

LISTED ON:	
VLR	09/30/2010
NRHP	12/21/2010

NPS Form 10-900-b

(Rev. 01/2009)

OMB No. 1024-0018

(Expires 5/31/2012)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form**

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission       Amended Submission

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

- Antecedents of Streamline Moderne
- The Many Motivations of Streamline Moderne
- Streamline Moderne Building Types and Character-Defining Features
- Streamline Moderne in Washington, D.C.
- Arlington County: 1936 to 1945
- Commercial Real Estate In Arlington County
- Residential Real Estate In Arlington County
- Streamline Moderne Residential Architecture in Arlington County
- The End of Streamline Moderne Residential Architecture in Arlington County
- Past, Present, and Future of Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County

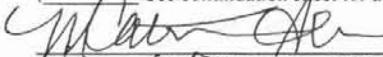
**C. Form Prepared by**

name/title	Laura Trieschmann, Paul Weishar Architectural Historians and Andrea Schoenfeld, Historian		
organization	EHT Traceries	date	February 2010
street & number	1121 Fifth Street, NW	telephone	202-669-5122
city or town	Washington	state	DC      zip code 20001
e-mail	<u>ltrieschmann@traceries.com</u>		

**D. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

	Deputy Director	November 1, 2010
Virginia Kipli	Deputy Director	November 1, 2010
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government		

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County,  
Virginia: 1936-1945

Virginia

Name of Multiple Property Listing

State

---

## Table of Contents for Written Narrative

---

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

	<b>Page Numbers</b>
<b>E. Statement of Historic Contexts</b>	1-31
(if more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	
<b>F. Associated Property Types</b>	32-47
(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	
<b>G. Geographical Data</b>	48
<b>H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods</b>	49-50
(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)	
<b>I. Major Bibliographical References</b>	51-54
(List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 1

---

**A. MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING NAME**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

**B. ASSOCIATED HISTORIC CONTEXTS**

Antecedents of Streamline Moderne

The Many Motivations of Streamline Moderne

Streamline Moderne Building Types and Character-Defining Features

Streamline Moderne in Washington, D.C.

Arlington County: 1936 to 1945

Commercial Real Estate In Arlington County

Residential Real Estate In Arlington County

Streamline Moderne Residential Architecture in Arlington County

The End of Streamline Moderne Residential Architecture in Arlington County

Past, Present, and Future of Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County

**C. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES**

Streamline Moderne Single-Family Dwellings in Arlington County

1. 1325 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South (1936)
2. 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South (1937)
3. 2116 South Kent Street (1937)
4. 4220 16<sup>th</sup> Street South (1937)
5. 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North (1938)
6. 4037 7<sup>th</sup> Street South (1939)
7. 4012 25<sup>th</sup> Road North (1940)
8. 2333 North Vernon Street (1940)
9. 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North (1941)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 2

---

**E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS:**

**Introduction**

The comprehensive survey of Arlington County, Virginia, started in 1993, has identified only nine extant single-family buildings that represent the modernistic architectural expression known as the Streamline Moderne style as it was interpreted between 1936 and 1945 in this Washington, D.C. suburb. The simplified, yet stylized, design of Streamline Moderne, coupled with its inexpensive construction costs, proved nationally popular in the 1930s and early 1940s. In spite of this being a period of great economic and social instability as the nation emerged from the Great Depression and faced another world war, the Streamline Moderne was designed to convey a sense of movement and speed and of modernity. The style was quickly adapted to transportation forms such as ships, airplanes, automobiles and bicycles. The style also carried over to the design of household products such as toasters, radios, and vacuum cleaners and even to jewelry and clothing. Although a short-lived vogue, Streamline Moderne eventually influenced architectural design, most significantly in urban centers and planned subdivisions throughout the United States.

However, Streamline Moderne never became popular in Arlington County, a residential suburb of the nation's capital with a predilection for the traditionally styled buildings produced in great quantities by speculative developers and builders. Each of the nine Streamline Moderne-style houses identified in the multi-phase survey of Arlington County was custom designed for an individual property owner who hired local architects and builders of their own choosing. Thus, each of the nine houses is exceptional and rare in architectural style as well as a showcase of individuality and personal wealth. The houses, originally owned by upper level civilian or military employees of the federal government, were constructed in newly platted neighborhoods populated by middle-class and professional residents. Although the custom-designed Streamline Moderne dwellings in Arlington County stand out among the adjacent dwellings because of their design, they are generally in keeping with their neighborhoods in terms of their size and cost of construction in a period when both housing reformers and the newly created Federal Housing Administration (FHA) were advocating design that provided maximum accommodation within a minimum of means. Most were constructed between 1935 and 1941, a period when Arlington County was expanding rapidly and developers were taking advantage of the FHA's mortgage

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 3

---

insurance programs to build subdivisions of moderately priced housing that the federal government's rapidly expanding work force could afford. Developers and builders, with the encouragement of the FHA, tested new planning ideals, employed innovative materials, and modified architectural styles to better serve modern life styles and economic needs. However, because FHA evaluated each project for its economic soundness, it tended to favor traditional building styles known to be popular in the region. Thus, speculative-built housing in Arlington County before and during World War II was predominantly a vernacular interpretation of the Colonial Revival style that was perennially popular in Northern Virginia suburbs. In contrast, each of Arlington County's Streamline Moderne houses is unique and innovative among its Streamline Moderne counterparts in the county because of the professional experiences and travels of each homeowner and the ability of their local architects to look beyond the traditional and familiar vocabulary for which Arlington County is known.

The systematic survey of Arlington County, starting in the southern end and working north, over the course of 13 years identified only ten Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings. The housing density of Arlington County is greatest in the southern end and diminishes to the north. It is reasonable to believe that these ten were the only Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings constructed in the county. Although Arlington County has experienced considerable infill and alteration or demolition of historic resources in the past decade, it is acceptable to suppose that Arlington County was not inundated with Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings that are no longer extant. In the course of the 13-year survey, if a building was not identified as Streamline Moderne, it would have been identified as modern movement. As such, all buildings identified as having an architectural style similar to Streamline Moderne were reevaluated to determine their correct style. Furthermore, although one Streamline Moderne single-family dwelling was recently demolished, the extent to which the nine extant examples remain unaltered and in excellent condition is a testament to the pride of ownership ensued by the owners of these buildings and suggests that no other Streamline Moderne buildings have been demolished.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 4

---

**The Antecedents of Streamline Moderne**

Amid the traditional and classical styles that so strongly held onto the past there emerged modern designs that were revolutionary, avant-garde, and futuristic. Acceptance of the innovative movements, as with any new design, was based on the modification of “old forms” to express the changing “new age.”<sup>1</sup> The most prevailing of these were sometimes referred to as “late abstract classical substyles, whose distinctions are so fine as to warrant collective consideration under the generic title ‘Art Deco.’”<sup>2</sup> Other architectural expressions emerged during this same period, specifically from 1920 to 1949, such as Constructivism, Expressionism, Futurism, and the International Style. Yet as architectural historian David Gebhard proclaims, “It was the Art Deco and the Streamline Moderne that caught the eye and held the attention of most Americans. These two styles permeated virtually every facet of the design world; their influence was manifest in everything from hairstyles and clothing to Hollywood films, to science fiction illustrations, to furniture, and finally, to architecture.”<sup>3</sup>

Modernistic styles such as Art Deco and Streamline Moderne first received widespread notice in 1922, when the *Chicago Tribune* held a world-wide competition for the design of its new headquarters building. Although Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen received second prize, his innovative Art Deco design drew significantly more acclaim than the winning design of Raymond Hood, which was in the well-known traditional Gothic Revival style. Although other examples of the “modern” style had been constructed as early as 1914 in Helsinki and 1923 in New York City, yet because of the publicity generated by Saarinen’s skyscraper design for the *Chicago Tribune* Tower, “the style quickly became the latest architectural fashion.”<sup>4</sup> Art Deco design, from which the stripped Streamline Moderne would evolve, was presented internationally in Paris at the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in 1925.<sup>5</sup> Architectural historian Randy Juster states “this event set the stylistic tone for early Art Deco, based on earlier neo-classical style but with the application of exotic motifs such as flora and fauna, fountains and chevrons, typically arranged in geometric patterns.”<sup>6</sup> Viewed as a “style of ornament,” Art Deco is predominantly rectilinear in massing, with low-relief designs, parallel straight lines, zigzags, and chevrons.<sup>7</sup> A more subtle but no less important feature of this new form of architectural modernism was the complete expression of functionalism, where surfaces indicated the depth and use of the interior structure. Examples of indicative ornamentation, much of which was embraced further by the succeeding “stripped

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 5

---

down” Streamline Moderne, include expansive window openings, often turning corners, in public living spaces, smaller porthole (round) windows for more private rooms, repetition of structural forms and motifs, fluting and reeding, square or oblong blocks or projections, and entry ways that are industrially plain or surrounded by abstract geometric patterns.<sup>8</sup>

The strong verticality emphasized by Art Deco made the style ideal for skyscrapers, rising upward with staggered setbacks and piers crowned by geometric cornices and pinnacles. No other landmark embodies this better than the Empire State Building in New York City. The building was designed by William Lamb of Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon Associates. Lamb’s design was influenced by the perpendicular style promoted by Eliel Saarinen and demonstrated by the Reynolds Building in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.<sup>9</sup> The beautifully finished Empire State Building has a strong verticality created by a smooth stone, metal and glass skin pierced by long “strips of windows separated by dull aluminum spandrels with modernistic moldings...” Rising 102 stories, the building is crowned by a cylindrical shaft with a conical top. Each of the building’s four corners is composed of “a set of three overlapping metal wings from which the shaft appears to grow; the four sides of the shaft are formed by continuous glass walls.”<sup>10</sup> Completed in 1931 at a cost of over \$27,000,000, the Empire State Building was constructed for John J. Raskob of General Motors, who envisioned his new structure as office and retail space. The bold, futuristic nature of Art Deco architecture, as exhibited by the Empire State Building, inspired the construction of other exceptionally impressive buildings intended to read as monuments such as public libraries, police stations, and local government offices. The style also lent itself well to schools, commercial storefronts, restaurants, and banks, where modernity was subordinate to “security” and “fidelity.”<sup>11</sup> Another avenue for Art Deco architecture that proved popular was the theatre. “As the style developed in the United States, it drew from an even wider range of sources including Egyptian, Chinese, and Mayan art. Movie theatres in particular attempted to establish an overall theme with these exotic sources.”<sup>12</sup> Architecture imitated art as theatres were constructed to reflect the nation’s “taste for opulent and glittery materials, and a desire to create buildings as atmospheric as theatrical stage sets.”<sup>13</sup> An exceptional example is Oakland’s Paramount Theatre. Constructed in 1931, this theatre is noted as the most ambitious theatre design of architect Timothy L. Pflueger. The building is defined by a thin, projecting blade sign emblazoned by vertical neon lights reading “PARAMOUNT” that reflect off mosaic tiles.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 6

---

Yet, despite its popularity in the 1920s through the 1940s, Art Deco had little effect on the architecture of Arlington County as it proved too futuristic and bold for a suburb dominated by Colonial Revival vocabulary. Art Deco, albeit more vernacular than high style, has been noted on some commercial buildings in Arlington County, predominately as a form of corporate branding, and a few multi-family dwellings seeking to create individuality. The 32 extant resources identified with elements of the Art Deco style are stores, movie theaters, restaurants, and garden-apartment buildings and complexes. No examples of freestanding, single-family dwellings illustrating the Art Deco style have been identified in Arlington County. As architectural historians Virginia and Lee McAlester point out, Art Deco nationally was “extremely rare in domestic architecture; we know of only a few surviving houses....”<sup>14</sup>

**The Many Motivations of Streamline Moderne**

By the early 1930s, “the beginning of streamlined industrial design for ships, airplanes, and automobiles,” inspired the futuristic, albeit short-lived, Streamline Moderne.<sup>15</sup> The Streamline Moderne, also known as Moderne, Streamline Deco or Art Moderne, was a stylized architectural expression that called attention to the “modern values of movement.”<sup>16</sup> Far less opulent and more restrained than Art Deco of the late 1920s and early 1930s, Streamline Moderne was an economic and stylistic response to the devastating effects of the Great Depression (1929-1941), when building materials were scarce and owners were reluctant to spend money on mere applied ornamentation, which was the hallmark of Art Deco.

Although both are defined as modernistic, Art Deco and Streamline Moderne are fundamentally different. Architectural historian Alan Gowans states that pure Art Deco “stylized classical forms into straight lines, zigzags, and vertical accents,” while Streamline Moderne “emphasized round shaped and horizontal accents.”<sup>17</sup> Architectural historian David Gebhard clarifies the differences as “...[Art Deco] reflecting the dominance of the triangle and ‘T’-square coupled with stylized classical derived ornamentation, and...[Streamline Moderne] reflecting the French curve and compass.”<sup>18</sup> A clear reaction to Art Deco, Streamline Moderne architecture “stripped off ornament, rounded the corners wherever possible, typically added horizontal bandings which looked like they had been whipped taut by terrific aerodynamic forces, wrapped bands of windows around corners, and replaced Art Deco’s ostentatiously rich materials with more practical and modern looking materials like chrome, plastic, glass blocks and stucco.”<sup>19</sup> In its

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 7

---

usual manifestations, the style “shunned the color experiments and expensive materials of Art Deco and happily relied on synthetics—plastics, plywood, ivory-colored Formica, black glass, and chrome strips.”<sup>20</sup>

Experimentation with the character-defining features of Streamline Moderne architecture began with the 1914 construction of a theater designed by Henri van de Velde for the Deutscher Werkbund Exhibition in Cologne, and then Eric Mendelsohn’s three department stores in Germany in the late 1920s. In 1931, Norman Bel Geddes designed the *House of Tomorrow*, which anticipated and possibly inspired many Streamline Moderne houses in Europe. As described by Donald J. Bush in *The Streamline Decade*, Bel Geddes believed that this new Modernistic design could reverse many of the mistakes of recent housing, warning “that its acceptance would require some jettisoning of old ideas and ideals. Clients would have to realign their priorities and have faith in progressive architects if improvements were to come.”<sup>21</sup> Bel Geddes proclaimed:

...it must be realized that at the moment we are only on the threshold of what in a few years will undoubtedly be the universal architecture; and to be able to visualize what that architecture will be like, the interested person must realize the principles which are governing those architects and designers who are trying to create what we may call the twentieth-century style.

The American adaptation of Streamline Moderne included “sleek, mechanically perfect curves...at the corners of the buildings, in cylindrical helix stairs, circular windows, and spherical knobs.”<sup>22</sup> The curve, as described by Martin Greif in *Depression Modern: The Thirties Style in America*, was “expressive of the tension, vigor, and energy of a new age, the curve became the most dynamic characteristic of the 1930s style. Found everywhere—in shop and showroom, hotel and public building—the curve suggested the streamline, hence modernity, to the American consumer.”<sup>23</sup> Designer Kem Weber exclaimed, “We are rounding the corner,” which the new style did in practice and theory.<sup>24</sup>

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 8

---

The rich materials and flippantly jazzy details enjoyed during the roaring twenties no longer seemed appropriate in an age now hostile to personal ostentation and extravagance.<sup>25</sup> Architectural historians acknowledge the change of style:

...[Streamline Moderne] differed from the High Art Modern Architecture of the early 1930s in that it continued to regard design as ‘styling’ and that architecture should represent or perform as an image rather than be used as a space to radically change one’s everyday life. The boosters of Streamline Moderne argued that their purpose was not to create an architecture that functioned in the same way as the ocean liner, airplane, or locomotive; rather the buildings would symbolize those things and therefore remind one of the ‘modern’ future.<sup>26</sup>

Streamline Moderne embodied the “hypnotizing promise of more and more things tomorrow, advanced by America’s machine technologies and rising standard of living.”<sup>27</sup> The style intentionally attempted to be a source of optimism for even the poorest Americans who hoped that modern machines and technology would be accessible to everyone and thus make life “on the other side of the Great Depression” easier.<sup>28</sup> The Streamline Moderne deliberately reduced financial burdens (metaphorically and figuratively) and ensured simple living by providing a less expensive design that was technologically advanced. Futuristic machines showcased this to the nation and provided a tangible result that promised an easier life. Alan Gowans explains:

[designers popularizing the innovations of streamlining] intended to improve the industrial fabric and provide jobs for everybody again. These were not glorifications of machines or subordinations of human interest to theories of scientific materials, but ‘streamline’ practical solutions to problems plaguing human life: superhighways that would make driving easier, cars that would make driving safer and easier, better-looking and better-working radios and clocks and washing machines. Streamlining referred not to some mystical ‘new Modern spirit,’ but to the reduction of complexity to simple, easier-flowing shapes for the benefit of beholders and users in every aspect of life—machines, buildings, furniture. Streamlining expressed and coped with Depression economies; it justified harsh necessities in terms of aesthetics, showing how the efficiencies of

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 9

---

exposed steel-cage construction of factory-made materials like glass brick could be made attractive to the user.<sup>29</sup>

Marked by the mass production of high volume goods on assembly lines and technological advances, the Machine Age forever influenced and changed the world. The facet that sparked the public's imagination the most was the possibility of rapid transportation. During the early 1930s, some people would spend weekends at airports, attracted by airplanes' speed and their limitless potential for travel.<sup>30</sup> The increasing ease and speed of road, rail, and air travel had a direct effect on where Streamline Moderne buildings were constructed. David Gebhard explains, "As a consequence of increasing suburbanization throughout the United States, Streamline Moderne buildings also tended to be street- or highway-oriented (service stations, motels, drive-in restaurants and theaters, supermarkets), not confined to urban environments to the extent that Art Deco buildings were."<sup>31</sup>

**Streamline Moderne Building Types and Character-Defining Features**

Throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, Streamline Moderne architecture was an acknowledged, even if not widely used, design style for both single- and multi-family housing, commercial, and industrial buildings nationwide. Streamline Moderne, like Art Deco, was most popular for dressing up public and commercial buildings such as courthouses, post offices, city halls, skyscrapers, movie theaters, bus stations, airport terminals, and museums, as a way of promoting sociological and ideological diversity.<sup>32</sup> Several public and commercial examples of the Streamline Moderne appear in Northern Virginia and the Washington metropolitan area and, because of their innovative architectural expression, are commonly revered as visual landmarks. Although it was the "prevalent Modernistic form" after about 1930, Streamline Moderne was never widely popular for residential architecture. Only "scattered examples can be found throughout the country."<sup>33</sup> The rarity of the style as applied to residential buildings is evident in Arlington County, where historical precedents dominated the suburban landscape. Constructed between 1936 and 1941, a period of burgeoning growth and speculative construction, the nine extant examples identified in Arlington County dared to cast off the traditional Colonial Revival-style vocabulary that recalled the past and evoked stability in favor of the bold and futuristic promise promoted by the Streamline Moderne. Each of the nine Streamline Moderne-style

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 10

---

houses identified was custom designed for an individual property owner who hired local architects and builders of his own choosing.

The character-defining features of the Streamline Moderne, elements portrayed on each of the nine extant examples in Arlington County, are their smooth surfaces, horizontal emphasis, and curved corners. In unison these elementary elements all contribute to the feeling of aerodynamic force of the Streamline Moderne. The smooth exterior surfaces are created by stuccoed concrete blocks such as 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South (1937), and exposed or painted brick cladding laid in stretcher bond exhibited at 4220 16<sup>th</sup> Street South (1937) and 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North (1941). This horizontality is created by the wide asbestos-cement shingles on the upper story of 4012 25<sup>th</sup> Road North (1940) and replacement siding at 4037 8<sup>th</sup> Street South (1939). Uncomplicated in form, these buildings are composed of square and rectangular blocks of varying heights and widths set next to and atop each other to form complex and visually stimulating multi-dimensional structures. This is seen at 2116 South Kent Street (1937), 2333 North Vernon Street (1940), 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South, and most notably at 4012 25<sup>th</sup> Road North. Curved corners and bays, such as those at 2333 North Vernon Street and 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North, unify the individual blocks. The house at 4012 25<sup>th</sup> Road North is an exemplary example of how curving corners, highlighting paint colors, and stacking boxes, sometimes elevated well above street level because of the natural topography of the building lots, present a sense of verticality that contrasts with the horizontal emphasis created by the structure itself.

Nautical elements, such as round metal railings, horizontal bands of windows lacking molded surrounds, and porthole (round) windows, are commonly featured. These details, noted at 2116 South Kent Street, 2333 North Vernon Street, and 4012 25<sup>th</sup> Road, "sought to create a nautical effect, as though the home were an ocean liner replete with pipe railings, white bows, and strip windows."<sup>34</sup> This effect is further emphasized by the lack of surface ornamentation and reinforced by the smooth, often white, finish of the walls, the soft round corners, flat roofs, and incised or slightly projecting string courses to create a distinctive streamlined look that is often highlighted by the use of suntrap (curved) and/or wrapping windows. These distinctive window openings are found at 2333 North Vernon Street, 4220 16<sup>th</sup> Street South, and 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 11

---

Embellishment of the austere white, smooth surfaces of Streamline Moderne dwellings was limited as a rule, reflecting the preferences of the individual owner and/or interpretations of the style by the various architects and designers. Ornamentation is generally limited to mirrored panels, glass wall blocks, concrete panels, and occasionally metal panels with low relief decoration that are confined to the entries or window openings. Ornamental construction materials were commonly used to adorn the Streamline Moderne houses in Arlington County. The sleekness of glass blocks, exhibited for the first time at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, was perfectly compatible with Streamline Moderne architecture, providing a dramatic luminous quality while brightening dark interiors. Martin Greif, in *Depression Modern: The Thirties Style in America*, states that, "[glass block's] very existence demanded a 'modern' setting. Used as wall or window, as inner partition or simple decoration, for bar or soda fountain, and even (for the fanciful) in furniture, glass block gave translucence without visibility, light with little heat transmission (making it perfect for America's first air-conditioned buildings), effective sound insulation, and low maintenance costs since it required no finish."<sup>35</sup> The octagonal-shaped dining room of 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North and the two-story block of 4220 16<sup>th</sup> Street South both have large glass block windows with no applied surrounds or moldings, thus allowing the blocks to read as ornamentation. The entry hall of 2333 North Vernon Street is illuminated by glass block sidelights that flank the primary entry opening, a feature reminiscent of classical architecture. The two-story, rounded entry bay at 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North incorporates glass block to form a sweeping, curved wall that provides natural light while not sacrificing privacy for the interior of the dwelling.

The primary entry openings of Streamline Moderne houses do not commonly serve as focal points, although it does present a palette for contrasting materials and colors.<sup>36</sup> This was certainly the case at 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North (1938), where the main entry is ornately finished with three courses of ceramic tiles, ranging in color from aqua to green. The color of the tiles, as well as the polished finish, is a striking contrast to the painted white brickwork of the structure. The primary entry opening at 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South contains a single-leaf door with a high reflective metallic finish and porthole, the only circular opening on the dwelling. In striking discord with the horizontal emphasis synonymous with the Streamline Moderne, the primary entry opening of 4037 7<sup>th</sup> Street South holds a single-leaf door with vertical fluting. This design element is the only vertical feature of the dwelling and provides stylistic definition on a building with very little embellishment.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 12

---

A popular design feature of the style utilized on many of the extant Streamline Moderne dwellings in Arlington County was the implicit hiding of the roof form and sheathing materials from the public view. This was typically achieved by a flat roof, which enforced the block form and emphasized the horizontality promoted by Streamline Moderne. This also allowed utilitarian equipment such as gutters to be hidden from view behind low parapet walls and thus not interfere with the design. The flat roof and obscuring of utilitarian equipment from view is evident on 4220 16<sup>th</sup> Street South and 1325 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South. Notably, the house at 2333 North Vernon Street is crowned by a side-gabled roof covered in red asphalt shingles that contrast with the white exterior of the structure. Unlike those covering the many contemporaneous Colonial Revival-style buildings in Arlington County, this roof has a narrow overhang and plain fascia board lacking applied ornamentation. The two-story square block projecting from the southeast elevation is covered by a hipped roof. This block is symmetrically matched by a projecting semicircular block on the northeast elevation, which is covered by a conical roof. The one-story block on the northeast elevation has a flat roof with a parapet that serves as a balustrade for the rooftop porch. The roofs, despite their forms, are shallow and low-lying so as not to interfere with the horizontality of the style. Moreover, the variety of roof forms at 2333 North Vernon Street clearly exemplifies the style's characteristic amalgamation of numerous square, rectangular, and curved blocks to create a visually stimulating, multi-dimensional structure.

The use of innovative materials was not restricted to the exteriors of Streamline Moderne houses, such as those in Arlington County demonstrate. Natural materials, such as wood and marble, are blended with mass-produced decorative elements like aluminum, stainless steel, and glass, for use as surrounds, railings, and balusters on the interiors of the buildings. As a rule, the style required floor plans that were flowing and open, with primary living spaces often merged or separated by a step or low railing. The interior of 2333 North Vernon Street, for example, has pine flooring and stair rails, pine paneling in the den, chrome fixtures and hardware, and a black marble mantel that is in sharp contrast to the white walls and ceiling that lack applied moldings. The living and dining rooms are combined, yet defined as two separate spaces—the living room is primarily located in the square block with casement and fixed metal-sash windows, while the dining room is set within the projecting semicircular block with a large glass block window. The house at 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North incorporates innovative elements specifically designed to provide maximum accommodation within a minimum of means, all the while ensuring that the expression of functionalism from the exterior was maintained. This is primarily the influence of

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number  E

Page  13

---

the homeowner, who was a civil engineer, but also signifies the Streamline Moderne's promotion of modern machines and technology. This house, innovative when constructed in 1938, provides a private telephone room, a dark room on the second floor, a chute on the second story that leads to the laundry room next to the kitchen, a shower on the first floor, and a small bedroom and bath on the lower story for live-in domestic staff.

**Streamline Moderne in Washington, D.C.**

Compared with cities such as New York or Philadelphia, where architectural experimentation was heralded, the nation's capital in the early decades of the twentieth century was decidedly conservative in its architectural tastes.<sup>37</sup> From the District of Columbia's inception as the nation's capital in 1800, its principal public buildings were constructed in classical styles and forms that evoked Greece and Rome and the classical precedents for the newly formed democracy. The built environment of the city was intentionally designed to inform the citizens of the country and the world at large of the young nation's core principles and its ambition to be a power on the world stage. Appreciation for the principles of classical design was reinforced in the late nineteenth century, as young American architects began to train at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. The architects selected to plan the development of the federal city at the opening of the twentieth century (informally known as the McMillan Commission) had trained at the Ecole, were well versed in classical styles, and were active proponents of the turn-of-the-twentieth-century urban planning movement known as the City Beautiful Movement. Federal architecture in the District adhered to classical designs in the years when Streamline Moderne was admired in commercial architecture. Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon explicitly rejected the use of modernistic styles for federal buildings in the city when he declared that Modern 'blunt' architecture would not be used in the construction of Washington's Federal Triangle (1928-1935), one of the last City Beautiful plans implemented in the country.<sup>38</sup>

Consequently, few Streamline Moderne buildings were constructed in Washington, D.C., an indication that new modernistic architectural styles and forms were not widely accepted in the nation's capital. Washington, D.C. was more influenced and controlled by the federal government than any other American city. It is interesting to note that the three buildings highlighted as exemplary examples of Streamline Moderne architecture in Washington, D.C. were owned and constructed by private companies for commercial purposes.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 14

---

One of the most visible Streamline Moderne buildings in Washington, D.C. is the Greyhound Terminal, located at 1100 New York Avenue, N.W. The landmark terminal, located within the confines of the federal city as originally laid out in 1791, was designed in 1938 by W. S. Arrasmith, a noted transportation architect with the firm of Wischmeyer, Arrasmith & Elswick from Louisville, Kentucky. This concrete structure is faced with Indiana limestone, which was the predominant material of choice in the nation's capital, and trimmed with black terra cotta, which was in stark contrast to the traditional materials of the federal city. The symmetrical design of the 140-foot-long building included a central two-and-one-half-story public waiting room flanked by two-story wings. The building features a four-story high triangular central tower surmounted by a speeding chrome greyhound and cantilevered marquee.<sup>39</sup> The building's rounded corners, complex of flat roofs, smooth, unadorned wall finish, and horizontal bands of windows with metal trim, present a streamlined look reflecting the arrival of the new industrial age, while touting the building's direct association with transportation.<sup>40</sup>

Another notable building reflecting high-style elements of the Streamline Moderne is the former Hecht Company Warehouse, located at 1401 New York Avenue, N.E. This large building has a six-story block that dominates the site with its massive quarter-round northwest corner rising to support a unique glass brick tower. The main façade, wrapping from New York Avenue to Fenwick Street, has a pronounced base of black glazed brick and terra cotta with evenly spaced metal casement windows framed by white glazed brick borders.<sup>41</sup> The building's location along New York Avenue near a rail line outside the boundaries of the federal city evokes the suburban growth spurred by a society enthralled with transportation, and probably played a role in the selection of Streamline Moderne as its architectural style. Opened in 1937, the warehouse was hailed as "symbolic of an arresting type of architecture that is destined to precipitate a revolutionary transformation in the appearance and utility of the buildings."<sup>42</sup> The landmark warehouse made a strong impression on the general public when it was completed and continues to receive great accolades from those in the architectural profession.

The Atlas Theater, located at 1333 H Street, N.E., is one of the best examples of a neighborhood movie house in the Streamline Moderne style. Built in 1938 at the height of the city's boom in theater construction, the air-conditioned, 1,000-seat theater and its distinctive storefronts exemplify the type of convenient modern facility that gradually began to supplant the grand downtown movie palaces. The building was designed by John Jacob Zink, the finest and most

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 15

---

prolific theater architect in the Mid-Atlantic States during the 1930s and 1940s. The Streamline Moderne façade is executed in limestone, black glass, and aluminum, with streamline and zigzag decorative motifs. The composition is dynamically asymmetrical—from a pivot point at one end, the triple-panel theater frontispiece, streamlined marquee, and projecting lighted sign form a Cartesian geometry of intersecting planes in three directions.<sup>43</sup> The Atlas Theater, a rare example of an unaltered theater in the city (most neighborhood theaters in the District of Columbia have been lost), is a point of neighborhood pride and stands as a landmark along the highly traveled streetcar and automobile corridor of H Street.

The Streamline Moderne buildings constructed in Washington, D.C. exhibit the work of well-known architects whose designs contrasted with the conservative nature of most federal government architecture in the early twentieth century. Yet, those residents of the surrounding suburbs who worked and shopped in the District of Columbia were inspired by the monumental classically inspired architecture of the nation's capital which affected the residential architecture of the growing suburbs, particularly Arlington County. In recognition of these architectural styles, the vast majority of these monumental governmental buildings are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Arlington County: 1936 to 1945**

While the rest of the nation was experiencing an unprecedented decline in housing construction and economic stability due to the effects of the Great Depression, a period of economic distress that began with the stock market crash in October of 1929, Arlington County was experiencing tremendous growth and development. A 26-square-mile county located along the Potomac River in Northern Virginia, Arlington County has served as a residential suburb of the District of Columbia and the nearby cities of Georgetown and Alexandria since the late eighteenth century. During this early period, prominent citizens established summer homes, large country estates, and farmsteads in what was to become Arlington County. At first development was slow, as the areas within and immediately surrounding the nation's capital were established. Arlington County remained predominantly rural throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with only minor growth in population. It was not until the outbreak of World War I in Europe in 1914 and the ensuing expansion of the federal government as the United States became involved, which attracted employees from across the country to the Washington metropolitan area, that

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 16

---

Arlington County witnessed any large-scale development. As a result, between 1910 and 1920, the population of the county grew by 60 percent. The population growth was further stimulated in the 1930s when the Roosevelt administration created New Deal programs in an attempt to jump-start the economy and provide employment for all classes of Americans. The New Deal programs more than doubled the number of available government-funded civilian jobs between 1930 and 1940. As a result, the Washington metropolitan area was stricken by a severe housing shortage.<sup>44</sup> As Arlington County improved its public infrastructure and transportation routes to and from the nation's capital, the once-rural county quickly became an attractive alternative to living in the city. By 1937, Arlington County was touted as "the smallest in area in the state and the fastest growing in population and telephones." Indeed, between 1930 and 1940, Arlington County doubled in size from 26,615 to 56,200 residents, becoming the fastest developing county in the Washington metropolitan area and the Commonwealth of Virginia.<sup>45</sup>

Washington, D.C.'s predilection for classical styles and forms in its public buildings influenced the architectural tastes of the citizens of the metropolitan area, particularly those living in the suburb of Arlington County. Many Arlingtonians were employed in Washington, D.C., working in these monumental government buildings and viewing the city's classical architecture daily. A survey by the *Washington Post* in 1936 revealed that the "American public prefers a simplified version of sturdy American styles rather than ultra-modern architecture."<sup>46</sup> The style embedded in American culture was Colonial Revival. Following on the heels of America's Centennial celebrations in 1876, the Colonial Revival style emerged strongly in the early 1880s. The style, which borrowed heavily from early American architecture – particularly Georgian and Federal buildings – was largely an outgrowth of a new nationwide nostalgia and pride in the past and a rapidly growing interest in historic preservation. In the early phase, the Colonial Revival style remained the exclusive domain of fashionable architectural firms and was favored for the large residences of wealthy clients. The Colonial Revival emerged in the American psyche through both literature and practice. Restoration architects and early historic preservationists embraced the Colonial Revival style following the restoration efforts at Colonial Williamsburg and other historic houses such as Mount Vernon and Stratford Hall in Virginia. These monumental restorations of national significance created a preservation ethic that resounded nationwide. The theories of the Colonial Revival movement were espoused in popular magazines such as *Harper's Weekly*, *Architectural Record*, and *The American Historical Review* that catered to the educational desires of the upper- and upper-middle classes. Articles were written by leading

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 17

---

promoters of the movement including Fiske Kimball and Lawrence Kocher, who both headed the Fine Arts program at the University of Virginia during the 1920s. These early advocates attempted to impose a pure American idiom on an increasingly diverse national population. Simultaneously, national organizations promoting awareness of America's colonial heritage, including the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Colonial Dames of America, and the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, were emerging and gaining increased popularity. A widespread interest in the preservation movement and historic architectural styles reached a crucial highpoint with John D. Rockefeller's interest in creating an educational and historical village in Williamsburg, Virginia. The ideology of Colonial Williamsburg, which was created in 1927, sought to serve as "a public sacrament, an outward and visible sign of spiritual truth and beauty, through which the lives of visitors to this place would be inspired and enriched."<sup>47</sup> The popularity of the Colonial Revival style was further ensured by the Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition of 1926 in Philadelphia and the creation of Henry Ford's Greenfield Village in Michigan in 1929. Yet, as much as the Colonial Revival movement aimed to inspire the nation as a whole, early reception was limited to the upper- and upper-middle classes who read the academic magazines, attended college lectures, employed high-style architects, and owned automobiles, creating a leisure class capable of traveling to visit historic sites. Accordingly, the buildings of Arlington County, whether residential, commercial, and governmental, are not illustrative of the high-style interpretation of the Colonial Revival style; rather, these symmetrically fenestrated buildings merely borrowed some of the traditional elements.

The dominance of the Colonial Revival style in Arlington County, and in the larger Washington metropolitan area, has resulted in a lack of stylistic variety and thus there are a limited number of Streamline Moderne buildings.

**Commercial Real Estate In Arlington County**

The Streamline Moderne commercial buildings constructed in Arlington County, which were not as elaborate and large as those in the nation's capital, are significant in that they demonstrated the influences a large city and a fashionable, albeit short-lived, architectural style could have on suburban architecture. Like the smaller Streamline Moderne commercial buildings in the District of Columbia, the non-residential Streamline Moderne buildings of Arlington County catered to

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 18

---

the small residential neighborhoods rather than the larger population that traveled through the county to the outlying suburbs.

A notable example of the Streamline Moderne in Arlington County is the automobile showroom at 3910 Wilson Boulevard historically known as Al's Motors. Auto part outlets, service stations, tire stores, and car dealerships like Al's Motors were among the many roadside buildings constructed nationwide to serve the automobile, and the streamlining of these buildings advertised their automobile-oriented function. Automobiles and auto-oriented buildings used the same industrial materials of steel, glass, and chrome tubing – hard, shiny, slick surfaces that were novel and modern. Al's Motors, constructed in 1948 along the highly traveled Wilson Boulevard, expressed the forward-looking ideals of the Streamline Moderne, with its rounded glass curtain walls and metal cornice, glass block sidelights and transom, and horizontal string courses and banding.

One mile to the northeast of Al's Motors is the Dan Kain Building. Located at 3100 North Washington Boulevard, this Streamline Moderne building was constructed in 1945 in downtown Clarendon, the commercial hub of Arlington County. Like the automobile-related buildings constructed to front major transportation corridors, the Dan Kain Building was intentionally designed for the heavily-traveled intersection of Washington Boulevard and North Highland Street. The one-story brick building is faced with limestone tiles and has a flat roof with a low parapet. The most notable feature is the commercial structure's cylindrical corner with recessed entry framed by limestone pilasters. The north and east elevations, both reading as primary facades, contain plate glass display windows framed in metal and capped by a molded aluminum band. A concrete string course unites these elevations as they wrap around the corner. The curving façade of the landmark Dan Kain Building is matched by the rounded portico of its neighbor, the Classical Revival-style Arlington Post Office, which was constructed in 1937 at 3118 North Washington Boulevard.

The architectural survey of Arlington County has identified less than twenty buildings associated with the Streamline Moderne, which like the County's Art Deco buildings, are predominately commercial buildings, such as automobile showrooms, gasoline stations, shopping centers, and stores. The continued growth of Arlington County throughout the twentieth century has resulted in the significant alteration or demolition of many Streamline Moderne commercial buildings, an

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 19

---

outcome generated by a lack of appreciation and/or understanding for the modernistic style, the buildings prominent locations along major transportation corridors, lack of local designation, and Virginia's by-right development land use law.

**Residential Real Estate In Arlington County**

With its convenient location near Washington, D.C., and its vast amount of open space ripe for development, Arlington County became a testing ground in the 1930s and 1940s for new housing developments, often supported by government-funded or -insured programs. Guided by such federal agencies as the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration (PWA) and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), developers quickly began to plat subdivisions and construct housing for the burgeoning population of middle class and working professionals. The FHA's approval process for mortgage insurance and publication of housing and subdivision standards allowed for the institution of a national program that regulated home building practices for many decades. The *FHA's Principles of Planning Small Houses* (1936) and circulars such as *Property Standards*, *Recent Developments in Building Construction*, and *Modern Housing* addressed issues of construction, materials, housing standards, and principles of design. As explained in the Multiple Property Documentation form, "Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1960," the FHA housing types ensured comfort while being "void of non-essential spaces, picturesque features, and unnecessary items that would add to their cost." The vast majority of houses constructed in Arlington County from the late 1930s onwards followed the FHA's principle of "providing a maximum accommodation within a minimum of means. Houses could be built in a variety of materials, including wood, brick, concrete block, shingles, stucco, or stone. To increase domestic efficiency, new labor saving technologies were introduced: kitchens were equipped with modern appliances, and the utility room's integrated mechanical system replaced the basement furnace of earlier homes."<sup>48</sup> These ensured all houses, regardless of funding or mortgage insurance, were economically within reach of the middle class and working professional population, and not just upper class residents.

Streamline Moderne actually lent itself well to small house construction with no applied ornamentation that "would add to their cost." In fact, the character-defining features of the Streamline Moderne house ensured that its construction was economically feasible for middle-class property owners in Arlington County. The smooth exterior walls of stucco or brick veneer

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 20

---

over a concrete-block structure required little maintenance. The indicative flat or shallow roof was less expensive to construct than the steeply pitched multi-gabled roofs of neighboring houses. Hidden within the structure, plumbing pipes, ducts, electrical conduits, together with furnaces or air-conditioning units, were modern and efficient by design.<sup>49</sup> Each dwelling was equipped with modern appliances, an element promoted in the Streamline Moderne model homes showcased at the 1939 World's Fair in New York City. The flowing, open plan deleted non-essential spaces by connecting public rooms and confining private spaces as the FHA suggested. "Unnecessary ornamentation was removed and sharp angles [of traditional housing] replaced with simple, aerodynamic curves. Exotic woods and stone, [which added great expense to construction costs] were replaced with cement and glass."<sup>50</sup> Despite the fact that the Streamline Moderne house met all of the qualifications of the FHA and small house construction directive, the style was not widely embraced by developers, financiers, and property owners in Arlington County.

Although the government publications did little to promote the innovative modernistic designs of the Streamline Moderne for residential construction as a rule, the PWA did eventually venture into the new modernistic expressions, especially for public housing. Author Mark Gelernter explains the problems this ultimately created:

This "inadvertently set up a number of serious problems which, after the Second World War, ultimately called the entire federal housing program into question. To begin with, the flat roofs and astringent detailing of Modernism led to greater maintenance problems and therefore higher continuing expenses...."<sup>51</sup>

Although free to present any architectural style, architects, builders, developers, and investors were reluctant to venture beyond the traditionally accepted styles, especially those expressed so imposingly by the monuments and federal government buildings of Washington, D.C. Moreover, Arlingtonians remained committed to classically styled houses, which evoked the security of the past. Streamline Moderne, in contrast, looked directly to the unknown of the future. Faced with a decision, many homebuyers were not willing to embrace the "radical socialist program with which the European Modernist movement had been associated."<sup>52</sup> There was a stigma associated with building a Streamline Moderne that did not sit well with the conventional thinking residents of Arlington County and their general resistance to change. Rather, classical and traditional

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 21

---

styles proved themselves to be a “safer” design in an era of uncertainty. In 1935, architect Leon Chatelain, Jr., remarked, “Modern ideas have had little influence on the exterior treatment of the private house to the present time.”<sup>53</sup> When looking for a new house, “most clients were not willing to embrace the austere European images, or the values for which they [Streamline Moderne] stood.”<sup>54</sup> A 1937 editorial in *The Washington Post* further reveals the Washington metropolitan area’s negative reaction to the new style, “Almost certainly it would have been a large, square box, with, perhaps, another smaller box on top of the first one. That seems to be the sole idea of the modern architect.”<sup>55</sup> This overwhelming sentiment, coupled with Arlington’s base of conservative government employees who worked in Washington, D.C.’s Beaux Arts neoclassical buildings, resulted in a majority of the 1930s and 1940s residential development being inspired by the traditional Colonial Revival style.

In classical and traditional architecture Americans knew what they were buying and thus were prepared economically. In Arlington County, the average size and cost of a single-family dwelling reflecting the Colonial Revival style was well established, something not yet known for Streamline Moderne architecture. For many, economic conditions were a deciding factor in the construction or purchase of houses in Arlington County during the 1930s and 1940s, which helps explain the lack of architectural experimentation. Many people purchasing dwellings in Arlington County during this period were new to the area with new government- or military-related jobs, and thus were uncertain about how long they would be in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area. The ability to secure financing was also a major consideration in the construction or purchase of a Streamline Moderne house. This would have been a difficult obstacle for most because no one understood or knew the market value of a Streamline Moderne dwelling in the future. For most Arlingtonians, the construction or purchase of a Streamline Moderne dwelling would have been an irresponsible investment at a time when much of the country was still reeling from the effects of the Great Depression and preparing to enter World War II.

Another determining factor in the rarity of Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings was that American architects were not sure if their profession would ever eschew classic design styles and forms in favor of modern design. In 1930, over six hundred architects attended the American Institute of Architects (AIA) national convention in the District of Columbia.<sup>56</sup> This architectural symposium was held to discuss the merits of modern design and “Modernism,” which was

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 22

---

viewed by many in the profession as novel and most likely to be short lived. Thus, potential homebuyers were not presented the opportunity to purchase a Streamline Moderne house simply because architects and builders in Northern Virginia and the Washington metropolitan area were not versed in the style. Similarly, it was difficult to find experienced builders who were familiar with the distinctive style and its irregular forms. Not familiar with the new, untried materials, builders wanted designs and materials that they could replicate many times over to maximize profits and decrease delivery times.

Consequently, Colonial Revival-style dwellings were an easy sell to homebuyers in Arlington County during the 1930s and 1940s, and well into the 1950s. “Architects who could build the most accurate replica of an Old-World house without compromising the client’s desires for modern utility were in great demand.”<sup>57</sup> Modern architecture touted by builders was for the most part merely an adaptation of popular styles with less ornamentation, thus appearing to be a “new” architectural expression to the casual observer who “seldom focused on the differences between works that would today be perceived as exemplifying contending styles.”<sup>58</sup> This further diluted the influence modernistic architecture could achieve in the residential building market, especially in suburbs of the nation’s capital like Arlington County. In 1938, noted West Coast architect and consultant architect for the Treasury Department, Gilbert Stanley Underwood, spoke of “Modern” architecture as not yet a style that can be classified.<sup>59</sup>

Mirroring Arlington County residents’ conservatism towards constructing or purchasing a Streamline Moderne dwelling were the homeowners’ magazines of the period. These periodicals, such as *House Beautiful*, “did not embrace the new ideas with any enthusiasm.”<sup>60</sup> Yet, although Americans were ambitious in their desire to streamline everything big and small, what remained constant was a deep seated desire for a classically styled house. This sentiment is first demonstrated in the Washington metropolitan area in 1928. A *Home Beautiful* exhibit led visitors through six “ideal” houses decorated with “new modernistic furniture.”<sup>61</sup> Floor lamps, kitchen appliances, and clocks, which had no reason to be aerodynamic, took a modern “streamline” look that was more easily accepted. The six showcase houses, in stark contrast to the furniture exhibited, were traditional in style.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 23

---

Historian David Gebhard explains how the material items associated with a house may be inspired by the future but, for most like those living in Arlington County, a Colonial Revival-style dwelling embodied the desirable classical proportions of early American architecture:

At the end of the 1930s, middle-class Americans could leave their Colonial Revival suburban homes, climb into their streamlined cars, and dart off to their Streamline supermarkets or neighborhood movie theaters.<sup>62</sup>

A comparative study for the period between 1936 and 1945, when the nine extant Streamline Moderne houses were being erected in Arlington County, shows the estimated construction costs for these innovative, stylized dwellings was analogous to neighboring dwellings that followed the FHA's principles for small houses. Construction costs ranged from \$4,000 to \$11,000, the difference defined primarily by the number of full baths and bedrooms. Interestingly, the least and most expensive of the nine extant dwellings were both built of wood frame covered in stucco with a concrete-block foundation. The average construction cost for the Streamline Moderne houses in Arlington County was \$7,000 to \$9,500, resulting in a concrete-block structure covered with stucco on a foundation of either concrete blocks or brick. Building permits show all of the examples in Arlington County were equipped with modern appliances and amenities such as electricity, gas, air conditioning, hot air, and oil heating. This placed the Streamline Moderne dwellings in the middle to upper end of dwellings constructed in Arlington County. Although the country was rebounding from the effects of the Great Depression, many had not forgotten the almost 30 percent unemployment rate just a few years earlier. Property values took a sharp decline and although Arlington County was insulated to a degree, constructing or buying a new house was a major economic risk for most, especially a house of a new non-traditional style.

Moreover, the lack of mass-produced elements, representative of the Streamline Moderne, necessitated that an owner hire an architect. This resulted in an additional cost that could not be met by many potential homeowners. Additionally, the drafting of a design took time, which many newcomers to Arlington County could not afford. The additional cost of finding temporary housing was not an attractive option for most. Thus, the overwhelming percentage of turn-key Colonial Revival-style dwellings and garden-apartment complexes proved attractive to the transient newcomers in the 1930s and 1940s.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 24

---

**Streamline Moderne Residential Architecture in Arlington County**

The limited number of Streamline Moderne residential buildings in Arlington County is a microcosm of the Washington metropolitan area. As mentioned before, a vast majority of the residents of Arlington County worked in Washington, D.C. These people were exposed to the monumental architecture and culture of national pride exhibited through classical architectural expressions. To build a Streamline Moderne single-family dwelling in the 1930s and 1940s in Arlington County would have been to take a major step against perceived notions of wise investment and sound judgment.

The style, although based in widely accepted theory and practiced nationwide, did not gain traction in Arlington County residential construction. Thus, the extant Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings are unique landmarks in the built environment of Arlington County, which was developed with large tracts of single-family, Colonial Revival-style dwellings. Although the buildings present a rare domestic style for Arlington County, they are not, within the confines of the style, examples of high-style architecture. However, taken within the context of the single-family dwellings constructed in Arlington County, the extant Streamline Moderne dwellings present a unique and significant trend in architectural history. The relatively few Streamline Moderne dwellings constructed in Arlington County are a powerful testament to the homeowners, architects and builders who designed and built them.

Homebuyers proved to be the most influential factor in the design of the nine Streamline Moderne houses identified in Arlington County. Operating within the design fundamentals, these Streamline Moderne dwellings exemplify their owner's individual taste and desire for forward-looking designs, forms, and materials, something which promoted the idea that Modernism was not simply just another style in the long history of architectural styles, but rather the end of style itself.<sup>63</sup> The owners of Streamline Moderne dwellings believed that Modernism inevitably resulted when one built functionally, rationally, and economically. This being said, the owners and architects of these Streamline Moderne dwellings stayed within the confines of many established building practices in Arlington County by maintaining the typical setback and massing of their respective neighborhoods.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 25

---

Given the aforementioned constraints of building a Streamline Moderne dwelling, it is notable that the original owners of these nine houses in Arlington County held professional jobs and were generally people of means. Moreover, the original owners were all influential in the design of these unique Arlington County dwellings. The dwelling at 4037 7<sup>th</sup> Street South, for example, was owned and designed by William F. Tapp, an aspiring architect raised in Arlington County. Tapp entered the 1936 Washington metropolitan area house design competition known as the “My Home Contest.” This competition invited the public to submit a sketch for the design of a new dwelling that would “express one’s own ideal.” The winning design was a collaboration of Tapp’s original sketch and local architect Leon Chatelain’s expertise.<sup>64</sup> Located at 4848 Upton Street, N.W. in Washington, D.C., the “My Home Contest” dwelling was dedicated on October 25, 1936. William Tapp’s penchant for progressive architecture influenced his desire to live in a Streamline Moderne house, which he had constructed in 1939 in the Alcova Heights neighborhood of Arlington County.

The house at 2333 North Vernon Street, constructed in 1940, was designed for Earle Winslow by local architect, Kenton Hamaker, who was prolific in the design of Colonial Revival-style buildings, especially in Arlington County. Winslow was an economist who specialized in tariffs and worked for most of his career at the United States Tariff Commission, located in a monumental Beaux Arts-style building in Washington, D.C. Yet his work enabled him to travel extensively throughout Europe, where he became familiar with modernistic architecture and the Streamline Moderne. The collaborative effort of owner and an architect best known for his work in the Colonial Revival style reflects the high degree of influence owners had over their architects. The resulting design is a distinct and unique Streamline Moderne dwelling, which championed the FHA’s dictum of “maximum accommodation within a minimum of means” to a degree acceptable to economist Earle Winslow.<sup>65</sup>

The imposing Streamline Moderne house at 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South is one of three such examples in the Arlington Ridge neighborhood. The house was constructed for Lieutenant Commander C.F. Cotton who, according to the building permit, also served as the architect. Because of his status as a naval commander (stationed at the Bureau of Aeronautics at the Washington Navy Yard), Cotton brought his first-hand knowledge of nautical elements to the design of his Arlington County house. Talbert W. Raymond served as the builder, completing the stylized house in 1937. Although Raymond built other houses in Northern Virginia for retired military

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 26

---

officers, they were primarily Colonial Revival dwellings, which is further testament to LCDR Cotton's influence on the design of his unique residence.<sup>66</sup>

Another excellent example of owner influence is the single-family dwelling at 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North, in the neighborhood of Bellevue Forest. Constructed in 1941 for James K. Knudson, the building was erected by builder Milton G. Smith, who was responsible for the erection of a significant number of residential buildings in Arlington County. Knudson, like other owners of Streamline Moderne houses in Arlington County, choose a builder adept in the Colonial Revival style. Knudson's selection of the Streamline Moderne for his large house was a result of his professional involvement as a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). The ICC was created by the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 as the first independent agency. The five-member enforcement board regulated the railroad, and later trucking, industry. Because of his status as a member of the ICC, Knudson brought his first-hand knowledge of streamlined railroad elements to the design of his Arlington County dwelling, which stands in stark contrast to the imposing Beaux-Art style building set within the Federal Triangle of Washington, D.C. where the ICC was located by 1935.

The influence of an owner with a professional background related to the field of transportation is also seen at 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North of Waycroft Woodlawn. Completed in 1938, the house was designed by local architect Kenton Hamaker, with significant assistance from property owner Lawrence Tuttle. Tuttle, born in the Philippines and raised in Hawaii, and his wife, Katharine Boynton, had purchased the ¼-acre lot in August 1937. Tuttle, with a degree in civil engineering, was an employee of the Federal Bureau of Public Roads (located in the 1906-1907 Beaux Arts-style Department of Agriculture building in Washington, D.C.) and later assistant to the commissioner of Public Roads. Katharine Tuttle, a 1927 Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Stanford University, was the daughter of Albert Boynton, who served for eight years as a state senator in California. Much taken with Hamaker's Streamline Moderne design for her residence, Mrs. Tuttle invited the architect to be a special guest speaker in a series of lectures held at the Arlington Woman's Club.<sup>67</sup>

An analysis of the original owners of these Streamline Moderne dwellings is fundamental in understanding why so few illustrations of this modernistic style were constructed in Arlington County. The original owners of these Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings in Arlington

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 27

---

County shared a common vision of the architectural future of America. These deep-seated beliefs are what motivated them to design, build, and ultimately pay for a house that expressed a modern architectural style that was never popular for residential use. These owners were respected professionals, many having extensively traveled the world. In a period of America's history when many people were without employment and their economic future was uncertain, these individuals were for the most part secure in their careers. Although the nation was coming out of the Great Depression, its devastating effects were not yet forgotten as World War II loomed on the horizon. The owners' wide range of careers, from military officer to a member of the ICC, exposed them to the cutting-edge designs and theories influencing the "streamlining of America" in the 1930s and 1940s. This, coupled with the financial means to undertake the design and construction of a truly original and unique house, resulted in the erection of only a few Streamline Moderne dwellings in Arlington County. Consequently, these dwellings are significant for their rare architectural expression and direct correlation to individual owners' influences.

**The End of Streamline Moderne Residential Architecture in Arlington County**

As a response to austere economic times and futurist mobility, the Streamline Moderne provided an emphasis on a better future. However, the style's tenure was short lived as the devastating effects following World War II set in. As Randy Juster states, "by the war's end, the 'e' in Moderne was gone and the Streamline gradually came to occupy a small subdivision of the dominant International Style."<sup>68</sup> As a result, only a limited number of Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings were constructed in Arlington County. The last example, located at 4806 Old Dominion Drive (razed 2009), was completed in 1945; a time when Arlington County's returning veterans yearned for traditional housing more closely identified with the Colonial Revival style. Historian David Gebhard pondered if the reality of World War II, with "its realization of so much of science fiction in the development of the bomb, faster than sound jets and of the rocket...made people less interested in the Streamlined as a symbol of the future."<sup>69</sup> Although the ubiquity of modern architecture continued nationwide until the early 1970s, its effect on the residential buildings in Arlington County had clearly ceased decades earlier. Modernist architecture left its mark on the landscape of Arlington County with a few residential illustrations of Streamline Moderne and even fewer examples of the International Style. Modernistic styles could not overcome the extraordinary popularity of the Colonial Revival

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 28

---

style, which had been embedded in the minds of Arlington County's builders and homeowners since the turn of the twentieth century.

**Past, Present, and Future of Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County**

The similarities of Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, and other modernistic architectural expressions have sometimes resulted in the misinterpretation of these styles by professional architectural historians and many laymen. Gebhard explains that "Such terms as Functional, Modernistic, Modernesque, and Modern were used virtually interchangeably to refer to any and all works designed in the 'new' style.<sup>70</sup> The methodical survey of Arlington County has positively identified nine extant Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings. Although the study was comprehensive, extending over a thirteen-year period, it is possible that more examples were constructed, and possibly demolished prior to identification or so substantially altered that they no longer reflect the Streamline Moderne. In 2009, the need for the proper identification and protection of these unique resources was amplified when the Streamline Moderne house at 4806 Old Dominion Drive (1945) was razed.

These resources are integral to understanding the residential development of Arlington County between 1936 and 1945. The current owners, in the same fashion as the original owners, are enthusiastic about the distinctive design aesthetic of their Streamline Moderne houses. The individuals who purchased and reside in these dwellings intentionally choose the unique architectural style in the sea of Colonial Revival-style buildings that defines Arlington County. A resounding theme is the low turnover of these houses; in many cases the houses are occupied by only the second or third owner. In the same way that the original owners were the inspirational force in the construction of these dwellings, the current owners understand their stewardship responsibilities and their role in the future of these innovative and rare Streamline Moderne dwellings.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 29

- 
- <sup>1</sup> David Gebhard, *The National Trust Guide to Art Deco in America*, (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1996), 1.
- <sup>2</sup> Alan Gowans, *Styles and Types of North American Architecture: Social Function and Cultural Expression*, (New York, NY: Icon Editions, 1992), 250.
- <sup>3</sup> Gebhard, 1.
- <sup>4</sup> Lee McAlester and Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 465.
- <sup>5</sup> The terms “Art Deco” and “Moderne” are derived from the title of the Exposition, although they did not come into common usage until the 1960s; see William Morgan, *The Abrams Guide to American House Styles*, (New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2004), 341-342.
- <sup>6</sup> Randy Juster, “Introduction: Decopix, the Art Deco Architecture Site,” <http://www.decopix.com/New%20Site/Pages/Directory%20Pages/Intro.html> (accessed November 3, 2009).
- <sup>7</sup> Marcus Whiffen and Frederick Koeper, *American Architecture, Volume 2: 1860-1976*, (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1981), 235.
- <sup>8</sup> Morgan, 342-349; Whiffen, 235.
- <sup>9</sup> “Empire State Building, Official Internet Site” Tourism: History, [http://www.esbnyc.com/tourism/tourism\\_history.cfm?CFID=36211253&CFTOKEN=62989974](http://www.esbnyc.com/tourism/tourism_history.cfm?CFID=36211253&CFTOKEN=62989974) (accessed November 17, 2009).
- <sup>10</sup> Carolyn Pitts, National Park Service, “Empire State Building,” National Historic Landmark Nomination, 1985, 5.
- <sup>11</sup> Randy Juster, “Introduction: Decopix, the Art Deco Architecture Site,” <http://www.decopix.com/New%20Site/Pages/Directory%20Pages/Intro.html> (accessed November 17, 2009).
- <sup>12</sup> Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Context* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1999), 243.
- <sup>13</sup> Gelernter, 242.
- <sup>14</sup> McAlester, 465.
- <sup>15</sup> McAlester, 465.
- <sup>16</sup> Patrick Pascal, *Kesling Modern Structures Popularizing Modern Design in Southern California 1934-1962* (Los Angeles, CA: Balcony Press, 2002), 10; quoted in Jon L. Wilson to Roxanne Tanemori, City of Santa Monica, memorandum, 6 December 2007, “Preliminary Historic Assessment: 2310 33<sup>rd</sup> Street,” <http://www01.smgov.net/planning/landmark/agendas/2007/2310%2033rd%20Street%20Preliminary%20Assessment.pdf>.
- <sup>17</sup> Gowans, 250.
- <sup>18</sup> David Gebhard, “The Moderne in the U.S., 1920-1941,” *Architectural Association Quarterly*, 2 (January 1970), 7.
- <sup>19</sup> Gelernter, 249.
- <sup>20</sup> Whiffen and Koeper, 332.
- <sup>21</sup> Donald J. Bush, *The Streamline Decade*, (New York, NY: George Braziller, 1975), 134-135.
- <sup>22</sup> Whiffen and Koeper, 332.
- <sup>23</sup> Martin Greif, *Depression Modern: The Thirties Style in America*, (New York, NY: Universe Books, 1988), 60.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 30

---

<sup>24</sup> Juster, "Introduction: Decopix, the Art Deco Architecture Site."

<sup>25</sup> Gelernter, 248.

<sup>26</sup> Pascal, *Kesling Modern Structures*, 10.

<sup>27</sup> American Experience, "People & Events: Chicago Century of Progress Exposition (World's Fair), 1933-1934," Public Broadcasting Service, [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/streamliners/peopleevents/e\\_fair.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/streamliners/peopleevents/e_fair.html) (accessed November 4, 2009).

<sup>28</sup> American Experience, "People & Events: Chicago Century of Progress Exposition (World's Fair), 1933-1934." <sup>29</sup> Gowans, 251.

<sup>30</sup> American Experience, "People & Events: Chicago Century of Progress Exposition (World's Fair), 1933-1934." <sup>31</sup> Gebhard, 10.

<sup>32</sup> Gowans, 252.

<sup>33</sup> McAlester, 465.

<sup>34</sup> Ben Lisle, "Modern Design and the Machine Aesthetic," University of Virginia: Department of American Studies, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Lisle/30home/modern/modern.html> (accessed November 3, 2009).

<sup>35</sup> Greif, 38.

<sup>36</sup> McAlester, 465-467; Morgan, 340-349; "Art Moderne Architecture," Colorado Preservation, Inc. [http://www.coloradopreservation.org/newdeal/nd\\_artmoderne.htm](http://www.coloradopreservation.org/newdeal/nd_artmoderne.htm); James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell, *House Styles in America: The Old-House Journal Guide to the Architecture of American Homes*, (New York, NY: Penguin Studio, 1999), 241; Sarah Cunliffe and Jean Loussier, editors, *Architecture Styles Spotter's Guide: Classical Temples to Soaring Skyscrapers*, (San Diego, CA: Thunder Bay Press, 2006); and Cyril M. Harris, *American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998), 321.

<sup>37</sup> District of Columbia Office of Planning, "Modernism in Washington," 2009.

<sup>38</sup> District of Columbia Office of Planning, "Modernism in Washington", 2009.

<sup>39</sup> Goode, 424.

<sup>40</sup> Goode, 426.

<sup>41</sup> Jerry G. Stockbridge, "Hecht Company Warehouse," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, prepared November 1993.

<sup>42</sup> Stockbridge, "Hecht Company Warehouse," National Register of Historic Places Nomination.

<sup>43</sup> DC Inventory of Historic Sites: (Updated February 23, 2004), 155.

<sup>44</sup> "Miles L. Cohean Will Head Two FHA Divisions," *The Washington Post*, 9 May 1937; James M. Goode, *Best Addresses: A Century of Washington's Most Distinguished Apartment Houses*, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 1988), 332.

<sup>45</sup> "Arlington Seen as Good Home Investment," *The Washington Post*, 20 September 1940.

<sup>46</sup> "Reform Suggested For Home Builder." *The Washington Post*, 27 September 1936.

<sup>47</sup> "Ideological Origins of the Williamsburg Restoration." [Available Online at <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~UG99/hall/AMSTUD.html>]. Downloaded September 17, 2003. p. 9

<sup>48</sup> Linda Flint McClelland, David L. Ames, and Sarah Dillard Pope, "Historic Residential Suburb in the United States, 1830-1960," National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form, Section E: 31.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number E

Page 31

- 
- <sup>49</sup> Gebhard, 10.
- <sup>50</sup> Juster, "Introduction: Decopix, the Art Deco Architecture Site."
- <sup>51</sup> Gelernter, 254.
- <sup>52</sup> Gelernter, 250.
- <sup>53</sup> Leon Chatelain, Jr., "Architecture Of New Styles Meeting Favor" *The Washington Post*, 21 April 1935.
- <sup>54</sup> Gelernter, 254.
- <sup>55</sup> Florence S. Auguste. "Modern Architecture." *The Washington Post*, 13 January 1937.
- <sup>56</sup> "Architects to Talk of Modern Trends: 600 Will Attend Convention of American Institute in Washington." *The Washington Post*, 11 May 1930.
- <sup>57</sup> Lester Walker, *American Homes: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Domestic Architecture* (New York, NY: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1996), 212.
- <sup>58</sup> Gebhard, 3.
- <sup>59</sup> Thomas M. Cahill. "Building Boom Now Starting, Architect Says" *The Washington Post*, 6 December 1938.
- <sup>60</sup> Gelernter, 252.
- <sup>61</sup> "Modernistic Note in Home Beautiful Attracts Throngs" *The Washington Post*, 26 April 1928.
- <sup>62</sup> Gebhard, 2.
- <sup>63</sup> Gelernter, 250.
- <sup>64</sup> "Display Ad 35 -- No Title." *The Washington Post*, 25 October 1936.
- <sup>65</sup> EHT Tracerics, Inc., "Earle Micajah Winslow House," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, prepared February 2009.
- <sup>66</sup> "Photo Standalone 15 - No Title." *The Washington Post*, 19 June 1938.
- <sup>67</sup> "Architect to Speak." *The Washington Post*, 1 May 1939.
- <sup>68</sup> Juster, "Introduction: Decopix, the Art Deco Architecture Site;" Only two single-family buildings in Arlington County reflect the architectural design influences of the International Style.
- <sup>69</sup> David Gebhard, "The Moderne in the U.S. 1920-1941," *Architectural Association Quarterly*, 2 (January 1970), 18.
- <sup>70</sup> Gebhard, *The National Trust Guide to Art Deco in America*, 3.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 32

---

**F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES:**

Properties associated with the context "Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945" take the following type:

1. Single-Family Dwelling

The nine known extant Streamline Modern Houses in Arlington County include:

1. 1325 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South (1936)
2. 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South (1937)
3. 2116 South Kent Street (1937)
4. 4220 16<sup>th</sup> Street South (1937)
5. 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North (1938)
6. 4037 7<sup>th</sup> Street South (1939)
7. 4012 25<sup>th</sup> Road North (1940)
8. 2333 North Vernon Street (1940)
9. 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North (1941)

***PROPERTY TYPE DESCRIPTION***

Custom Houses:

These are houses that were designed by an architect for an individual owner/client, rather than for a builder or developer.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F Page 33

---

**Physical Characteristics and Associative Qualities**

All of the eligible properties attached to this Multiple Property document must be designed, constructed, and continue to function as a single-family dwelling in Arlington County, Virginia, exhibiting elements of the Streamline Moderne from the period between 1936 and 1945. The following signature design elements are key aspects of all of the Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings constructed between 1936 and 1945 in Arlington County: 1) smooth surfaces, 2) horizontal emphasis, 3) curved corners, and 4) lack of applied ornamentation. In unison these elementary elements all contribute to the feeling of aerodynamic force of the Streamline Moderne.

1. Building Heights:
  - a. Ranging from one to two stories, often with walk-out basements
2. Building Massing and Form:
  - a. Rectangular form
  - b. Square form
  - c. Square or oblong projections
  - d. Blocks of varying heights and widths set next to and atop each other
  - e. Complex and visually stimulating multi-dimensional structures
3. Structure, Cladding, and Finish:
  - a. Concrete-block structures
  - b. Brick veneer in stretcher or Flemish bond
  - c. Painted brick
  - d. Exposed brick (untextured)
  - e. Glass brick
  - f. Stucco finish
  - g. Smooth wall finish with lack of surface ornamentation
  - h. Soft round corners
4. Roof Form and Covering:
  - a. Flat

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 34

---

- b. Side gable (shallow)
  - c. Hipped (shallow)
  - d. Asphalt shingles
  - e. Composite material
5. Entry Surrounds and Porches:
- a. Abstract geometric patterned surrounds
  - b. Tile surrounds
  - c. Brick surrounds
    - i. Stacked brick
6. Doors:
- a. Single leaf
  - b. Double leaf
  - c. On some of these houses the ornamentation of the door serves as a focal point yet on others it is simple and unadorned.
    - i. Flush, no lights
    - ii. Flush, square or round lights
    - iii. Flush, paneled or no lights
7. Windows:
- a. Double-hung sash: metal, wood, or replacement (vinyl and aluminum)
    - i. 1/1
    - ii. Single
    - iii. Paired
  - b. Casement: metal or replacement (vinyl)
    - i. One-light
    - ii. Single
    - iii. Paired
    - iv. Triple
  - c. Awning
  - d. Corner (wrapping)
  - e. Porthole (round)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 35

---

- f. Sliding: metal or replacement (vinyl)
  - g. Fixed: metal or replacement (vinyl)
  - h. Glass block
  - i. Picture window (fixed and fixed with operable flanking sash)
8. Window Surrounds:
- a. Minimal, if at all, window surrounds.
9. Pattern of Openings:
- a. Most houses have a high ratio of wall to opening
  - b. Windows commonly wrap two elevations
10. Chimneys:
- a. Exterior side
  - b. Interior side
  - c. Interior
  - d. Exterior rear
  - e. Exterior façade
  - f. Parged
  - g. Brick, exposed and painted
  - h. Limited decorative elements
    - i. Single-course brick belt
    - ii. Angled shoulders
11. Siting and Landscaping:
- a. Set within residential neighborhoods
  - b. Presence of mature trees and plantings
  - c. Maintain setback of their respective neighborhoods
  - d. Asphalt driveways
  - e. Concrete driveways
  - f. Concrete walkways
  - g. Stone and/or gravel walkways
  - h. Wood or metal fencing

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 36

---

**Geographical Information**

Dating from between 1936 and 1941, when the style was fashionable, the residential buildings are remarkably similar in form, detailing, material, and fenestration. They stand within planned residential neighborhoods teeming with traditional architectural styles and forms, such as the popular Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Bungalow, and Cape Cod. The dwellings share common setbacks and orientation as found in their respective neighborhoods.

**Boundaries**

The boundaries of all of the eligible properties are typically the original lot lines as determined by individual surveys or subdivision plats.

**Variations Occurring within the Property Type**

The catalyst for the variation occurring within the identified properties are the individual property owners. As each of these dwellings were an exercise in a rare residential architectural style in Arlington County, the qualities the individual owners desired of their new houses were unique, albeit limited in scope as to conform to the dictums of the Streamline Moderne style. The dwellings are generally larger than their Colonial Revival-style contemporaries which dominate the landscape of Arlington County, although not grandiose in scale and massing. The Streamline Modern style's favor of economical, simplistic design created by the building's form and construction materials established parameters in which each dwelling was to conform. The precise implementation of these rigid parameters is what defines each dwelling within the subset of Streamline Moderne houses in Arlington County constructed between 1936 and 1945. Each of the dwellings implements the required high-style fundamentals of Streamline Moderne while illustrating the individuality of the owner, architect, and builder by infusing the design with singular elements of the style.

**Locational Patterns of the Property Type**

All of the properties exist within Arlington County, Virginia, beyond the confines of Washington, D.C., in what would be considered a suburban setting by the mid-1930s. The

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 37

---

Streamline Moderne dwellings are located in the eastern half of the county, within residential neighborhoods. Their location pattern, dates of construction, and platting and development of their respective neighborhoods, suggest that these Streamline Moderne houses were built on vacant lots in growing neighborhoods.

**Condition of the Property Type**

(NOTE: See Registration Requirements below for more specific information on integrity as it relates to eligibility.)

Some of the dwellings have replacement windows. Often, the sash is replaced in-kind although a few of the windows have been replaced with vinyl sash. Replacement sash should be wood or metal frame, depending on the original material and thus be in-kind. The replacement of the windows is a common, economical change. If the original windows are not restored, the replacement windows should be in keeping with the original window type and light pattern. Windows should be matched to original window form. Since Streamline is a more minimalist style, windows stand out as critical material features.

A few of the Streamline Moderne dwellings have been enlarged by a modest addition, often very compatible in character. For the most part, following the *Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation*, the additions have not compromised the integrity of design or setting for the individual buildings. Additions should be relegated to the rear or side of the main block, as the original design allowed and encouraged. Rooftop additions on the main block or addition to the projections or wings must not be raised above the roofline of the main block.

**Specific Period of Time and Location of Eligible Resources**

The eligible resources were built between 1936 and 1945 and all exist in Arlington County, Virginia. This period begins with the creation of the FHA under the 1934 National Housing Act. Through the mechanism of providing mortgage insurance for both single- and multi-family moderately priced housing projects, the FHA created incentives for the construction of both owner-occupied and rental housing while setting standards for the first time for such

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 38

---

construction. The 1945 date reflects the last construction date for a Streamline Moderne single-family dwelling in Arlington County, and the nationwide demise of the style.

The period of significance for Streamline Moderne houses in Arlington County should begin with their construction date. The ending date will be the date of completion of the dwelling. Alterations and demolitions to buildings should not be the determining end dates.

***PROPERTY TYPE SIGNIFICANCE***

Adaptable because of its sociological and ideological diversity, the Streamline Moderne style was commonly accepted in planned subdivisions throughout the United States, especially in California and Florida. The modernistic style's simplistic, yet stylized design, coupled with its inexpensive construction costs during a period of great economic and social instability, made the Streamline Moderne tremendously popular in the 1930s and early 1940s, especially at World Fairs. Promoting movement and speed during a period of economic instability, Streamline Moderne directly affected the designs of transportation machinery, such as ships, airplanes, and automobiles, and industrial and consumer products such as bicycles, toasters, radios, and vacuum cleaners. Yet, the Streamline Moderne style was not overwhelmingly popular as the style of choice for single-family dwellings in Arlington County, where suburban development was rampant in the first half of the twentieth century. As the fastest growing county in the Washington metropolitan area and the Commonwealth of Virginia by 1940, Arlington County became a proving ground for new housing developments, including a number supported by government programs. Developers quickly took advantage of the situation and constructed speculative housing for middle-class and professional residents. However, these dwellings overwhelmingly illustrated traditional architectural expressions like the familiar Colonial Revival style that radiated a sense of place and stability in newly platted neighborhoods. Further, the guidelines and standards generated by the federal government through the Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) Small Housing Program and Low-Cost Housing Act unofficially promoted the Colonial Revival style, limiting experimentation with Modernistic styles like the innovative Streamline Moderne and its forerunner, the Art Deco style. Unlike the vast majority of single-family houses in Arlington County that were constructed by speculative developers or investors who utilized the government guidelines, the nine Streamline Moderne-style houses identified were designed specifically for individual property owners who personally hired local

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 39

---

architects and builders. The collaborative effort by designer and owner guaranteed individuality within the confined definition of Streamline Moderne, while at the same time ensuring the FHA's dictum of maximum accommodation within a minimum of means. Thus, each of the nine houses is exceptional and rare within its suburban subdivision, and unique and innovative among its Streamline Moderne counterparts.

Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings in Arlington County dating from 1936 to 1945 are significant in the area of Architecture. These single-family dwellings are significant indicators of architectural ideals (**Criterion C**).

Criterion C applies when:

A house reflects the Streamline Moderne style with simplistic design created principally by building form, construction materials, and material finish.

A Streamline Moderne house constructed in Arlington County between 1936 and 1945 utilizes many of the innovative building techniques and practices of the period, such as concrete-block construction veneered in brick with a smooth stucco finish, flat roofs, and windows (casement or double-hung) that unite the interior spaces with the outdoors.

***PROPERTY TYPE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS***

For National Register eligibility, a Streamline Moderne dwelling must possess sufficient historic integrity by visibly reflecting the overall physical appearance it gained during the period of historic significance. Generally speaking, historic integrity is composed of seven qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. (Note: See National Register Bulletin 15 for basic definitions of the seven aspects of integrity.)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 40

---

**Registration Requirements:**

1. Streamline Moderne Single-Family Dwelling

These resources should all be eligible for Criterion C and integrity of design and materials should be present with special emphasis placed on form, massing, and exterior cladding. Though window replacements are not the norm for this particular housing type, they should not be viewed as a sole determining factor when assessing integrity of materials and workmanship. Yet, a double-hung window should never be installed in an opening that did not originally hold a double-hung window. In particular, the retention of the original fenestration pattern and their component parts is required. Furthermore, the color of the window casing, surround, muntins, and associated hardware should reflect the original design.

Due to the age of these dwellings and their continued use, some degree of deterioration is to be expected. Given the tenuous nature of some of the building materials and the streamlined, smooth exterior effect inherent to the style, cyclical maintenance of these dwellings is paramount. However, their degree of deterioration should be viewed in respect to each other and not necessarily in comparison with dwellings of different architectural style constructed at the same time in Arlington County. These other dwellings were constructed using different materials and construction techniques from the Streamline Moderne houses.

Streamline Moderne dwellings that are eligible for the National Register should have integrity of **location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling and association**. Resources should meet the following requirements:

**Location:** A Streamline Moderne dwelling should not be moved from its original location and should be located in a residential subdivision in Arlington County. Some allowances may be made if the move is short in distance and the subject house is highly threatened.

**Design and Workmanship:** A Streamline Moderne dwelling should possess the character-defining elements of the Streamline Moderne style as typified in Arlington County, Virginia, from 1936 to 1945.

- a. Rectangular and square forms

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 41

---

- b. Rounded corners
- c. Smooth exterior finishes
- d. Horizontal emphasis
- e. Lack of stylized ornamentation in favor of economical, simplistic design created merely by building forms and construction materials
- f. Any applied original ornamentation, however limited in scope, may not be permanently removed without compromising the dwelling's eligibility.

**Materials:** A Streamline Moderne dwelling should utilize popular and innovative building materials from the mid-1930s through the mid-1940.

- a. The structures are concrete block veneered in brick with either six-course American or six-course Flemish bonding or a smooth stucco finish. Often the dwelling is painted white. Asbestos-cement shingles are acceptable if they are an original exterior cladding material. Replacement of the exterior cladding at 4037 7<sup>th</sup> Street North is acceptable as long as the new cladding maintains the horizontal emphasis and profile currently displayed by the siding. Care should be taken to preserve corner boards, frieze boards, and coping.
- b. The roofs are flat, gable (side or front), hipped, or a combination of all, covered in asphalt shingles or a composition material.
- c. Entry surrounds and porches are wood frame or brick with limited surrounds. Porches are cantilevered and minimal in design and share a continuity with the main block in its horizontal emphasis and massing. Ornamentation is limited to three courses of ceramic tiles, ranging in color from aqua to green, composing the entry surround at 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North and the molded brick surround found at 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North.
- d. Casement, awning, hopper, or sliding windows of steel or replacement aluminum or vinyl. The use of metal-sash windows, placed flush on smooth exterior walls, is a hallmark of the Streamline Moderne style. Limited use of double-hung and wood-sash windows.
- e. Glass block windows and glass brick walls.

**Setting:** A Streamline Moderne dwelling should be sited within a residential, single-family neighborhood. Often, these dwellings are located on large lots or a property composed of

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 42

---

multiple lots. The dwellings should share a common setback within their respective neighborhoods and be sited accordingly based on their lot parameters.

**Feeling:** A Streamline Moderne dwelling should maintain the necessary physical features, which taken together, convey its historic character, specifically the period during which it was constructed. By retaining the original design, majority of the materials, workmanship, and setting, these single-family dwellings can express a partial aesthetic and historic sense of residential construction in Arlington County between 1936 and 1945. Individual elements that should be retained or replaced in-kind are:

- 2116 South Kent Street
  - Curved stairs to main entry
  - Canted, inset main entry
  - Metal railing along façade and patio
  - Curved first-story patio on facade
  - Curved second-story patio on façade
  - Thin window opening flanking main entry
  - Casement windows
  - Retain chimney form
- 4220 16<sup>th</sup> Street South
  - Door hood
  - Thin molded cornice
  - Glass block window on façade (however painted?)
  - Corner (wrapping) windows
  - Retain chimney form
  - Retain garage door opening and replacement door should be in kind
- 4012 25<sup>th</sup> Road North
  - Curved eastern appendage extending from two-story block
  - Plain and scalloped cornices and frieze boards
  - Brick cornice along first-story blocks
  - Alternating, bi-color scheme
  - Horizontal brick strings highlighted this first-story window openings which are duplicated on the second story block
  - Retain chimney form

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 43

---

- 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North
  - Curved glass brick wall on façade
  - Flush glass brick wall on facade
  - Exposed brick veneer
  - Projecting curved bay window on façade
  - Cladding of secondary elevations of main block is harmonious with exterior cladding utilized as a façade accent as well as the exterior cladding of the addition
  - Curved door hood
  - Stacked soldier-brick main entry surround
  - Flush rowlock brick sills
  - Façade window openings should hold casement windows
  - Curve on garage corresponds with curve utilized on the façade of the main block
- 4037 8<sup>th</sup> Street South
  - Horizontal cladding with matching profile
  - Door hood
  - Fluted-panel single-leaf entry door
  - Diamond window
  - Minimal cornice extending across parapet
  - Corner (wrapping) window
  - Retain chimney form
- 2333 North Vernon Street
  - Glass block entry surround
  - Porthole window on facade
  - Corner (wrapping) windows
  - Shallow hipped roof
  - Secondary opening on façade (double-leaf door opening with transom and sidelights)
  - Angled shoulders on exterior-side chimney
- 1325 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South
  - Ribbon windows
  - Glass and brick wall flanking main entry
  - Louvered awning covering second-story openings on south elevation
  - Retain chimney form
- 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North
  - Main entry surround of three courses of ceramic tiles, ranging in color from aqua to green
  - Shallow roofline
  - Stacked brick window surrounds

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 44

- 
- Small window openings flanking the main entry
  - Simple roof coping
  - 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South
    - Single-leaf entry door with metallic finish and porthole
    - Curved entry opening
    - Curved door hood
    - Soft, rounded edges and rooflines
    - Black-frame sash
    - White garage door

**Association:** A Streamline Moderne dwelling should maintain a link between its historic origin and the events that led up to its creation (**association**). The resources can reflect this association by remaining a largely unaltered single-family dwelling and resembling mid-twentieth-century stylistic housing trends and themes in their architectural expression.

A Streamline Moderne dwelling in Arlington County dating from between 1936 to 1945 will meet registration requirements if the following guidelines are met:

1. **Wall Materials:** Original wall materials should be substantially intact and non-historic cladding should not have been introduced on the façade and secondary elevations. Replacing portions of damaged masonry with in-kind masonry to match or of comparable appearance will not cause the building to fail to meet eligibility requirements. A building with exposed masonry should not be painted if it was not originally. Replacing portions of damaged stucco with in-kind stucco to match will not cause the building to fail to meet eligibility requirements. Vinyl siding or synthetic shingles should only be applied to elevations or elements originally clad in a material with a horizontal emphasis. Exposed brick, painted brick, or brick with a stucco finish should not be altered with the application of exterior cladding.
2. **Windows:** Replacement of the original sash or casement windows, though not common, is acceptable for this particular housing type if certain requirements are met. If the sash or casement cannot be restored and is replaced in-kind with regard to window type and light

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F Page 45

---

pattern, the building continues to meet the eligible requirements. The fenestration pattern, sill, surround, lintel or arch, opening size, and color must remain intact.

3. **Doors:** Replacement of the main entry doors is permissible. Original doors, either ornamental or plain, should be replaced in-kind. Paneled metal or wood doors installed without regard to the concept of smooth exteriors and flush door mountings will cause the building to fail to meet the eligibility requirements. The exterior, taken as a whole system, is composed of relatively few elements due to the smooth exterior required by the Streamline Moderne style. Any interruption of this, albeit as minimal as a door, severely alters the character of the dwelling. Furthermore, door openings are often sheltered by minimalist hoods or caps, or are inset as demonstrated by: 4037 7<sup>th</sup> Street South, 4220 16<sup>th</sup> Street South, 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North, 2333 North Vernon Street, 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North, and 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South. These hoods and inset openings must be retained in-kind.
4. **Roofs:** Roof form must remain substantially unchanged. Most of the roofs are obscured from public view and must remain so. Furthermore, any architectural element implemented to obscure, or partially obscure a roofline should also be retained. Roofs that are visible from the public right-of-way should retain their original form and cladding material. If gutters are to be installed, integrated gutters should be utilized so as to not alter the original roofline.
5. **Chimneys:** The original form, height, and exterior treatment of a chimney should not be altered. On some houses, an interior or exterior-front chimney plays an integral role in the stylistic merit of the dwelling. On the other hand, an interior chimney serves as the lone vertical element on some dwellings. Additionally, a chimney should not be added to the dwelling that can be viewed from the public right-of-way.
6. **Additions:** Modest additions are not common but have occurred. Non-historic additions should respect the materials, mass, scale, and architectural character of the original Streamline Moderne design. Additions that do not diminish the dwelling's stylistic merit are acceptable and must utilize like materials and exterior finishes as the main block. Additions are permissible on the side and rear elevations only. These are usually

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 46

---

discernable by a deviation in roof form or exterior cladding materials, though a complementary addition will have a rectangular or square form, be in scale with the main block, have like exterior materials and finishes, and have a roof that is either not visible from the public right-of-way or have a shallow pitch (dependant on the design of the dwelling). Alterations to the dwelling should be reversible so that, when removed, any original architectural elements may be restored.

7. **Garages:** Garages are often integral to the original design of the dwelling, as demonstrated at 4220 16<sup>th</sup> Street South, 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South, 2116 South Kent Street, 4012 25<sup>th</sup> Road North, 3833 30<sup>th</sup> Street North, and 2333 North Vernon Street and should be retained.
8. **Secondary Resources:** Original secondary resources are not common but do exist. These resources must remain in their original locations and display substantially original form. The introduction of a non-original secondary building or structure to the property is permissible if it does not negatively affect the dwelling's main elevation.
9. **Landscape:** Landscaping should not deter from the architectural characteristics of the Streamline Moderne style. Window and door openings should not be obscured by plantings. Importantly, the horizontal emphasis and sense of movement of the structure must be preserved and not interrupted by natural elements or hardscaping introduced by the homeowner. Landscaping, such as that found at 2116 South Kent Street, will often mimic the design of the dwelling. The terraced front yard is a continuation of the stepped-down design of the house. The smooth, parged perimeter walls at 1215 25<sup>th</sup> Street South are comparable to the finish utilized on the main block.
10. **Interiors:** The floor plans of these Streamline Moderne dwellings are substantially unaltered, although upgrades relating to HVAC, mechanical equipment, bathrooms, and kitchens have occurred. These alterations are normal and expected, though the high-degree as to which the owners have taken steps to retain the original interior design and characteristics of the Streamline Moderne style is notable. The use of innovative materials was not restricted to the exteriors of Streamline Moderne houses, such as those in Arlington County demonstrate. Natural materials, such as wood and marble, are

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number F

Page 47

---

blended with mass-produced decorative elements like aluminum, stainless steel, and glass, for use as surrounds, railings, and balusters on the interiors of the buildings. As a rule, the style required floor plans that were flowing and open, with primary living spaces often merged or separated by a step or low railing. The interior of 2333 North Vernon Street, for example, has pine flooring and stair rails, pine paneling in the den, chrome fixtures and hardware, and a black marble mantel that is in sharp contrast to the white walls and ceiling that lack applied moldings. The living and dining rooms are combined, yet defined as two separate spaces—the living room is primarily located in the square block with casement and fixed metal-sash windows, while the dining room is set within the projecting semicircular block with a large glass block window. The house at 4911 15<sup>th</sup> Street North incorporates innovative elements specifically designed to provide maximum accommodation within a minimum of means, all the while ensuring that the expression of functionalism from the exterior was maintained. This is primarily the influence of the homeowner, who was a civil engineer, but also signifies the Streamline Moderne's promotion of modern machines and technology.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number   G  

Page   48  

**G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:**

	<b>Address</b>	<b>Construction Date</b>	<b>Building Subtype</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
1.	1325 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street South	1936	Single-Family Dwelling	Extant
2.	1215 25 <sup>th</sup> Street South	1937	Single-Family Dwelling	Extant
3.	2116 South Kent Street	1937	Single-Family Dwelling	Extant
4.	4220 16 <sup>th</sup> Street South	1937	Single-Family Dwelling	Extant
5.	4911 15 <sup>th</sup> Street North	1938	Single-Family Dwelling	Extant
6.	4037 7 <sup>th</sup> Street South	1939	Single-Family Dwelling	Extant
7.	4012 25 <sup>th</sup> Road North	1940	Single-Family Dwelling	Extant
8.	2333 North Vernon Street	1940	Single-Family Dwelling	Extant
9.	3833 30 <sup>th</sup> Street North	1941	Single-Family Dwelling	Extant
10.	4806 Old Dominion Drive	1945	Single-Family Dwelling	Demolished

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number H

Page 49

---

**H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS**

The multiple property listing of Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia constructed between 1936 and 1945 is based upon a 13-year survey of the county conducted by the architectural history firm of EHT Tracerics, Inc., under the auspices of the Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development.

The systematic survey of Arlington County, starting in the southern end and working north, over the course of 13 years identified only ten Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings. The housing density of Arlington County is greatest in the southern end and diminishes to the north. It is reasonable to believe that these ten were the only Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings constructed in the county. Although Arlington County has experienced considerable infill and alteration or demolition of historic resources in the past decade, it is acceptable to suppose that Arlington County was not inundated with Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings that are no longer extant. In the course of the survey, if a building was not identified as Streamline Moderne, it would have been identified as modern movement. As such, all buildings identified as having an architectural style similar to Streamline Moderne were reevaluated to determine their correct style. Furthermore, although one Streamline Moderne single-family dwelling was recently demolished, the extent to which the nine extant examples remain unaltered and in excellent condition is a testament to the pride of ownership ensued by the owners of these buildings and suggests that no other Streamline Moderne buildings have been demolished.

To achieve the desired products, a senior architectural historian of EHT Tracerics, Inc. and the historic preservation coordinator for Arlington County visited each of the Streamline Moderne dwellings. The on-site windshield survey recorded the number of resources associated with the property and the existing status of the property and its resources based on historic documentation. For each property, locations were noted; black and white, and digital, photographs were taken; computerized inventory forms were completed; research, including the checking of permits and deeds was conducted, and narrative architectural and historical descriptions written. This work was conducted by EHT Tracerics, Inc. Furthermore, the resources were examined for original and replacement windows and doors, additions and alterations, entry and window surrounds, roof type and cladding, and exterior cladding materials

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number H

Page 50

---

and finish. The neighborhood context and siting of each resource was evaluated to determine if integrity of setting, location, and feeling were present.

The architectural features of the ten identified Streamline Moderne-style single-family dwellings constructed in Arlington County between 1936 and 1945 were considered in developing the outlines of potential registration requirements. The non-extant dwelling was included due to the relative small number of resources from which to draw from and its outstanding architectural merits before its demolition. One of the properties included with this multiple property nomination (2333 North Vernon Street) is in the first stage of National Register Nomination. This outstanding example of a Streamline Moderne-style single-family dwelling in Arlington County was chosen primarily due to owner-interest and in part due to a pending renovation of the residence.

Research was conducted at the Arlington County Historical Society, the Virginia Room of Arlington County Library, the Library of Congress, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development Library (before it was fully dismantled in the winter of 2009). The Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development and the Federal Housing Administration reference specialist at the National Archives, College Park, were consulted. *The Washington Post* (Historical) was searched online through Proquest.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number I

Page 51

---

**I. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Books, Journal Articles, Government Publications**

Bush, Donald J. *The Streamline Decade*. New York: George Braziller, 1975.

Cunliffe, Sarah and Jean Loussier, editors. *Architecture Styles Spotter's Guide: Classical Temples to Soaring Skyscrapers*. San Diego: Thunder Bay Press, 2006.

"DC Inventory of Historic Sites," District of Columbia Office of Planning, February 23, 2004.

EHT Tracerics, Inc., "Earle Micajah Winslow House," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2010.

Gebhard, David. "The Moderne in the U.S., 1920-1941" *Architectural Association Quarterly*, 2 (1970): 7.

Gebhard, David. *The National Trust Guide to Art Deco in America*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996.

Gelernter, Mark. *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Context*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1999.

Gowans, Alan. *Styles and Types of North American Architecture: Social Function and Cultural Expression*. New York: Icon Editions, 1992.

Greif, Martin. *Depression Modern: The Thirties Style in America*. New York: Universe Books, 1988.

Harris, Cyril M. *American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number I

Page 52

---

Koeper, Frederick and Marcus Whiffen. *American Architecture, Volume 2: 1860-1976*.  
Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1981.

Maliszewski-Pickart, Margaret. *Architecture and Ornament*. Jefferson, North Carolina:  
McFarland & Company, 1998.

Massey, James C. and Shirley Maxwell. *House Styles in America: The Old-House Journal Guide  
to the Architecture of American Homes*. New York: Penguin Studio, 1999.

McAlester, Lee and Virginia McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred  
A. Knopf, 2006.

McClelland, Linda Flint, David L. Ames, and Sarah Dillard Pope. "Historic Residential Suburb  
in the United States, 1830-1960," National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property  
Documentation Form.

"Modernism in Washington," District of Columbia Office of Planning, 2009.

Morgan, William. *The Abrams Guide to American House Styles*. New York, NY: Abrams, 2004.

Pascal, Patrick. *Kesling Modern Structures Popularizing Modern Design in Southern California  
1934-1962*. Los Angeles: Balcony Press, 2002.

Pitts, Carolyn, "Empire State Building," National Historic Landmark Nomination, 1985.

Stockbridge, Jerry G., "Hecht Company Warehouse," National Register of Historic Places  
Nomination, 1993.

Walker, Lester. *American Homes: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Domestic Architecture*. New  
York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1996.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

Section Number I

Page 53

---

**Newspaper Articles**

"Arlington Seen as Good Home Investment," *The Washington Post*, 20 September 1940.

"Architect to Speak," *The Washington Post*, 1 May 1939.

"Architects to Talk of Modern Trends: 600 Will Attend Convention of American Institute in Washington," *The Washington Post*, 11 May 1930.

Auguste, Florence S., "Modern Architecture," *The Washington Post*, 13 January 1937.

Cahill, Thomas M., "Building Boom Now Starting, Architect Says," *The Washington Post*, 6 December 1938.

Chatelain, Jr., Leon, "Architecture Of New Styles Meeting Favor," *The Washington Post*, 21 April 1935.

"Modernistic Note in Home Beautiful Attracts Throngs," *The Washington Post*, 26 April 1928.

"Miles L. Cohean Will Head Two FHA Divisions," *The Washington Post*, 9 May 1937.

"Reform Suggested For Home Builder," *The Washington Post*, 27 September 1936.

*The Washington Post*, searched through Proquest.

*Washington Star*, Washingtoniana Division, Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library.

**Online Resources**

American Experience, "People & Events: Chicago Century of Progress Exposition (World's Fair), 1933-1934," Public Broadcasting Service,  
[http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/streamliners/peoplevents/e\\_fair.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/streamliners/peoplevents/e_fair.html).

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington County, Virginia: 1936-1945

**Section Number** I

**Page** 54

---

“Art Modern Architecture,” Colorado Preservation, Inc.,

[http://www.coloradopreservation.org/newdeal/nd\\_artmoderne.htm](http://www.coloradopreservation.org/newdeal/nd_artmoderne.htm).

“Empire State Building, Official Internet Site,” Empire State Building, <http://www.esbnyc.com>.

“Ideological Origins of the Williamsburg Restoration,”

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~UG99/hall/AMSTUD.html>.

Juster, Randy, “Introduction: Decopix, the Art Deco Architecture Site,”

<http://www.decopix.com/New%20Site/Pages/Directory%20Pages/Intro.html>.

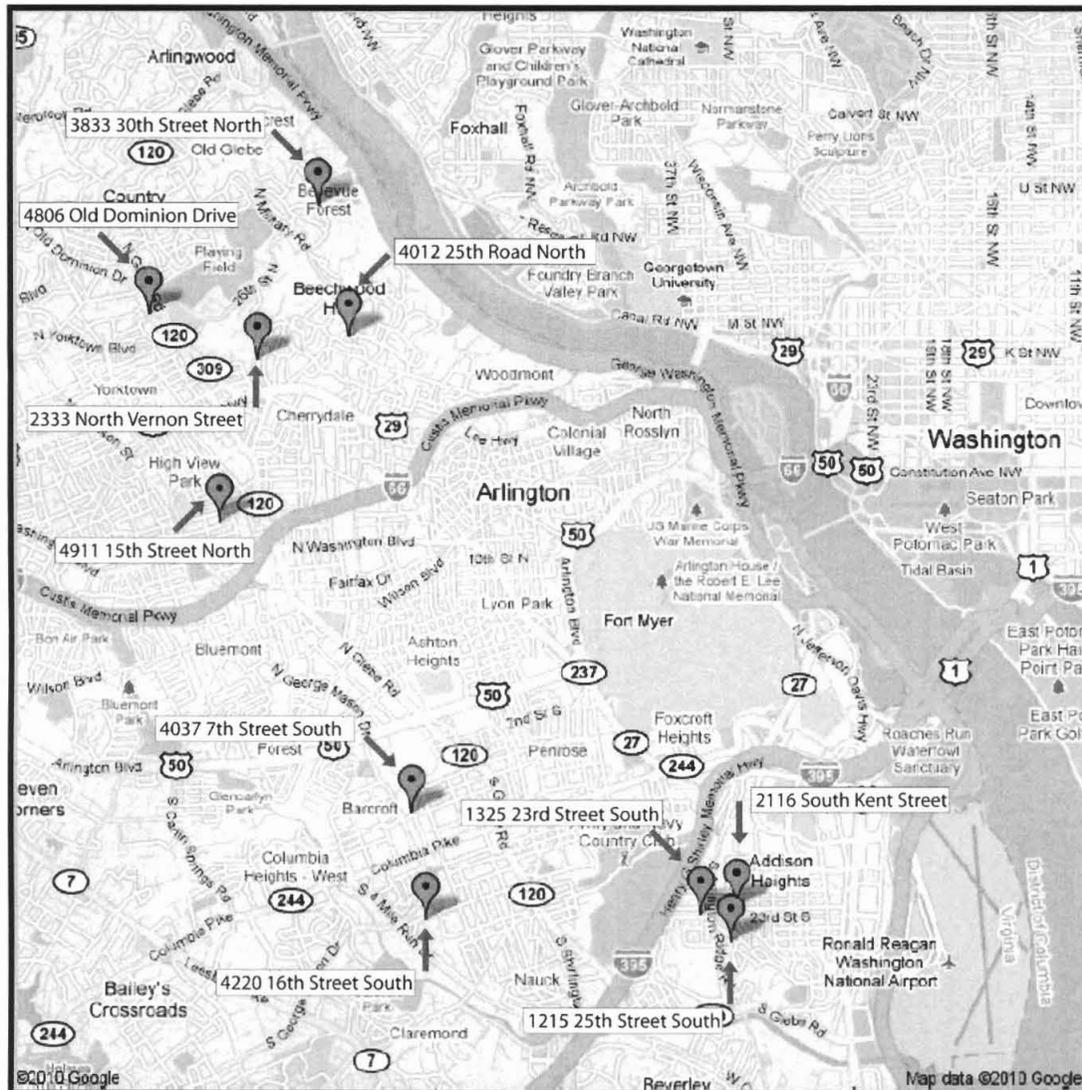
Lisle, Ben, “Modern Design and the Machine Aesthetic,” University of Virginia: Department of American Studies, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Lisle/30home/modern/modern.html>.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Arlington County, Virginia  
County and State  
Streamline Moderne Houses in Arlington  
County, Virginia: 1936-1945  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page 1



Locational map of Streamline Moderne single-family dwellings in Arlington County.