

ATTACHMENT C

ARLINGTON COUNTY REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION FORM

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: **Reevesland**
Other names: **Torreyson Farm**

2. LOCATION OF PROPERTY

Street and Number: **400 N. Manchester Street**
County: **Arlington County**
State, zip code: **Virginia, 22203**

3. TYPE OF PROPERTY

A. Ownership of Property

Private
 Public
 Local
 State
 Federal

B. Category of Property

building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

C. Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
___	___	sites
___	___	structures
___	___	objects
___	___	Total

D. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places

Yes No In process

4. FUNCTION OR USE

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Historic Functions: Private Resident
Current Functions: Vacant

5. DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Architectural Classification: **Two-story, frame farmhouse on stone foundation, built in at least two stages and having a modified T-plan. The earliest portion is the two-story gabled-roofed unit positioned on an east-west axis. The 1900 modifications added cross gables.**

Materials: Foundation: **Stone**
Walls: **Frame**
Roof: **Asphalt Shingles**
Other: **Combination of wood and aluminum siding**

6. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A. Applicable Designation Criteria as described in Section 31A of the Arlington County Zoning Code and adopted Bylaws of the HALRB:

31A Reevesland meets all three of the designation criteria as listed in Section of the Arlington County Zoning Code.

B. Areas of Significance:

This house was originally a tenant house on the William H. Torreyson Farm, later known as Reevesland, the last operating dairy farm in Arlington County. The dairy continued in operation until 1955. The areas of significance include architecture, late 19th-century and early 20th-century Arlington, and social/community/land development in Arlington County.

C. Period of Significance

Late 19th and early 20th century

D. Significant Dates

1865, 1900, 1955

E. Significant Person

William H. Torreyson, George Richard Reeves, Nelson Reeves

F. Cultural/Social Affiliation

G. Architect/Builder

William H. Torreyson

H. Narrative Statement of Significance

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Reevesland, originally the Torreyson farm, had the distinction of being the last operating dairy farm in Arlington County. The estate, location at 400 N. Manchester Street in the western part of the county in what is now the Boulevard Manor neighborhood, consists of two acres of land with a house and outbuildings which were originally part of a 160-acre dairy farm.

Three generations of the same family have owned and operated the farm, which originally extended from Wilson Boulevard on the north to beyond Arlington Boulevard to the south, and west to Seven Corners. The land was purchased in 1863 by William H. Torreyson of Unison, Virginia. Torreyson built the house in 1865 and used it as a tenant house. Around 1900, the house was enlarged to its current size. The last owner, Nelson Reeves, son of George Richard Reeves, Torreyson's son-in-law, was born in this house in 1900. In 1910, the property passed to George Reeves. In 1924, father and son formed a partnership which lasted until the elder Reeves' death in 1949. The property then passed on to Nelson and his wife, Louise, who continued to raise dairy cattle and crops until 1955. After the Reeves ceased farming, the land, except for the two acres on which the house stands, was sold off and subdivided. As for outbuildings, two remain on the property: the barn, which has been converted into a garage, and the milkhouse. Other buildings, along with the Torreyson house, Chestnut Grove, have been destroyed.

I. Significant Features

The significant features of the site include the frame house, one outbuilding, and its immediate surroundings. Priority for preservation will be maintaining the integrity and character of the house and its 1900 addition, as well as the outbuildings and the open character of the area around the original structures.

J. Areas exempt from Designation

The most significant area of the site is the main house and its immediate outbuildings. The rest of the site is significant because there are no buildings interrupting the viewshed of the main house.

Designation Criteria

Reevesland meets all three designation criteria as cited in Section 31A of the Arlington County Zoning Code, which are historical significance, suitability for preservation or restoration, and educational value. In addition, the nomination meets eleven of the twelve criteria as listed in the adopted Bylaws of the Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board.

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- One:** Its character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation;
- Two:** Its location as a site of significant local, state, or national event;
- Three:** Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the county, state or nation;
- Four:** Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, or method of construction.
- Six:** Its embodiment of elements of design, detailing, materials, or craftsmanship that render it structurally or architecturally significant;
- Seven:** Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature;
- Eight:** Its character as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure representing a period or style in the commercial, industrial, or agricultural development of the county, with a high level of historic integrity or architectural significance;
- Nine:** Its potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the county, state, or nation;
- Ten:** Its suitability for preservation or restoration;
- Eleven:** Its educational value; and/or
- Twelve:** Its historical significance.

Conclusion

Reevesland is a significant historic site in Arlington County. It is the last operating dairy farm in Arlington and reflects an important era in Arlington's history, as Arlington developed from a rural to a suburban/urban county. Its integrity and character are good and the structure meets most of the county's established criteria for local historic designation.

7. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

1. Reeves, Nelson. "Recollections of Arlington's Last Dairy Farmer," *Arlington Historical Magazine*, vol. 5, No. 3, October 1975, pp. 34-43.
2. Sweeney, Kathleen. "A Farmer Still At Home in Arlington," *Northern Virginian*, Summer 1989, pp. 26-9.
3. Eggert, Lynn. "County Farmer Likes Old and New," *Arlington News*, no date. (clipping in Glencarlyn Library)

8. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property 2 acres
RPC Number
Verbal Boundary Description

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Bluemont Park borders the property on the east. The other three sides of the property are bordered by townhouses and single-family residences. The property is at the end of Manchester Street, in the block between 4th Rd. N, 4th St. N, and Montague St.

Boundary Justification

The proposed boundary is the current area owned by the Arlington County Board and includes the entire 2 acres.

9. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/title	Beth Bolling, Chair HALRB Survey Committee and member of the Arlington County Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board
Organization	Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board, Arlington County
Date	March 2002
Address	2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 701, Arlington, VA 22201
Telephone	703-228-3830

10. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

See attached Preliminary Information Form and memo on Reevesland Farm for more information.

11. PROPERTY OWNER

Name	Arlington County Board, Department of Parks, Recreation and
Address	2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201

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REEVESLAND

In 1863, William H. Torreyson bought 160 acres of land in Arlington County, Virginia and established a dairy farm. The northern boundary of his land was present-day Wilson Blvd. Four Mile Run formed the eastern border (what is now Bluemont Park). To the west, the property extended in a sweeping curve past present-day Montague St. and south, across Rt. 50 to S. 2nd St and what is now Kenmore Junior High School. He also owned some additional acreage in Fairfax County. Initially, Torreyson built a log house, which is no longer extant, near the intersection of present-day S. 1st Street and Madison Street. Later, he moved into a large house at N. 1st Street and N. Manchester Street, called Chestnut Grove (which was torn down by the county in 1953 to make way for Arlington Blvd.). Around 1865, he also built a simple tenant farmhouse on his property, further north of Chestnut Grove, where N. 4th Road meets N. Manchester Street. This house became the home of his daughter, Lucy and her husband, George Reeves, in 1898. In 1900 their son Nelson was born in this farmhouse, where he would spend the rest of his life as a third-generation farmer, witnessing the growth of Arlington County from a sleepy, rural community to the thriving suburban/urban community it is today. Reevesland, the name given to the farm and dairy operation by George Reeves, is a direct and tangible link to Arlington's rich history over the past 140 years. The house and outbuildings on the remaining two acres and should be preserved and maintained so that current and future residents as well as visitors to Arlington County can experience the rural character of Arlington from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s.

Nelson Reeves' recollections, housed in the Virginia Room of Arlington's Central Library, provide a vivid picture of Arlington during this time. According to Nelson, when he was born, the house had just three rooms, a wood cookstove, oil lamps, and a bathroom "down the path." During his childhood, his family's horse and wagon often got stuck in the mud on Wilson Blvd., then just a dirt road. Nelson started school in the one-room schoolhouse in Glencarlyn (the east wing of the Ball-Sellers House) and later, took the electric streetcar to school in Georgetown. He also took the streetcar to Great Falls, then a popular amusement park and picnic area. Nelson witnessed the transformation of transportation in Arlington from horse-drawn wagons to trains to electric streetcars to automobiles to the Metro. He remembered when the Wright brothers brought their airplane into Ft. Myer for a test flight. During his teenage years, the area

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around the Pentagon and Crystal City was called Hell's Bottom. Reeves recalled "gambling dens, murder traps, robberies, and just about anything else" along Rt. 1. In the 1930s, sewer lines were laid in Arlington County, ushering in a building boom. Arlington was transformed from rural to residential over the next three decades. In 1932, Reevesland farms changed to milking machines—a sign of modernization. Nelson and his father George continued to operate the farm during the depression and World War II. In 1949, Nelson's father died. In 1955, about the time that tank trucks replaced milk cans, Nelson stopped the dairy farm operations. Reevesland was the last operating dairy farm in Arlington County.

Nelson Reeves' significance lies not only in his life as a farmer in Arlington, but also in his years of dedication to Arlington as a public servant. He worked for forty-six years with the Election Board, beginning as a clerk in the Glencarlyn Precinct in 1924 and continuing as a registrar, election judge, and commissioner at the courthouse. Nelson played a significant role in his community, and the greater Arlington community, throughout his life. He shared his knowledge and anecdotes of Arlington during the early-to-mid twentieth century with school children and adults alike, helping to connect residents to Arlington's rural past. He died in June 2000 at the age of 99.

In 1952, Courembis Construction Company bought some of Nelson's land and began construction of the houses in Boulevard Manor. In 1954, twenty acres were sold to Arlington County to establish Bluemont Park. Some of the land went into the Four Mile Run Park System, and some was set aside for a school and a church. (Ashlawn Elementary and Kenmore Middle School are currently located on Reeves' former property.) More land was sold in 1975 for the Spy Hill residential development. Today, Reevesland consists of the original farmhouse on two acres of land.

The original tenant farmhouse, as built in 1865, consisted of a two-story gabled roof building positioned on an east-west axis on a stone foundation. Around the time Nelson was born, his father added a sitting area off the dining room on the east side of the house. In 1910, he added onto the west side of the house. The result is a modified T-plan. The earliest sections have a simple box cornice with gable returns, a plain frieze, and double cornerboards. The windows in the smaller original section are 6/6 double hung wood sash, while the windows in the larger unit are 1/1 double hung wood sash replacements. The windows have

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single-beaded box trim. The house is partly covered with wooden siding and partly with aluminum siding. There is a bracketed one-story porch on the east side supported by turn posts. At the rear is a small open porch filling in the rear L on the north side. An enclosed exterior stair opening onto this porch leads to an apartment above. The roofline of this porch is a continuation of the gable roof of the rear wing. There is a one-story enclosed, shed-roofed porch on the south side, filling in that L.

The historical significance of Reevesland lies in its longevity and its connection to Arlington's not-so-distant rural past. As the last operating dairy farm in Arlington, it serves as the site of when Arlington County was agriculturally based. It is identified with Nelson Reeves, and the two generations of his family preceding him. Nelson spent his entire life witnessing growth and change in Arlington, and his recollections and experiences are invaluable in helping to understand and appreciate Arlington's history. The house is in good condition and is an architecturally significant example of a typical farmhouse in Arlington. Its location adjacent to Bluemont Park, with its sweeping lawn and commanding presence, has made it an established visual feature in the neighborhood. Reevesland is ideally suited for preservation and has potential for a variety of uses by the county. Whether it is maintained as a private residence, converted to offices, or adapted for commercial use, the house stands as a visible and tangible reminder of Arlington's rural history.