

## Virginia Department of Historic Resources PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the property for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the property could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

<b>General Property Information</b>	For Staff Use Only DHR ID #:
Property Name(s): <u>Leslie Avenue warehouse #3</u>	
Property Date(s): <u>1953</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post    Open to Public? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Property Address: <u>1406 Leslie Avenue</u> City: <u>Alexandria</u> Zip: <u>22301</u>	
County or Ind. City: <u>Ind. City of Alexandria</u> USGS Quad(s): <u>Alexandria, VA-DC-MD</u>	

<b>Physical Character of General Surroundings</b>	
Acreage: <u>0.3441</u> Setting (choose one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Town <input type="checkbox"/> Village <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Corridor	
Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features: <u>The building is situated on level ground within a wedge-shaped lot encompassing 14,989 square feet, located on the west side of Leslie Avenue and the north side of E. Alexandria Avenue. It lies just west of U.S. Route 1, and northwest of present-day CSX railroad and WMATA metro tracks which are remnants of Potomac Yards.</u>	
Secondary Resource Description (Briefly describe any other structures (or archaeological sites) that may contribute to the significance of the property):	
Ownership Category: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal	

<b>Individual Resource Information</b>	
What was the historical use of this resource? Examples include: Dwelling, Grist Mill, Bridge, Store, Tobacco Barn, etc...	
<u>Light industrial/warehouse</u>	
What is the current use? (if other than the historical use) <u>Commercial/office</u>	
Architectural style or elements of styles: <u>Art Deco</u>	
Architect, builder, or original owner: <u>James N. Juliano, builder; Floyd K. Huston Associates, architect</u>	
# of stories <u>1</u> Condition: <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Rebuilt <input type="checkbox"/> Renovated	

Are there any known threats to this property? **None known**

### Resource Component Information

Please answer the following questions regarding the individual components of the resource. If the component does not exist, answer “n/a.” If you feel uncomfortable in answering the question, please leave the space blank. Photographs of the features can also help our staff identify specific feature components. Usually, priority is given to describing features on the primary (front) facade of the structure.

**Foundation:** Describe the foundation that supports the structure. Examples include piers, continuous brick, poured concrete.  
**Concrete (continuous brick visible)**

**Structure:** Describe the primary structural component of the resource. Include primary material used. Examples include log, frame (sawn lumber), and brick. Also include the treatment, such as a particular brick bond or type of framing, if known.  
**Steel frame, cinder-block, brick**

**Walls:** Describe the exterior wall covering such as beaded weatherboard or asbestos shingles.  
**Red brick laid in a 5:1 common bond, limestone trim**

**Windows:** Describe the number, material, and form of the primary windows. This includes the number of panes per sash, what the sashes are made of, and how the sashes operate (are they hinged or do they slide vertically) Have the windows been replaced?  
**10 full-height, fixed-pane, multi-light windows in metal frames**

**Porch:** Briefly describe the primary (front) porch. List the primary material, shape of the porch roof, and other defining details.  
**N/A**

**Roof:** Describe the roof, listing the shape and the covering material.  
**Flat parapet**

**Chimney(s):** List the number of chimneys and the materials used. Include the brick bond pattern if possible.  
**N/A**

**Architectural Description of Individual Resource:** *(Please describe architectural patterns, types, features, additions, remodelings, or other alterations. A sketch of the current floor plan would be appreciated.)*

The Art Deco building at **1406 Leslie Avenue** was constructed in 1953 by builder and property owner James Juliano. It is one of five Art Deco warehouses developed by Juliano and his partner, Frank Koplín, along Leslie Avenue between 1952 and 1953. It was designed by the Alexandria-based Floyd K. Huston Associates, architects, but is similar in style and detailing to 501 E. Monroe, a neighboring warehouse built the same year and designed by Washington, D.C.-based architect William St. Cyr Barrington.

Juliano and Mildred E. Koplín filed a new construction permit with the City of Alexandria on 15 January 1953 to erect an industrial warehouse on former railroad land facing Alexandria and Leslie avenues. The structure would comprise a concrete foundation, a steel frame, and cinder block walls with brick veneer and stone trim. The one-story edifice would rise 21-feet high and terminate in a flat roof comprising a steel deck clad in four-ply slag. The three-sided building, with a curved façade, would measure 135-feet by 98.5-feet<sup>i</sup> and would cost an estimated \$35,000 to build.<sup>i</sup> The building first appears on the 1958 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, as an Electronics Warehouse with concrete floors, steel columns and beams, and a metal deck roof on steel joists.<sup>ii</sup> [Figure 1]

From the outset, the industrial structure was intended to house light manufacturing or to function as a storage space. Since its inception, the building has served as the warehouse facility for Melpar Inc. (an

<sup>i</sup> According to the City of Alexandria Real Estate Assessment database, Account No.13529000, Assessment Map 044.03-01-19, the gross building area is 10,063 square feet.  
12/22/2015

electronics plant housed in a neighboring building); Virginia Propeller Service (aircraft manufacturers); Specialties, Inc. (which produced industrial ball bearings and transmissions); and Exports, Inc (a ball-bearings distributor). Although this occupancy turn-over might have necessitated alterations to the interior organization, only one alteration/repair permit for the address was discovered: In 1963, owner Gordon Seigle hired Oxford Roofing to remove and replace the slag roof at the cost of \$ 2,850.<sup>iii</sup>

The principle façade is curved, adhering to the wedge-shaped lot on which it sits, which follows the bend in the road as E. Alexandria Avenue morphs into Leslie Avenue. The entrance, within a parapet pavilion positioned in the center of the curve, is oriented in a southeasterly direction, and is flanked by four window bays and a corner pavilion on each end. The exterior walls are brick, laid in a five-to-one common bond, and rise from the ground plane to a flat parapet roof coped in stone and decorated with a geometric limestone cornice. The three parapet pavilions are framed by fluted, limestone pilasters, the capitals of which extend above the roofline and are spanned by plain stone frieze and cornice. The eastern pavilion features a full-height, metal-frame, fixed-pane window with 12 lights and a simple stone surround. The central pavilion holds the main entrance, which features a single-light glass door with a metal frame flanked by single-light, three-quarter-height sidelights, all of which is surrounded by a plain stone trim. Above the lintel, inset above the doorway as part of the entrance surround, is a large, decorative stone panel bearing geometric shapes and spirals. This ornate panel is found above the entrances of four other neighboring warehouses, and all of the carved stone appliqué bears characteristic Art Deco designs similarly displayed on the adjacent buildings. The façade is symmetrically fenestrated with eight full-height, fixed-pane windows with 12 lights each in metal frames. The apertures are separated by double, fluted, stone pilasters. The westernmost window bay has been altered to include a secondary entrance, with single-light glass double doors in metal frames. The westernmost pavilion features a light-less garage door. The north and west elevations are fenestrated with seven double-hung, metal windows with two-over-two lights; the north elevation also has a metal service door.

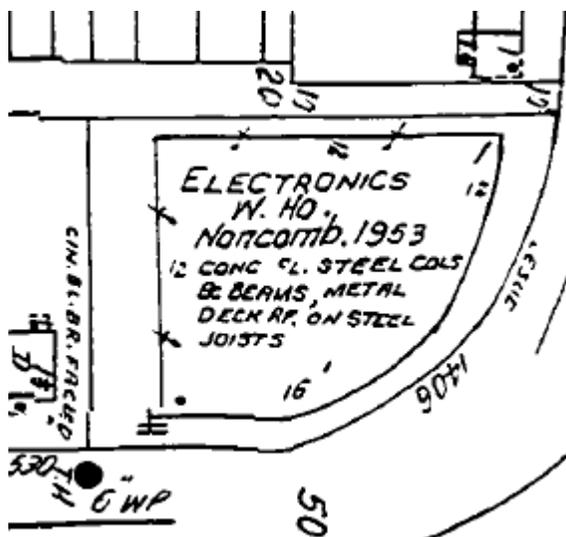


Figure 1: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, 1958, Vol. 1, Sheet 46.

**Significance Statement:** Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the property. (Detailed family genealogies are not necessary.) Please list all sources of information. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Normally, only information contained on this form will be posted for consideration by the State Review Board.

The Leslie Avenue warehouse #3 occupies Parcel 2 of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad (RF&P RR) land (Assessment Map 204), which is also Lots 19-20 (and part of Lots 13-18), Block 13 of Park Addition to Alexandria, subdivided circa 1892.<sup>iv</sup> [Figures 2 and 3] Braddock Heights and a small portion (the western end) of Park Addition were annexed by the City of Alexandria in 1915, but the core of Park Addition (east of Mt. Vernon Avenue) was not annexed by the city until 1930. The area remained rural and under-developed for the next two decades after annexation: the 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia shows a lone house on the corner of E. Alexandria and Leslie avenues, and a similarly solitary dwelling on the northwest corner of Gene Alley where it intersected with an alley running parallel with and north of E. Alexandria Avenue. The surrounding parcels are vacant. The wedge-shaped lot on which the building at 1406 Leslie Avenue rests today was formerly the northern terminus of Leslie Avenue, before the street was rerouted to feed into Gene Alley, which was widened and renamed circa 1950. [Figure 4]

This area remained undeveloped despite the opening of "the Potomac Yards, a major railroad switching facility located [just east of] the Washington-Alexandria Turnpike (now Route 1)" in 1906.<sup>v</sup> Encompassing 450 acres, the vast Yards "was built for the joint use of a number of railroads to classify and interchange their freight traffic,"<sup>vi</sup> including the RF&P, the C&O, Conrail, the Delaware and Hudson, and the Norfolk Southern railroad companies. During the first half of the last century, the switching point was one of the busiest on the east coast, containing 50 miles of tracks which stored as many as 3,130 cars.<sup>vii</sup>

The RF&P railroad relinquished ownership of two parcels (Parcel 1 containing 88,252 square feet, and Parcel 2 containing 11,948 square feet) to Mildred E. Koplín and James Juliano in 1951.<sup>viii</sup> James Nicholas Juliano (ca.1924-1997), a builder and real estate developer,<sup>2</sup> began his career in residential development with his brothers, Joseph and John, but went into commercial development with partner Frank Koplín circa 1945. One of the partnership's earlier projects was Mason Hall Apartments (1951) in Alexandria, followed by the Virginia Plaza Shopping Center, Gem department stores, and the Bradlick Shopping Center (1964) in Annandale, Virginia.<sup>ix</sup> Before constructing the five Leslie Avenue warehouses, Juliano built well-appointed warehouses in the vicinity: in a letter dated 10 March 1952 and directed to the Alexandria Board of Zoning Appeals, Juliano states that the board should not "worry" about the quality of his warehouse designs, as he already had built "beautiful" warehouses on Reed Avenue and U.S. Route 1.<sup>x</sup>

In fact, the warehouse was designed in a high-style Art Deco by Floyd K. Huston<sup>3</sup> Associates, an Alexandria-based architecture firm, most likely in accordance with the elevations for 501 E. Monroe Avenue, which local architect and native Washingtonian, William St. Cyr Barrington (ca. 1898-1976), prepared that same year.<sup>4</sup> Barrington's design for the Leslie Avenue warehouse monumentalized the structure and its banal purpose through the use of decoration and exquisite detailing. The significant use of stone, however, as an appliqué building material can be attributed to Juliano, who was the son of an

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<sup>2</sup> Juliano was listed in Alexandria city directories between 1950 and 1957 as having the occupation "president and residential manager," presumably of James Juliano, Builders & Realty Corp., the firm listed on new construction permit #5385 from 29 March 1952 for 1509 Leslie Avenue.

<sup>3</sup> Born in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania in 1918, Floyd Huston lived most of his adult life in Alexandria and the vicinity, passing away at his home in Fairfax in 1981. In 1955, while a resident of Alexandria, he became a member of the Andrew Jackson Masonic Lodge No. 120.

<sup>4</sup> There is some confusion about Barrington's name; other scholars have written it Edward William, William E., and William C. The name on the drawings for 501 E. Monroe Avenue is "William St. Cyr Barrington."

Italian stonemason who immigrated to Philadelphia at the turn of the last century. Juliano's signature aesthetic was the use of stacked stone in particular, and his buildings reflect a continued interest in stone masonry and Italian craft traditions.<sup>xi</sup> The warehouse is not only one of the finest examples of Art Deco in the area, but is perhaps a rare example of an industrial building in which so much attention has been paid to architectural quality.

Prior to 1963, Gordon D. Seigle acquired the property and his estate retained it until circa 1985, when it was sold to Spex, Inc. In 1986, Spex, Inc. sold the property to American Bearing & Power Transmission Inc., which sold it to Applied Industrial Technologies - Dixie Inc. in 1997.<sup>xii</sup> The latter sold the property to its present owners, 1406 Leslie Ave Assoc LLC, in 2003.<sup>xiii</sup>

The building lies outside the boundaries of the Town of Potomac Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1992. However, the building should be considered either individually or as one in an ensemble of five adjacent warehouses. It is significant on the local and state levels as characteristic of the Art Deco style (criterion C); for its association with local persons of significance, including area developer James Juliano and local architect Floyd K. Huston (criterion B); and for its role in the development of the greater Del Ray neighborhood as an urban enclave (criterion A) concurrent with Northern Virginia's growing regional importance in the interwar years and the country's transformation from a predominantly rural to an urban character. It retains integrity in its setting, location, design, materials, and feeling.

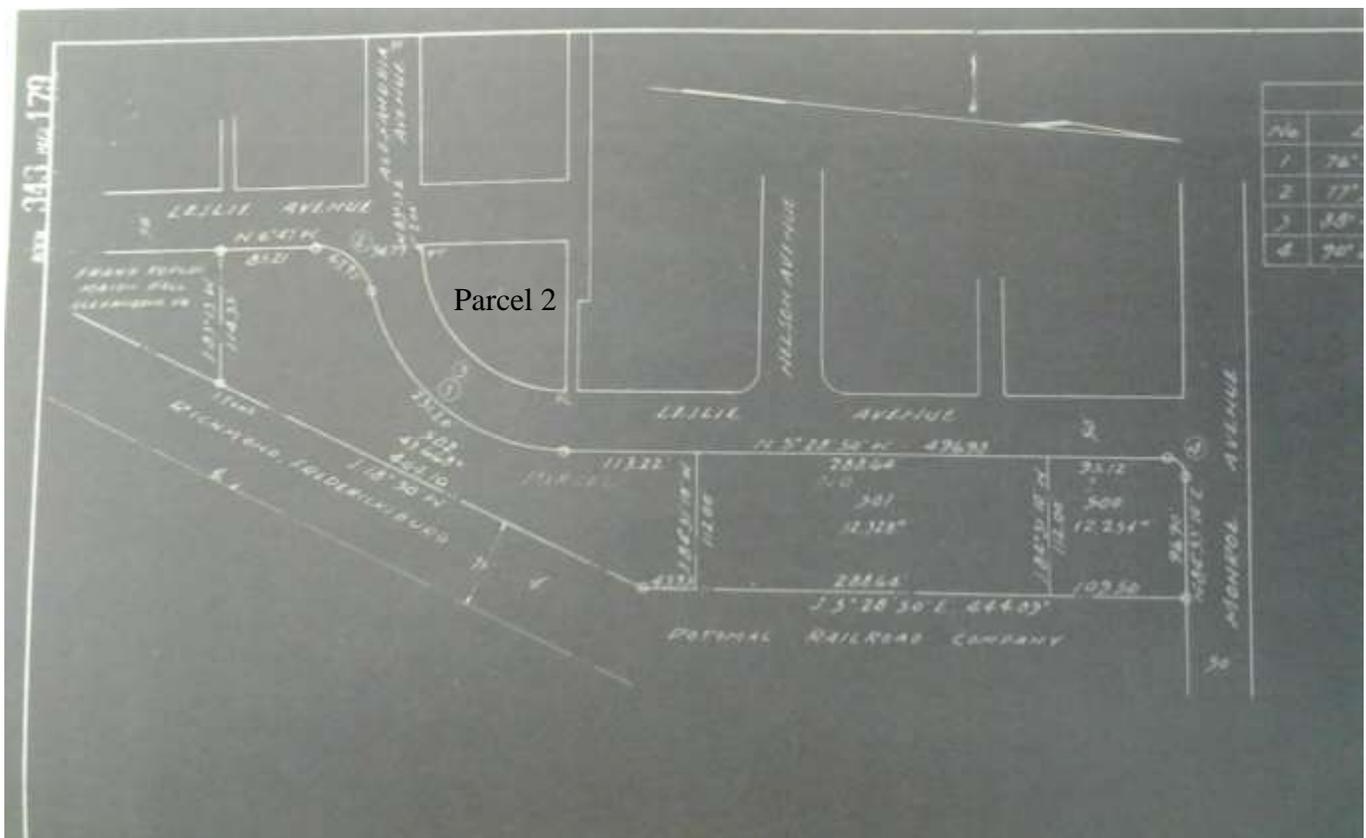


Figure 2: Plat showing Parcels 1 and 2 of RF&P RR land re-subdivided into lots 500-502 inclusive. From Alexandria City Deed Book 343, page 177, 31 July 1952: Mildred E. and Frank Koplun and James Juliano, Dedication. Repository: Alexandria Clerk of the Court - Court of Records



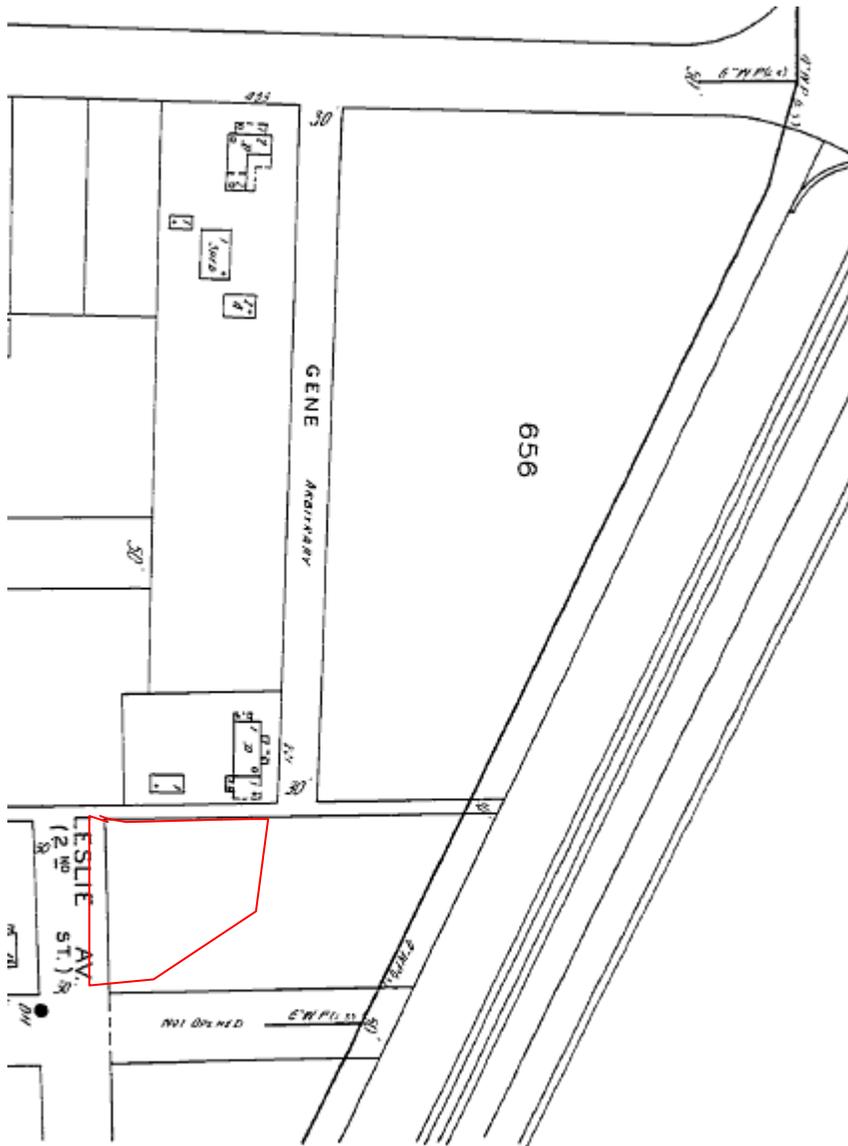


Figure 4: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, 1941, Vol. 1, Sheet 46. N.b., the red outline marks the approximate present footprint of the building, which overlays atop the former northern terminus of Leslie Avenue, before it was rerouted, and lots belonging to the Park Addition subdivision.



1. 1406 Leslie Avenue. Façade (southeast) elevation, partial, oblique angle, facing SW. Photograph by Gwen White, 4/6/14.



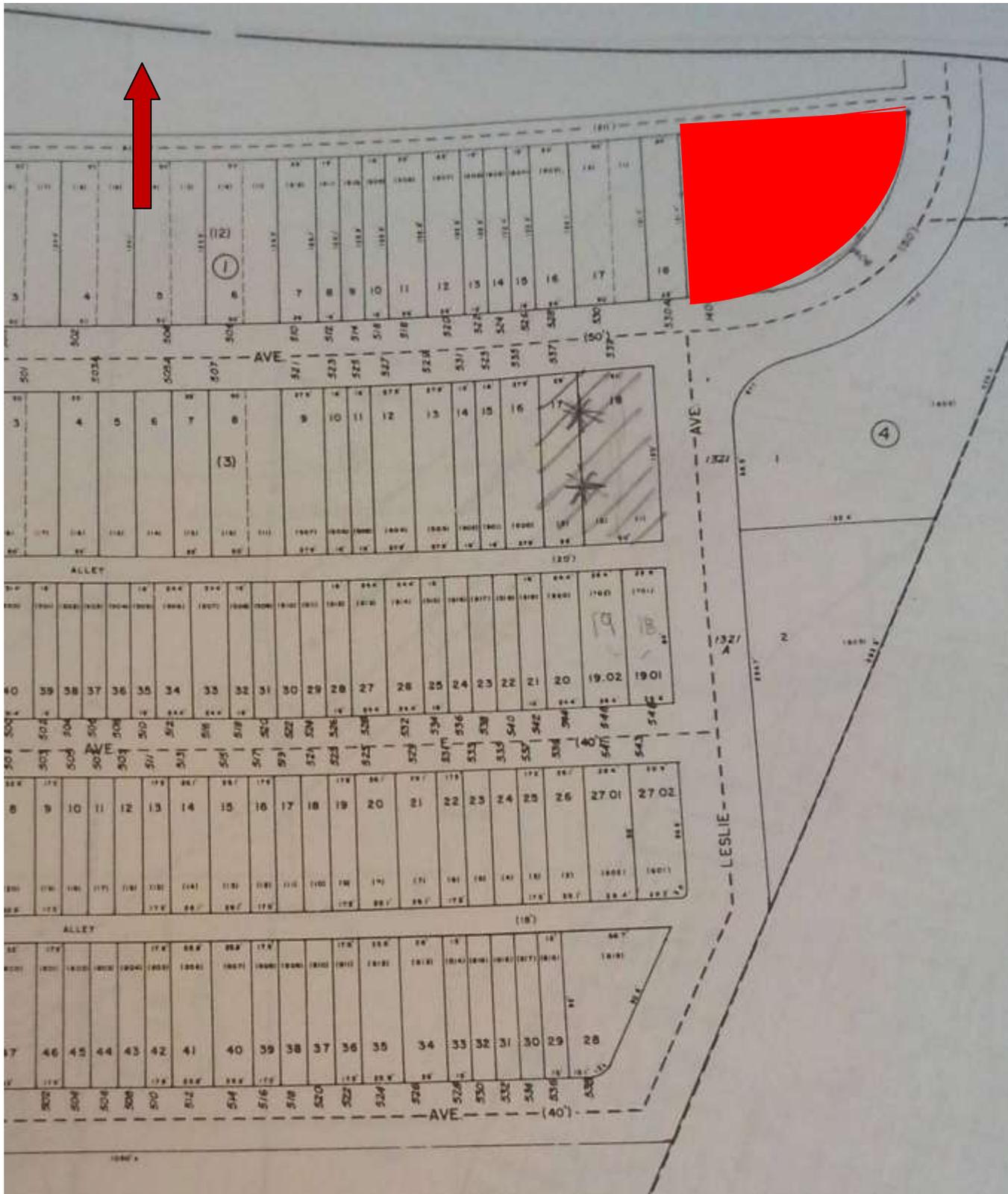
2. 1406 Leslie Avenue. Façade (partial), detail: central pavilion with entrance, straight angle, facing NW. Photograph by Gwen White, 4/6/14.



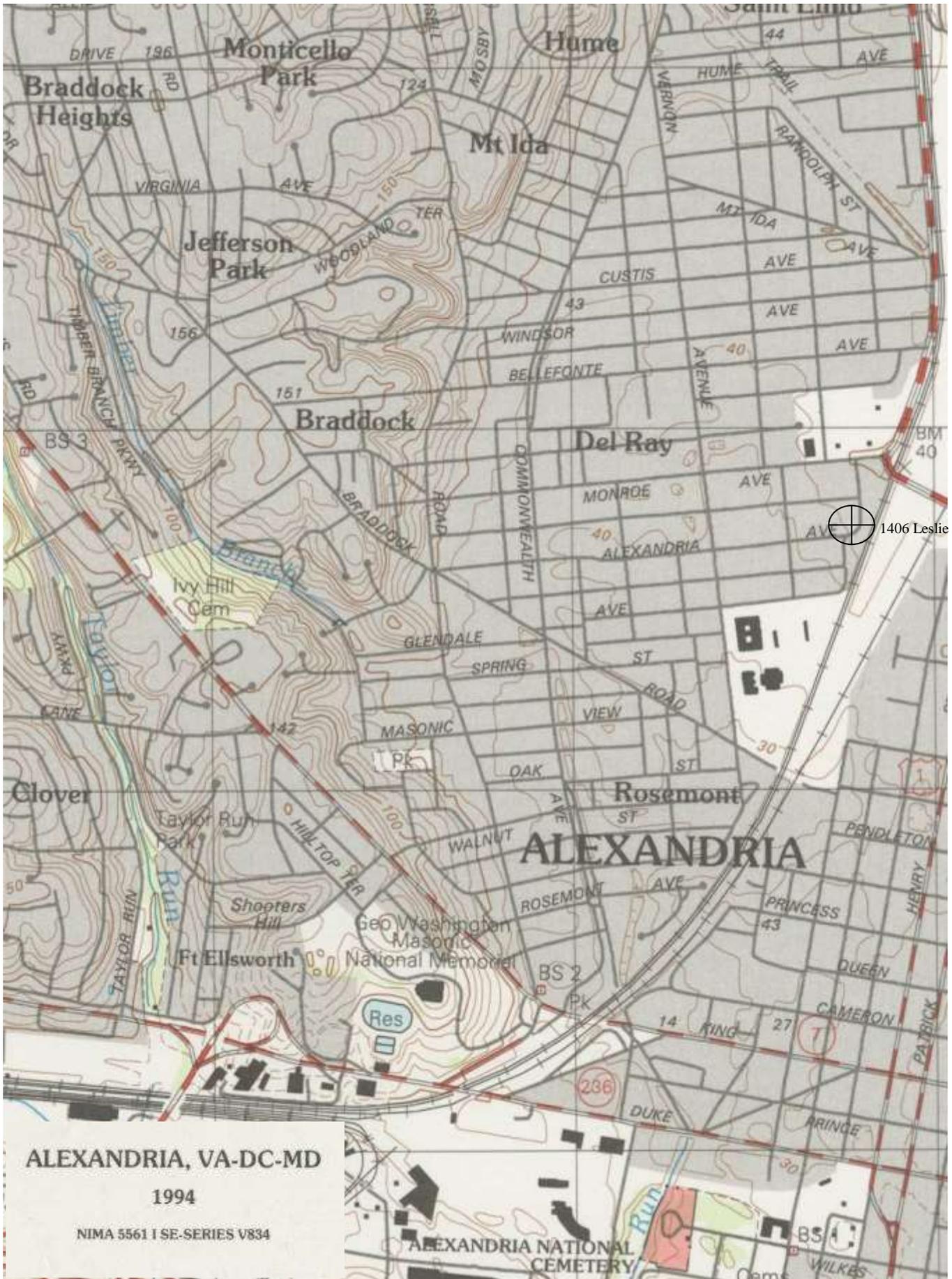
3. 1406 Leslie Avenue. Façade (partial), detail end pavilion, and north elevation, oblique angle, facing 207° SW. Photograph by Gwen White, 4/6/14.



4. 1406 Leslie Avenue. Facade (partial), detail end pavilion, and west elevation, oblique angle, facing 1° N. Photograph by Gwen White, 4/6/14.



Building outline not to scale.  
2014.



1406 Leslie Ave.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>i</sup> New construction permit #5646 from 15 January 1953 for 1406 Leslie Avenue. City of Alexandria Archives and Records Center.
- <sup>ii</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, 1958, Vol. 1, Sheet 46.
- <sup>iii</sup> Alteration/repair permit #20129 from 6 December 1963 for 1406 Leslie Avenue. City of Alexandria Archives and Records Center.
- <sup>iv</sup> See Alexandria County land records, Liber N, No. 4, folio 231.
- <sup>v</sup> Susan Escherich, "Town of Potomac Historic District," National Register of Historic Places, 1992, section 8: page 40.
- <sup>vi</sup> Nan and Ross Netherton, *Arlington County in Virginia: A Pictorial History* (Norfolk: The Donning Co., 1987), 133. Also, Robert L. Crabill, "History of the Town of Potomac" 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., June 1993.
- <sup>vii</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>viii</sup> City of Alexandria Deed Book 329, page 92, 29 March 1951: RF&P Railroad Co., Grantor to Mildred E. Koplín and James Juliano, Grantees. Alexandria Clerk of the Court - Court of Records.
- <sup>ix</sup> "Washington Area Builder, Developer," obit., *The Washington Post* (2 August 1997): C4.
- <sup>x</sup> New construction permit # 5385 from 29 March 1952 for 1509 Leslie Avenue. City of Alexandria Archives and Records Center.
- <sup>xi</sup> James Juliano, Jr. Telephone interview with Heather McMahon, 26 April 2014.
- <sup>xii</sup> City of Alexandria Deed Book 1186, page 578, 1 August 1986: Spex Inc., Grantor to American Bearing & Power Transmission Inc., Grantee. City of Alexandria Deed Book 1624, page 437, 22 December 1997: American Bearing & Power Transmission Inc., Grantor to Applied Industrial Technologies - Dixie Inc., Grantee. Alexandria Clerk of the Court - Court of Records.
- <sup>xiii</sup> City of Alexandria Instrument Number 100013001, 29 May 2003: Applied Industrial Technologies Inc., Grantor to 1406 Leslie Avenue Associates LLC, Grantee. Alexandria Clerk of the Court - Court of Records.