



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office

David L. S. Brook, Administrator

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Lisbeth C. Evans, Secretary

Division of Archives and History
Jeffrey J. Crow, Director

January 10, 2002

MEMORANDUM

TO: William D. Gilmore, Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
Division of Highways
Department of Transportation

FROM: David Brook

SUBJECT: B-3614, Replace Bridge No. 300 on SR 1141 over Hominy Creek, State Project
#8.2843901, Federal Aid # BRZ-1141(9), Buncombe County, ER 02-8268

Thank you for your letter of November 26, 2001, transmitting the survey report by Mattson, Alexander and Associates for the above project.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following property is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places

O H. Winchester Farm

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above-referenced tracking number.

DB:kgc

cc: Mary Pope Furr, NCDOT
Mattson, Alexander and Associates

bc: Brown/Montgomery
County
Reading

Administration
Restoration
Survey & Planning

Location
507 N. Blount St, Raleigh, NC
515 N. Blount St, Raleigh, NC
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**B-3614 · Replace Bridge 300 on SR 1141 over Hominy Creek
Buncombe County · Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report**

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT
REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 300 ON SR 1141
OVER HOMINY CREEK
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TIP NUMBER B-3614
FEDERAL PROJECT NUMBER BRZ-1141(9)
STATE PROJECT NUMBER 8.2843901**

**Prepared for
Stantec, Inc.
Raleigh, North Carolina**

**Prepared by
Mattson, Alexander & Associates, Inc.
Charlotte, North Carolina**

5 November 2001

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235**

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2002

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT
REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 300 ON SR 1141
OVER HOMINY CREEK
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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5 November 2001



Principal Investigator **Date**
Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc. 5/11/01



Historic Architectural Resources **Date**
North Carolina Department of Transportation 11/26/01

**REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 300 ON SR 1141
OVER HOMINY CREEK, BUNCOMBE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TIP NUMBER B-3614
FEDERAL PROJECT NUMBER BRZ-1141(9)
STATE PROJECT NUMBER 8.2843901**

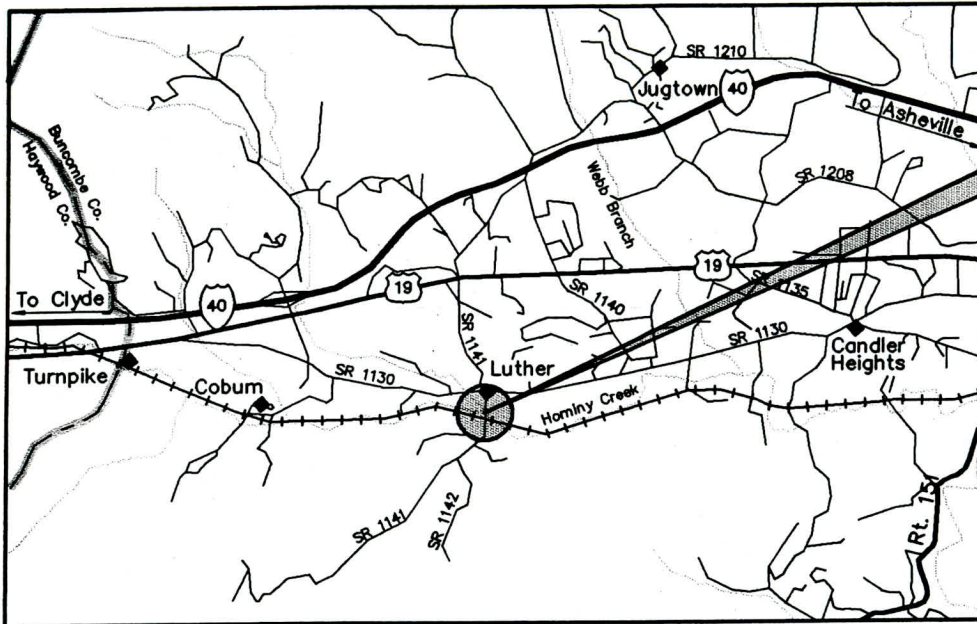
The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to replace Bridge No. 300 on SR 1141 over Hominy Creek in Buncombe County (Figures 1, 2a, and 2b). The bridge has a sufficiency rating of 36.9 out of a possible 100 for a new structure. The bridge is considered functionally obsolete and structurally deficient. Two alternatives were studied and are described below.

Alternative A replaces the existing bridge with a two-lane span on new location on the east (downstream) side. The approach roadway will consist of two ten-foot travel lanes with four-foot shoulders. The proposed bridge will provide a twenty-six-foot clear roadway width to allow for two ten-foot travel lanes and three-foot shoulders on each side. The elevation of the new bridge will be approximately the same as the existing structure. This is the longer of the two alternatives and is located farther from the existing bridge (Figure 2a).

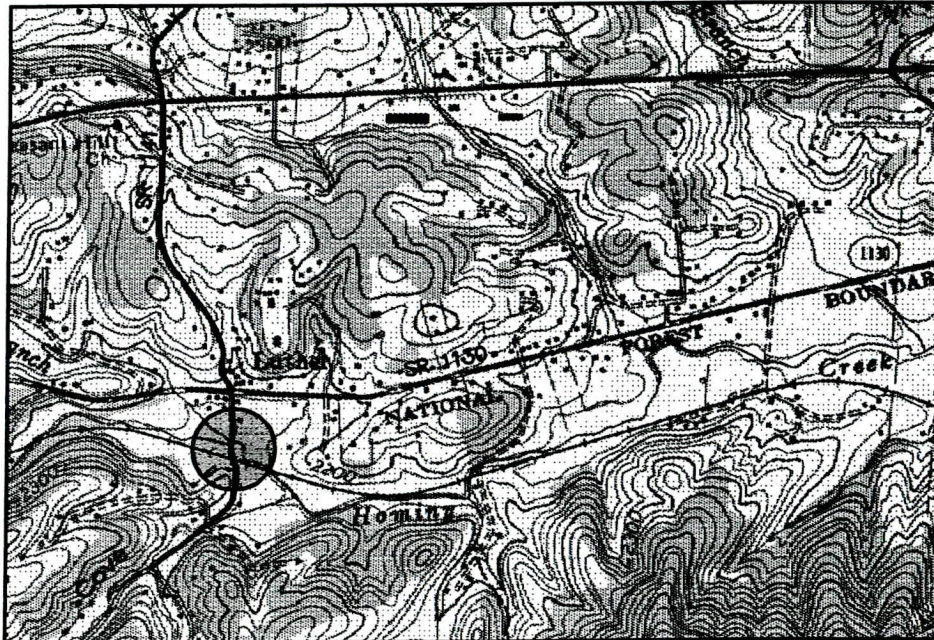
Alternative B replaces the existing bridge with a two-lane span on new location on the east (downstream) side. The approach roadway will consist of two ten-foot travel lanes with four-foot shoulders. The proposed structure will provide a twenty-six-foot clear roadway width to allow for two ten-foot travel lanes and three-foot shoulders on each side. The elevation of the new bridge will be approximately the same as the existing structure. This is the shorter of the two alternatives and is located closer to the existing bridge (Figure 2b).

Purpose of Survey and Report

This survey was conducted and the report prepared in order to identify historical architectural resources located within the area of potential effects (APE) as part of the environmental studies conducted by NCDOT and documented by a Categorical Exclusion (CE). This report is prepared as a technical appendix to the CE and as part of the documentation of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended. Section 106 of the NHPA requires that if a federally funded, licensed, or permitted project has an effect on a property listed in or potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation be given a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings.



Project Vicinity



Buncombe County



**North Carolina
Department of Transportation**

**SR 1141
Replace Bridge No. 300
over Hominy Creek
Buncombe County
North Carolina**

B-3614

Project Vicinity

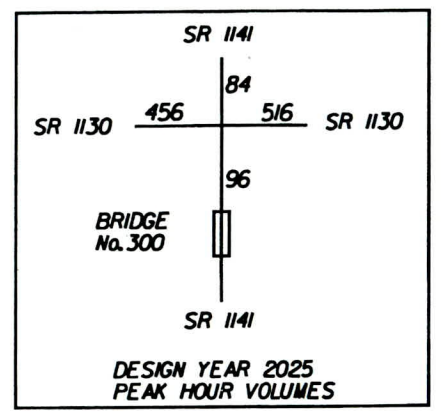
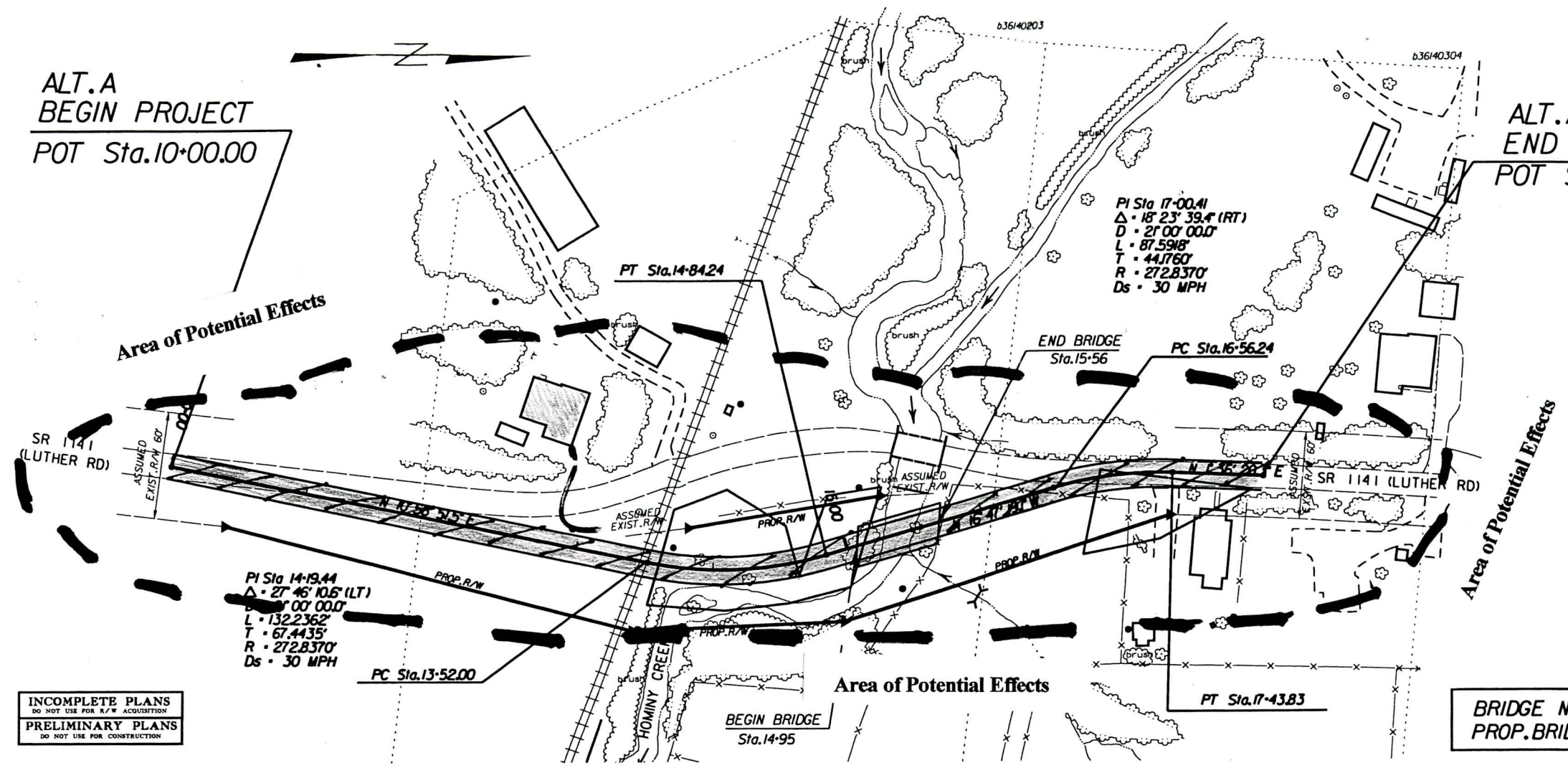
Not to Scale

Figure 1

ALT.A
 BEGIN PROJECT
 POT Sta.10+00.00

ALT.A
 END PROJECT
 POT Sta.18+09.65

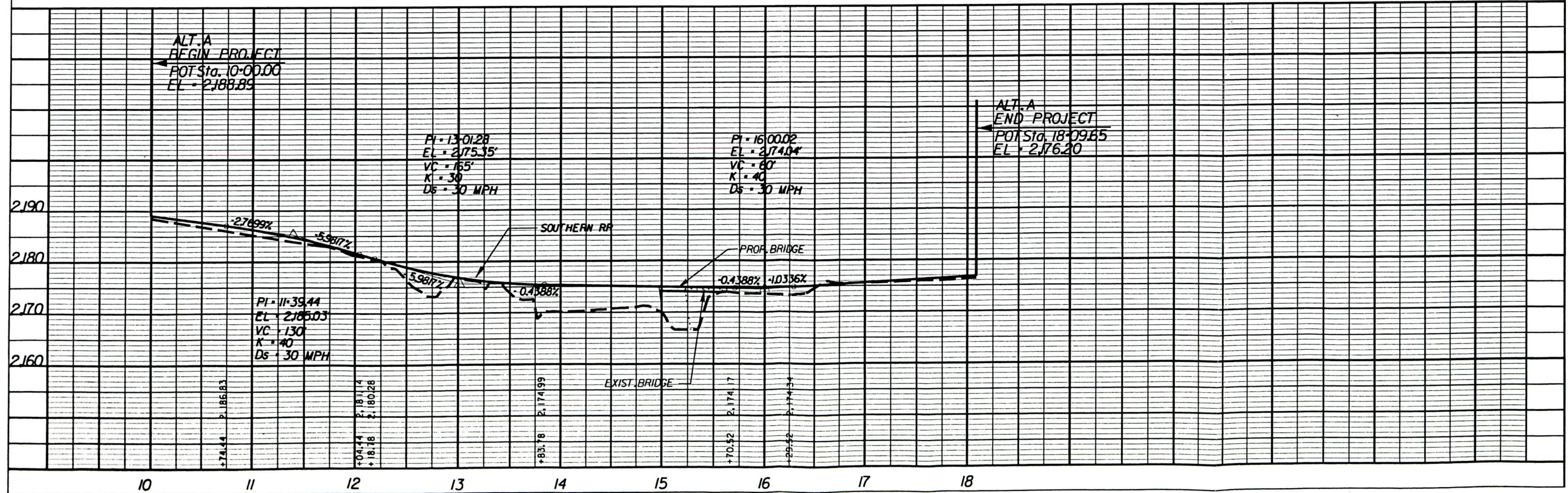
Figure 2a



FUNCTIONAL ALTERNATIVE A
 TIP NO. B-3614
 REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 300
 SR 1141 OVER HOMINY CREEK
 BUNCOMBE COUNTY

BRIDGE No. 300, L = 36 FT
 PROP. BRIDGE LENGTH = 61 FT, WIDTH = 26 FT

INCOMPLETE PLANS
 DO NOT USE FOR R/W ACQUISITION
 PRELIMINARY PLANS
 DO NOT USE FOR CONSTRUCTION



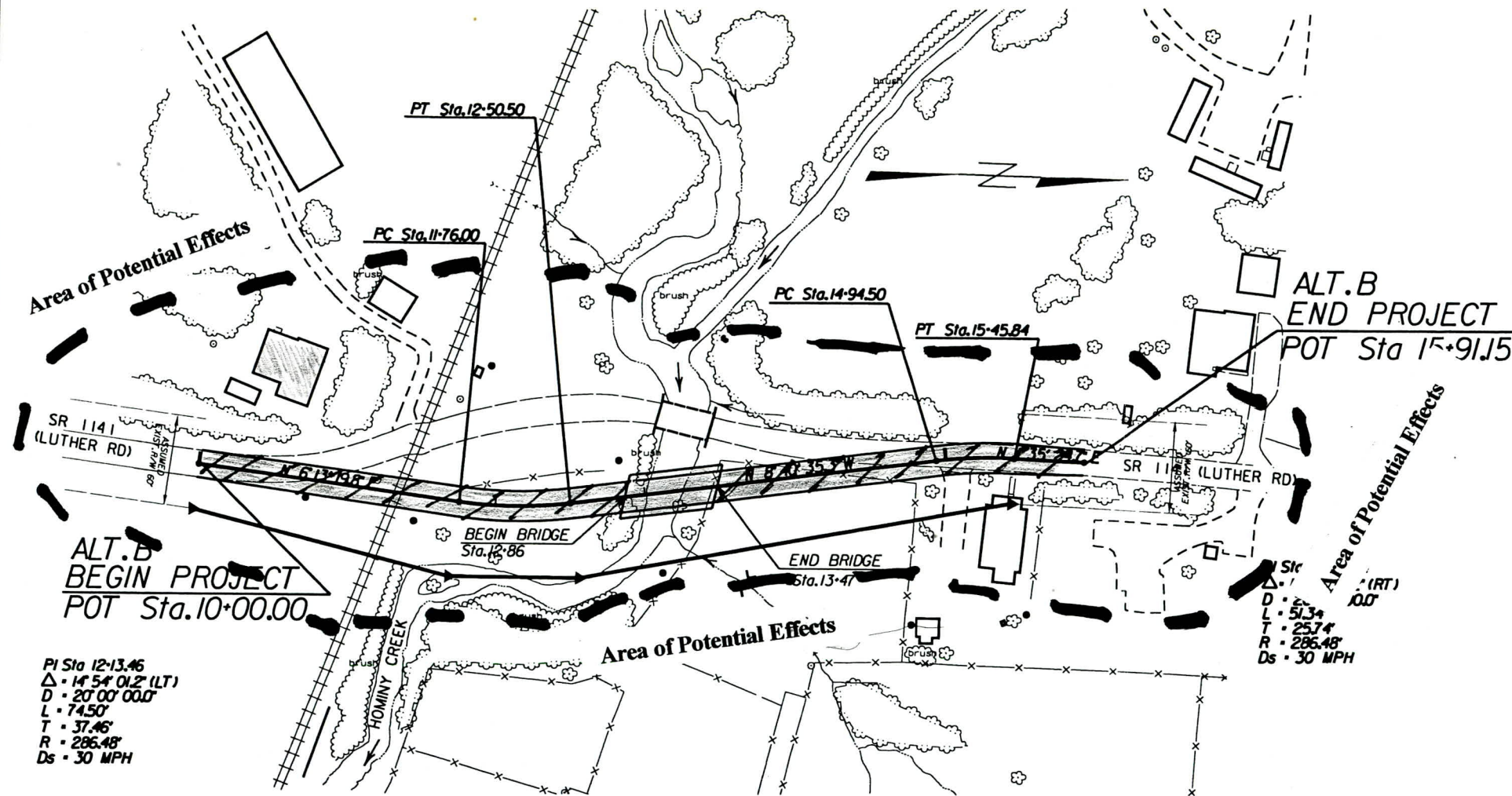
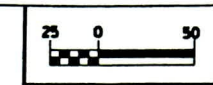


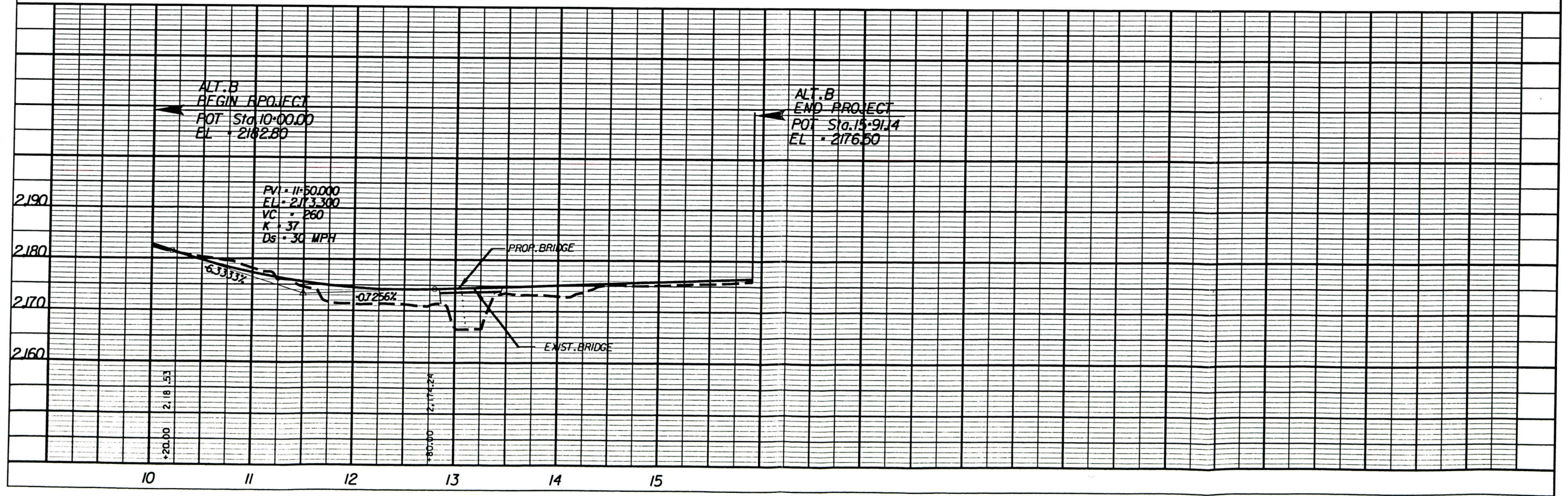
Figure 2b

INCOMPLETE PLANS
 DO NOT USE FOR R/W ACQUISITION
 PRELIMINARY PLANS
 DO NOT USE FOR CONSTRUCTION

FUNCTIONAL ALTERNATIVE B

TIP NO. B-3614
 REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 300
 SR 1141 OVER HOMINY CREEK
 BUNCOMBE COUNTY

BRIDGE No. 300, L = 36 FT
 PROP. BRIDGE LENGTH = 61 FT, WIDTH = 26 FT



Methodology

This survey was conducted and the report compiled in accordance with the provisions of FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents); and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716); 36 CFR Part 800; 36 CFR Part 60; and Survey Procedures and Report Guidelines for Historic Architectural Resources by NCDOT.

The "Final Identification and Evaluation" was conducted with the following goals: 1) to determine the APE, defined as the geographic area or areas within which a project may cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist; 2) to identify all significant resources within the APE; and 3) to evaluate these resources according to the National Register of Historic Places criteria.

The methodology consisted of background research into the historical and architectural development of the area and a field survey of the APE. The field survey was conducted in September 2001, by automobile as well as on foot, to delineate the APE and to identify all properties within this area, which were at least fifty years of age. The boundaries of the APE are shown in Figures 2a and 2b. The APE is defined by modern construction, topographical features, and sight lines, and 100 percent of this area was surveyed.

Local resident, Ruby Clark, provided information on the O. H. Winchester Farm within the APE. Douglas Swaim's publication, *Cabins and Castles: The History and Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina*, offered historical and architectural background information for this report (Swaim 1981).

Summary Findings of the Survey

The project area follows SR 1141 across Bridge No. 300 over Hominy Creek in rural Buncombe County. This rural area is characterized by the bottomlands of Hominy Creek and development beginning in the early twentieth century along SR 1141 and the adjoining two-lane roads. One property, the O. H. Winchester Farm, was identified within the APE and evaluated in the "Property Inventory and Evaluations" section of this report. The property is not recommended eligible for the National Register.

Properties Listed on the National Register

None

Properties Listed on the North Carolina State Study List

None

Properties Considered Eligible for the National Register

None

Properties Evaluated Intensively and Considered Not Eligible for the National Register

O. H. Winchester Farm

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ESSAY

Located in the Blue Ridge chain of the Southern Appalachians in western North Carolina, Buncombe County was created in 1792. In common with the state's mountain region as a whole, county growth was hampered by poor transportation routes and the rugged terrain. While the region's isolation had profound effects on the social and economic landscape throughout the nineteenth century, the completion of the Buncombe Turnpike in 1827 testified early on to the benefits of good transportation. The toll road linked Tennessee and Kentucky to South Carolina with an overland route that followed the French Broad River and cut through the center of Buncombe County. The major route for drovers herding livestock from the mountains to markets in coastal South Carolina and Georgia, the turnpike also sparked local commerce and the beginnings of a cash-crop economy in western North Carolina. The pike road generated scores of small drovers' stands offering lodging for herders and stock pens for animals. Local farmers raised feed for sale at these stands, as well as shipped their own livestock and surplus produce via the turnpike to destinations throughout the lowland South (Sondley 1977: 619-621).

Consequently, Buncombe County developed steadily during the antebellum decades, and by 1850 contained 13,425 residents (including 1,717 slaves). County farmers raised corn and oats to feed livestock, and by 1860 were also producing quantities of apples and peaches for market. Between 1850 and the eve of the Civil War, the dollar value of orchard fruits in the county jumped from \$1,000 to over \$28,000 (Swaim 1981: 11-15, 17-19; Bishir et al. 1999: 25-26).

The long-anticipated arrival of the Western North Carolina Railroad, which reached Asheville in 1880, spurred growth after the Civil War. By 1890, Asheville was linked by rail to the Ohio River, eastern coastal ports, and northern urban markets. Between 1880 and 1890, Asheville's population soared from 2,690 to 10,235, as the former mountain town became a progressive urban center. In 1880, the town limits were confined to land within a mile radius of the Buncombe County Courthouse. Three years later, the General Assembly designated Asheville a "city" with expanded boundaries that stretched to the French Broad River on the west and to just south of Beaucatcher's ridge to the east. By 1890, Asheville boasted a streetcar system, a waterworks, an electrical plant and two electric light systems, a sewer system, a gas company, an improved public school system, a \$100,000 post office, a public library, and a Board of Trade (Swaim 1981: 38-39, 77-80).

A major western spur of the Western North Carolina Railroad connected Asheville to Murphy, North Carolina, and gave rise to the small railroad stops, including Luther within the study area. Luther was named for the Luther family, who settled the Upper Hominy area in the middle nineteenth century, and established farms and stores around Luther and Candler to the east. By 1887, the Luther community contained a post office and a small iron works near Hominy Creek. Other towns arose or expanded along the Western North Carolina rail line north and east of Asheville, providing shipping points for the surrounding farming communities (Branson 1896; Sondley 1977: 487; Johnson and Perkins 1983).

In the Luther vicinity and throughout Buncombe County, subsistence farming steadily gave way to commercial agriculture, particularly the cultivation of tobacco and orchard crops. The value of farm property in the county climbed dramatically from approximately two and one-half million dollars in 1880 (before the arrival of the railroad) to thirteen and one-half million dollars in 1910.

However, the railroad also brought local farm products in competition with larger regional and national markets. By the early twentieth century shifts in the market led to the sharp decline in the production of flue-cured tobacco, and farmers increasingly turned to orchard crops and dairy production to meet the growing demands of the region's urban population. As the twentieth century progressed, larger landowners prospered with the rise of mechanized farming, while many marginal farmers left the land in search of employment in booming Asheville. Although the population of the county continued to increase in this period, most of the rural townships lost residents (Branson 1896; Swaim 1981: 20-24; Bishir et al. 1999: 62).

Poor roads remained a chronic hindrance to economic growth, but with the growing use of the motor truck and automobile after World War I, significant strides were taken to improve roadway travel. As a result of vigorous state and local campaigns for good highways, new or improved roads and bridges were gradually constructed through the county's mountain gaps and narrow valleys. After the passing of the 1921 Highway Act, a state-supported highway system was established, and funds were expended to build highways linking the state's county seats. By 1930, two major state highways, NC 10 and NC 20, bisected the county, connecting Asheville and the smaller rail towns to an emerging statewide system of hard-surfaced highways. East-west NC 10 (which followed portions of present-day SR 1130 north of the project) passed through Luther. The paved roadway offered local residents unprecedented access to Asheville and the neighboring towns and rural communities (Figure 3) (Lefler and Newsome 1973: 600, 650; Bishir et al. 1999: 49-50).

The onset of the Great Depression stalled new construction throughout Buncombe County and brought Asheville's boom period to an abrupt halt. The city fell into bankruptcy in 1930, and would not completely recover from its economic collapse until the late twentieth century. In both the city and the countryside, the hardships brought on by the depression were relieved in part by a variety of federal work programs. Most notable was the building of the Blue Ridge Parkway, connecting Shenandoah National Park in Virginia to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina. By World War II, when public funds for the scenic parkway were redirected for use in the war effort, one half of the road was completed. The Blue Ridge Parkway winds diagonally across the south side of Buncombe County and marks the southwest border of the county (Bishir et al. 1999: 85-88).

Since World War II, Buncombe County and the region have experienced unprecedented growth created largely by steady improvements in transportation, the widespread availability of electric power, and the vigorous promotion of the Blue Ridge as a tourist destination. Sweeping economic and social changes in the modern era have engendered dramatic changes to the landscape. Near the project area, the construction of four-lane US 19-23-74 and Interstate Highway 40 has brought Asheville to within easy commuting distance and encouraged suburban development. While Luther and the entire Upper Hominy community remains largely rural and agrarian, middling farmsteads now commingle with modern dwellings sited on subdivided parcels. Typical of the region as a whole, many local farmers also hold second jobs outside the community. The persistence of rural schools and churches continue to give Upper Hominy and other such rural areas distinct identities, but the major commercial activities now take place in and around Asheville and the larger towns north of the project area.

Figure 3

Luther Community and Environs, 1930

Source: North Carolina State Highway Map, 1930



PROPERTY INVENTORY AND EVALUATIONS

Properties Evaluated Intensively and Recommended Not Eligible for the National Register

O. H. Winchester Farm

West side SR 1141, just south of junction with Southern Railway, Luther community
Buncombe County

s

Date of Construction

Early twentieth century

Associated Outbuildings

Well House (ca. 1910); Garage (1920s); Barn (1920s); Chicken House (1950s)

Evaluation of Integrity (Plates 1-10) (Figure 4)

Established along Hominy Creek in the early twentieth century, the O. H. Winchester Farm consists of the house, a small collection of outbuildings, and some ten acres of cultivated fields in the bottomland along Hominy Creek. The house stands on a tree-shaded rise of land supported by a fieldstone retaining wall. Constructed ca. 1910, the dwelling has been altered in recent decades and is in disrepair. It is a traditional frame, one-story dwelling with a single-pile, center-hall plan, a fieldstone foundation, two-over-two sash windows, a center brick chimney, and a side-gable roof with a third gable centered over the three-bay façade. A kitchen and bedroom wing with an enclosed porch extends to the rear of the main block. The hip-roofed wraparound front porch has several original turned posts, but replacement square posts predominate and the balustrade that once existed no longer survives (Ruby Clark Interview 2001). The porch deck is modern. The main body of the house has original weatherboard siding, but later particleboard siding covers the enclosed porch on the west elevation. The deck and the French doors on the east side of the rear wing are later additions. The interior was not accessible, but views of the interior from the porch reveal that the mantels in the two principal rooms are now gone and the walls have been covered with sheet rock.

The outbuildings, now all abandoned, include a well house, an auto garage, a barn, and a large chicken house. The brick well house is in ruinous condition. A section of its gable-front roof has collapsed and a portion of the original brick exterior has been replaced by a concrete wall. The frame, gable-front barn, once used for curing tobacco and stabling livestock, is also now ruinous. The cinder block chicken house is in deteriorated but stable condition. Now overgrown, it is a long, story-and-a-half structure with a gable-front roof. The fieldstone garage is also overgrown but remains in fair condition. The agricultural field to the north of the farm complex remains in use, and is currently planted with corn.

Historical Background

In the early twentieth century, O. H. Winchester, a worker for the Southern Railway, acquired approximately sixty-eight acres of land along Hominy Creek and the rail line. Winchester built the house and the well house about 1910, and constructed the garage and the present barn in the 1920s. He did not farm the property himself, but rented the bottomland to his brother-in-law, Burgen Young, who raised burley tobacco, an assortment of grains, and some livestock. The

property was later inherited by family members, who resided in the dwelling and erected the chicken house in the mid-twentieth century. The farm was later subdivided among descendants, and a modern dwelling owned by Winchester's granddaughter, Ruby Clark, occupies a parcel directly behind the Winchester House. In recent years, the Winchester House was sold to an out-of-state resident who visits the property only rarely. The farmland remains under cultivation (Ruby Clark Interview 2001).

Evaluation of Eligibility

The O. H. Winchester Farm is not recommended eligible for the National Register under any Criterion. The property does not possess sufficient integrity to qualify under Criterion A for agriculture. The property is not eligible under Criterion B because it is not associated with individuals whose activities were demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context. The house and outbuildings do not have sufficient architectural significance or integrity for eligibility under Criterion C. Finally, the property is not considered eligible under Criterion D because the architectural components are not likely to yield information important in the history of building technology.



Plate 1. O. H. Winchester Farm, Winchester House, Looking South.



Plate 2. O. H. Winchester Farm, Winchester House, Rear Elevation, Looking North.



Plate 3. O. H. Winchester Farm, Winchester House, West Elevation, Looking East.



Plate 4. O. H. Winchester Farm, Winchester House, Enclosed Porch, Looking North.



Plate 5. O. H. Winchester Farm, Ruinous Well House, Looking North.



Plate 6. O. H. Winchester Farm, Ruinous Barn, Looking West.



Plate 7. O. H. Winchester Farm, Chicken House, Looking South.



Plate 8. O. H. Winchester Farm, Garage, Looking South.



Plate 9. O. H. Winchester Farm, Cultivated Field, Looking East.

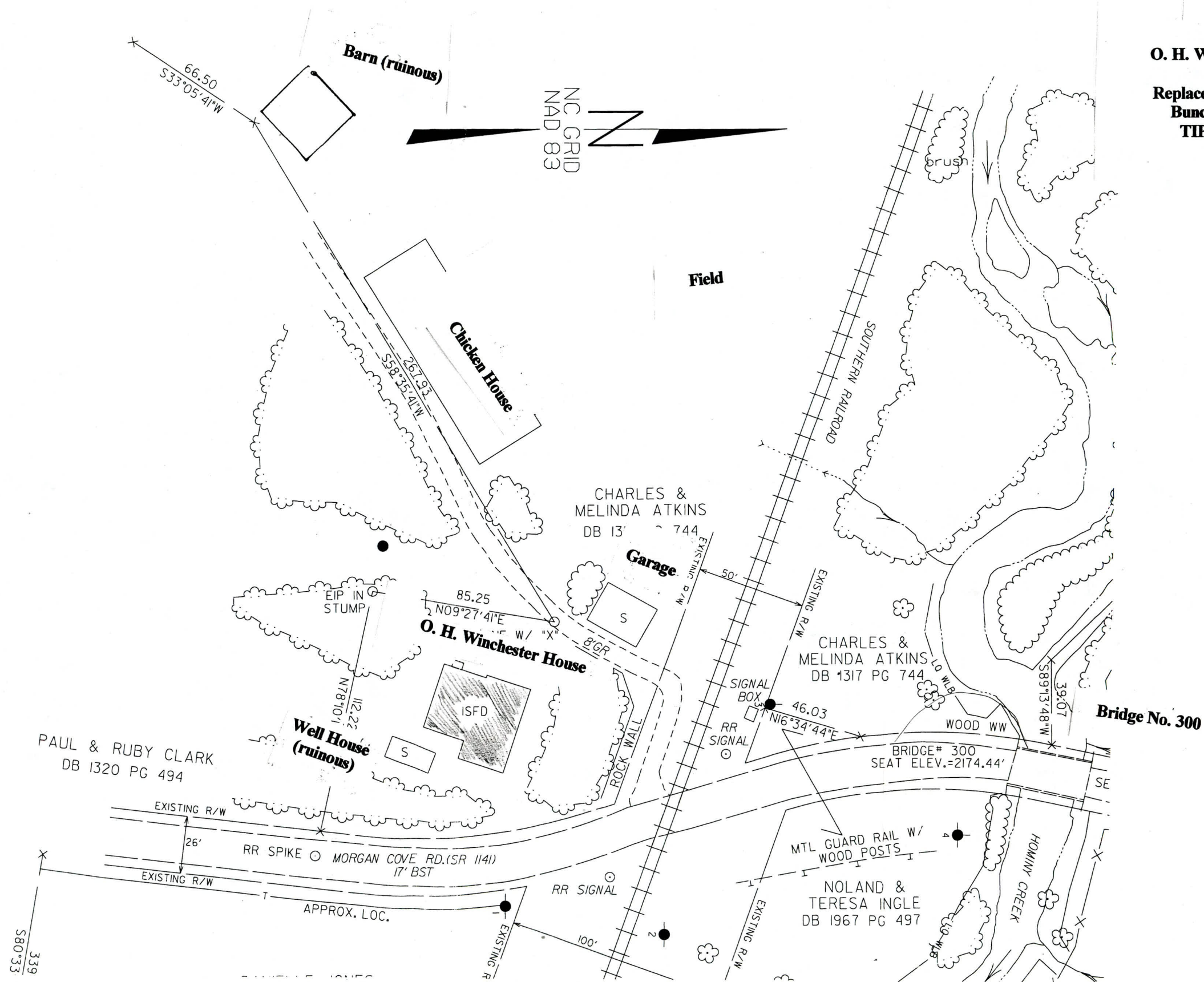


Plate 10. O. H. Winchester Farm, Looking North Towards Bridge No. 300.

Figure 4

Site Plan
O. H. Winchester Farm

Replace Bridge No. 300
Buncombe County
TIP No. B-3614



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- Swaim, Douglas. *Cabins and Castles: The History and Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina*. Asheville, North Carolina: Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County, 1981.