

DRAFT

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Fretz Farm

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Almshouse Road and Route 611 _____ not for publication

city, town Doylestown Township _____ vicinity of congressional district 8

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Bucks code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Grandaddy's

street & number 1001 Easton Road

city, town Willow Grove _____ vicinity of state Pennsylvania 19090

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bucks County Courthouse

street & number Court Street

city, town Doylestown state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Bucks County Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes _____ no

date 1980 _____ federal state county _____ local

depository for survey records Bucks County Conservancy/Pennsylvania Historical & Museum
Commission

city, town Doylestown/Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

A. Residence

Section 1: 2½ story, single pyle, plastered stone construction; slate gable roof with a slate capped, corbelled brick interior end chimney on the east end; cross gable on both the north and south faces; heavy molded and bracketed eave and raking cornices with heavy curved and perforated brackets (angled on the raking cornices to hang vertically).

1st Floor N face: 3 bay, two 2/2 windows in frames decorated with architrave trim, heavy arch molded cornices complete with tiny brackets, timber sills, and shutter holdbacks; one large central picture window in a plain frame which replaced the original doorway. Evidence of the original doorway and accompanying one bay entrance porch can still be seen on the plastered wall. This renovation probably occurred during the 20th century when the house was used as a furniture store.

2nd Floor N face: 3 bay, two 2/2 windows matching those on the first floor. The westernmost bay is obscured by a later projecting pavillion attached to section three used as a kitchen for an upstairs apartment. This pavillion is of wood construction and has a one bay chamfered corner to match the style of the other pavillion of that section. It has a molded and bracketed cornice; two 1/1 windows on the east face and one 1/1 window on each portion of its angled north face, all with straight molded cornices and timber sills with simple bed molding. Each window surmounts a single molded panel.

3rd Floor N face: large cross gable with a double arched 2/2 window in frame decorated with a heavy ornate hoodmold and having a simple timber sill.

Porch N face: Simple trellis covered by corrugated fiberglass and supported by four chamfered square posts which have been reinforced by three iron pipes, one of which supports the projecting second story pavillion.

Section 2: 2½ story, single pyle, plastered stone construction; slate gable roof, heavy molded, bracketed cornices and returns matching those of section one, interior brick end chimney with newer flue snaking up east face. Ashler stone water tabler visible on the south face as well as on the west end where it encompasses the entire height of the exposed basement level. Entrance to this lower level is via a very wide 6 light/2 panel door. The doorway is protect by an "L" shaped porch with a metal roof and a molded cornice which reveals curved rafter ends supported by simple chamfered posts with long simple brackets. The east end also has a recessed doorway leading out from the ground level. That door is of 2 light/2 panel design with a 2 light rectangular transom and has a wooden 8 light/1 panel wooden storm door with a rectangular single pane outer transom. This doorway has a one entrance porch which is slightly more ornate than the lower one in that its posts have simple molded capitals and there is a carved knob pendant at the juncture of the long brackets.

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1st floor S face: 2 bay; one recessed doorway with a molded 2 light/2 panel door, 2 light rectangular transom, wooden storm door in a beaded door frame and with a rectangular transom. The doorway is surmounted by a straight molded cornice supported by tiny brackets. The second bay is a 2/2 window with an arched cornice matching those of the windows in the first section.

2nd floor S face: 3 bay; one central double 2/2 window in frame with architrave trim topped by a single long arched molded frame which is supported by two small brackets. This window is flanked by 2/2 windows matching those in section 1.

3rd floor S face: cross gable with a double arched gable window matching those in the cross gable of section 1.

Porch S face: The entire south face of this section and section 1 are protected by a shed porch supported by ornate chamfered square columns. The columns are connected by graceful arched brackets filled with jigsaw trim and having ornate pendants at their centers. Since the columns are resting on stone pillars which seem out of place, there may have once been a raised wooden floor where a concrete patio exists today.

Section 3: 2 1/2 story, double pyle, plastered stone construction, slate gable roof with a large cross gable on the west slope, molded and bracketed cornice matching the rest of the house. The north end of this section has two five-sided, one story pavillions. The westerly pavillion has a molded and bracketed cornice matching the eave cornice. There are four long 1/1 windows on this pavillion. Two of the windows are on the central face with one on each of the adjoining faces. All the windows have the arched cornices found throughout the house. Under each of the windows, separated by torus and bead molding, are molded panels. The easterly pavillion is projecting from the second floor atop a one bay entrance porch. This pavillion has the same molded and bracketed cornice as the other pavillion, as well as the same window alignment. However since the pavillion is much shorter than the other, the windows are much smaller. The smaller size also accounts for the lack of panelling underneath and the replacement of arched cornices by straight ones.

1st floor W face: wide 2 bay; two sets of narrow French doors lead-out on to the porch. They are of 1 light/1 light/1 panel design with simple frames decorated with architrave trim and surmounted by straight molded cornices.

2nd floor W face: 4 bay; four 2/2 windows with the central two having the molded arched cornices found throughout the house while the outer two have the straight molded cornices.

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3rd floor W face: cross gable with large double arched gable windows matching the windows found in the other cross gables throughout the house.

Porch W face: The entire west and south faces of this section are protected by a raised wooden shed porch with a molded cornice, ornate square columns, large curved brackets, and a fence with heavy turned balusters.

B. Barn

Section 1: large 3 story; mixed construction with plastered stone west face, plastered stone north and south ends with wooden gables(board and batten south and vertical barnboard on north gable) each with a large ornate compound round top gable window; chamfered frame forebay on east face; asbestos shingle gable roof. There is a datestone on the south end which reads FRETZ 1857. Since the barn's conversion into a restaurant in the late 1970's the structure has undergone several exterior changes including the addition of a hipped roof glass porch on its west face, the blocking off of several old stall doors under the forebay, and the opening of a wide service door on the south end which is protected by a partially enclosed end porch which extends around to cover part of the east face. A small portion under the forebay has been closed-in to house a large furnace which has a large exterior chimney attached to the east face of the barn.

Section 2: 2 1/2 story; mixed construction with a masonry first story on the north face, horizontal barnboard on the south, or barnyard, face, and a board and batten second story; slate gable roof with open rafter ends visible. As with the first section, part of the area under the forebay (south face) has been closed up with cinderblocks.

Section 3: long 2 1/2 story; built on a lower level than section two and not quite as wide as that section; mixed construction with the first story being of random fieldstone on the north and east faces (plastered on north face) and of vertical barnboard on the south face. The roof is slate gable with a notch cut on the west end of the south slope to allow light to enter the gable window of section two.

Section 4: 1 story; cut fieldstone construction; corrugated metal uneven gable roof. This section has an open west, or barnyard, face and the remnants of an old stone barnyard wall projecting from the south west corner in a westerly direction.

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C. Carriage House

Section 1: 2 1/2 story; chamfered frame construction with excavated fieldstone foundation visible on the east face; slate gable roof with alternating rows of rounded and conventional slates; very heavy molded and bracketed cornice with large curved and perforated brackets complete with pendants; central square cupola with an arched tracery window on each face each with heavy hoodmold having bead and reel astragal molding, flat roof with molded and bracketed cornice surmounted by a hexagonal spire with a large iron weathervane.

1st floor W face: 7 bay; a central and two end doorways with two windows interspaced in between them. The doorways have ornate molded 4 panel doors with the upper two panels having quatrefoil designs atop trefoils; strap hinges; and have two light rectangular Victorian transoms. The four window bays consist of double 8 light casement windows in simple frames with molded triangular pediments.

2nd floor W face: 5 bay; five 2/2 windows with arched moldings having astragal molding with bead and reel enrichment.

3rd floor W face: wide cross gable with two 1/1 arched gable windows with a double arched heavy hoodmold with two strings of astragal bead and reel molding.

Porch W face: full width flat roof porch supported by an end wall protruding from the south gable of section 1 having two 2/2 windows with triangular pediments and by five square columns with molded capitals and curved brackets. The porch roof extends past the north end of the main section to act as the roof of section two.

Section 2: 1 story, chamfered frame; flat roof.

1st floor W face: 2 bay; one long, thin 1/1 window with triangular pediment; the other bay is obscured by large plywood sheets.

D. Small Barn/Corn crib

1 1/2 story; vertical barnboard construction with the western 2/3 of both the north and south faces being of spaced slat construction; slate gable roof with open rafter ends visible. The structure is unusual in that it was built on a steep slope and the northeastern corner is completely off the ground; supported by a large post.

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E. Old Barn

Small abandoned 2 story frame barn of board and batten style; having a asbestos shingle gable roof with open rafter ends visible.

F. Gazebo

Partially enclosed one story polygonal gazebo with a tent roof topped by a knob shaped finial; with a molded and bracketed cornice having very heavy perforated scroll brackets arranged in sets of two; simple quatrefoil enriched frieze; fieldstone foundation. The open portion of the structure has simple square columns with arched brackets having the simple quatrefoil designs cut into them and central pendants. The columns are connected by highly ornamental teardrop shaped cut outs which form a mock balustrade.

H. Pump House

One story, small square structure of chamfered frame construction with plain cornerboards; tarpaper over wood hip roof; molded four panel door on west face.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

It is rare to find in Central Bucks County a total farm complex representing mid-19th century architectural trends, especially the Italianate characteristics found on this site. The Fretz farm complex shows a mixture of the general Victorian House and the Gazebo are the most distinctive examples, with the house a slightly more conservative statement and the barn the most austere. For many years the entire complex was strikingly painted white and red. Now the front of the barn, with a restaurant located within, and the Gazebo (moved from the front of the house to the front of the barn) are painted in each tones to give them a separate entity. The restaurant in the barn retains most of the original distinctive features such as an 1870's marble fireplace mantle, taken from the house, to add elegance.

The location of this Italianate farm complex adds to its notability and to the insecurity of its future. Sitting atop a gentle ridge, it is at the intersection of two major highways - Almshouse Road and Route 611 (Easton Road). Traveling either direction on the busy four lane "611" one can see the entire complex. Plans have been proposed to increase the capacity of the intersection which would directly threaten the house.

Although there is strong evidence for a multi-phased construction of the Fretz farmhouse its clear statement of vernacular Italianate is consistent throughout the building.

From the presence of thick exterior-type walls separating the central portion from the remainder of the house, the fireplace placement, and the arrangement of the doors and windows and its size (3 bay, 1 pyle) this section possibly dates from the 18th century while the remainder appears to date from the mid-19th.

Various documentation can be found to support the age of this first section. Deeds from 1792 mention a message on the 200+ acre property. There are licenses from 1812 to 1846 for a tavern on the site. Most supportive is an 1819 map of the area which shows a house on the precise spot where the house now stands.

This central block has obviously undergone extensive renovation including the closing off of not only the fireplace but both the front and back doors. The numerous external changes which can be confirmed as 19th century seem so vast as to be nearly prohibitive financially. It almost appears to have been simpler to build an entirely new house.

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The external features of the house, and even to a greater degree the Carriage House, with its large square cupola and spire show an overwhelming Italianate influence. This influence tends to date the existing building complex from the mid-nineteenth century; a date which is supported by an 1857 datestone on the main section of the barn.

Each of the house's eight gables has the round top windows associated with the period. The arch motif is extended over to the other windows throughout the house. Although of the standard Victorian 2/2 sash style the vast majority of the windows have arched and heavily molded cornices giving the impression of rounded windows. The house has many other Italianate features including a fancy bracketed cornice with obliquely cut brackets on the raking cornices, deeply molded eaves, projecting bays, scrollwork and small pavillions.

ART

The house and carriage house are the subjects of a large oil painting by Edmund J. Wilson entitled "The Fretz Farm, Doylestown" (1882) now in the possession of the Bucks County Historical Society. Wilson, born in southwest Philadelphia in 1850, spent fifty years as an artist and sign painter in New York City before returning to Pennsylvania and settling in New Britain Township. Wilson died at the Harrison Home for the Invalid in 1937.

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EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

The history of the Fretz farm can be traced back to a 2500 acre patent in the seventeenth century. However the actual settlement of the tract probably did not occur until the mid-eighteenth century. In 1703 Dr. John Rodman of Burlington, N. J. bought the entire 2500 acre parcel but apparently never lived there. Rodman's heirs divided the estate with Richard Smith receiving a 600 acre tract which included the site of the Fretz farm. It is unlikely that Smith lived on the tract as there are records of his dividing the property into two separate plantations which he leased to local farmers who might have actually improved the property. The parcel upon which the nominated site sits was in the tenure of John Harvey when purchased by John Fretz in 1792.

In that year John Fretz bought 299+ acres and soon removed from the township of Bedminster with his family. Family records indicate that he built a barn and house in 1794 and 1795 respectively. Six years later Fretz bought the remainder of the 600 acre Smith property; beginning a series of purchases which eventually saw the entire region becoming known as the Fretz Valley.

Local histories of Warwick (later Doylestown) Township indicate that the original Fretz house was destroyed in 1898. The nominated house appears to have been built by John's son Christian Fretz at the turn of the nineteenth century. Although John Fretz died in 1804 his contribution to the area was considerable. His family remained in the area for over a century leading the community in economic, political, and social affairs. John S. Fretz, a great grandson of the original settler, built a sawmill on a section of the family homestead in the mid-nineteenth century.

COMMERCE

Christian Fretz at age 24 inherited 200 acres of his father's estate in 1804. The plantation and homestead were located along Almshouse Rd. between the Philadelphia to Easton Stage Road and the Neshaminy Creek. At that time Christian probably resided at the Fretz homestead near the Creek. However his application for a tavern license indicates that in 1822 he "still resides in and occupies the house on Easton Road opposite the Poor House...in which he has been licensed to keep a public house of entertainment and tavern for ten years past and upward."

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Little is known of the tavern from 1812 to 1818 but by 1819 the tavern was important enough to be one of the few buildings specifically located on the map for the laying out of Doylestown Township. The house labelled merely as Fretz's is on the precise location of the present house.

Christian Fretz's tavern licenses from 1821 to 1831 call the House "The Sorrel Horse" except for a year or so when the license was somehow issued under the name of the "Bay" or the "Red Horse".

From 1831 to 1835 the tavern was leased to two different tenants who renamed it first to the "Barley Sheaf" and then to the "Wheat Sheaf". When Christian's son Philip K. Fretz took over the establishment in 1836 he retained the name "Wheat Sheaf" until he closed the Inn in 1846. According to a family geneology Philip, on January 9, 1846 the first anniversary of the birth of his daughter, simply went out and cut down the tavern's signpost. Thus after about 35 years the tavern closed down. Today the large barn on the property houses a large restaurant and bar taking advantage of the favorable spot chosen by Christian Fretz nearly two centuries ago.

SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN

Philip K. Fretz was deeply religious with a strong social conscience which may account for his closing of the family tavern. He had a widespread reputation as a humanitarian for his efforts during the cholera epidemic which swept through the county in 1849-1850. The disease proved extremely virulent at the Bucks County Almshouse (located directly across the street from the tavern) striking down not only many residents but the staff as well. When the superintendent was struck down Philip, after seeing his family to safety, worked tirelessly to ease the suffering of the afflicted; spending days and weeks at the institution disregarding his own personal safety.

The Civil War also provided Philip with a challenge to be met. He organized fund raising drives to clear the neighborhood boys from the draft. When money could not be raised, Philip Fretz advanced it himself, went to Philadelphia and cleared his district of the draft. In the words of local historian General W. W. H. Davis, "Fretz was one of the prominent men of his community, not in the sense of seeking or holding public office, but in the doing day by day, as occasion offered, those things that tend to uplift humanity and stimulate...others."

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 3.636

Quadrangle name Doylestown, PA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1,8	4,8,9	0,0,0	4,4	5,7	7,1,0
Zone	Easting		Northing		

C

1,8	4,8,8	9,8,0	4,4	5,7	6,0,0
Zone	Easting		Northing		

E

Zone	Easting		Northing		

G

Zone	Easting		Northing		

B

1,8	4,8,9	1,2,0	4,4	5,7	6,8,0
Zone	Easting		Northing		

D

1,8	4,8,9	1,0,0	4,4	5,7	5,2,0
Zone	Easting		Northing		

F

Zone	Easting		Northing		

H

Zone	Easting		Northing		

Verbal boundary description and justification Starting a a point at the intersection of U.S. 611 and L.R. 09046, moving north along Rt. 611 381.06 ft.; then SE 420.6 ft.; then SW 540.42 ft.; then NW 449.78 ft. along L.R. 09046 to starting point.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeffrey L. Marshall

organization Bucks County Conservancy

date July 8, 1980

street & number 11 North Main Street

telephone (215) 345-8966

city or town Doylestown

state Pennsylvania 18901

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

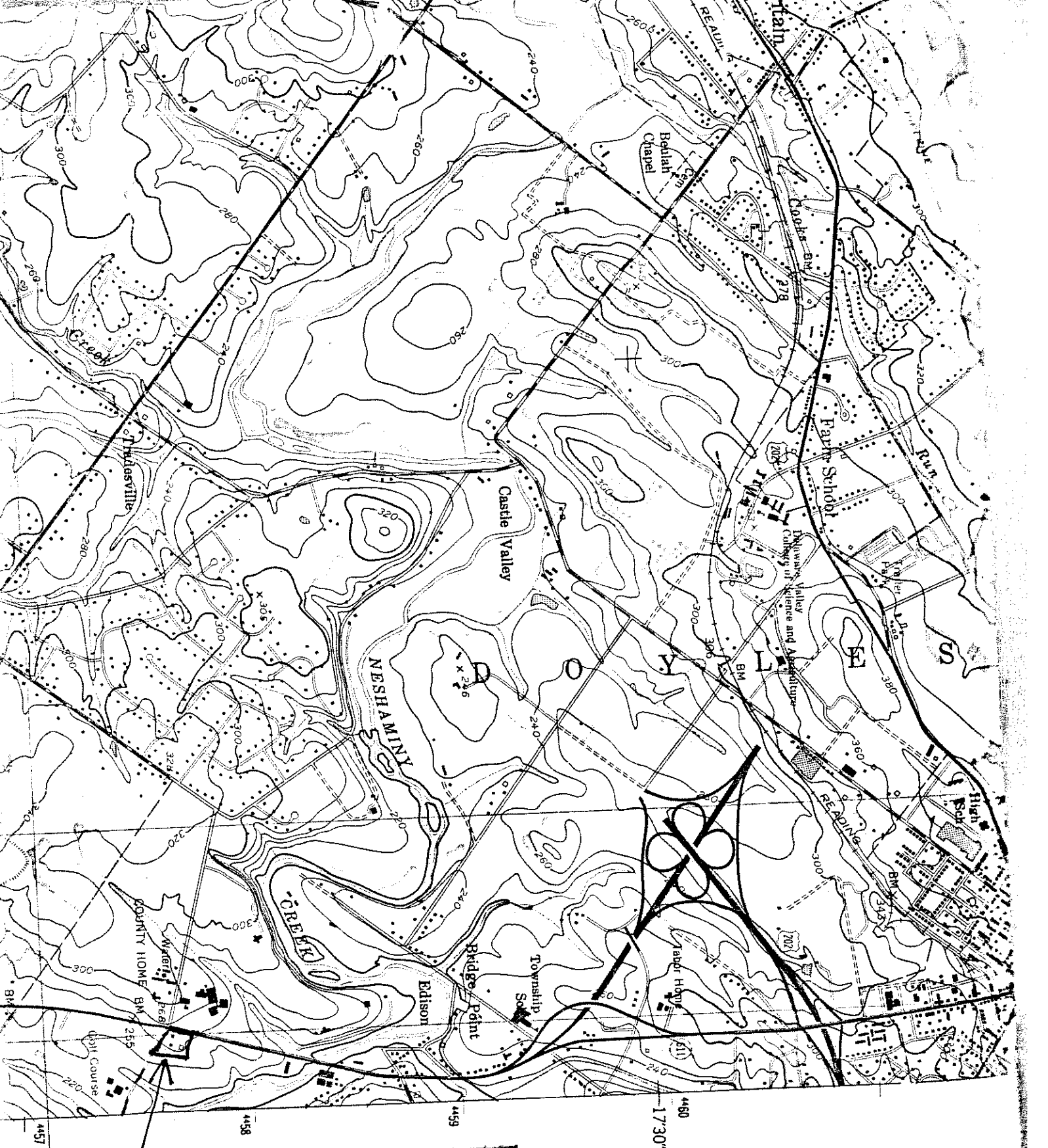
national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

[Signature], Director, Office of
title Historic Preservation date _____

For HCERS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
Keeper of the National Register	date _____
Attest:	date _____
Chief of Registration	



Fretz Farm			
Bucks County			
Zone 18	A	E489000	N4457710
	B	E489120	N4457680
	C	E488980	N4457600
	D	E489100	N4457520