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DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS NO. 47

1980

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE GRAND RAVINE SENIOR HOUSING, INC.
PROPERTY, CITY OF ALLEGAN, ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

William M. Cremin

INTRODUCTION:

Re: HUD Project 047-EH-025-WAH-L8

Pursuant to the receipt of letters (dated 10 Oct 80) from

Mr. T.E. Malita, President, Grand Ravine Senior Housing, Inc.

and Mr. Larry Snyder, Housing Consultant, H&W Properties, Inc.,

agent for Grand Ravine Senior Housing, Inc., authorizing an

archaeological survey of a tract of land located in the City

of Allegan, Michigan, archaeologists from Western Michigan

University undertook on-site evaluation of the property in order

to determine whether activities related to the construction of

housing units would impact cultural resources. There follows

a report of fieldwork, together with appropriate background

information, conducted on 21 Oct 80 and recommendations based

upon our findings.

PROJECT PERSONNEL:

Principal Investigator - William M. Cremin, Ph.D., Assistant

Professor of Anthropology, WMU

Field Assistants - Michael Higgins, M.A. Candidate in

Anthropology, WMU

- Jean Marek, M.A. Candidate in

Anthropology, WMU

All project participants have received considerable formal

training in archaeological field methods and have served in

supervisory capacities in various aspects of WMU's field

research program. Moreover, all are very experienced in the

conduct of CRM projects of this nature, having acquired much

experience both at WMU and elsewhere.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TRACT EVALUATED:

The parcel surveyed comprises 2.7 ha (6.62 acres) in the center of the NW 1/4, NW 1/4 of Section 27, Allegan Township, T2N R13W, Allegan County, Michigan. It is located to the rear of the Immanuel Lutheran Church at 631 Grand Street (M-118) in the City of Allegan. The property backs up to a steep sided ravine where the elevation is about 3 m less than that of Grand Street (210 m) which passes to the south of the parcel at a distance of about 263 m from the ravine. Between Grand Street and the ravine, the ground cover consists of grass, a dense stand of pines situated along the eastern margin of the parcel and a mixed stand of hardwoods fronting on the ravine and bordering the parcel along the northern 1/2 of the western boundary. The small intermittent stream which occupies the ravine bottom and drains this parcel flows into the Kalamazoo River in the adjacent NE 1/4 of Section 28 to the west.

Soils of the Miami-Hillsdale association predominate in this area of the Kalamazoo River Basin. These soils are typically medium to coarsely textured and occupy rolling to steep topography. They are developed in glacial drift and till and range from sandy loam, loam and silt loams to sandy clay loam. Such soils are well drained with medium permeability rates and formerly supported communities of mixed hardwoods and oak.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH:

A literature and documents search and examination of the Allegan County site files maintained by the Michigan History

Division (and with a duplicate set kept in the Department of Anthropology, WMU) revealed that no fewer than five archaeological sites were known to occur within less than 500 m of the property in question. These sites were located and recorded in 1978

during a systematic survey of the Allegan area by archaeologists from WMU under the direction of the Principal Investigator (see Cremen and Marek 1978). Four of the sites (20 AE 210, 211, 303 and 304), identified as lithic scatters occupying areas ranging in size from 10-25 m², are in the SW 1/4 of Section 22. The fifth (20 AE 305), a lithic scatter of 10 m² extent, lies to the west in the NE 1/4 of Section 28. Importantly, two of the five sites are located along the same ravine, only on the opposite or north side of this natural feature.

FIELD PROCEDURES:

Inasmuch as ground surface visibility across the area to be evaluated was absolutely nil, the survey team relied on shovel testing procedures to examine the parcel. We systematically traversed the area from south to north at 20 meter intervals, with shovel probes being spaced at 10-20 m intervals along each line of survey. Moreover, many additional shovel tests were randomly placed in a 10 m wide area fronting on the ravine at the back of the property. In aggregate, 132 tests, ranging in depth from 40-90 cm, were placed along the eight transects and clustered near the ravine margin, revealing a well developed horizon (0-28 cm) underlain by a deposit of sandy loam and sandy clay loam (with gravelly inclusions) extending to an

undetermined depth.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY:

Despite a very systematic and intensive program of subsurface testing, surveyors were unable to detect even the

slightest indications of human activity in the form of cultural remains during evaluation of the parcel. And recent

evidence of human presence consisted entirely of activity related to the presence of a downed fence along the south margin of the ravine and the pine plantation near the eastern edge of the tract.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Although we had good reason (given site locational data

available from the 1978 survey) to anticipate finding an archaeological site(s) in the area evaluated, our on-site examination

has produced no evidence to indicate the presence of significant cultural resources which would be impacted as a result of the

proposed land use. Therefore, it is recommended that plans to construct housing units by Grand Ravine Senior Housing, Inc.

be permitted to proceed as scheduled.

REFERENCES CITED

Cremitt, W.M. and J.F. Marek

1978 An archaeological survey of Allegan County, Michigan: 1978 multiple transect survey in the middle Kalamazoo river valley. Project completion report on file with the Michigan History Division, Michigan Department of State, Lansing.