



1979

34-Archaeological Survey of the Proposed Howard-Solon St. Extension, Kalamazoo, MI

Elizabeth B. Garland

Western Michigan University, elizabeth.garland@wmich.edu

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REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS, NO. 34

1979

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED
HOWARD-SOLON STREET EXTENSION, KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN.

ELIZABETH B. GARLAND

Project Personnel:

Principal Investigator: Elizabeth B. Garland, Ph.D.

Field Supervisor: Deborah Rhead, B.A.

Field Assistant: Kenneth Barr, B.S.

Purpose of Investigation:

This survey was made at the request of Mr. Ronald Copping of the Kalamazoo Co. Road Commission in response to a request for survey by the Michigan History Division, Michigan Department of State. The purpose of the project was to determine the extant cultural resources of the areas to be impacted by the proposed Howard-Solon St. extension. The fieldwork for the project was carried out April 18, 1979.

Description of the Project Area:

The project area includes a 2.7 acre parcel on the edge of the Western Michigan University campus, two proposed drainage basins, and an area averaging 100' from the center along the proposed extension of Solon St. which runs from the NW 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of section 20 northward through the SW 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of section 17 terminating in the E 1/2 of the SE 1/4 of section 18, Kalamazoo Township, MI.

The topography of the project area is undulating; the land generally rises from an elevation of about 860' MSL at the end of Howard Street to a maximum elevation of 896' MSL on a hill near the northern edge of the parcel. The southern half of the proposed extension had been previously disturbed, consequently the land in this area was somewhat more level to gently rolling. The northern half of the area is more markedly rolling with moderate hills and small ravines.

Vegetation is varied; the southern-most portion is covered with grasses, and some shrubs. Further to the north, the area is wooded, and well covered with underbrush. Included were primarily hardwoods with some softwoods, vines, thorny shrubs, with some grasses and wildflowers. Also, conifers had been planted along a ridge at the north edge of the northern proposed basin.

The soil within the area is composed of glacial till. Rocks varied in size from small pebbles to small boulders. Generally topsoil was a deep, rich organic loam; however on the higher ridges, it was sparse, and often not present at all.

Previous Research:

Western Michigan University has conducted previous archaeological research in Kalamazoo County, however the project area had never previously been examined. Inspection of archaeological site files at the Department of Anthropology at W.M.U. revealed two sites near the project area: 20 KZ 12 is located in the center of section 17, and is of undetermined temporal placement; 20 KZ 21, a Woodlandmound group, is in section 24 of Oshtemo Twp., approximately one mile from the project area.

Procedures:

Records of archaeological sites, including some as yet unrecorded in the State files, were checked at the Department of Anthropology, W.M.U., to determine the nature of known cultural resources in the area adjacent to the project prior to fieldwork.

Field procedures consisted of transect survey with subsurface shovel probes. Crew members were spaced 50' apart and shovel probes were placed at 25 yard intervals. The same transect and subsurface probe intervals were utilized on the two proposed drainage basin sites, and on the 2.7 acre parcel.

Dense underbrush, combined with the curved trajectory of the proposed roadway extension and missing surveyor stakes, made keeping transect intervals difficult. Several dirt paths meandering through the area and an adjacent cultivated field west of the northern proposed basin were also examined since they offered excellent surface visibility.

Sites Recorded:

No historic or prehistoric cultural material of any significance was encountered by the survey crew. A few pieces of fire cracked rock were noted, as were a few cortex spalls of chert, however these were not in close association, and their presence is most probably due to natural factors.

Recommendations:

Since no significant prehistoric or historic cultural materials or sites were located in the proposed project area, as delimited by the Kalamazoo County Road Commission, I can recommend that the project proceed as planned.

Prepared and Submitted by:

Elizabeth B. Garland
Elizabeth B. Garland, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator
April 19, 1979

