by a picturesque landscape characterized by open views, expansive lawns, and large trees. The land exists in a high ratio to the built environment and has functioned as a setting for equestrian sports, agriculture, and
animal husbandry. We can conclude that Meown Farm is, by Marshall’s (2002) criteria, a prime example of a Brandywine country house.

On a residential scale, we learned that Meown represents a family legacy that has extended over eighty years and across three generations. In comparison to the many du Pont estates studied by Lidz (2009), Meown is significant in the sense that it has remained privately owned and occupied by the Sharp family since the time it was constructed. Its connection to the Sharp’s original home, Gibraltar, an estate that is listed on the National Register for Historic Places and has received preservation treatments, enriches Meown’s value as a historic landscape.

In the context of the regional landscape, Meown plays a significant role as one of the Brandywine Valley’s many country houses. While the estate is just a 30-acre portion of the vast Brandywine Valley, according to Marshall (2002), the “Brandywine country house is largely responsible for the modern landscape and beauty of the Brandywine Valley” (p. 187). Collectively, these estates contribute to the region in a way that may be best described by the words of Greek philosopher Aristotle: “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

We also understand the complexity and value of historic landscapes. Analyzing these sites through the lens of time allows their stories to shine through. Historic landscapes are valuable cultural artifacts that merit a thorough understanding of their history in order for us to design meaningful plans for the future. Designers should approach such projects with sensitivity and awareness.

The methodology for this case study emphasized the application of a formalized design process. Evaluating the application of the design process yields the
following conclusions:

• **Design is a process that can lead to a logical, appropriate solution for a site.**
  This research demonstrated that critical phases – including an inventory, analysis, and conceptual design – are necessary to propose a successful design solution. Each individual phase of the process was essential in order to meet the objective of the research. Viewing the design process as a necessary tool for design work cannot be overemphasized.

• **Additional measures can be incorporated into the conceptual design phase that may help guide the design to completion.** In addition to the inventory, analysis, and conceptual design phases, the design process for Meown Farm incorporated two supplementary tools: (1) pictorial inspiration boards and (2) three-dimensional modeling.
  - Drawing inspiration from Meown Farm’s site history and context was one method that guided the conceptual design towards a solution that was historically authentic. The pictorial inspiration boards functioned as a visual tool to facilitate this process.
  - Three-dimensional modeling was used as a tool to aid in the visualization of the ideas presented in the two-dimensional concept plans. Effective communication of design ideas was necessary in order for the Client to determine whether the proposed plan was a functional solution for the site. The use of this method was instrumental to the Client’s understanding of the
Evaluating design process in the context of historic landscapes yields the following conclusions:

- **Designing for occupied historic residential landscapes requires an intensive and thorough design process.** In the case of this research, the inventory phase for Meown Farm occurred over a period of eighteen months. Given the complexity of historic landscapes, an in-depth inventory phase is necessary in order for the designer to gain a holistic understanding of the site.

- **Drawing upon a site’s history to inform contemporary design concepts can strengthen its historic character and integrity.** When they are meaningfully incorporated, contemporary design elements add a new layer of depth to a site and further enrich its historic value. The conceptual design for the gardens surrounding the main residence is a case in point. Based on Meown’s connection to the Gibraltar estate and Marian Coffin, the design for these areas was inspired by Coffin’s concept of formal garden rooms. The incorporation of Coffin’s design style for the gardens at Meown formed a connection to Gibraltar that was not currently present in the landscape.

- **Contemporary designs for historic sites must strike a balance between change and continuity in the landscape.** Given the level of modification necessary to make the landscape functional for the Client, it was determined that the proposed
plan for Meown Farm would not meet the preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, or restoration Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (1996). Although the caretaker’s residence and the greenhouse may potentially be lost in the future, the majority of the estate’s architectural and landscape features will be maintained. To reiterate the findings of Sisson’s case study, a broad conclusion from this research is that meaningfully embracing and incorporating change while paying tribute to the past is a challenging aspect of designing for occupied historic residential sites. When they are meaningfully incorporated, contemporary design elements can add a new layer of depth to a site and further enrich its historic value.

It is clear that the identification and maintenance of character-defining features is critical to retaining a landscape’s historic character and integrity. While some of Meown Farm’s character-defining features were not preserved in the conceptual design, the plan maintained the majority of the site’s critical architectural and landscape features. The overarching goal in the design of historic sites should be to maintain as many character-defining features as possible.

On the other hand, it would be short-cited to neglect the potential need for alteration or removal of character-defining features from a site. In these cases, the question to consider is a simple one: How much is too much? In other words, how much or how many of a site’s character-defining features may be altered or removed before historic character and integrity are lost? As designers, we have a responsibility to consider this issue thoroughly when designing for historically significant landscapes.
• **Conservation easements provide necessary constraints in the design of historic sites.** Throughout the design process, the conservation easement was a guiding aspect of the project. The establishment of the easement itself underscored the importance of Meown Farm. It provided constraints to the design that allowed the proposed plan to remain sensitive to the legal guidelines of the document.

• **Historic landscapes are valuable cultural artifacts that merit protection, advocacy, and documentation.** Homeowners of historic sites should consider measures that will protect and prolong historic sites. In addition to establishing conservation easements to protect against property development and degradation, homeowners should consult professionals who specialize in historic properties when considering architectural or landscape changes to the property. The use of professionals who specialize in these areas may help ensure the continuity of the landscape’s historic character and integrity throughout the design and implementation of contemporary plans.

In conclusion, we can use this case study to build on the process formulated by Wood (2007) in her proposal of the Central Campus at Iowa State University. The following is a procedure that could be employed in future designs for historic sites:

1. Prepare a developmental history of the site.
2. Document and observe its current conditions.
3. Identify the contemporary and future needs of the Clients.
4. Identify and qualify the landscape’s character-defining features.
5. Design a plan that meets the following objectives:
   - Reconciles the contemporary and future needs of the Clients
   - Maintains the site’s character-defining features as much as possible
   - Incorporates contemporary design inspired by the site’s history
REFERENCES


National Register of Historic Places, Centreville Historic District, New Castle County, Delaware, National Register #83001338.


Appendix A

CLIENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How would you describe the current character — the “personality” — of your landscape? (i.e. picturesque, romantic, etc.)

   I find our current character to be a bit of a hodgepodge. I seem to know what I like, but I am not so good at the design side. I would like for it to be charming.

2. What facets of the character do you like and what would you change?

   I like our hardscape layout in the back and on the side, but I think it all feels too exposed. The back and side of the house I would like to feel a little more intimate with bits of surprise here and there. The front, I would like more exposure to the front (stone part) and less exposure to the mud room door area of the house.

3. What specific characteristics of the site cause the landscape to function well? Poorly?

   The back patio and side patio flow very well for entertaining because they both butt up to the house. I find them both very functional. I love the view of the orchard and barn on the one side as well and the view of the rolling hill on the other.

4. What specific site elements are critical to its overall character?

   I think the revamp of the driveway and front landscape of the house and flow to the pool (greenhouse) is the most critical.

5. Do you consider your property historic and if so, how do you view the historical aspect of the property?

   Very important to honor the historical aspect of this landscape in the future, but I think you will be creating it properly!
Appendix B

PERMISSION LETTERS

From: Kristen Frentzel <kfrentzel@brandywine.org>
Subject: RE: site plan permission
Date: July 12, 2013 3:52:21 PM EDT
To: Sarah Minnich <sarah1minnich@gmail.com>

Hi Sarah,

The map you are referring to was recorded with the conservation easement and is therefore in the public record. You are welcome to use it in your thesis. Congratulations on finishing and good luck!

Best regards,
Kristen

Kristen Frentzel
Associate Easement Manager
Brandywine Conservancy
Environmental Management Center
PO Box 141
Chadds Ford, PA 19317
Ph: 610-388-6391
Fax: 610-388-1575
www.brandywineconservancy.org

Follow our new blog at: http://stewardshipchronicles.blogspot.com/

-----Original Message-----
From: Sarah Minnich [mailto:sarah1minnich@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2013 12:06 PM
To: Kristen Frentzel
Subject: site plan permission

Hi Kristen!

My name is Sarah Minnich and I'm a graduate student at the University of Delware.

I have written a thesis on a historic property that has an easement with the Conservancy (it is owned by the Sharp family and located at 100 Center Meeting Road, Wilmington, DE). I just finished and defended my thesis and am in the process of submitting it to the grad office. I included a PDF of the conservation easement site plan in the thesis (and have credited the Brandywine Conservancy as the source). As a formality, I need to ask for the Conservancy's permission to use the image and provide the grad office with proof of permission. Can you grant me permission to use this material in my thesis?

If so, I will provide the grad office with a copy of this email. I contacted Edie but I see that she's currently out of the office, so I thought I would contact you as well.

Thank you!

Sarah Minnich

-----
No virus found in this message.
Checked by AVG - www.avg.com
Version: 2013.0.2904 / Virus Database: 3204/6482 - Release Date: 07/11/13
Hello! Sorry for the delay, I have been busy and hadn't checked my email in forever. I would be honored if you used my picture. Thanks for writing me. :-)

Sincerely,
Karen Stevenson
Sent from Yahoo! Mail on Android

Hi Karen!

My name is Sarah Minnich and I'm a graduate student at the University of Delaware.

I have written a thesis on the Gibraltar estate in Wilmington, Delaware. I just finished and defended my thesis and am in the process of submitting it to the grad office for final approval. In the paper, included your photograph of the garden (image is attached - I cropped it in the paper to remove the watermark) and have credited you as the source. As a formality, I need to ask for your permission to use the image and provide the grad office with proof of permission. Can you grant me permission to use your photograph in my thesis?

If so, I will provide the grad office with a copy of this email.

Thank you so much!

Sarah Minnich
You have my permission, thanks!

---Original Message----
From: Sarah Minnich [mailto:sarah1minnich@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2013 11:53 AM
To: Maggie Litz
Subject: photo permission

Hi Maggie! I hope this email finds you well. I have finished and defended my thesis on Meown Farm (exciting!) and am in the process of submitting it all to the grad office. I used some of the photographs you gave me last November in the thesis (and have credited you as the source). As a formality, I need to ask your permission to use the photographs and provide the grad office with proof of permission. Can you grant me permission to use your photographs in my thesis?

If so, I will provide the grad office with a copy of this email.

Thank you for all of your help in my research! It was much appreciated!

Sarah Minnich
Ms. Minich:
Please feel free to use the photo. If you need "official" approval, please send me a release form.
John Milner
We will allow you to include the photographs in your thesis free of charge. You should use the credit line: Lord and Burnham Collection, Archives of The New York Botanical Garden.

Hi Stephen! I hope this email finds you well. I am in the process of submitting my thesis to the graduate office. In the paper, I used some of the photographs you sent me of the greenhouse plans for Bayard Sharp (and have credited the Mertz Library as the source). As a formality, I need to ask your permission to use the photographs and provide the grad office with proof of permission. Can you grant me permission to use the photographs in my thesis?

If so, I will provide the grad office with a copy of this email.

Thank you for all of your help in my research! It was much appreciated!

Sarah Minnich
Sarah,
You have our permission to use material provided by us in your thesis. Best of luck and I look forward to seeing it.

Thanks,
Eli

-----Original Message-----
From: Sarah Minnich [mailto:sarah1minnich@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2013 12:16 PM
To: Eli Sharp; Molly Sharp
Subject: Image permission

Hi Eli and Molly! I hope this email finds you well. I’m preparing to submit my thesis to the grad office - exciting!! As you know, I used some of the material you lent me in the thesis (and have credited you as the source). As a formality, I need to ask your permission to use the images and provide the grad office with proof of permission. Can you grant me permission to use this material in my thesis?

If so, I will provide the grad office with a copy of this email.

Sarah
Dear Ms. Minnich,

By means of this email reply I give you my permission to use the referred images in your thesis. Sincerely, Eldon Homsey, AIA

----- Original Message

From: Sarah Minnich
To: Eldon Homsey
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2013 5:06 PM
Subject: Fwd: Sharp Property on Center Meeting Rd.

Hi Mr. Homsey! I hope this email finds you well.

I have finished and defended my thesis on the Sharp property and am in the process of submitting it to the university grad office. In the thesis, I used the scanned images of the renovation plans that I borrowed from Hagley last summer with your permission. As a formality, I need to ask your permission to use the material and provide the grad office with proof of permission. Can you grant me permission to use these images in my thesis?

If so, I will provide the grad office with a copy of this email.

Thank you for all of your help in my research! It was much appreciated!

Sarah Minnich