
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2010



Vanderbilt Mansion
Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

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Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

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Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site (NHS) is a 211-acre historic site located 70 miles north of New York City in Hyde Park, Dutchess County, New York. Perched on a high terrace overlooking the Hudson River, Vanderbilt Mansion and its estate grounds represent an intact example of the grand estates and opulent lifestyles of the wealthiest Americans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Mansion grounds feature open parkland, with broad lawns and century-old specimen trees, formal gardens, a creek, native woodlands, and rolling meadows. The site also contains nine historic buildings in addition to bridges, dams, garden structures, roads, and paths. The estate grounds of Vanderbilt Mansion is a layered landscape that bears the imprint of five generations of owners who developed the grounds over nearly two centuries, building upon the work of previous owners.

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS preserves the former home and estate grounds of Frederick and Louise Vanderbilt. The estate is one of a many built along the river by influential families who were drawn to Dutchess County for its fertile soils, outstanding views, access to the river corridor, and proximity to New York City. The property reflects the consecutive developments by several affluent landowners, including the Bards, Hosacks, Langdons, and Vanderbilts and is historically significant for its association with the Gilded Age and as an example of Country Place Era landscape design as practiced at the end of the nineteenth century. The site includes the Vanderbilt's 54-room palatial Mansion, an exceptional collection of mature specimen trees, winding drives, expansive views, and ornate formal gardens.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The property on which Vanderbilt Mansion NHS was developed was originally patented in 1705 by Peter Fauconnier, who appeared to hold the patent as an investment, as no physical improvements to the property were recorded. It was probably Fauconnier, however, who named the estate "Hyde Park" in honor of Sir Edward Hyde, Lord Cornbury, then Governor of New York who granted the original patent. When Dr. John Bard acquired the property through his wife in 1764, it included the land of the current estate grounds along the Hudson River bank on the west side of Albany Post Road (today Route 9) in addition to a large area of land on the east side of the road, a total of 3,600 acres. Dr. Bard first developed the eastern portion of the property, land well suited to agriculture. He built and lived in the Red House just east of Albany Post Road and developed a farm, which included a barn and other farm buildings and structures, a fruit orchard, and cultivated fields.

John Bard's son, Dr. Samuel Bard, inherited the Hyde Park property upon his father's death in 1799. Unlike his father, the younger Dr. Bard was clearly interested in the scenic value of the western portion of the land overlooking the Hudson River. He built a grand house on the property's highest point at the precipice of the terrace above the rolling fields and forests that descended to the river. In addition to the house, Dr. Bard built barns, stables, and other outbuildings, a store at Bard Rock, and a system of roads connecting the two river landings with the house and other buildings and structures. Dr. Bard also kept gardens and greenhouses to support his pursuit of horticulture and the collecting of rare and exotic plants, and he planted ornamental trees, vines, shrubs, and grasses to beautify his estate grounds.

David Hosack purchased Hyde Park from the heirs of his friend and colleague, Samuel Bard, in 1828.

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Like Bard, Hosack showed an enthusiasm for horticulture, having established in 1801 the Elgin Botanical Garden in New York, the first public botanical garden in the country. After enlarging and rebuilding Samuel Bard's house and adding gate lodges, a pavilion, stables, gardens, and greenhouses, Hosack turned his attention to the estate grounds, soliciting the help of landscape designer and nurseryman Andre Parmentier.

Parmentier, an immigrant from Belgium, specialized in country seats, designing estate landscapes in the fashion of European country estates. Parmentier espoused the principles of picturesque landscape design, in which elements of the landscape are arranged according to compositional rules borrowed from landscape painting to give the impression of a natural landscape vista. Parmentier followed these tenets when laying out the grounds at Hyde Park. The main drive from Albany Post Road to the house was realigned to curve gently through the pastoral landscape and approach the Mansion obliquely. Other drives followed geographical features, like Crum Elbow Creek and the ridge line at the top of the bluff. Parmentier also favored the placement of classically inspired landscape ornamentation in the form of pavilions and sculptures. A number of these ornamental structures were placed throughout the estate grounds, including two rotunda pavilions.

After Dr. Hosack's death, the property was purchased from his heirs by John Jacob Astor, who then gave it to his daughter and son-in-law, Dorothea and Walter Langdon, in 1840. The northern portion of the estate grounds, later known as the Sexton tract, was retained by Magdalena Hosack and then sold separately to a series of owners before being reunited with the rest of the property by Frederick Vanderbilt in 1905. Many of the changes to the overall layout of the grounds were done in the early years of the Langdons' ownership to accommodate this change in boundary. These changes included a new north gate and gatehouse and the realignment of the entry road to the north gate. The Langdons also built a new mansion after the Hosack mansion burned in 1845.

Walter Langdon died in 1847, leaving Hyde Park to his many children. Over the next five years, Walter Langdon, Jr. bought the interest from his siblings so that by 1852 he was the sole owner. He also purchased other land that had been separated from the estate, including Crum Elbow Creek and the farm property on the east side of Albany Post Road. Walter Langdon, Jr.'s most significant contribution to the estate was the construction of new formal gardens and greenhouses.

The Vanderbilts purchased the estate and farm from Langdon's heirs in 1895 and immediately began updating the property with new buildings. The Langdon house was demolished and a new mansion was built in its place. Other new buildings include a guest house called the Pavilion, the Coach House, two gatehouses, a perimeter wall and gates, a pump and power house on Crum Elbow Creek, and a second pump house near the Hudson River. Structures associated with the creek that were constructed in the early years of the Vanderbilts' ownership include the White Bridge, the Coach House Bridge, and four dams that created a series of ponds. Frederick Vanderbilt planted numerous trees over the course of his residency. These included specimen trees throughout the property, an allée of sugar maples along the entry drive, and a white pine buffer along Albany Post Road. The overall layout and character of the estate grounds, however, appears to have been largely retained.

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The Vanderbilts also employed a series of designers to rework the formal gardens constructed by Walter Langdon, Jr. in 1875. The overall organization of the gardens was retained, as were the two buildings, many of the perimeter walls, and the graded terraces. Early changes to the gardens included the replacement of Langdon's greenhouses with three new greenhouse structures: the carnation house, the rose house, and a pair of palm houses. The gardens were also redesigned and extended eastward, with redesigns of the two eastern-most terraces by James L. Greenleaf and the addition of the rose garden designed by Thomas Meehan and Sons and Robert B. Cridland. New structures in the gardens included walks, walls, arbors, pavilions, pools, and fountains. Changes to the gardens, including new or altered architectural elements, rearrangement of garden beds, and new plantings, were carried out over several years from 1905 to about 1934, when the Italian garden designed by Greenleaf, with its dense plantings of evergreen shrubs and hedges, was redesigned by Cridland as a flowering cherry allée with perennial border beds.

After Louise Vanderbilt died in 1926, Frederick Vanderbilt is said to have spent more time at Hyde Park and probably gave even closer attention to the management of the landscape. A tree survey of the property completed in 1941 indicated a significant number of young trees, less than 13 inches in diameter, that were likely planted during the last twenty years of Frederick Vanderbilt's ownership. Plant purchases for the gardens documented in the estate's purchase ledgers during the 1920s and 1930s also indicate a continued interest in the upkeep of the estate grounds. Cridland's redesign of the Italian garden mentioned above was also undertaken during this period. When Frederick Vanderbilt died in 1938, he left his estate to his niece Mrs. James Van Alen, who gave it to the National Park Service in 1940.

The National Park Service acquired the 211-acre estate property west of Albany Post Road as a national historic site in 1940. The farm property east of the road was not included in the acquisition and continued to be held in private ownership. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a friend and neighbor of Frederick Vanderbilt, was instrumental in securing the estate as a national historic site, offering his strong endorsement and guiding the process through the legislature. Shortly after acquisition, the National Park Service conducted a thorough site inventory, including a detailed tree inventory, and developed a master plan for the park, although no substantial changes to the organization or character of the landscape were carried out. Over the years the greenhouses and several other secondary structures throughout the property were removed.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is nationally significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A in the area of economics for its association with the Gilded Age of American wealth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Country estates such as the Vanderbilt Mansion NHS were the product of the economic, social, and cultural developments resulting from American industrialization following the Civil War. The site is nationally significant under Criterion C as a remarkably complete example of a gilded-age country place in terms of the architecture, room arrangement, interior finishes and furnishings, and mechanical systems of the mansion and other buildings, representing the rural domestic ideal of elite gilded-age families. Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is also nationally significant under

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Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture as a rare example of early picturesque landscape design in America and for exhibiting the distinctive characteristics of Country Place Era landscapes.

The period of significance spans the years from 1828, when then-owner David Hosack and landscape designer Andre Parmentier began developing the site layout, to 1938, when Frederick Vanderbilt died. While the history of the development of the site dates at least to 1797, extant design characteristics such as the circulation system, location of the main house, and overall landscape character were established with the Hosack-Parmentier design beginning in 1828. Characteristics of the earlier designs do not appear to have survived with sufficient integrity to be included in the period of significance. The period of significance end date of 1938 marks the end of the site's association with Frederick Vanderbilt and includes a number of changes to the landscape implemented during the 1930s. Frederick Vanderbilt is said to have spent increasing amounts of time at Hyde Park after Louise Vanderbilt died in 1926 and continued to involve himself in the management of the estate landscape. Changes in the formal gardens include a redesign of the Italian garden by Robert Cridland in 1934. Tree inventories from the 1940s suggest that Vanderbilt planted numerous trees in the later years of his residency, and estate purchase ledgers show that plants and trees for the formal gardens and the estate grounds were purchased throughout the 1930s.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

The Vanderbilt Mansion property retains the seven aspects of integrity, including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The site retains its historical location, setting, and association with its former property owners, strongly evoking the historic scene through its extant features, landscape patterns, and views to the Hudson River. Alterations to the site have been made since the end of the period of significance to accommodate park operations and visitor services, including the removal of the garden greenhouses, remaining buildings on the northern portion of the property, addition of a visitor parking lot, and removal of foundation plantings around the mansion. Despite these changes, the defining features have been retained, thereby preserving the site's ability to convey its significance. The majority of the buildings and structures at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS reflect the design, materials, and workmanship of the period of Vanderbilt ownership from 1895 to 1938. These include the Mansion (1899), the Pavilion (1895), the Coach House and a Power House (1897), two gatehouses (1898), and two bridges and three dams (1897-1898). The basic structure of the formal gardens and the two structures associated with the gardens, the Tool House and the Gardener's Cottage, date from the Langdon ownership in 1878. Redesigns of the gardens, including changes to the bed layout, garden organization, and walls, steps, and other structures, were carried out during the Vanderbilt period. Finally, the primary elements of the circulation system, the basic site layout, and the overall character of the landscape vegetation were established as far back as the 1828 Hosack-Parmentier design. The current landscape is a layered combination of materials from each period and conveys the site's historic associations and feeling of an early American picturesque landscape design and an impressive Country Place Era estate.

Overall, Vanderbilt Mansion NHS retains integrity and still clearly conveys its historical significance through extant resources. The condition of the landscape at the time of this report's completion is

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evaluated as “good.” Impacts on the cultural landscape that affect the historic character include invasive vegetation species, encroachment of forest on historically clear areas, aging specimen trees, deferred maintenance, erosion, and wear from visitation.

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Vanderbilt Mansion 2008 Existing Conditions.

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Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name: Vanderbilt Mansion

Property Level: Landscape

CLI Identification Number: 650058

Parent Landscape: 650058

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code: Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site -VAMA

Park Organization Code: 1797

Park Administrative Unit: Roosevelt-Vanderbilt Headquarters

CLI Hierarchy Description

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS includes one cultural landscape, Vanderbilt Mansion, and one component landscape, the Vanderbilt Mansion Formal Gardens.

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

The information contained in this inventory is based primarily on the “Cultural Landscape Report for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site” (CLR) by John Hammond, completed in 2009. Fieldwork and research for the CLR were conducted during multiple site visits in 2008 and 2009 by John Hammond, Margie Coffin Brown, and Brona Keenan. Assistance was provided by park staff, including Dave Hayes, Chief of Resources, as well as the volunteer group, Frederick W. Vanderbilt Garden Association.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	07/13/2010
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	09/17/2010

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The New York State Preservation Office concurred with the findings of the CLI on September 17, 2010. They had no editorial comments on the CLI.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY
CONCURRENCE FORM

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Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site concurs with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for Vanderbilt Mansion including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained

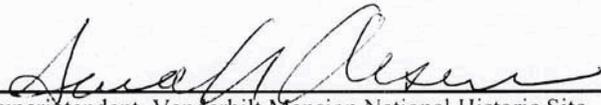
CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for Vanderbilt Mansion is hereby approved and accepted.



Superintendent, Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site 7.13.10
Date

Park concurrence on the findings of this CLI was received on July 13, 2010.

SHPO concurrence on the findings of this CLI was received on September 17, 2010.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The boundary of the Vanderbilt Mansion cultural landscape corresponds with the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site (NHS) boundary. The park is bounded on the east by Albany Post Road, on the west by the Hudson River, and on the north and south by private property. This corresponds with the current boundary of the Vanderbilt Mansion NHS as described in the 1980 National Register of Historic Places nomination form. The park boundary contains all extant resources associated with the site's significance that are currently under National Park Service management. The resources within the formal gardens at the site are documented in a separate CLI as a component landscape.

State and County:

State: NY

County: Dutchess County

Size (Acres): 211.00

Boundary UTMS:

Source: GPS-Uncorrected
Boundary Source Narrative: Google Earth
Type of Point: Area
Datum: NAD 83
UTM Zone: 18
UTM Easting: 588,262
UTM Northing: 4,628,560

Source: GPS-Uncorrected
Boundary Source Narrative: Google Earth
Type of Point: Area
Datum: NAD 83
UTM Zone: 18
UTM Easting: 588,306
UTM Northing: 4,627,359

Source: GPS-Uncorrected
Boundary Source Narrative: Google Earth
Type of Point: Area
Datum: NAD 83
UTM Zone: 18
UTM Easting: 587,914
UTM Northing: 4,626,875

Source: GPS-Uncorrected
Boundary Source Narrative: Google Earth
Type of Point: Area
Datum: NAD 83

UTM Zone:	18
UTM Easting:	587,497
UTM Northing:	4,626,840
Source:	GPS-Uncorrected
Boundary Source Narrative:	Google Earth
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	18
UTM Easting:	58,658
UTM Northing:	4,628,889

Location Map:



Location Map. Shows the location of Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site as well as the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site (OCLP 2008).

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is located within the Hudson Valley, the region along the Hudson River extending northward from New York City for more than 150 miles. The region includes the larger cities of Poughkeepsie, Albany, and Troy, as well as numerous small towns, agricultural land, and tourist destinations.

Initial settlement of the Hudson Valley in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was driven by its proximity to New York City and the ease of access afforded by the river. In 1683, Thomas Dongan, Governor of the Province of New York, began making patents of large parcels of land in order to encourage settlement of the sparsely populated territory between New York City and Albany. The large patents, often of several thousand acres, typically had narrow access to the river, a valuable asset before sufficient roads. These lands were used primarily for agricultural purposes, but many of the more dramatic parcels along the river were developed as estates by “gentlemen farmers.” These estates had large ornate mansions, extensive pleasure grounds, ornamental gardens and conservatories, as well as substantial agricultural operations. This use of the Hudson Valley by New York’s wealthy increased, peaking during the Gilded Age in the late nineteenth century when the banks of the river were home to the country’s most well-known families, including Vanderbilt, Rockefeller, and Roosevelt.

Around these lavish estates, the Hudson Valley developed as a working region, with agriculture giving way to industry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Industrial and transportation centers like Poughkeepsie and Kingston boomed, helping to drive the nation’s industrial development. All the while, the majority of the region was characterized by farms and small towns. Today, both agriculture and industry have declined as influences on the region’s economy. Hudson Valley now serves primarily as a suburb of New York City and as a tourist destination for those wishing to escape the city.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is perched on a high bluff overlooking the Hudson River. The Hudson Valley is part of the Great Appalachian Valley, which in turn is part of the Valley and Ridge physiographic province of the Appalachian Mountain system. The valley is bordered immediately to the west by the Shawgunk Mountains and by the Catskill Mountains. The Hudson River, a major river draining 13,400 square miles of the Adirondack and Catskill Mountains, is 325 miles long and over a mile wide in places.

The land around the Hudson River is folded into long north-south ridges, which create long, narrow terraces bordered by steep slopes that drop to the river. High bluffs along the river provide long views to the west composed of rolling hills and distant mountains. The fertile soil

is rocky with numerous large shale outcroppings.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is located within the town of Hyde Park in Dutchess County, New York. The town is governed by an elected Town Supervisor and a Town Board with four elected members.

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is managed within the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites management unit, which also includes the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS and Eleanor Roosevelt NHS. In addition to the three national historic sites, Hyde Park contains two historic districts (Vanderbilt Lane Historic District, which includes the Langdon and Vanderbilt farm areas and structures, and the Main Street/Albertson Street/Park Place Historic District, which contains a number of nineteenth century buildings in the center of Hyde Park) and numerous buildings and structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Management Unit: Roosevelt-Vanderbilt NHS

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 07/13/2010

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site (NHS) meets the management category “Must be Preserved and Maintained” because it is a nationally significant property. Preservation is stipulated in the enabling legislation and the landscape is related to the legislated significance.

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Public Access:

Type of Access: Unrestricted

Explanatory Narrative:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is open year-around from sunrise to sunset.

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Description:

In addition to the 211-acre estate landscape currently within the park, the Vanderbilt property originally consisted of an approximately 500-acre eastern portion where the farm and agricultural fields were developed. This land served as the farm portion of the property from the end of the eighteenth century through the end of the Vanderbilt ownership in 1938. Through the years, this property contained farm houses, barns, and other farm buildings, as well as agricultural fields, graze lands, and forests. The farm property was not transferred to the National Park Service at the end of the Vanderbilt period and today is privately owned. Although much of the property has been developed as housing, significant resources associated with the Vanderbilts' farming activities remain, including buildings, structures, walls, and fields. Although these resources are in private ownership, they contribute to the significance of the Vanderbilt Mansion NHS.

The subway, a short tunnel that once provided access between the estate and farm properties beneath Albany Post Road, straddles the park boundary. The western half of the structure is within the park, while the eastern portion and the portion under the road are outside of the park. A metal gate currently blocks access from the park side. The portions of the subway outside of the park boundary (i.e. adjacent lands) contribute to the cultural landscape.

Views are an essential character-defining element of Vanderbilt Mansion NHS. Views of the river and the mountains beyond from the areas around the Mansion were a primary asset both of the location and the design of the estate landscape. While isolated buildings have been built along the opposite bank of the river, the views toward the west are still largely undeveloped, presenting a naturalistic scene of river, forest, and distant mountains that contributes strongly to the historic character of the landscape.

National Register Information

Existing NRIS Information:

Name in National Register: Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site
NRIS Number: 66000059
Primary Certification Date: 10/06/1980

Significance Criteria: A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

Significance Criteria: C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

Period of Significance:

Time Period: AD 1828 - 1938
Historic Context Theme: Creating Social Institutions and Movements
Subtheme: Ways of Life
Facet: Occupational And Economic Classes
Time Period: AD 1828 - 1938
Historic Context Theme: Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme: Landscape Architecture
Facet: The Late Victorian Eclectic Landscape

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:	Architecture
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Economics
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Landscape Architecture
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None

Statement of Significance:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is nationally significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A, in the area of economics, for its association with the Gilded Age of American wealth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Country estates such as the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site were the product of the economic, social, and cultural developments resulting from American industrialization following the Civil War. The site is also nationally significant under Criterion C, in the areas of architecture, as an example of the academic neoclassical architectural style typified by the teachings of the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, and landscape architecture, as a rare example of early picturesque landscape design in America and for exhibiting the distinctive characteristics of Country Place Era landscapes.

The period of significance spans the years from 1828, when then-owner David Hosack and landscape designer Andre Parmentier began developing the site layout, to 1938, when Frederick Vanderbilt died. While the history of the development of the site dates at least to 1797, extant design characteristics such as the circulation system, location of the main house, and overall landscape character were established with the Hosack-Parmentier design beginning in 1828. Characteristics of the earlier designs do not appear to have survived with sufficient integrity to be included in the period of significance. The period of significance end date of 1938 marks the end of the site's association with Frederick Vanderbilt and the Gilded Age lifestyle he lived. The period of significance incorporates all evident physical characteristics and features and includes a number of changes to the landscape implemented during the 1930s (CLR 2008:10-11).

CRITERION A

The Gilded Age:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is significant under Criterion A as a preeminent example of a country estate

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from the Gilded Age of American wealth. The Gilded Age refers to the period in America between Reconstruction and the early twentieth century marked by extravagant displays of wealth and excess by the country's upper class. The rapid industrialization of the country, population expansion, and other social and economic factors lead to a dramatic polarization of wealth. Industries such as steel, oil, and railroads produced families of immense new wealth, who, eager to project an appearance of an established upper class, spent their money lavishly and conspicuously. Looking to the old European estates as models, many built extravagant estates in the country with large mansions, formal gardens, and extensive grounds (CLR 2009:14).

The Vanderbilt family epitomized the patterns of the Gilded Age. A dynasty built by Cornelius Vanderbilt in the middle of the nineteenth century in the railroad industry, the family amassed great wealth over three generations. Frederick Vanderbilt, the grandson of Cornelius, inherited the railroad business and an enormous amount of money from his father, William Henry Vanderbilt. Frederick bought the Hyde Park estate in 1895, toward the end of the Gilded Age, and proceeded to develop his grand estate (CLR 2009:14).

CRITERION C

Gilded Age Architecture:

The Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is significant under Criterion C as an example of a Gilded Age country estate with a number of buildings and structures representative of the styles that typify the period. Notable buildings include the Mansion, Pavilion, and two Guesthouses, all designed by the firm McKim, Mead & White with Charles F. McKim as the partner in charge. McKim, Mead & White was one of America's preeminent architectural firms by the end of the nineteenth century. The buildings display academic neoclassical styling typified by the teachings of the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, where McKim had studied. The building designs incorporate classical design elements, including those from Greek, Roman, and Italian Renaissance architecture, as well as those from earlier American and Colonial architecture. The grand scale, elaborate ornamentation, and classical references were meant to impress visitors and present an air of class and dignity, qualities that were complemented by the scenic setting, dramatic views, and carefully designed grounds.

In addition to the primary buildings designed by McKim, Mead & White, Vanderbilt Mansion NHS contains a number of buildings and structures designed by other notable architects and builders. The majority of these buildings and structures were commissioned by Vanderbilt in the early years of his residency. These include the Coach House, designed by Robert H. Robertson; the Power House and the White Bridge, designed by W. T. Hiscox and Co.; and the Rustic Bridge, designed and built by Norcross Brothers, a construction firm that contracted to build most of the other buildings on the property as well. Two buildings survive from before the Vanderbilt period. These buildings, the Tool House and the Gardener's Cottage in the formal gardens, were designed by John Sturgis in 1875. These buildings and structures display a wide range of architectural styles, including the neoclassical White Bridge, the rustic cobblestone Power House and Rustic Bridge, and the eclectic Coach House, which exhibits characteristics from American Queen Anne, Tudor revival, Romanesque, and shingle style architecture. While exhibiting widely varying design styles, all of these buildings and structures,

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like the McKim, Mead & White buildings, were intended to showcase the wealth, stature, and tastes of the estate's owners.

Picturesque Landscape Design:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is significant under Criterion C as a leading example of early American picturesque landscape design as it was practiced in this country in the early nineteenth century is the only known landscape in America designed by Andre Parmentier (1780-1830) to survive. As such, the landscape embodies the distinctive characteristics and principles that guided much of American landscape design in the nineteenth century and that continue to influence both residential and public landscape design today (CLR 2009:11).

Early development at Hyde Park was strongly influenced by perceptions of nature rooted in the ideals of the Romantic movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Prior to this, nature was viewed as either savage and dangerous wilderness or as raw resources to be utilized and exploited. During the Romantic period, however, nature was often viewed as the unspoiled ideal, and proximity to nature, especially to visually dramatic scenes such as mountains and rivers, was considered proximity to God. Designed landscapes of the time both incorporated and emulated the natural features within and beyond their borders. Distant views were prized, and the built aspects of the landscape were laid out to showcase these views. Naturalistic forms were favored over geometric forms; paths and roads tended to follow organic curves, and trees and shrubs were planted in informal groupings (CLR 2009:11).

This deference to natural forms was refined further in the nineteenth century by incorporating compositional rules borrowed from landscape painters. Painters often took liberties with the landscape before them, rearranging the elements to create a more balanced and aesthetically appealing composition. Landscape painting of the period was characterized by distinct foreground, middle ground, and background elements. Landscape forms that were favored include mountains, rivers, broken forest, and open fields, with large, mature trees often featured in the foreground. Structures such as pavilions and bridges, often inspired by classical architecture, were typically placed in the middle ground, occupying high knolls or tucked near the edges of the forest. The goal was to depict an ideal nature, one that exhibited equal parts balance and grandeur. Picturesque landscape designers applied these compositional principles to the landscape, arranging the features on the land as if they were the subject of a painting, with emphasis on views and aesthetic composition (CLR 2009:11-12).

The principles of picturesque landscape design were first developed at the grand country estates in England in the eighteenth century. By the late 1820s, the style had come to the United States, strongly influencing the design of private estates, public parks, and institutional campuses through much of the nineteenth century. One of the earliest practitioners of picturesque design principles in America was Andre Parmentier. Andrew Jackson Downing, one of the principal landscape designers and scholars of the mid-nineteenth century, wrote in 1841, "The only practitioner of [landscape gardening], of any note, was the late M. Parmentier of Brooklyn, Long Island" (CLR 2009:12; from Downing, "A Treatise on Theory...," as cited in CLR 1992:291-292). Downing elaborated:

"M. Andre Parmentier was the brother of that celebrated horticulturist, the Chevalier Parmentier,

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Mayor of Enghein, Holland. He emigrated to this country about the year 1824, and in the Horticultural Nurseries which he established at Brooklyn, he gave a specimen of the natural style of laying out ground, combined with a scientific arrangement of plants, which excited public curiosity, and contributed not a little to the dissemination of a taste for the natural mode of landscape gardening. ...In short, we consider M. Parmentier's labors and examples as having effected, directly, far more for landscape gardening in America, than those of any other individual whatever."

In an essay he wrote in 1828, Parmentier himself described some of the compositional techniques he espoused, including curvilinear paths, informal vegetation groupings, and carefully composed views. Illustrating his use of painting techniques for composing the landscape, Parmentier wrote:

The plantations and groups of trees near the house should be, if possible, of a deeper green ; they would extend the view and the perspective, and produce the effect of shades in a landscape-picture, where the groups of trees in front are of a darker shade, and seem to remove the perspective from the extremity of the landscape. For the same reason, the trees at the farther part of a park, or garden, should be those of a thin and light foliage. (Fessenden 1847, 184)

Consistent with the principles of picturesque landscape design, the layout of Vanderbilt Mansion NHS as established by Parmentier reflects a conscious coordination of the designed elements and the natural features. The location of the main house and the arrangement of the drives respond to topography, views, and the water features. Views from the areas around the Mansion feature open grassy areas with mature specimen trees in the foreground, rolling meadows and bands of woodland in the middle ground, and the Hudson River and mountains in the background. Trees near the Mansion and main drive areas are either solitary or in small informal groups, arranged to frame and filter longer views. Roads and paths curve gently with the contours of the land and wind through small stands of trees. Arrangement of the buildings and other features is informal, relating to natural features such as slope, vegetation, or the creek. The effect is of an idealized pastoral landscape with balanced visual composition and an emphasis on sequential experience (CLR 2009:12-13).

Country Place Landscape Design:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is also significant under Criterion C as an example of Country Place Era landscape design as it was practiced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When Frederick Vanderbilt purchased the Hyde Park estate in 1895, he began updating the property to reflect his needs and tastes. While honoring the overall layout of the property and retaining the main circulation system, Vanderbilt replaced nearly every structure on the property and added a number of new buildings, drives, bridges, and dams. The arrangement and style of these changes were characteristic of the period of residential landscape design called the Country Place Era (CLR 2009:13).

The Country Place Era in American landscape design refers the period of design practice between 1880 and 1929 when the profession of landscape architecture was preoccupied with residential design commissions for the wealthy. The period spanned stylistic sub-periods, trends, and labels including Romantic, Victorian, Neoclassical, and Beaux-Arts. Consistent throughout the period, however, were a

number of principles that reflected the fashions and desires of an affluent class of clientele, including privacy, grandeur, neoclassical elements, and an integration of architecture and landscape (CLR 2009:13).

The philosophy that guided country estate landscape design during the Country Place Era was summarized in the 1917 publication *An Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design*, a volume that served as the primary design textbook at Harvard University through the 1940s. As was typical of the period, the design philosophy was defined in terms of the desires of the wealthy owners:

“Each man will wish, first of all, a proper and convenient house in scale with the life which he expects to lead. He will also wish to own a piece of land which, together with the house, satisfies his sense of possession and plainly expresses his ownership. Usually a part of that expression will be some sense of boundary between what he owns and the neighboring properties. He will want a place for hospitality, for entertainment of his friends; and for himself and for his friends he will want a variety of interesting things to look at, and a number of interesting things which can be done. Further, he will wish to enjoy the expanse of free spaces, he will be glad to have a piece of property from which a distant view is obtained.” (CLR 2009:13; from Hubbard et al, “*An Introduction to the Study of...*,” 1917:248)

Vanderbilt employed some of the most prominent designers of the time to create his country estate, including the firm of McKim, Mead & White for the design of the Mansion and other buildings and landscape architect James L. Greenleaf for alterations to the formal gardens. These designers were strongly associated with the Country Place Era, working on numerous commissions for large country estates. The landscape as it was managed by Vanderbilt exhibited the characteristics typical of estates during the Country Place Era, including a naturalistic arrangement of elements, prominence and grandeur of the house, neoclassical styling of the architecture, and distinct sense of privacy (CLR 2009:14).

Today, Vanderbilt Mansion NHS continues to reflect the opulence, refinement, and grand ornamentation that characterized Frederick Vanderbilt’s estate. The buildings, designed by some of the most prominent architects of the age, display the grand scale and classical style typical of the estates and mansions of the time. The buildings are set in the extensive grounds with formal gardens, manicured parkland, and dramatic views. Overall, the estate presents a showcase for Vanderbilt’s fortune and a significant example of Gilded Age country estates (CLR 2009:14).

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Estate Landscape

Primary Current Use:

Leisure-Passive (Park)

Current and Historic Names:

Name

Type of Name

Vanderbilt Mansion

Both Current And Historic

Hyde Park

Both Current And Historic

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1705	Land Transfer	Sir Edward Hyde, Lord Cornbury, Governor of New York, grants the patent for the land that would eventually include Hyde Park to Peter Fauconnier and three other partners. (CLR 1992: 5)
AD 1746	Land Transfer	Upon Fauconnier`s death, his property passes to his daughter, Magdalene Fauconnier Valleau. (CLR 1992: 5)
AD 1764	Land Transfer	By 1764, Dr. John Bard has inherited through his wife, Suzanne Valleau, most of the Fauconnier patent. (CLR 1992: 6)
AD 1764 - 1768	Farmed/Harvested	Shortly after acquiring the land, Bard establishes a farm on the east side of what would become Albany Post Road. A description of the property from 1768 includes reference to a farm house, barn, and an orchard of 500-600 apple trees. The description also mentions woodlands, swamps, upland meadows, and the large flat rock that would become known as Bard Rock. (CLR 1992: 6)
AD 1772	Built	John Bard builds a house, known as the Red House, on the farm property east of Albany Post Road. (CLR 1992: 6)
AD 1797 - 1799	Built	Samuel Bard builds a house at the edge of the land table overlooking the rolling slopes, parkland, and woodland that descended to the river. (CLR 1992: 11)
AD 1799	Land Transfer	Upon John Bard`s death in 1799, Hyde Park passes to his son, Dr. Samuel Bard. (CLR 1992:11)

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AD 1799 - 1821	Built	In addition to the house, Samuel Bard develops Hyde Park to eventually include several outbuildings and a garden and greenhouse. The road system includes a road or footpath from Hyde Park Landing at the south end of the property to the house, a central drive from Albany Post Road to the house, and Bard Lane, a road from Albany Post Road to Bard Rock. The exact composition and layout of Samuel Bard's estate is not known. (CLR 1992: 18)
AD 1828	Land Transfer	Samuel Bard dies in 1821, and in 1828 his long-time friend Dr. David Hosack buys Hyde Park from Bard's heirs. (CLR 1992: 29)
AD 1828 - 1830	Altered	Hosack employs Andre Parmentier to lay out the grounds of his estate. Parmentier establishes the circulation system of the park, altering it considerably from the Bard period. (CLR 1992: 33)
	Planted	Parmentier's plan includes the planting of trees and plants in the estate grounds. The landscape of the upper park and the grounds around the house is likely a combination of planted trees and trees retained from the Bard period as well as naturally occurring trees. (CLR 1992: 37)
AD 1829 - 1830	Altered	Hosack retains the services of architect Martin Thompson to substantially remodel and rebuild Samuel Bard's house. The enlarged house is described as having a spacious beautiful lawn on the east side. (CLR 1992: 29)
	Built	A coach house is built north of the house. The house, built of stone in a Greek Revival style, is 60 feet by 40 feet. (CLR 1992: 31)
	Built	A greenhouse is built south of the house. The greenhouse consists of a central portion and two wings, and measures about 110 feet long and 20 feet deep. Plants kept inside include a collection of pines, <i>Magnolia grandiflora</i> , <i>strelitzia</i> , <i>farnesiana</i> , and <i>Ficus elastica</i> . (CLR 1992: 31)
	Built	Two gate lodges designed by Martin Thompson are built at the gates to the property. (CLR 1992: 31)
	Built	Several ornamental structures are placed throughout the pleasure grounds, including two circular pavilions, one near the southern entrance and one at Bard Rock, and a colossal urn atop a plinth. (CLR 1992: 40)

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AD 1835	Land Transfer	In 1835, David Hosack dies suddenly from a stroke. His heirs deed 60 acres on the northern end of the property to his widow and sell the Red House and farm to John A. Degraff. (CLR 1992: 55)
AD 1840	Land Transfer	John Jacob Astor purchases the remainder of the Hosack estate (south of the acres deeded to Mrs. Hosack and west of Albany Post Road) in 1840 and gives the estate to his daughter, Dorothea (Astor) Langdon and her husband Walter. (CLR 1992: 55)
AD 1845 - 1847	Built	After the Hosack house burns in 1845, the Langdons build their own house on the same site. (CLR 1992: 64)
AD 1847	Land Transfer	Walter Langdon dies in 1847, leaving the estate to his children. Over the next five years, Walter Langdon, Jr. buys out the interest of his siblings so that by 1852, he is the sole owner. (CLR 1992: 64)
AD 1849	Land Transfer	Walter, Jr. purchases Crum Elbow Creek and land to its south. (CLR 1992: 64)
AD 1872	Land Transfer	Walter, Jr. purchases the Red House and farm. (CLR 1992: 64)
	Built	In 1872 the barns and their contents of hay and grain burn and are rebuilt. (CLR 1992: 64)
AD 1874 - 1875	Built	In 1874, Langdon employs the architecture firm of Sturgis and Brigham to design a formal garden complex. The complex consists of two cottages (a gardener's cottage and a tool house) connected by a greenhouse, a conservatory, and enclosing walls. These architectural elements enclose a series of six terraces that stepped down the hill, each containing a formal garden of geometric beds. (CLR 1992: 66)
AD 1875	Removed	Walter, Jr. tears down the Red House in 1875. (CLR 1992: 64)
AD 1884	Built	The Langdons' new barns are struck by lightning and again burn to the ground in 1883. New barns are built in 1884. (CLR 1992: 74)

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AD 1895	Land Transfer	Hyde Park is purchased by Frederick W. and Louise Vanderbilt. (CLR 1992: 88)
	Built	The first building to be completed by the Vanderbilts is the pavilion. Designed by McKim, Mead, and White, the pavilion is used as a residence for the Vanderbilts while they rebuild the mansion. (CLR 1992: 114)
AD 1896 - 1899	Built	The Vanderbilts initially intend to renovate the Langdon house, but when it is discovered that the house has severe structural problems, they decide to rebuild it in its entirety. The new house is located in the same place as all of the previous houses, and while it resembles the Langdon house in general appearance, it features the latest in modern conveniences, including electricity, plumbing, and central heat. (CLR 1992: 118)
AD 1897	Built	Designed and constructed by W. T. Hiscox, the White Bridge is built to carry the main entry drive over Crum Elbow Creek. (CLR 1992: 114)
	Built	The double-arched bridge at the coach house is designed and built by Norcross Brothers. It is constructed of reinforced concrete with cobble-stone facing. (CLR 1992: 114)
	Built	Four new dams are constructed between 1895 and 1900, including the dam at Albany Post Road, the dam under the White Bridge, the power house dam, and the lower dam near the coach house. (CLR 1992: 114)
	Built	In 1897 and 1898, two pump houses are built. One is a rustic stone powerhouse on the east side of Crum Elbow Creek near the dam, and the other is located on the lower road near the river and the Sexton Tract boundary line. These are both designed by W. T. Hiscox. (CLR 1992: 118)
	Built	The coach house is designed by New York architect Robert H. Robertson and built by Norcross Brothers. (CLR 1992: 118)
AD 1898	Built	In 1898, the gates and stone wall around the entire estate are completed. The latter is the work of a local mason, Henry Myers. (CLR 1992: 118)

	Built	Two gatehouses are designed by McKim, Mead, and White and built by Norcross Brothers. (CLR 1992: 118)
	Altered	While retaining the overall layout of the estate's circulation system, Vanderbilt makes some changes to portions of the estate's system of drives. Existing drives - from the south entrance to the main entrance along Crum Elbow Creek, from the main entrance to the house, and from the house northward - are improved with a crushed stone or gravel surface and formed concrete gutters. When the new mansion is under construction, the main drive passing directly in front of the house is reshaped and the drive leading past the pavilion to the north gate is straightened, reflecting more Victorian values of form and symmetry. New drives include the lower woodland drive along the river bank that extends from the south gate to just south of what is at the time the northern boundary of the property. (CLR 1992: 108)
AD 1898 - 1901	Planted	A survey of the estate's trees conducted by Platt and Burley shows over fifty trees that appear to be very small and were probably planted after the Vanderbilts bought the property. (CLR 1992: 118)
AD 1901	Built	Despite repairs made only a few years earlier to the Langdon farm buildings, in 1901 they are replaced with a new farm group. (CLR 1992: 128)
AD 1902 - 1904	Altered	James L. Greenleaf develops plans for an Italian style garden on the eastern two terraces of the formal gardens. The linear space is oriented along a north-south axis, about 320 feet long and 90 feet wide. The space is enclosed on the north by a pergola and on the south by an aquatic plant pool and pavilion. Framing elements include walls, piers, iron work, trellis elements, and a circulation system of walks and steps. The plantings in the Italian garden include perennial flowers and shrubs, such as flox and irises, vines, and massed evergreen shrubs. A tall trimmed cedar hedge divides the garden into two distinct spaces. The character of this garden is dense and lush. (CLR 1992: 142)

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AD 1905	Built	In 1905 plans are put forward by the Pierson-Sefton Co. for simple twin palm houses intended to replace the conservatory built thirty years prior. The two palm houses are located on the top terrace in the northwest corner of the garden. (CLR 1992: 135)
AD 1906	Removed	In 1905, Vanderbilt acquires the northern portion of the estate that consists of 64 acres that had been withheld by David Hosack's heirs when the property was sold to Walter Langdon. This reconstitutes the original estate property as it had been known by Hosack and the Bards. Shortly after acquiring the tract, Vanderbilt sets out to reorganize the northern portion of his estate to reflect the new boundaries. This includes the removal of nearly all of the structures that had been built on the Sexton tract in the intervening years, as well as the relocation of the north gate. Both the lower woodland drive and the upper drive past the pavilion are extended into the new land, connecting to Bard Rock and the north gate respectively. (CLR 1992: 128)
	Removed	Two gates are removed after the Vanderbilts acquire the Sexton tract: the north gate Walter Langdon had installed when he purchased the land and the main gate of Torham, as the Sexton estate was known. A new gate is constructed further north near the northern border of the property with flanking stone pillars and integrated into the newly extended stone perimeter wall. (CLR 1992: 128)
	Built	In 1906 an underground drive, referred to as the subway, is constructed beneath Albany Post Road between the estate property and the farm lands. (CLR 1992: 132)
	Planted	In 1906 the Vanderbilt extends the pine screen into the newly acquired Sexton tract. The trees, planted in tight rows, extend along the road from the new north gate to where the old gate had been and then along the inside (west) margin of the pine screen that had been planted a number of years before. This creates a second layer of younger trees along the inside of the screen. (CLR 1992: 132)

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AD 1907	Built	In 1907 the Pierson U-Bar Co., likely a successor form of the Pierson-Sefton Co., develops drawings and construction details for the greenhouse between the gardener`s cottage and tool house. This greenhouse is generally referred to as the carnation house. (CLR 1992: 138)
AD 1908	Built	The Pierson U-Bar Co. also designs a large two-wing greenhouse, called the rose house, to replace the four Langdon greenhouses on the southwest terrace. (CLR 1992: 138)
AD 1910	Altered	In 1910, the sweep of the drive directly past the house is realigned eastward to form a more circular configuration. This reconfiguration, often referred to as the Great Circle, doubles the size of the mansion lawn. (CLR 1992: 132)
	Expanded	In 1910, the firm of Thomas B. Meehan and Sons designs the loggia garden, an eastward extension of the garden on a lower level that is later known as the Rose Garden. The garden features geometric planting beds, a circular fountain, and a pavilion, as well as walks, steps, and enclosing fence and piers. The planting plan developed by Meehan and Sons originally features a variety of shrubs and perennials, similar in character to the Italian garden immediately to the west. (CLR 1992: 154)
AD 1916 - 1934	Altered	In 1916, the Vanderbilts engage Robert B. Cridland as garden designer. Over nearly twenty years, Cridland develops a number of plans for the formal gardens. These plans, some of which are executed and some are not, deal primarily with the garden plantings. The overall structure of the gardens remains much as it had been established between 1875 and 1910. (CLR 1992: 157)
AD 1916	Altered	In 1916, Cridland develops an overall plan for the gardens that includes a redesign and new plantings for nearly every garden area from the top terraces near the greenhouses to the new loggia garden. The only part of this that appears to have been executed was the lower half of the Italian garden near the pool and pavilion. The planting plan features 22 conical arborvitae shrubs and perennial plantings. (CLR 1992: 157)

	Altered	Sometime after he develops the overall planting plan for the formal gardens, Cridland develops a new planting plan for the loggia garden that specified that it be planted nearly entirely in roses. The roses, including standard roses, climbing roses, and hybrid tea roses, are arranged by color rather than by cultivars. (CLR 1992: 158)
AD 1919	Altered	In 1919, an iron fence is installed atop the entire length of the perimeter wall. This fence is removed during World War II in support of wartime scrap drives. (CLR 1992: 132)
AD 1922	Altered	Cridland develops plans in 1922 to that alter the structural elements of the garden along the western edge of the Italian garden. These changes include wire arches, pergolas, retaining walls, and plantings. Greenleaf had designed this area as a continuous trellis wall with window openings into the Italian garden. Cridland's design features hedges that frame both sides of the walk and are joined overhead with a trellis over the steps, and a series of vine-covered wire arches. (CLR 1992: 164)
	Altered	Another Cridland design of 1922 involves remodeling the pergola at the north end of the Italian garden. The design reuses the brick piers developed by Greenleaf, but replaces the peaked rafters with a series of ogee curved members. (CLR 1992: 164)
AD 1923	Altered	In 1923, Cridland develops a plan for foundation plantings at the front of the mansion. The plan features tall columnar junipers and mounded massings of yews. (CLR 1992: 178)
AD 1934	Altered	In 1934, Cridland creates a new planting plan for the Italian garden, replacing the lush evergreen shrubs with a more simplistic design. The new design comprises a double row of flowering cherries over lawns flanking the walk. Narrow beds of perennials front retaining walls along each of the lawns. The design produces a strikingly different character than the previous plantings, which had by that time become mature and overgrown. (CLR 1992: 164)
AD 1938	Land Transfer	Frederick Vanderbilt dies in 1938, leaving his estate to his niece Mrs. James Van Alen. (CLR 1992: 178)

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AD 1940	Land Transfer	The National Park Service acquires the 211-acre estate property west of Albany Post Road as a National Historic Site in 1940. The farm property east of the road is not included in the acquisition and continues to be held in private ownership. (CLR 1992: 184)
AD 1940 - 1950	Built	In the 1940s, two small parking lots, one at the Coach House and one at Bard Rock, and a larger parking lot on the terrace north of the Mansion are added for visitor use. (CLR 1992: 192)
AD 1940 - 2010	Preserved	The specimen trees throughout the estate grounds are replaced in-kind as they die. Early procedures involve planting new trees near the historic trees before they die. Later guidelines stipulate the removal of failing historic trees and replacement in the same location. (CLR 1992: 215)
AD 1941 - 1957	Neglected	With the beginning of World War II, inadequate resources are available to maintain the formal gardens. The garden beds become overgrown and the structures deteriorate and become safety hazards. (Master Plan 1961)
AD 1947	Removed	The Rose House in the formal gardens is removed. (Master Plan 1961)
AD 1950	Destroyed	One of the two Palm Houses in the formal gardens collapses during a storm. The glass panes in the second Palm House and in the Carnation House are removed for safety. (Master Plan 1961)
AD 1951	Removed	The deteriorated North Pergola in the formal gardens is dismantled and the timbers removed for safety. (Master Plan 1961)
AD 1953	Removed	The Boathouse at Bard Rock is removed. (Master Plan 1961)
AD 1954	Removed	The Carnation House and the remaining Palm House is removed. (Master Plan 1961)
AD 1980 - 1990	Rehabilitated	During the 1980s, the formal gardens are rehabilitated, including repairing and rebuilding of many of the walls and pergolas and reestablishing the planting beds. (VAMA Records)

AD 2000	Rehabilitated	The concrete curbs and gutters along the entrance drive are rebuilt. (VAMA Records)
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Physical History:

The following section provides information on the physical development and evolution of the site, organized by time periods. This information is extracted from the 2009 “Cultural Landscape Report for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site, Volume II: Treatment.” Graphics associated with this section are located at the end of this report.

DR. JOHN BARD, 1764-1799

When Dr. John Bard acquired the property in 1764, it included the land of the current estate grounds along the Hudson River bank on the west side of Albany Post Road (today Route 9) in addition to a large area of land on the east side of the road, a total of 3,600 acres. Dr. Bard first developed the eastern portion of the property, land well suited to agriculture. He built and lived in the Red House just east of Albany Post Road and developed a farm, which included a barn and other farm structures, a fruit orchard, and cultivated fields. Landings on the Hudson River were made at the south end of the property at Hyde Park Landing or at the north end of the property at a large flat rock outcropping known as Bard Rock. Bard Lane, a road built to access Bard Rock from Albany Post Road was constructed during this period (CLR 2009:6).

DR. SAMUEL BARD, 1799-1821

John Bard’s son, Dr. Samuel Bard, inherited the Hyde Park property upon his father’s death in 1799. Unlike his father, the younger Dr. Bard was clearly interested in the scenic value of the western portion of the land overlooking the Hudson River. He built a grand house on the property’s highest point at the precipice of the terrace above the rolling fields and forests that descended to the river. Illustrations from the period show Dr. Bard with his family on the grassy terrace near the house peering through a telescope at the view of the river and its activity of boats and steamships (Figure 1). In addition to the house, Dr. Bard built barns, stables, and other outbuildings, a store at Bard Rock, and a system of roads connecting the two river landings with the house and other structures. Dr. Bard also kept gardens and greenhouses to support his pursuit of horticulture and the collecting of rare and exotic plants, and he planted ornamental trees, vines, shrubs, and grasses to beautify his estate grounds (CLR 2009:6).

Samuel Bard showed an interest in the discipline of landscape design early in his father’s ownership of Hyde Park. In letters that he wrote home to John Bard while he was studying medicine in Edinburgh in 1764, Samuel excitedly implored his father to consider aesthetic attributes when laying out his estate grounds (CLR 2009:7).

“Next, I think straight lines should be particularly avoided, except where they serve to lead the eye to some distant and beautiful object – serpentine walks are much more agreeable. Another object deserving of attention seems to be, to place the most beautiful and striking objects, such as water, if possible, a handsome green-house, a grove of flowering shrubs, or a remarkably fine tree, in such situations, that from the house they may almost all be seen; but to a person walking, they should be artfully concealed until he suddenly, and unexpectedly, comes upon them; so that by the surprise, the pleasure may be increased: and if possible, I would contrive them so that they should contrast each other, which again greatly increases their beauty” (CLR

2009:7; letter from Samuel Bard to John Bard, April 1 1764, quoted in CLR 1992; originally published in *McVickar* 1822: 57-58).

While it does not appear that John Bard took any of his son's suggestions to heart, Samuel clearly demonstrated not only an interest in the aesthetics of the estate grounds, but also a somewhat sophisticated understanding of the principles of landscape design as it was being practiced in Europe at the time. Historical documentation is insufficient to give us a complete picture of the estate grounds during Samuel Bard's ownership; however, this interest in the composition of the landscape, together with his documented pursuit of ornamental plantings for his estate, suggests that he followed, at least to some degree, the advice he gave his father forty years prior. The letters also foreshadow the practice that would be followed throughout the site's history of carefully and artfully composing the landscape to appear natural (CLR 2009:7).

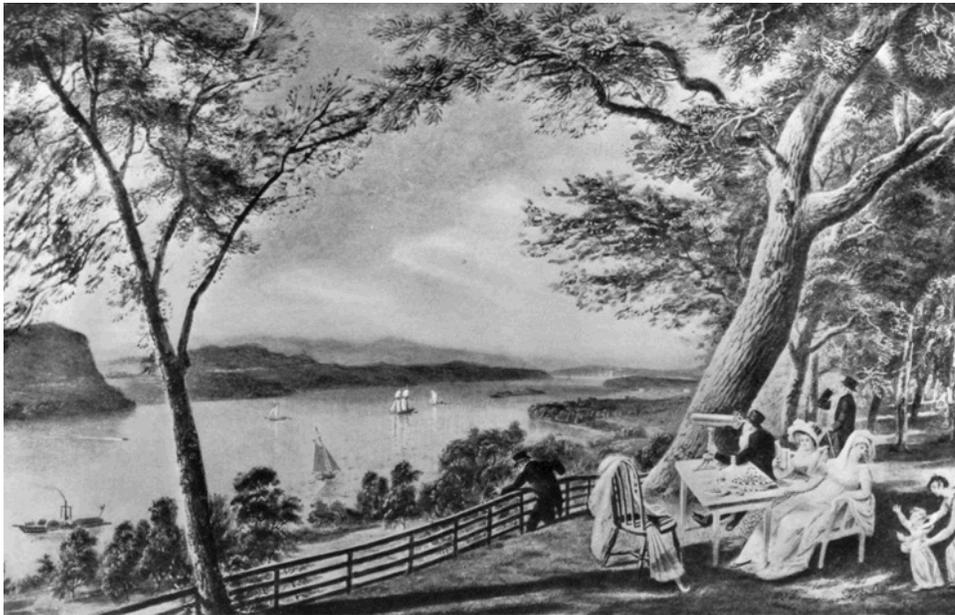


Figure 1. "Samuel Bard and His Family on the Terrace of Hyde Park, 1806." Drawing by John R. Murray. (Courtesy of Mr. Brett E. Langstaff, Morristown, New Jersey. Reproduced in CLR Volume 1).

DR. DAVID HOSACK, 1828-1835

David Hosack purchased Hyde Park from the heirs of his friend and colleague, Samuel Bard, in 1828. Like Bard, Hosack showed an enthusiasm for horticulture, having established in 1801 the Elgin Botanical Garden, the first public botanical garden in the country. After enlarging and rebuilding Samuel Bard's house and adding gate lodges, a pavilion, stables, gardens, and greenhouses, Hosack turned his attention to the estate grounds, soliciting the help of landscape designer and nurseryman Andre Parmentier (CLR 2009:7).

Parmentier, an immigrant from Belgium, had been operating a nursery in Brooklyn since 1824.

He specialized in country seats, designing estate landscapes in the fashion of European country estates. Parmentier espoused the principles of picturesque landscape design, in which elements of the landscape are arranged according to compositional rules borrowed from landscape painting to give the impression of a natural landscape vista. In picturesque landscape design, naturalistic forms and arrangements are preferred over geometric or formal arrangements. Parmentier followed these tenets when laying out the grounds at Hyde Park. The main drive from Albany Post Road to the house was realigned to curve gently through the pastoral landscape and approach the Mansion obliquely. Other drives followed geographical features, like Crum Elbow Creek and the ridge line at the top of the bluff. Parmentier also favored the placement of classically inspired landscape ornamentation in the form of pavilions and sculptures. A number of these ornamental structures were placed throughout the estate grounds, including two rotunda pavilions. As a testament to the skill with which Parmentier composed the landscape at Hyde Park in the style of picturesque landscape design, drawings of the property made shortly after Dr. Hosack's death bear remarkable similarity to landscape paintings done during the same period, often intended to represent an idealized natural or pastoral landscape (Figure 2) (CLR 2009:7-8).

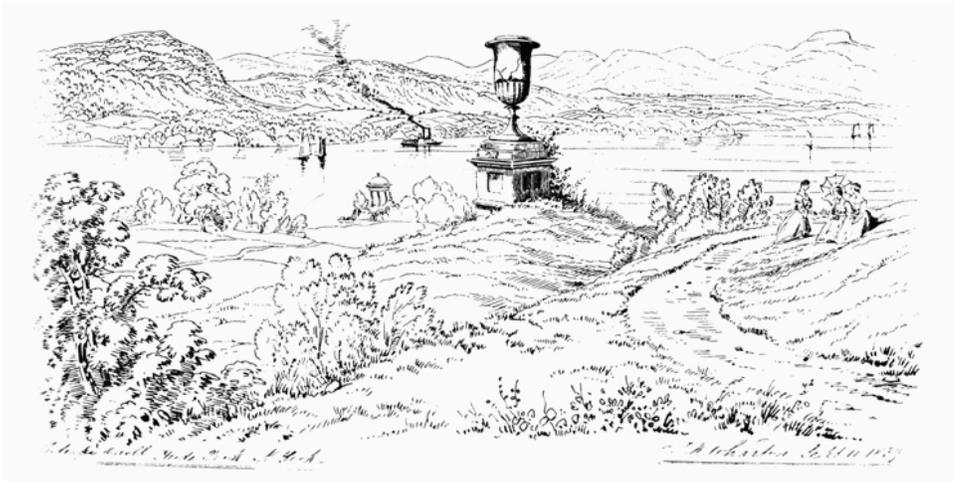


Figure 2. A drawing of the Hyde Park estate by Thomas K. Wharton during the Hosack ownership in 1839 (New York Public Library, Manuscripts Division).

WALTER AND DOROTHEA LANGDON AND WALTER LANGDON, JR., 1840-1895

After Dr. Hosack's death, the property was purchased from his heirs by John Jacob Astor, who then gave it to his daughter and son-in-law, Dorothea and Walter Langdon, in 1840. The northern portion of the estate grounds, later known as the Sexton tract, was retained by Magdalena Hosack and then sold separately to a series of owners before being reunited with the rest of the property by Frederick Vanderbilt in 1905. Many of the changes to the overall layout of the grounds were done in the early years of the Langdons' ownership to accommodate this change in boundary. These changes included a new north gate and gatehouse and the realignment of the entry road to the north gate. The Langdons also built a new mansion after the Hosack mansion burned in 1845 (Figure 3). The new house was built in the same site as the previous house (CLR 2009:8).

Walter Langdon died in 1847, leaving Hyde Park to his many children. Over the next five years, Walter Langdon, Jr. bought the interest from his siblings so that by 1852 he was the sole owner. He also purchased other land that had been separated from the estate, including Crum Elbow Creek and the farm property on the east side of Albany Post Road. Walter Langdon, Jr.'s most significant contribution to the estate was the construction of new formal gardens and greenhouses (Figure 4). The complex consisted of two cottages (a Gardener's Cottage and a Tool House) connected by a greenhouse, a conservatory, and enclosing walls. These architectural elements enclosed a series of six rectangular terraces that stepped down the hill, each containing a formal garden of geometric beds. Elements of these gardens, including the Tool House and Gardener's Cottage, brick walls, and the terracing, remain today (CLR 2009:8).

Apart from the reorganization of the northern portion of the property to accommodate the new gate location and the construction of the new gardens, there is little evidence that the Langdons effected any substantial changes to the landscape during their 55-year residency. As the landscape matured it appears that the Langdons took a less rigorous approach to its maintenance and up-keep. In 1849, Andrew Jackson Downing wrote that "since the death of Dr. Hosack, the place has lost something of the high keeping which it formerly evinced," (CLR 2009:33; originally in Downing, 1849 as cited in CLR 1992:79) and by the time the Vanderbilts bought it, a Poughkeepsie newspaper described the place as "somewhat neglected and run down" (CLR 2009:33; originally in the Poughkeepsie Sunday Courier, 1896:2; quoted by Snell 1955:60, as cited in CLR 1992:91).

Yet despite this decline in the overall level of maintenance, descriptions of the property by landscape architect Charles Eliot in 1890 concur with descriptions by Thomas Wharton nearly 60 years earlier in presenting a highly scenic landscape that skillfully blended the natural and designed elements (CLR 2009:8-9).



Figure 3. View of Langdon's House looking north, circa 1890. Photograph by Charles Sylvester Piersaull (Roosevelt Library no. 43-183-77).

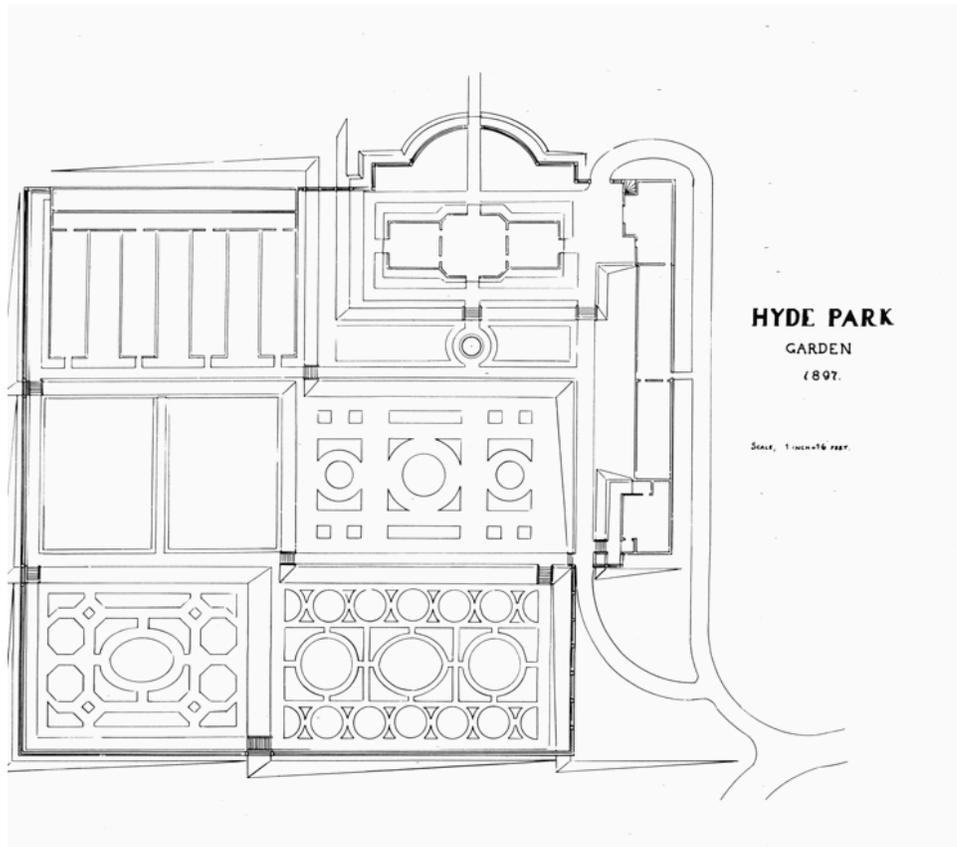


Figure 4. Diagrammatic plan view of Walter Langdon's gardens in 1875 (Traced from an 1897 survey of Hyde Park, CLR Volume 1).

FREDERICK W. AND LOUISE VANDERBILT, 1895-1938

The Vanderbilts purchased the estate and farm from Langdon's heirs in 1895 and immediately began updating the property with new buildings. The Langdon house was demolished and a new mansion was built in its place (Figure 5). Other new buildings include a guest house called the Pavilion, the Coach House, two gatehouses, a perimeter wall and gates, and a pump and power house on Crum Elbow Creek (Figures 6 and 7). Structures associated with the creek that were constructed in the early years of the Vanderbilts' ownership include the White Bridge, the Coach House Bridge, and four dams that created a series of ponds (Figures 8 and 9). This flurry of construction was completed by 1899. After the Vanderbilts acquired the Sexton track in 1905, they proceeded to remove the majority of the buildings and structures on it and expand the circulation system into the newly acquired northern portion of the property. This included the removal of the Langdons' north gate and exit road and the construction of a new north gate (Figure 10) (CLR 2009:9).

Frederick Vanderbilt planted numerous trees over the course of his residency. These included specimen trees throughout the property, an allée of sugar maples along the entry drive, and a

Vanderbilt Mansion

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

white pine buffer along Albany Post Road (Figure 11). The overall layout and character of the estate grounds, however, were largely retained. The Vanderbilts also employed a series of designers to redesign the formal gardens constructed for Walter Langdon, Jr. in 1875. Early changes to the gardens included the replacement of the greenhouses with three new greenhouse structures: the Carnation House between the existing Tool House and Gardener's Cottage, the Rose House, and a pair of Palm Houses. The gardens were also redesigned and extended eastward, with major redesigns of the two eastern-most terraces designed by James L. Greenleaf and the addition of the rose garden designed by Thomas Meehan and Sons and Robert B. Cridland. New structures in the gardens included walks, walls, arbors, pavilions, pools, and fountains. Changes to the gardens were carried out over several years from 1905 to about 1932, when the Italian garden designed by Greenleaf, with its dense plantings of evergreen shrubs and hedges, was redesigned by Cridland as a flowering cherry allée with perennial border beds (CLR 2009:9).

After Louise Vanderbilt died in 1926, Frederick Vanderbilt is said to have spent more time at Hyde Park and probably gave even closer attention to the management of the landscape. A tree survey of the property completed in 1941 indicated a significant number of young trees, less than 13 inches in diameter, that were likely planted during the last twenty years of Frederick Vanderbilt's ownership. Plant purchases for the gardens documented in the estate's purchase ledgers during the 1920s and 1930s also indicate a continued interest in the upkeep of the estate grounds. Cridland's redesign of the Italian garden mentioned above was also undertaken during this period (Figure 12). When Frederick Vanderbilt died in 1938, he left his estate to his niece Mrs. James Van Alen, who gave it to the National Park Service in 1940 (CLR 2009:9-10).



Figure 5. Vanderbilt Mansion during construction, 1898. Photo by Charles Sylvester Piersaull (Roosevelt Library, no. 43-183-208).



Figure 6. South Gate, showing Boston ivy and barberry hedge, circa 1960 (National Park Service, Harpers Ferry).



Figure 7. South Gatehouse, showing low foundation plantings, 1956 (VAMA V-153).



Figure 8. White Bridge looking southwest, circa 1900. Photograph by Charles Sylvester Piersaull (Roosevelt Library no. 43-183-217).



Figure 9. View of the White Bridge and the maple allée looking east toward the Main Gate, circa 1900. Photo by Charles Sylvester Piersaull (VAMA V-2504).



Figure 10. North Drive looking north, 1941 (VAMA V-731).



Figure 11. View of the Entrance Drive and maple allée, 1926 (VAMA).



Figure 12. Aerial view of the formal gardens and surrounding landscape, circa late 1930s. Photograph by New York Daily News and published in Dr. Bard of Hyde Park, J. Brett Langstaff, 1942, reproduced in CLR Volume 1.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, 1940-PRESENT

The National Park Service acquired the 211-acre estate property west of Albany Post Road as a National Historic Site in 1940. The farm property east of the road was not included in the acquisition and continued to be held in private ownership. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a friend and neighbor of Frederick Vanderbilt, was instrumental in securing the estate as a National Historic Site, offering his strong endorsement and guiding the process through the legislature. Shortly after acquisition, the National Park Service conducted a thorough site inventory, including a detailed tree inventory, and developed a master plan for the park, although no substantial changes to the organization or character of the landscape were carried out. Two small parking lots, at the Coach House and at Bard Rock, and a larger parking lot on the terrace north of the Mansion were added for visitor use, and over the years the greenhouses, boat house, and tennis court were all removed (CLR 2009:10).

From 1940 to the present, specimen trees throughout the estate grounds have been replaced in-kind as they die. Early procedures involved planting new trees near the historic trees before they die, while later guidelines have stipulated the removal of the failing historic trees and replacement in the same location. With the beginning of World War II and through the late 1950s, inadequate resources were available to maintain the formal gardens. The garden beds became overgrown and the structures deteriorated and became safety hazards. During the 1980s, the formal gardens were restored, including the rebuilding of many of the walls and pergolas and reestablishing the planting beds.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Significant landscape characteristics identified for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site (NHS) include spatial organization, buildings and structures, circulation, vegetation, views and vistas, and small scale features. Many of these characteristics have associated with them features that contribute to the site's overall historic significance and identity, as well as features that do not contribute or are undetermined. The analysis that follows is taken directly from the 2009 report, "Cultural Landscape Report for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site."

The physical integrity of the Vanderbilt Mansion NHS landscape is evaluated by identifying the essential physical components, patterns, and relationships present during the historic period that must be intact in order for the property to convey its significance. To determine if these essential elements are still evident in the property, the landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance (1828-1938) are compared with current conditions. Today, the physical features of the estate's buildings and structures, as well as the patterns of spatial organization, circulation, vegetation, and views and vistas present during the period of significance remain, contributing to the property's ability to convey its significant associations.

For its association with Gilded Age country estates, as well as its association with Country Place Era landscape design, Vanderbilt Mansion NHS retains the qualities that reflect the characteristics that typify country estates of that time. These characteristics include grand neoclassical architecture, extensive designed grounds, informal landscape arrangement, highly articulated formal gardens, and expansive views of the surrounding landscape. These characteristics are evident today in the style and organization of the Mansion and other buildings; in the arrangement of open lawns, mature specimen trees, and wild areas; the layout and character of the estate's circulation system; the terraced formal gardens; the dramatic natural topography; and the views of the Hudson River and distant Catskill Mountains. Notable resources from the Vanderbilt period include the Mansion (1899), the Pavilion (1895), the Coach House and a Power House (1897), two gatehouses (1898), and two bridges and three dams (1897-1898). The basic structure of the formal gardens and the two structures associated with the gardens, the Tool House and the Gardener's Cottage, date from the Langdon ownership in 1878. Redesigns of the gardens, including changes to the bed layout, garden organization, and walls, steps, and other structures, were carried out during the Vanderbilt period.

As an example of early American picturesque landscape design, Vanderbilt Mansion NHS still reflects the principles that guided the design movement. The basic layout of the estate property, the primary elements of the circulation system, and the overall character are essentially as it was designed by Andre Parmentier in 1828. While the locations of the specimen trees have changed over the years, their general arrangement and relationship to the open spaces, circulation, and buildings reflect the compositional principles of nineteenth century landscape painters and from which picturesque landscape design gets its name.

INTEGRITY

Vanderbilt Mansion

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

The Vanderbilt Mansion property retains all seven aspects of integrity including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The site retains its historical location, setting, and association with its former property owners, strongly evoking the historic scene through its extant features, landscape patterns, and views to the Hudson River. Alterations to the site have been made since the end of the period of significance to accommodate park operations and visitor services, including the removal of the garden greenhouses, remaining buildings on the northern portion of the property, addition of a visitor parking lot, and removal of foundation plantings around the mansion. Despite these changes, the defining features have been retained, thereby preserving the site's ability to convey its significance.

Location:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS retains the integrity aspect of location. While the current boundary of property represents only a portion of the total land held by the successive owners during the historic period, it represents the entirety of what was considered the estate portion. Lands outside of the current boundary were either undeveloped or used for agricultural purposes.

Design:

The design of Vanderbilt Mansion NHS evolved throughout the historic period, from Andre Parmentier's design of David Hosack's estate in 1828 through the end of Vanderbilt's ownership. While each successive owner of the property modified the estate to suit their needs and tastes, the changes were incremental and built on the previous design. Thus at the end of Vanderbilt's ownership in 1938, the property bore the same basic design characteristics it had for more than a hundred years. Since the historic period there has been very little change to the overall spatial organization of the property. The loss of some of the buildings, particularly in the garden, and the addition of parking lots to accommodate visitors have altered the spatial relationships to a small degree, but the historic design of the property is overwhelmingly intact.

In addition to the overall design of the property, the characteristic design of the individual elements of the landscape, including the Mansion and other buildings, bridges, dams, and formal gardens, remain evident today. Vanderbilt Mansion retains the integrity of its design.

Setting:

Setting is the character of the physical environment of a property. Historically, the Vanderbilt estate was surrounded by agricultural land, forests, open meadows, and rural communities. Open views across the Hudson River were of largely undeveloped rolling land rising toward the distant Catskill Mountains. Today, the area around Vanderbilt Mansion is more developed and populated than it was in 1938, but it remains largely rural with substantial forested and agricultural areas. Developed areas outside of the property are generally not visible from within the property and do not detract from its setting. Views across the river remain largely undeveloped. Vanderbilt Mansion NHS retains the integrity its setting.

Materials:

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during the period of significance in a particular pattern or configuration to give form to the property. Much original fabric remains in the Vanderbilt landscape. The buildings and other architectural features retain their original materials and have been maintained and repaired with in-kind materials since the historic period. Much of the historic vegetation remains, particularly the large specimen trees throughout the property, some of which are estimated to be close to two hundred years old.

Workmanship:

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts and methods of construction used during the specified historic period of significance. Evidence of the historic workmanship of the Vanderbilt landscape is extant and visible in the configuration of roads, paths, steps, and buildings and structures. Overall, the high level of workmanship is still evident from the period of significance.

Feeling:

Feeling is the expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular time resulting from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey a property's historic character. The Vanderbilt landscape is evocative of the sense of place created by at the turn of the century during the Country Place Era. Most of the significant features and the setting remain from the historic period to convey the feeling of the grand estate. The loss of greenhouses and growth of vegetation that blocks views to the Hudson River diminish the feeling of the grand estate, yet overall the property retains integrity of feeling.

Association:

Association is the direct link between the property and an important historic event or person. Although the property is no longer a private home, evidence of the site's association with the Vanderbilts is readily available through the designed landscape and ornate buildings, bridges and gatehouses. The Vanderbilt Mansion thus retains integrity of association.

The following section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding List of Classified Structures names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (1828-1938), contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource.

Landscape Characteristic:

Spatial Organization

The arrangement of the buildings, structures, vegetation, and circulation elements at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS follows the principles and characteristics of picturesque landscape design and Country Place Era design. Buildings are sited in conspicuous places intended to take advantage of the views and to make them visible throughout the property. Approaches are oblique and serpentine, following the topography and responding to vegetation. Emphasis is on sequential experience, views, and connection to the landscape (CLR 2009:15).

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is situated on the eastern bank of the Hudson River on a high terrace that slopes steeply down to the water. The property is over a mile long north to south, but less than a half a mile wide at its widest point, and is bordered by the river on the west and Route 9 on the east. Crum Elbow Creek flows across the southeast edge of the property, passing through a series of dammed ponds before emptying into the Hudson River at the southern point of the property. Built elements of the estate are organized in response to the natural features of the site, located primarily along the brink of the terrace or along the creek (CLR 2009:15-16).

Historic Conditions:

Hosack Period: The overall spatial organization at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS was established in 1828 by then-owner David Hosack and designer Andre Parmentier (Figure 13). Parmentier retained some of the aspects of the existing landscape, including the location of the main house, which was remodeled from Samuel Bard's house. Around the main house, Parmentier established a new system of curvilinear drives and paths that included a drive that wound along Crum Elbow Creek from Hyde Park Landing in the south, a new main entrance from Albany Post Road (now Route 9), and a serpentine approach road to the main house. The spatial sequence of the entrance drive was a defining element of the Hosack/Parmentier landscape, descending the grade via a straight section before crossing a bridge over the creek and ascending the opposite slope. This section of the drive swept wide to the south before switching back to the north and approaching the house at an angle. A greenhouse and ornamental gardens were located just south of the main house, north of their current location. Other structures added during Hosack's ownership included barns, cottages, and other outbuildings, and ornamental structures such as pavilions and large-scale urns, which were carefully located to compose aesthetically balanced views from the main house, drives, and terrace edge (CLR 2009:16).

Langdon Period: Walter Langdon, Sr. and his son Walter Langdon, Jr. retained most of the site's organization as it existed when the elder Langdon acquired the property in 1840. The northern third of the property, which was separated from the rest of the property following Hosack's death, was developed as a separate estate by a series of owners between 1842 and 1905. In response to this, Walter Langdon, Sr. created a new exit at the new northern boundary of the property. Langdon also relocated the gardens further south to their present location, creating a walled garden on a series of terraces with elaborate greenhouses (Figure 14) (CLR 2009:16).

Vanderbilt Period: When Frederick Vanderbilt purchased Hyde Park in 1895, he proceeded to redevelop the estate to suit his needs. With the exception of the formal gardens that were built by Walter Langdon, Jr. in 1875, Vanderbilt removed all existing structures and replaced them with his own, while retaining the overall organization of the estate. The new Mansion was built in the same location as Hosack's and Langdon's houses were built. The Pavilion was built on or near the location that had been occupied by a coach house since around 1829. Most of the drives were retained, including the main entrance drive and the drive along Crum Elbow Creek.

All three entrances were also retained until 1905, when Vanderbilt acquired the northern portion of the property and relocated the northern entrance within it. Vanderbilt retained Bard Lane along the northern property boundary but removed all other aspects of the development from the Sexton Tract (Figure 15) (CLR 2009:16-17).

Existing Conditions:

Today, the overall organization of Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is essentially unchanged since Vanderbilt's death in 1938. The Mansion sits roughly in the center of the property on the edge of the terrace overlooking the river. The east façade of the Mansion faces onto a lawn populated by large specimen trees and encircled by the entrance drive, or Great Circle. Lawn also stretches to the south of the Mansion between it and the formal gardens. Like the East Lawn, the South Lawn also features large specimen trees, including the enormous ginkgo tree. Five hundred feet north of the Mansion is the Pavilion, also on the edge of the terrace. The Mansion and Pavilion, together with the gardens, entrance drive, and great lawns, comprise the historic core of the property (CLR 2009:17).

The main entrance to the property is from Route 9 on the eastern edge. The semi-circular Main Gate features a gatehouse and iron gates. The entrance drive passes through the semi-circular gate, through an allée of sugar maples, and over the White Bridge before winding up the hill toward the Great Circle. Just west of the bridge, the road forks to the left and leads along Crum Elbow Creek toward the Coach House and the southern end of the property (CLR 2009:17).

Two entrances provide access to the property in the south. One is an informal entrance at the Coach House, which after passing the Coach House, crosses the arched cobblestone bridge and connects to the drive along the creek. The other entrance is the South Entrance from Dock Street near the river, which like the Main Entrance, is formed by a semicircular alcove in the perimeter wall, and just inside the gate is a gatehouse that matches the one at the main gate (CLR 2009:17).

North of the Pavilion, the main drive passes along the edge of the terrace, providing views of the rolling meadows, woodlands, and river below. On the east side of this road, a 140-car parking lot built by the National Park Service in the 1940s provides visitor parking. A large meadow, largely free of trees, spreads out to the north of the parking lot. The main drive continues on to the north exit gate, similar in design to the other two gates but without a gatehouse. Beyond the North Gate, the drive curves toward the west becoming Bard Lane, which leads down to Bard Rock on the northern corner of the property (CLR 2009:17).

The existing spatial organization of Vanderbilt Mansion NHS represents a continuum of development from 1828 through 1938, simultaneously reflecting the values that guided the early design of the property and the ways in which subsequent owners adapted the property to their needs. The spatial organization conveys the principles of picturesque landscape design and embodies many of the qualities that characterized Country Place Era design. Spatial organization is a contributing characteristic of the Vanderbilt Mansion NHS landscape and helps to convey the site's significance (CLR 2009:18).

Character-defining Features:

Feature: East Lawn
Feature Identification Number: 146279
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: North Lawn
Feature Identification Number: 146277
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: South Lawn
Feature Identification Number: 146275
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: North Meadow
Feature Identification Number: 146273
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: South Meadow
Feature Identification Number: 146271
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

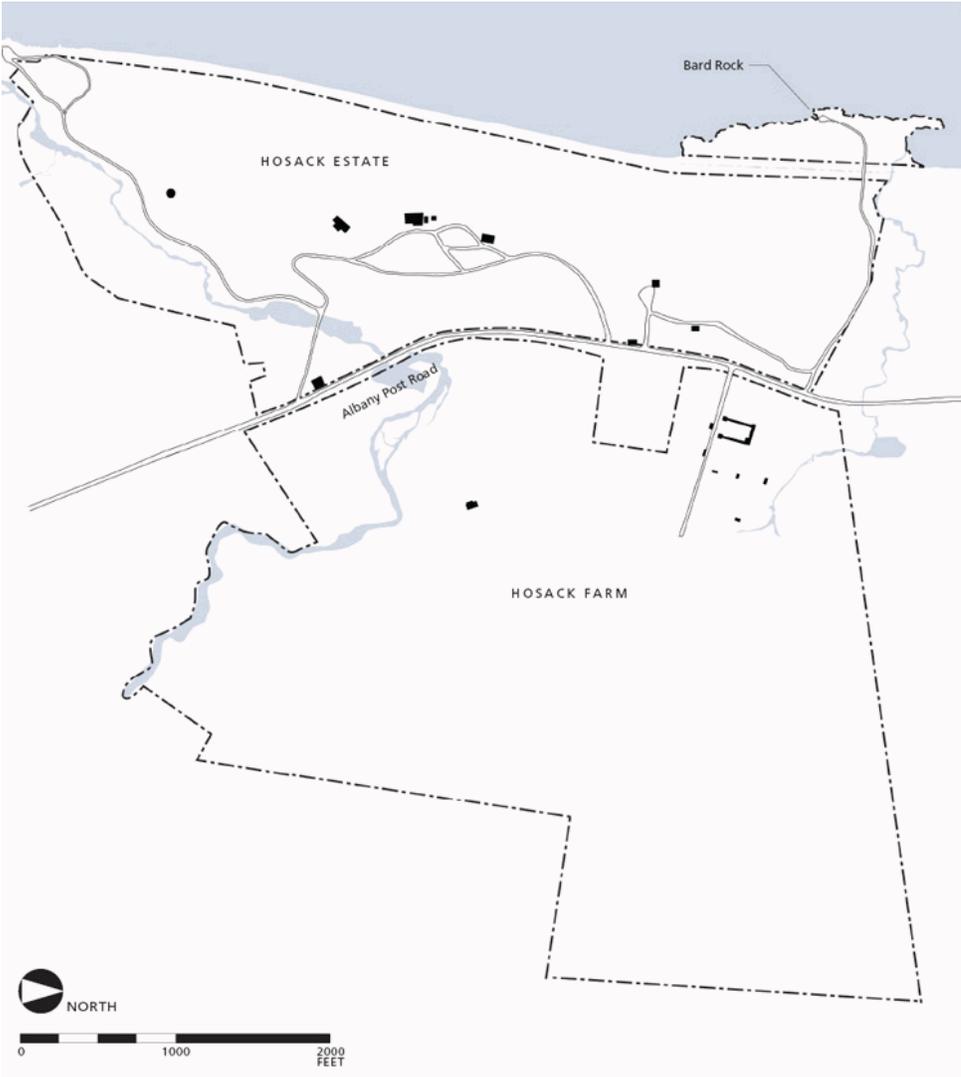


Figure 13. 1830 Period Plan, Hosack Estate

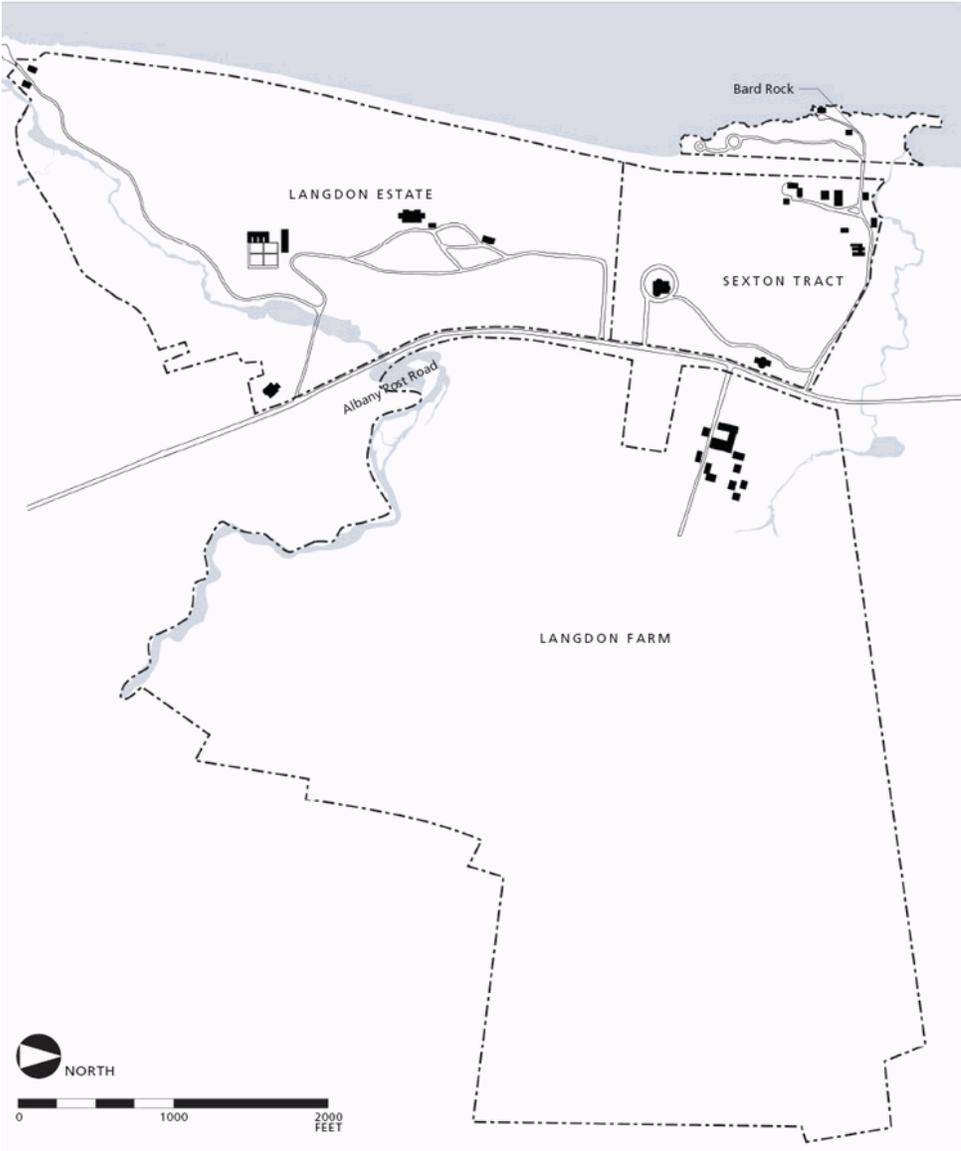


Figure 14. 1890 Period Plan, Langdon Estate.

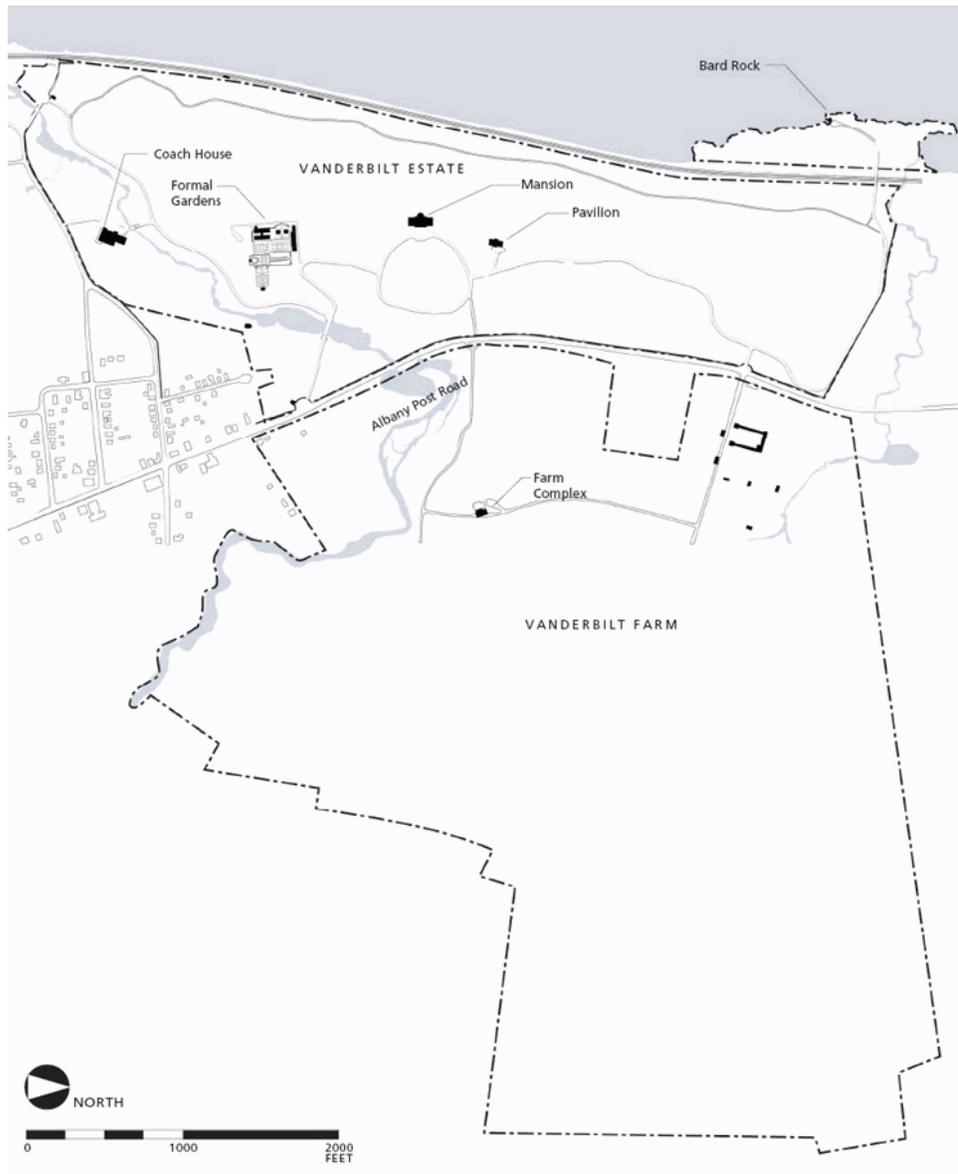


Figure 15. 1938 Period Plan.

Buildings and Structures

Through each of the ownership periods at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS, the buildings and structures, showcased as the jewels of the property worthy of their setting, reflected the scale and style favored by the country's upper class through the early twentieth century. The focal point of each iteration of the estate was the main house, a classically styled mansion built on the highest and most prominent point of the property. The main house was supplemented by guest houses, coach houses, and other buildings, bridges, greenhouses and other garden structures, and ornamental structures located throughout the landscape (CLR 2009:29).

Historic Conditions:

Hosack Period: When David Hosack acquired Hyde Park in 1828, he set about redesigning the estate in the style of an English country landscape with the help of Andre Parmentier. Although the plan called for a substantial redesign of the landscape with new roads, outbuildings, gardens, and greenhouses, Hosack retained Samuel Bard's house, albeit significantly enlarged and remodeled. The location of Bard's house, perched at the edge of the terrace overlooking the Hudson to the west and a broad level lawn to the east, could hardly be improved upon, but Hosack added a large wing to each side of the house and a new façade. The house was symmetrical and classically proportioned, but somewhat simple in its decoration. In addition to the mansion were a number of outbuildings, including a coach house and stable, "built of stone in a chaste style of Grecian simplicity," two gate lodges with projecting porticos with Greek Doric columns, greenhouses, barns, and a gardener's cottage (CLR 2009:29; originally from Thacher, "An Excursion on the Hudson – Letter II," 1830, as quoted in CLR 1992:33).

Consistent with the principles of picturesque landscape design, structures were used in the landscape as decorative elements to evoke romanticized images of ancient Greece and Rome. These structures included two round pavilions with domed roofs and columns, ornamental bridges, and decorative elements such as a grossly oversized urn atop a large pedestal on one of the knolls in the north meadow between the mansion and Bard Rock. Hosack also either built or retained from the Bard period a low stone wall that ran along Bard Lane between Albany Post Road and Bard Rock (CLR 2009:29).

Langdon Period: For five years after Walter Langdon, Sr. bought the property, he and his wife lived in Hosack's house, until it burned in 1845. The new house, which Langdon built in the same location, was similar in scale and character to Hosack's house, but with a somewhat more classical style. Notable style changes include a flat roof with a balustrade parapet and semi-circular porticos on the north, south, and west facades (CLR 2009:29).

Walter Langdon Sr. died only seven years after purchasing Hyde Park, about the time the new mansion was finished. Walter Langdon, Jr. owned the estate for more than forty years following his father's death, but considering this time span, made few substantial changes to the buildings and structures. Most of the documented changes during this time include changes to the farm property to the east, as well as the addition of the gardens and greenhouses. It is not known exactly what became of the ornamental structures Hosack erected, including the round pavilions and the decorative urn. These features are mentioned in descriptions of Langdon's property early in his tenure, but are not mentioned in detailed descriptions in 1890, not long before Frederick Vanderbilt bought the estate (CLR 2009:29-30).

In 1874, Langdon employed the architecture firm of Sturgis and Brigham to design a formal garden complex. The complex consisted of two cottages (a gardeners cottage and a Tool House) connected by a greenhouse, a conservatory, and enclosing walls. These architectural elements enclosed a series of six terraces that stepped down the hill, each containing a formal

garden of geometric beds (CLR 2009:30).

During the period that Langdon owned the southern portion of the Hyde Park property, the northern tract was developed separately by a series of owners. Several buildings were built in this parcel during the period, including a mansion, coach house, coachman's residence, barns, greenhouses, a boathouse, and other outbuildings. The majority of these buildings were removed in 1906 when Vanderbilt acquired the parcel.

Vanderbilt Period: After initially planning to remodel and expand the Langdon house, the Vanderbilts decided the structure was not worth saving and opted instead for a new house. They employed the firm of McKim, Mead & White to design the new house as well as many of the other structures that were to be built over the next few years. The first building to be built was a guest house called the Pavilion, which the Vanderbilts used as a residence while the Mansion was being constructed. The Pavilion was completed in a mere three months in the fall of 1895. The construction of the Mansion commenced the following summer and continued until its completion in 1899. McKim, Mead & White designed a number of other buildings for the estate during this time, including the two Gatehouses, but they were not the exclusive architects for the Vanderbilt estate. The Coach House was designed by the New York architect Robert H. Roberts and completed in 1897. The engineering firm of W.T. Hiscox designed and built many of the structures associated with Crum Elbow Creek including three dams, the White Bridge, and the rustic fieldstone Power House. Associated with the White Bridge were two low bulkhead walls along the creek channel beneath the bridge (referred to as the White Bridge Riverside Curbing in the LCS). The other rustic fieldstone structure, the Coach House Bridge, was apparently designed by the construction firm Norcross Brothers, who built most of the structures at Hyde Park. Another bridge was built in 1912 to carry Bard Lane over the New York Central Railroad tracks to Bard Rock (CLR 2009:30).

Vanderbilt employed a series of architects and landscape designers to redesign the gardens that Walter Langdon, Jr. had built in 1875. The Tool House and the Gardener's Cottage from Langdon's gardens were retained (although the greenhouse between them was replaced), as was the potting shed, which was originally part of one of Landon's greenhouses and was saved and incorporated into a new greenhouse. Also retained were many of the perimeter walls and the terraced structure of the gardens. To these were added new greenhouses, walls, pergolas, pools, and garden pavilions (CLR 2009:30).

Existing Conditions:

Today, nine buildings remain from the Vanderbilt period: the Mansion (Figure 16), Pavilion, Coach House (Figure 17), the two Gatehouses, the Power House, Gardener's Cottage, Tool House, and Potting Shed. In addition to these buildings, numerous structures remain, including the White Bridge (Figure 18), Coach House Bridge (Rustic Bridge), Railroad Bridge (Bard Rock Bridge), the subway, three formal gates and stone perimeter wall, the stone wall along Bard Lane (Figure 19), an iron fence along the railroad tracks, creek dams, and garden structures. The most notable losses to the structures at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS are the three

greenhouses, as well as the boat house at Bard Rock, which were removed by the National Park Service (CLR 2009:30-31).

The extant buildings of the Vanderbilt estate represent a variety of complementary architectural styles. The mansion, the centerpiece of the estate and in the most prominent position, is grand and formal, representing academic neoclassical Beaux-Arts design. Other structures, such as the Gatehouses, the gates, and the perimeter wall, exhibit similar formal and restrained style. The Pavilion is more understated than the Mansion, both in scale and design, and demonstrates somewhat more refined Palladian features. The Coach House contrasts these structures with its more rustic Queen Anne styling, Roman brick walls, stucco, and half-timber gables. More rustic still are the Coach House Bridge and the Power House, with their exposed fieldstone construction. These structures are tucked along the creek in the deep shade of the forest. Although all of these structures differ stylistically from each other, all of the structures represent styles that were popular in Country Place and estate design of the period, and each building complements its immediate surroundings (CLR 2009:31).

The buildings and structures at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS contribute to the historical significance of the site. The Mansion, Pavilion, Coach House, bridges, and garden structures in particular are focal points and organizational elements that strongly reflect the character of the historic period. Most of these buildings and structures have been well maintained or recently restored and are in good condition with few non-historic alterations. The loss of the greenhouses negatively impacts the character and spatial organization of the gardens, but overall does not detract significantly from the integrity of the landscape (CLR 2009:31).

Features with an asterisk (*) in the table are described in the National Register.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	Vanderbilt Mansion *
Feature Identification Number:	146345
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	1350
LCS Structure Name:	Vanderbilt Mansion
LCS Structure Number:	001
Feature:	The Pavilion *
Feature Identification Number:	146363
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	1355
LCS Structure Name:	"The Pavilion"
LCS Structure Number:	002

Feature: Coach House *

Feature Identification Number: 146339

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 7504

LCS Structure Name: Coach House

LCS Structure Number: 005

Feature: Main Gate House *

Feature Identification Number: 146349

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 1353

LCS Structure Name: Main Gate House

LCS Structure Number: 006

Feature: Lower Gate House (South Gatehouse) *

Feature Identification Number: 146325

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 1356

LCS Structure Name: Lower Gate House

LCS Structure Number: 007

Feature: Power House *

Feature Identification Number: 146355

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 1354

LCS Structure Name: Power House

LCS Structure Number: 008

Feature: Power House Dam *

Feature Identification Number: 146359

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 7511

LCS Structure Name: Power House Dam

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LCS Structure Number: 1797-153

Feature: White Bridge Dam * (1797-154)

Feature Identification Number: 146337

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 7514

LCS Structure Name: White Bridge Dam

LCS Structure Number: 1797-154

Feature: Lower Dam *

Feature Identification Number: 146329

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 7510

LCS Structure Name: Lower Dam

LCS Structure Number: 1797-155

Feature: South Entrance Gate (South Gate) *

Feature Identification Number: 146333

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40856

LCS Structure Name: Lower Gate

LCS Structure Number: 1797LOGA

Feature: Main Entrance Gate (Main Gate) *

Feature Identification Number: 146347

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40861

LCS Structure Name: Main Entrance Gate

LCS Structure Number: 1797MAGA

Feature: North Exit Gate (North Gate) *

Feature Identification Number: 146357

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40850

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LCS Structure Name: North Exit Gate
LCS Structure Number: 1797NOGA
Feature: North Property Line Wall (N.Perim.Wall)
Feature Identification Number: 146361
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 40851
LCS Structure Name: North Property Line Wall
LCS Structure Number: 1797NOR
Feature: South Property Line Wall (Market St.Wal)
Feature Identification Number: 146341
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 40854
LCS Structure Name: Market Street Wall
LCS Structure Number: 1797SOU
Feature: West Entrance to Subway
Feature Identification Number: 146331
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 40857
LCS Structure Name: West Entrance to Subway
LCS Structure Number: 1797SUB
Feature: West Property Line Fence (W.Bound.Fence)
Feature Identification Number: 146351
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 40858
LCS Structure Name: West Property Line Fence
LCS Structure Number: 1797WEST
Feature: White Bridge *
Feature Identification Number: 146353
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Vanderbilt Mansion

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IDLCS Number: 7508

LCS Structure Name: White Bridge

LCS Structure Number: 1797001P

Feature: Railroad Bridge *

Feature Identification Number: 146335

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 7512

LCS Structure Name: Railroad Bridge

LCS Structure Number: 1797002P

Feature: Rustic Bridge (Coach House Bridge) *

Feature Identification Number: 146327

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 7509

LCS Structure Name: Rustic Bridge

LCS Structure Number: 1797003P

Feature: Bard Lane Wall

Feature Identification Number: 146343

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40853

LCS Structure Name: Bard Lane Retaining Walls

LCS Structure Number: 1797BARW

Feature: East Property Line Wall (Rt.9 StoneWall)

Feature Identification Number: 146281

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40855

LCS Structure Name: Route 9 Stone Wall

LCS Structure Number: 1797EAST

Feature: White Bridge Riverside Curbing

Feature Identification Number: 146323

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Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	40860
LCS Structure Name:	White Bridge Riverside Curbing
LCS Structure Number:	1797RICU

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 16. View of Vanderbilt Mansion and East Lawn looking west (OCLP 2008).



Figure 17. View of the Coach House south elevation looking north, showing the two historic white pine trees that are in decline. The third replanted tree is visible behind the white trailer (OCLP 2008).



Figure 18. View of the White Bridge looking northwest (OCLP 2008).



Figure 19. View looking west of the dry laid field stone wall along the north side of Bard Lane (OCLP 2009).

Circulation

The circulation system of Vanderbilt Mansion NHS evolved over the years, with each successive owner retaining the overall arrangement of the previous systems while amending it to suit their needs and the prevailing style (CLR 2009:24).

Historic Conditions:

Hosack Period: Much of the basic structure of the circulation system was designed by Andre Parmentier in 1828. Parmentier believed that forms in the landscape should mimic nature, and that straight lines and geometric forms should be avoided. Accordingly, he laid out the Hosack estate with serpentine drives that wove their way over the topography and through the vegetation. This principle was exemplified by the Entrance Drive that, after crossing Crum Elbow Creek, climbed the hill toward the main house in a sweeping switchback that approached the house obliquely. The drive crossed the open terrace past the Mansion before curving back toward Albany Post Road to exit the property. A second drive extended from the Hudson River landing at the south end of the property to the Entrance Drive, following Crum Elbow Creek. Together, these drives provided the primary experience of the estate landscape, showcasing the unique natural features and views (CLR 2009:24).

Bard Lane survived from Samuel Bard's residency (and possibly from John Bard's residency in the late 1700s). This drive extended from Albany Post Road along the north boundary of the property to the river at Bard Rock (CLR 2009:24).

In addition to the wider drives that could accommodate wagons and carriages were a number

of footpaths. One extended along the edge of the terrace from Crum Elbow Creek in the south, past the Mansion, to a point near Bard Lane. A second path descended from the terrace rim over the sloped meadows to Bard Rock (CLR 2009:24).

Langdon Period: As with the spatial organization of the estate, the primary change to the circulation during the period that the Langdons owned Hyde Park was the change in the north exit to accommodate the new northern boundary. The majority of the rest of the circulation system otherwise appears to have been unchanged during the Langdon period (CLR 2009:24).

Vanderbilt Period: Vanderbilt altered the circulation system to suite his needs and tastes, but retained much of the original system as it was laid out by Parmentier. The Entrance Drive from Albany Post Road to the Mansion, as well as the drive along Crum Elbow Creek, were retained. In the early years of his ownership, Vanderbilt constructed a new South Gate and a new drive through the lower woodlands along the river. When the Sexton Tract was reunited with the rest of the property in 1906, the Lower Woodland Drive was extended to Bard Rock and the North Gate was moved back toward the northern end of the property. The exit drive (North Drive) was realigned to follow the edge of the terrace toward the North Gate, once again providing sweeping views of the river. In 1910, the drive that passed in front of the Mansion was realigned to the east, forming the Great Circle (CLR 2009:24-25).

The surface of the drives during Vanderbilt's ownership was gravel or crushed stone. Many of the drives, including the Entrance Drive and South Drive, featured integrated concrete curbs and gutters. Other drives, including the Great Circle, were lined with cast stone curbs without gutters. Footpaths were also likely surfaced with gravel or crushed stone (CLR 2009:25).

Existing Conditions:

Vehicular Circulation: Today, vehicular circulation within Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is accommodated by a system of paved drives, entrance gates, and parking lots. The main entrance is through the gate on the eastern boundary of the property off Route 9. From there, the entrance drive descends along a straight segment through an allée of sugar maples to the creek, which it crosses via the White Bridge (Figure 20). From there, the drive splits, with the main circulation route leading through a wide serpentine arc up the terrace to the Great Circle and the Mansion (CLR 2009:25).

The Great Circle, the roughly circular main drive in front of the Mansion, was created in 1910 when the existing drive was redesigned to provide a more formal entry. Today, vehicular circulation from the Main Gate is routed along the eastern half of the Great Circle, with the western half blocked by moveable barricades. From the Great Circle, the drive continues north past the visitor parking lot toward the North Gate and Bard Rock. A one-way drive also leads from the two southern entrances (the South Gate and the Coach House entrance) northward along the creek, connecting to the main drive at the western end of the White Bridge (CLR 2009:25).

During the Vanderbilt period, the roads were surfaced with crushed stone with concrete curb and gutter combinations or cast stone curbs styled to resemble cut blue stone. Today, paved drives throughout the property are surfaced with a dark gray or black asphalt of a uniform texture and color (Figure 21). The drives are typically 12 feet wide and edged with either concrete curb and gutter combinations, cast stone curbs, or turf shoulders. All of the curbing in the park was recently rebuilt using historically documented materials and design (CLR 2009:25).

Pedestrian Circulation: Pedestrian circulation is accommodated primarily with gravel foot paths. These include paths that lead from the Pavilion to the Mansion and from the Mansion past the formal gardens to the South Drive between the South Gate and Coach House entrance. The alignment of the latter, which follows the edge of the terrace, is the same as it was during the Vanderbilt period and likely dates back to the earliest development of the property. Paths between the formal gardens and the Pavilion have changed alignment in places, but follow the basic route that they did in the Vanderbilt period (CLR 2009:25-26).

Two additional footpaths from the Vanderbilt period remain today. One leads from the White Bridge to the Great Circle, basically short-cutting the large arc that the vehicular drive makes. This path appears to be part of the Parmentier circulation plan. The path is about four feet wide and surfaced in places with gravel and other places either with larger stone aggregate or earth. The path is rutted and eroding, and weeds are growing in the trail matrix. The second path leads from the northeast corner of the formal gardens to the drive along the creek, and is of similar character and condition. Neither of these paths has been maintained to the level that those around the Mansion and formal gardens have, and they are showing signs of erosion, destabilization, and encroachment of weeds and turf (CLR 2009:26).

A footpath leads through the forest along the south side of Crum Elbow Creek from the White Bridge to the Coach House. This path, which appears to date from the Vanderbilt period, has also been subject to some neglect, and it is washed out and hard to follow in places. In one segment just below the Power House, the path passes along the steep bank of the creek on a causeway of large flat flagstones. Many of the stones have collapsed or have been washed away, making passage along this section difficult. Most of the stones are still present in the creek bed nearby (CLR 2009:26).

A forest drive that extends from the South Gate northward to Bard Rock was built by the Vanderbilts in the early twentieth century (Figure 22). Today this drive is closed to vehicular traffic and functions as a walking trail. The trail is the width of a single-lane road and thus wider than the footpaths elsewhere in the property. It is surfaced in dirt and gravel and passes over a number of masonry culverts as it winds along the river bank (CLR 2009:26).

Beyond these pedestrian routes, there is little accommodation for pedestrian circulation within Vanderbilt Mansion NHS. A short section of concrete sidewalk adjoins the western edge of the visitor parking lot. Pedestrians traveling elsewhere in the property tend to follow the paved

vehicular drives or their grass shoulders (CLR 2009:26).

The primary change to the circulation since the end of the historic period has been the surface material, a change from gravel to asphalt necessary to accommodate visitor traffic. Other changes, including the construction of parking lots and new footpaths, were also done for visitor service. No major circulation feature present in 1938 has since disappeared, resulting in a historic circulation system that is intact today. Furthermore, because earlier circulation features, particularly those designed by Andre Parmentier, were incorporated into subsequent estate layouts, the existing circulation system still conveys those earlier designs. The circulation system at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS contributes to the historical significance of the site (CLR 2009:26-27).

Features with an asterisk (*) in the table are described in the National Register.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Historic Trails *

Feature Identification Number: 146283

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40831

LCS Structure Name: Historic Trails

LCS Structure Number: 1797HTRA

Feature: Service Roadway Hudson River (L.Wood.Dr)

Feature Identification Number: 146309

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40836

LCS Structure Name: Service Road Along Hudson River

LCS Structure Number: 1797R400

Feature: Main Entrance Route (Entrance Drive)

Feature Identification Number: 146311

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40833

LCS Structure Name: Main Entrance Road

LCS Structure Number: 1797RT10

Feature: Bard Rock Road (Bard Lane)

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Feature Identification Number: 146307
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 40832
LCS Structure Name: Bard Rock Road
LCS Structure Number: 1797RT11

Feature: Lower Gate Road (South Drive)

Feature Identification Number: 146313
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 40835
LCS Structure Name: Lower Gate Road
LCS Structure Number: 1797RT12

Feature: Coach House Road (Coach House Drive)

Feature Identification Number: 146305
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 40834
LCS Structure Name: Coach House Road
LCS Structure Number: 1797RT13

Feature: Great Circle

Feature Identification Number: 146319
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: North Drive

Feature Identification Number: 146317
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Parking Lots

Feature Identification Number: 146321
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Non-historic Trails and Walks

Feature Identification Number: 146315
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 20. View of the White Bridge and the maple allée looking east toward the Main Gate, 2008. Orange construction netting associated with Route 9 Bridge construction is visible at left (OCLP 2008).



Figure 21. North Drive looking north, 2008. Although the character of the road has been changed somewhat from its historic conditions, the road still displays much of the character that is evident in Figure 10 (OCLP 2008).



Figure 22. View of the Lower Woodland Drive looking south, showing the deep wooded character of the drive (OCLP 2008).

Vegetation

Vegetation refers to the trees, shrubs, grasses, groundcover, and other plant material, whether indigenous or introduced, as well as the larger patterns of vegetation cover of the site. The vegetation at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS is a diverse mix of native and cultivated plants, including dense woodlands, open meadows, lawns, specimen trees, and formal gardens. The patterns of vegetation have remained remarkably stable throughout the history of the site, defining its historic character and articulating the principles that guided its design. Additionally, many of the individual trees can be dated to at least the Vanderbilt period, and some may date as far back as the Hosack or Bard period (CLR 2009:18).

Historic Conditions:

Hosack Period: The larger patterns of vegetation at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS were in place when the property was first developed in the late eighteenth century. The steep slopes between the river and the top of the terrace were covered by long north-south bands of deciduous woodlands interspersed with large open meadows. The top of the terrace was mostly open, with lawn and meadow punctuated with singular or small groupings of trees. The combined effect of the varied vegetation with the rolling topography created a visual scene of bucolic ideal, a quality strongly valued in picturesque landscape design and a perfect starting point for laying out a country estate. Early descriptions of the property extolled the exquisite views and prominently featured the vegetation as an asset of the estate (CLR 2009:18). In 1830, Dr. Hosack's friend Dr. James Thacher described the vegetation of Hyde Park:

“The forest trees which surround the domicile are identically the natives which are found in our

forest; some of the oaks are a century in age, and all are large and so grouped and intermingled over the lawn as to present at every step the most fantastic views that can attract the pencil of the artist.” (CLR 2009:18; originally from Thatcher, 1830, quoted in CLR 1992:37)

Another visitor to Hosack’s estate, Thomas K. Wharton, described in 1832:

“...the lawns, parterres, walks, and broad winding carriage drives are all kept in the highest order—and nothing can exceed the beauty of the forest groups and clumps of ornamental trees and shrubs which are disposed with the utmost skill over the whole place...” (CLR 2009:18; originally from Wharton, 1832, cited in CLR 1992: 46)

Vegetation was an integral aspect of Parmentier’s design for Hyde Park. Parmentier would have utilized existing trees, many of which were planted by Samuel Bard during his thirty years residency, as well as extensive plantings from his own nursery in Brooklyn. Vegetation included ornamental trees and numerous shrubs carefully placed throughout the grounds to contrive specific views and to produce varying sequential experiences (CLR 2009:19).

In an essay he published in 1928, at roughly the same time he was designing the Hyde Park landscape, Parmentier articulated many of the principles he saw as essential in creating a “modern” picturesque garden. In the essay, titled “Landscapes and Picturesque Gardens,” he offers a number of suggestions for the use of vegetation that give clues to how he may have used plantings at Hyde Park. According to Parmentier, “the modern style presents to you a constant change of scene, perfectly in accordance with the desires of a man who loves, as he continues his walk, to have new objects laid open to his view” (CLR 2009:19; originally from Parmentier, 1847:185). He advocates screening undesirable prospects and neighboring buildings while emphasizing appealing distant views of neighboring lands in a way that suggests they are an extension of the owner’s property (CLR 2009:19).

Parmentier favored serpentine drives, but insisted that the “winding should have a reason—that is to say—some groups of trees should be so placed as to appear to be the cause of it” (CLR 2009:19; originally from Parmentier, 1847:185). Following this guidance, Parmentier would have placed trees along the curves of the entrance drive and other drives in Hyde Park so that they would appear to wind their way through an existing landscape (Figure 23). Other suggestions in the article include using trees of a deeper green near the house and of thin and light foliage in the distance to enhance the perception of perspective, emulating a similar technique used to suggest depth in a landscape painting, and using ornamental fruit trees for their visual virtues as well as for production (CLR 2009:19).

Hosack’s estate also featured a greenhouse with an ornamental garden. As founder of the Elgin Botanical Gardens in New York City, Hosack was an avid horticulturalist. Thatcher described Hosack’s greenhouses and listed magnolia, bird of paradise, ficus, and a large collection of pines among their contents (CLR 2009:19). He also describes the surrounding gardens:

“Contiguous to the greenhouse is an extensive ornamental garden, in which is arranged in fine style, a beautiful variety of trees, shrubs and flowers, among which stands that glory of the forest, the magnolia glauca [sic], bearing large white flowers, perfuming the atmosphere with a delightful fragrance.” (CLR 2009:19; originally from Thacher, 1830, quoted in CLR 1992:52)

Other descriptions of the ornamental gardens mention flower beds, lawn, parterres, and shrubs (CLR 2009:19; originally from Wharton, 1832, quoted in CLR 1992:52).

It is unknown who designed the ornamental gardens around the greenhouses. Hosack may have laid them out himself, or Parmentier may have included them in his design for the larger estate, although he has expressed an unmistakable disdain for parterres (CLR 2009:19; originally from Parmentier, 1847:185).

Langdon Period: While the development at Hyde Park during the Hosack ownership period was brief and intense, the landscape development during the nearly sixty years that the Langdons owned the property was more gradual. The most significant change to the landscape was the aforementioned relocation and redesign of the formal gardens by Walter Langdon, Jr. in 1875. Otherwise, the existing vegetation was allowed to mature with no major changes. In his later days, Walter Langdon, Jr. apparently allowed the condition of the property to decline. One writer described the grounds in 1896:

“When Mr. Vanderbilt purchased it..., the place was somewhat neglected and run down. Mr. Vanderbilt found a beautiful park all grown up to underbrush. The lawns were covered with the wild growth that nature puts forth under forest trees...” (Poughkeepsie Sunday Courier, July 19, 1896, quoted in CLR 1992:88)

Another reporter described the trees in more detail:

“The brownstone staircase led to a fine lawn, beyond which was a grove of fir trees. On the east lawn there were also as on the river side some fine trees and all through the park could be seen English elms, maples, lindens, beeches and pines with occasional tamarack, dogwood and rare specimens of South American and Japanese trees.” (Poughkeepsie Sunday Courier, September 15, 1895, quoted in CLR 1992:88)

Vanderbilt Period: Vanderbilt’s initial flurry of development in the first years after he bought Hyde Park focused on the construction of buildings, bridges, and other major structures, but there is evidence that he also planted a considerable number of new trees around the property. Property surveys in 1901 by Charles A. Platt and J. L. Burley show, in addition to large trees existing from the Hosack and Langdon periods, small trees that were likely planted by Vanderbilt between 1895 and 1900. The arrangement of the new trees largely followed the patterns established by Vanderbilt’s predecessors, characterized by singular or groups of trees over lawn. Over the rest of Vanderbilt’s residency, he continued to add trees incrementally to

the estate in this fashion.

Like the previous owners of Hyde Park, Vanderbilt largely left the major patterns of woodlands as they were when he acquired the property, with the significant exception of planting stands of conifers in several places on the property. These stands consisted of evenly spaced monocultures of white pine, hemlock, or spruce. Vanderbilt may have simply planted these stands in an effort to establish forest cover quickly and economically, but it is possible he planted some of these trees as forays into the practice of forestry, intending to manage and harvest the trees. Forestry was a young profession in America at that time, and a pursuit of its practices would have been consistent with the image of a gentleman farmer. By 1938, conifer plantations grew near the main entrance drive, in a band along Route 9, and in the northwest portion of the property along the river.

The long conifer stand that extended along Route 9 on the eastern boundary of the property was intended as a screen to block views in and out of the property and increase the sense of privacy of the estate. This screen was planted in three successive efforts separated by a number of years. The oldest, which is closest to the road and extends from the Great Circle to about half way to the northern boundary, was installed around the time the perimeter wall was built in 1898. The second row was planted in 1906 when the Vanderbilts acquired the northern portion of the property and extends along the west side of the first planting and then along the highway to the northern property boundary. The third planting consisted of hemlock trees planted around 1937 in a double row along the west side of the previous two groups. The effect was a tiered conifer screen with the tallest trees along the road and the newer trees toward the property.

Existing Conditions:

Although the vegetation at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS has evolved since the historic period, the larger patterns that help define the site's historic character are largely unchanged. Existing vegetation can be categorized by type as woodlands, meadows, lawn, trees over lawn, shrubs, and ornamental annuals and perennials.

Woodlands: Woodlands occur in long contiguous belts, primarily along the river bank, on the slopes below the terrace, and along the course of the creek. Woodlands include deciduous woodlands, dominated by oaks, maples, and tulip trees and nearly free of conifers; planted conifer groves consisting of single-aged stands of white pine, hemlock, and spruce; and mixed woodland, located primarily along the creek. The composition and character of the woodlands appears to have changed little over the years, but the extent of the woodlands have increased in recent years, with historical evidence indicating that woodlands today cover considerably more of the grounds than they did during the historic period. Aerial photos indicate that woodlands now cover ten to fifteen percent more area than they did in 1938.

Meadows: Meadow grasses and forbs cover nearly twenty-five percent of the property, and together with woodlands comprises the wilder portions of the property that form a foil for the

cultivated park-like areas. The meadows, which occur in long bands on the slopes below the terrace, are characterized by both native and exotic grass and forb species between two and four feet tall. The meadow areas are mowed once or twice a year to maintain their character, encourage native species, and suppress woody shrubs and trees. Where the meadows occur on steep slopes, it is difficult or dangerous to mow them effectively. In these places, woody vegetation has grown up, altering the meadow character. In many places this has impacted the views, especially below the Mansion and Pavilion. In other places, such as below the formal gardens, the meadows have reverted back to dense woodland.

Lawn: Much of the property is covered by lawns maintained with turf grass mowed regularly to a couple of inches. Lawn areas are concentrated in the historic core around the Mansion and Pavilion and include the South Lawn, the East Lawn within the Great Circle, and the North Lawn north of the visitor parking lot. These lawns are an essential element of the landscape character, creating an open park-like setting for the estate. In addition to the large lawns, turf grass can be found throughout the historic core along roads, around structures, and within the formal gardens.

Trees over lawn: Also referred to as specimen trees, large singular or small clusters of trees planted over open lawn comprise a significant portion of the property and are a major character defining vegetation type. Extant specimen trees date at least to the Vanderbilt period, and many likely date to earlier periods. It has been speculated that some of the trees, such as the ginkgo on the South Lawn (Figure 24), may date to the ownership period of Samuel Bard in the early 1800s (CLR 1992:289; Thacher, 1830, cited in CLR 1992:290).

The locations, sizes, and species of trees in the historic core have been recorded repeatedly over the years. In 1901, Charles Platt completed a survey for Frederick Vanderbilt that included specimen tree locations and species. A similar survey was conducted in 1940 as part of the master plan when the National Park Service acquired the property, and in 1994, a detailed Historic Plant Inventory was completed that recorded the location and size of specimen trees and shrubs in the historic core.

The park has in place a methodical plan for the replacement in kind of aging and failing specimen trees, involving the removal of the tree and the stump and the replanting of a replacement tree of the same species in the same location. This process has ensured continuity in the specimen tree composition of the historic landscape, at least in the recent years in which it has been in place. Although the replacement in kind of specimen trees has been a goal of the park since its inception, there were periods when resources did not allow for a strict adherence of this policy, and a number of trees indicated on the 1940 survey no longer exist.

Shrubs: Planted shrubs are scattered throughout the property and clustered around the formal gardens, but are not currently abundant enough to represent a conspicuous component of the landscape. Most of the shrubs are broad-leaf evergreens.

The Historic Plant Inventory for Vanderbilt Mansion NHS completed in 1994 recorded a number of shrubs just outside the garden on the west side alongside the path from the Mansion. It is unknown if these shrubs, mostly mock orange, forsythia, and lilac, date from the Vanderbilt period or were planted during National Park Service's tenure. Most of these shrubs have been removed since the plant inventory was completed. More shrubs were recorded outside of the western end of the garden. These were mostly mock orange and privet (*Ligustrum* sp.). Some of these have been since removed and the remaining shrubs are covered in honeysuckle (*Lonicera* sp.), akebia, and grape vines, which form large, indistinct mounds.

Other shrubs, including rhododendrons, are located throughout the property. Clusters of rhododendrons are growing along the drive along Crum Elbow Creek and near the South Gatehouse. Large rhododendrons grow as foundation plantings in front of the South Gatehouse (Figure 25).

Ornamental Annuals and Perennials: The vegetation at Vanderbilt Mansion relied largely on lawns and specimen trees and the natural features, with little seasonal ornamental vegetation. The exception was in the formal gardens, where beds were filled with a large variety of annuals and perennials. Today these beds are maintained by the Frederick W. Vanderbilt Garden Association and are planted with new plants each year (Figure 26). The plantings follow the larger patterns established by Vanderbilt's gardeners, with annuals on the top two garden terraces planted in single color, uniform geometric beds, perennials in the next two terraces in mixed variety and color, and roses in the lower terrace. The varieties planted today are based in part on historical documentation and on the recollections of one of Vanderbilt's gardeners, Alex Knauss, who in the 1960s drew maps of the planting beds as he remembered them. The available historical record was incomplete, however, and numerous substitutions have been made, so that the planting plans today represent a mix of historic and non-historic plants. The plants that are planted each year, as well as the condition and overall effect of the plantings, vary due to weather, plant sources, and available resources.

In addition to the annuals and perennials in the planting beds, the gardens contain a number of vines, including honeysuckle, trumpet vine, and grape, that are trained over the arbors and pavilions. These vines are consistent with the use of vines in Vanderbilt's garden, but even with routine pruning these vines grow lushly in the summer, eventually growing beyond their historic scale and obscuring the structures beneath them.

The overall patterns of vegetation that characterized the Vanderbilt Mansion NHS landscape during the historic period are largely intact today. These include the bands of woodlands and meadows below the Mansion terrace, the woodlands along the creek, the broad lawns with specimen trees, and the ornamental plantings in the formal gardens. Although there have been changes to the elements of these patterns, the vegetation still strongly conveys the historical significance of the site.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Specimen Trees

Vanderbilt Mansion

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

Feature Identification Number: 146291

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Entrance Allee

Feature Identification Number: 146285

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Shrubs

Feature Identification Number: 146289

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Woodlands

Feature Identification Number: 146287

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 23. View of the Entrance Drive and maple allée, 2008 (OCLP 2008).



Figure 24. The large ginkgo specimen tree and the South Lawn looking south (OCLP 2008).



Figure 25. South Gatehouse looking west, showing overgrown foundation plantings (OCLP 2008).



Figure 26. The formal gardens upper perennial terrace looking southeast (OCLP 2008).

Views and Vistas

Views are an essential character-defining element of Vanderbilt Mansion NHS. Views of the river and the mountains beyond from the areas around the Mansion were a primary asset both of the location and the design of the estate landscape. Drawings, photographs, and descriptions of the property throughout the historic period prominently feature the dramatic views. Today, while reduced in places, views continue to characterize the historic landscape (CLR 2009:27).

Historic Conditions:

All Periods: Views to the west from the Mansion were of primary importance during all of the historic periods. These views conformed to idealized standards valued by picturesque landscape designers (and the landscape painters they looked to for inspiration). Such views typically had a foreground, middle ground, and background and contained a varied landscape of natural features such as rivers and mountains, forests, meadows or agricultural fields, and large mature trees. The views from the Mansion offered these characteristics with the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains in the background, a rolling landscape of woodlands and meadows in the middle ground, and large specimen trees and lawn in the foreground (Figure 27) (CLR 2009:27).

Samuel Bard was the first to locate his house in 1797 in the place that the Vanderbilt Mansion now occupies. The house was sited at the highest point in the property immediately on the verge of the steep terrace slope. To the west, the bands of forest and meadow spread out below the house over an undulating terrain, beyond which was the broad Hudson River, and in the distance, the Catskill Mountains (Figure 28). These elements composed an ideal picture of

a country landscape that was so desired by the successive owners of Hyde Park. After Samuel Bard, David Hosack, Walter Langdon, Sr., and Frederick Vanderbilt all chose the same location for their respective mansions (CLR 2009:27).

Descriptions and drawings from all of the historic ownership periods indicate that the slope immediately below the house was clear of tall vegetation, providing unimpeded views from the house and the lawn areas around it. A few large trees were located along the terrace edge to frame views. The primary views were to the southwest along the river and to the northwest, where a small island and a undulation of the eastern bank of the river provided interest to the middle ground, while the far bank and a series of distant mountains established a background that receded into the distance. Three drawings of this view done from the same vantage point, one from the Bard period, one from the Hosack period, and one from the Langdon period, show the view to the northwest to be essentially unchanged during that time. Furthermore, aerial photographs from 1942 suggest that the view was the same at that time as well (CLR 2009:27-28).

Other views throughout the property were mentioned in descriptions by Hyde Park visitors and depicted in drawings. These include views from the ridge that climbs from the southern end of the property up to the house on the terrace, views from the drive that extended from the Mansion northward to the north exit gate, views from Bard Rock, and shorter views within the property of features like Crum Elbow Creek, the White Bridge, ponds, lawns, and the Mansion. While these views did not typically have the prominence of the views from the Mansion, they nonetheless were essential characteristics of the estate landscape (CLR 2009:28).

Existing Conditions:

The quality and content of the views today are similar overall to those of the historic period. The primary views continue to be those from the Mansion, from the Pavilion, and from the overlook drive north of the Pavilion. The patterns of forest bands and open meadow still characterize the land below the terrace, and limited development along the opposite river bank has resulted in historically intact views. Some changes in vegetation, however, have altered historic views to a degree (CLR 2009:28).

Views today are reduced from historic conditions, primarily by the growth of trees and brush on the slopes immediately below the terrace edge and the expansion of forested areas along the river. A number of conifers are growing on the slope between the Mansion and the Pavilion restricting or obscuring views altogether (Figure 29). Tree-of-heaven and other woody brush have also grown up in thick obscuring thickets on the slope. Periodic attempts to control the tree-of-heaven have restored the view for a time, but eventually the trees grow in again and once again block the view. The band of woodland on the slope below the formal gardens has also expanded to obscure westward views from the footpath that passes there, significantly altering the character (CLR 2009:28).

Despite reduction or loss of some of the historic views at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS, the majority

of the historic views are still intact. The views of the river and mountains from the edge of the Mansion terrace still convey the sense of awe that first drew people to this site. The composition of the views, with foreground, middle ground, and background, continue to convey the picturesque principles that guided the early development of the estate. Furthermore, lost or compromised views can be recaptured through clearing of vegetation to restore historic conditions. The views at Vanderbilt Mansion NHS contribute to the historic character of the landscape (CLR 2009:28).

Character-defining Features:

Feature: View toward the West from the Mansion

Feature Identification Number: 146297

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: View toward the West from the Pavilion

Feature Identification Number: 146293

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: View toward the West from the Overlook

Feature Identification Number: 146295

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 27. Specimen trees and the view toward the river looking northwest from near the Mansion (OCLP 2008).



Figure 28. View of north meadows looking north from the overlook (OCLP 2008).



Figure 29. View looking northwest from the Mansion, showing ailanthus and other brush obscuring the view (OCLP 2008).

Small Scale Features

Small-scale features are small structures and objects in the landscape that serve functional or decorative functions. At Vanderbilt Mansion NHS, the small-scale features include planters

and decorative art objects, fence posts, and an iron boat hook.

Historic Condition:

There is little historical documentation of small-scale landscape features outside of the formal gardens during the historic period. Considering the size and use of the estate, it is likely that the property contained a certain number of objects in both the functional and decorative categories, but in keeping with the design style of the estate these were likely used minimally and inconspicuously. Drawings and photographs from the historic period show an open, clean landscape nearly free of cluttering objects. Since the property was enclosed on three sides with a stone wall, there was little need for fences within the estate. The exception was a long fence on the west side of the property along both sides of the railroad tracks. Strictly utilitarian in design, this fence was constructed of wrought iron fence segments mounted between concrete posts, separating the estate from the railroad right-of-way. The fence extended the length of the property from the north at Bard Rock to the southern end at Hyde Park Landing.

At Bard Rock, iron fixtures were mounted in the rock outcrop for securing boats. These fixtures included two iron boat hooks, or davits, used for lifting and suspending small boats out of the water. A historic photo from 1895 shows a boat suspended from these hooks. It is unknown when the hooks were installed.

Other notable small-scale features evident in historic photos include the two well-head planters located on the east façade of the Mansion. It is possible that other such decorative objects, such as those used extensively in the formal gardens, were used similarly in the larger estate landscape, but there is no historical documentation of this.

Existing Conditions:

Remnants of the iron fence and concrete fence posts along the railroad right-of-way remain today. In places these are intact sections of rusted iron fencing still attached to the fence posts, while in other places only the fence posts remain or the fence is missing all together.

Of the iron boat fixtures at Bard Rock, one boat hook and an iron hook remain, both attached to the rock outcrop on the edge of the river. Both features show extensive rust.

The two antique stone wellheads on the east side of the Mansion remain are used today as planters. The two Italian wellheads are carved of Venetian Istrian stone and date from between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. Although worn from exposure to the elements, the wellheads are in good condition.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	Boat Hook
Feature Identification Number:	146299
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	40840

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LCS Structure Name: Boat Hook

LCS Structure Number: 1797HOOK

Feature: Iron Fence and Concrete Fence Posts

Feature Identification Number: 146303

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40843

LCS Structure Name: Concrete Fence Posts

LCS Structure Number: 1797CONC

Feature: Stone Italian Wellheads

Feature Identification Number: 146301

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 07/13/2010

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Vanderbilt Mansion NHS generally meets the current definition of “good” condition: it shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The landscape’s cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. Immediate corrective action is not needed to maintain the current condition.

Primary impacts to the landscape include aging specimen trees, erosion on steep slopes, invasive vegetation, and encroachment of forest vegetation on historically clear areas. Additional impacts include minor to moderate wear from visitation and deferred maintenance. These impacts are relatively minor with respect to the scale of the landscape, and do not imminently threaten the integrity of the landscape.

Stabilization Measures:

Recently completed stabilization projects in the Project Management Information System (PMIS) include the stabilization of eroded hillside west of the Mansion (PMIS 74911) and repair of the Crum Elbow Creek/Route 9 retaining wall (PMIS 108492). No other active landscape stabilization projects were identified in PMIS.

Impacts

Type of Impact:	Erosion
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Steep hillslopes below the Mansion are eroding from rainwater drainage, causing a deep gully down the hill.
Type of Impact:	Vegetation/Invasive Plants
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	The slopes below the Mansion have been colonized by tree-of-heaven (<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>), blocking historic views to the west. The steepness of the slopes make maintenance of this historically open area difficult. Regular efforts to clear the area, including hand clearing and using goats and movable pens, have been successful at temporarily removing the trees, however continued efforts are needed to eradicate the tenacious weed.

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants
External or Internal: Internal
Impact Description: Areas of the landscape historically characterized by meadow have since reverted to forest cover. Although periodic mowing of the existing meadows help keep the forested areas at their present extent, the forest continues to encroach in places, particularly on steep slopes that are difficult to mow. Regular clearing of these areas is needed to preserve their open character.

Type of Impact: Improper Drainage
External or Internal: Internal
Impact Description: Areas along Crum Elbow Creek are eroding from improper drainage. In some places, exposed and broken clay drainage pipes are evident. The eroding hillsides threaten historic features, such as the Power House, and impact the water quality of the creek through increased sedimentation.

Stabilization Costs

Landscape Stabilization Cost: 527,000.00
Cost Date: 03/09/2010
Level of Estimate: C - Similar Facilities
Cost Estimator: Park/FMSS

Landscape Stabilization Cost Explanatory Description:

The cost above is the total amount of the PMIS stabilization projects.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Rehabilitation

Approved Treatment Document: General Management Plan

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

Currently a General Management Plan is being developed to coordinate the management of the three parks under the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Site management unit: Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site, The Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, and Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site. The General Management Plan has identified three alternatives for the management of the sites. The first alternative, called the No-Action Alternative, includes efforts consistent with the preservation of the existing resources. The second alternative, Action Alternative One, primarily involves the restoration of the resources to historic uses and conditions, while the third alternative, Action Alternative Two, includes recommendations consistent with adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of the buildings and landscape. The draft General Management Plan indicates that Action Alternative Two is the preferred alternative. The General Management Plan is scheduled to be finalized in the summer of 2010.

In support of the General Management Plan and the preferred treatment alternative of rehabilitation, a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for Vanderbilt Mansion NHS was completed in 2009. The CLR includes a number of treatment recommendations for the stabilization and rehabilitation of landscape features. The following treatment projects in the Project Management Information System (PMIS) include features of the cultural landscape at Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site (NHS):

PMIS 162521

Rehabilitate Redbud-Dogwood Grove, \$13,582.27. This project will provide needed stabilization work on the redbud and dogwood grove to the southeast of the formal gardens, including pruning existing trees, removing dead trees, and clearing understory vegetation. This grove has been recommended for preservation in the Cultural Landscape Report, Volume II, Task 2.5.

PMIS 162739

Restore Hudson River Vista From Pavilion, \$20,064.00. This project reinstates the view west to the Hudson River from Pavilion, using targeted tree removals, based on 1940 historic photograph and historic and modern aerial photography. The historic views from the Pavilion have been obscured by vegetation growth stretching back over fifty years. Today the River is barely discernible in winter, and totally obscured during the growing season. This project is needed to restore the scenic view present during the historic period.

PMIS 162516

Restore Vista from Vanderbilt Overlook, \$26,752.00. Using targeted tree removals, this project restores the view westward across the Hudson River from the Vanderbilt Overlook by removing trees and reinstating the woodland-meadow edge to historic location. This famous view, used since the 18th century in prints, lithographs and photos, is a signature feature of the Vanderbilt Estate.

PMIS 162519

Restore South Meadow to Historic Footprint, \$26,752.00. This project involves the identification and

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removal of volunteer vegetation in the south meadow to stop the encroachment of forest on historically open areas and return the meadow to its historic extent.

PMIS 66506

Restore Historic Meadow, \$40,000.00. The meadows at Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site have been reduced in size due to growth of vegetation. This project will restore 4 acres of historic meadows at Vanderbilt estate, including brush removal, erosion control and rehabilitation. The project involves the removal of recent vegetation growth on meadow edges to rehabilitate historic scene. The Vanderbilt estate boasts a nationally significant designed landscape, but unchecked vegetation growth has altered its character. Vistas are reduced and meadows are smaller in size. This project will result in a substantially more accurate portrayal of the historic scene.

PMIS 12133

Rehab The Vanderbilt Historic Trails System, VAMA 22. \$49,280.00. This project involves the rehabilitation of the Vanderbilt historic trail and walkway system throughout the historic core area landscape. The work includes rebuilding collapsed support walls and drains, and rehabilitating the walking surfaces of the original trails and pathways. The historic trail system suffers from age, wear, weathering and years of deferred maintenance. This project is necessary to repair the deterioration, remediate minor safety problems and renew the service life of this historic cultural landscape feature.

PMIS 152522

Replace Specimen Trees Along the Main Entrance Road, \$63,000.00. Replace the diseased and dying century-year old maples and oaks flanking the Vanderbilt Mansion main entrance road. The specimen trees flanking the entrance to the Vanderbilt Mansion site were planted at various times during the historic period, between 1845 and 1923, most around 1907. All are in decline and some have been removed when they became safety hazards to the public. They need to be replaced in kind and in situ to restore and preserve the historic cultural landscape.

PMIS 97146

Replace Specimen Trees, \$75,000.00. This project is intended to provide in kind replacement of specimen trees and historic decorative tree stands that have been removed or are in serious decline. Many of the prime specimen trees and cultivated tree groupings are in serious decline and are in need of replacement, including the large White Pine Grove.

PMIS 161795

Repair Historic Vanderbilt Rustic Bridge - FHWA #1797-003P, \$100,800.00. This project involves repairs to the historic Coach House Bridge outlined in the 7/25/2006 Federal Highway Administration Inspection Report for Structure 1797-003P. Historic and public access bridge in need of repairs as outlined in the inspection report.

PMIS 161859

Perform Repairs to White Bridge Outlined in FHWA Inspection Report, \$246,400.00. This project involves repairs to the White Bridge, Structure 1797-001P, outlined in the Federal Highway Administration 7/25/2006 Inspection Report. The bridge is need of repairs to preserve it and continue its

service as the main entrance route for the visiting public.

PMIS 13970

Rehabilitate Historic Upper and Middle Dams (multiple projects), \$431,000.00. This project involves the rehabilitation of the White Bridge Dam and the Power House Dam. The work will include relaying/repointing of the entire stone wall and adjacent side walls of the dams' impoundment areas and downstream pools. It also includes resetting existing cap stones and replacing missing or broken stones. The project will also replace the drain gates and valves. The two dams suffer from age, wear, weathering, and years of deferred maintenance. This project is necessary to repair the deterioration, remediate minor safety problems and renew the service life of this historic structure.

PMIS 13987

Rehabilitate Historic Vanderbilt Lower Dam, \$552,027.52. This project involves the rehabilitation of the Vanderbilt Lower Dam. The work will include relaying/repointing of the entire stone wall and adjacent side walls of the dam's impoundment area and downstream pool. Both dam side walls will be replaced as they are compromised and leaking. It also includes resetting the existing cap stones and replacing missing or broken stones. The drain gate and valve are to be replaced and soft sediment removed. The Lower Dam suffers from age, wear, weathering and years of deferred maintenance. This project is necessary to repair the deterioration, remediate minor safety problems and renew the service life of this historic structure. The 1990 Soil Conservation Study noted wall seepage below both wingwalls and significant sediment loading. The dam has been classified and upgraded to a level-2 significant hazard.

PMIS 152519

Replace the Vanderbilt Pine Barrier, \$626,080.00. This project involves removing and replacing approximately 2,500 ninety-plus-year-old white pine and hemlock trees in the 1/2 mile long Vanderbilt pine screen. This tree stand was planted along the property boundary between 1917 and 1923. The trees, some over 40 inches in diameter, have become overgrown and periodically fall across the adjacent public highway - US Route 9 - constituting a major safety hazard. In 2006, removal of the most dangerous trees cost over \$57,000. Many have become hazards since. As well as being a safety hazard to the public, it no longer serves its historic purpose as a screen. It needs to be removed and replaced in situ with identical species.

Approved Treatment Completed: No

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