Letter Report,
A Suspended Phase I Archaeological Survey of the
Location of a Proposed Telecommunications Facility (WAC357)
Located at the Virginia Theological Seminary
3737 Seminary Road in Alexandria, Virginia

In February 2009, Archeological Testing and Consulting, Inc., of Silver Spring, Maryland was contracted by Advantage Environmental Consultants LLC. To conduct a Phase I archaeological survey at the Virginia Theological Seminary, located at 3737 Seminary Road in Alexandria, Virginia. The proposed development plan included the installation of a concrete pad, equipment cabinets and two underground utility runs associated with the construction of a telecommunications facility known as WAC357. The limits of disturbance (LOD) for this proposed development established the boundaries for what is hereafter referred to as the study area.

An initial pedestrian survey identified a number areas affected by ground disturbances. Large portions of the study area had been impacted by erosion and the construction of a number of footpaths, walkways, a set of concrete stairs and landscaping. A steeply sloped berm was located along the north façade of a modern elevator shaft. Along the southeastern portion of the study area, a poured concrete pathway and stair had been overgrown and partially buried. Interviews with the maintenance staff indicated that a number of buried utility lines already existed within the study area and extended from two power poles and a transformer. The exact location of these existing lines was not known at the time of the initial survey, therefore the subsurface field survey in this portion of the project area was suspended until the location of these buried utilities could be identified.

Two underground utility runs were proposed for the installation. Transects 1 & 2 (T-1 & T-2) were plotted along the proposed routes of these two utility runs. Three shovel tests (STP's 1-3) were plotted at a 100' interval along T-1 (offset 10' east), while one shovel test (STP 4) was plotted 100' southeast of the face of an electric transformer along T-2. A surface survey was conducted within the LOD and along both T-1 and T-2. Visual inspection of the existing ground conditions was conducted as well as collection, mapping and recordation of any existing surface finds.

Metal detection sweeps were conducted along both T-1 and T-2. Each sweep was approximately 6' wide. The metal detection sweep along T-1 generally bordered an asphalt-paved walking path. The metal detection sweep along T-2 was located along a sloping embankment that bordered an elevator shaft. Metal detection along both transects identified more than a hundred positive metal detection 'hits'. Concerns about the level of soil disturbance which would be required to excavate all of the positive metal detection locations made it necessary to assume a selective sampling strategy in order to minimize the destruction of soils with high archaeological potential. The already identified positive metal detection 'hits' along T-1 were rescanned with the metal detection equipment and a sample of the weakest and strongest signals were plotted for excavation. During the rescan, twenty-two positive metal detection 'hits' were plotted for excavation.

Metal detection hits were not excavated in the same manner as shovel tests, but were only excavated until metals were recovered and the test area no longer provided a positive indicator on the metal detector. Stratigraphic associations, based on shovel testing were recorded for all artifacts recovered from metal-detection hits. All non-metallic artifacts recovered during excavation of positive metal detection locations were recorded in the same manner as metals.

Artifacts were recovered from twenty-two metal detection locations and STP1, STP2 and STP4. Artifacts were not recovered from Shovel Test 3. The recovery included architectural (n=36), domestic (n=25), fuel (n=48), hardware (n=3), miscellaneous (n=6), Native American (n=1) and modern (n=22) artifacts. The architectural recovery included brick fragments (n=22), machine cut nail fragments (n=7), cut nail fragments (n=2), slate (n=2), bracket (n=1), cast pipe fragment (n=1) and a screw (n=1). The domestic recovery included clear container glass (n=9), clear molded container glass (n=3), aqua container glass (n=4), white container glass (n=1), lamp bulb fragment (n=1), aqua window glass (n=1) and undecorated whiteware (n=5). The fuel recovery included: charcoal (n=2) and coal (n=41); the modern recovery included: fencing wire (n=7), steel fragment (n=1), asphalt (n-1), hardware basket (n=1), wire nail (n=1), steel hardware (n=1), wire nail (n=1) and razor (n=1). The miscellaneous recovery included wire fragments (n=2), U-loop (n=1) and iron fragments (n=3) and the Native American recovery included: quartzite primary waste flake (n=1).

Artifacts were recovered from surface collection, Stratum I and Stratum II. Due to the implementation of the sampling strategy, no reliable concentrations of metal detection 'hits' were observable along T-1. Soils encountered during subsurface testing were generally eroded and gravelly, which was likely due to runoff from nearby paved areas and the study areas location along a gently sloping hillside. Stratum I was generally composed of a 10YR3/2 Very Dark Grayish Brown sandy loam and extended, on average 2" below ground surface. In two locations (STP4 and in the vicinity of MD19) Stratum I extended significantly deeper than average. Soils in the vicinity of STP 4 were likely disturbed by the construction of a nearby modern elevator shaft and subsequent landscaping. The location around MD19 was located at the base of a small slope and may represent the deposition soils from the nearby hilltop and slope. Stratum I also contained a significant amount of fine to medium gravels, a large portion of which appeared to be paving gravels. Stratum II was generally composed of a compact 10YR6/6 brownish yellow sandy loam with fine to medium gravels and generally extended from 2-9" below ground surface. Often, the soils of stratum II were mottled with soils resembling those from both Stratum II and Stratum III. Stratum III was composed of a 10YR6/8 Brownish Yellow silty clay with fine gravels (<5%). Stratum III was classified as culturally sterile subsoil based on its inorganic characteristics, its depth and its lack of cultural materials. A minimum 4" depth was excavated into the soils of Stratum III.

Due to changes in the proposed development plan, further testing at the WAC357A was suspended after the initial site visit and one additional day of fieldwork. Based on an assessment of the revised development plan in August 2009, further testing was deemed unnecessary and excavations were permanently suspended. The existing artifact recovery was then recorded with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources as an addition to the existing archaeological site (44AX0173). Artifacts from the recovery were catalogued and archived according to the City of Alexandria's Archaeological Standards for the Treatment and Processing of Collections and then submitted to the Alexandria Archaeology Museum.

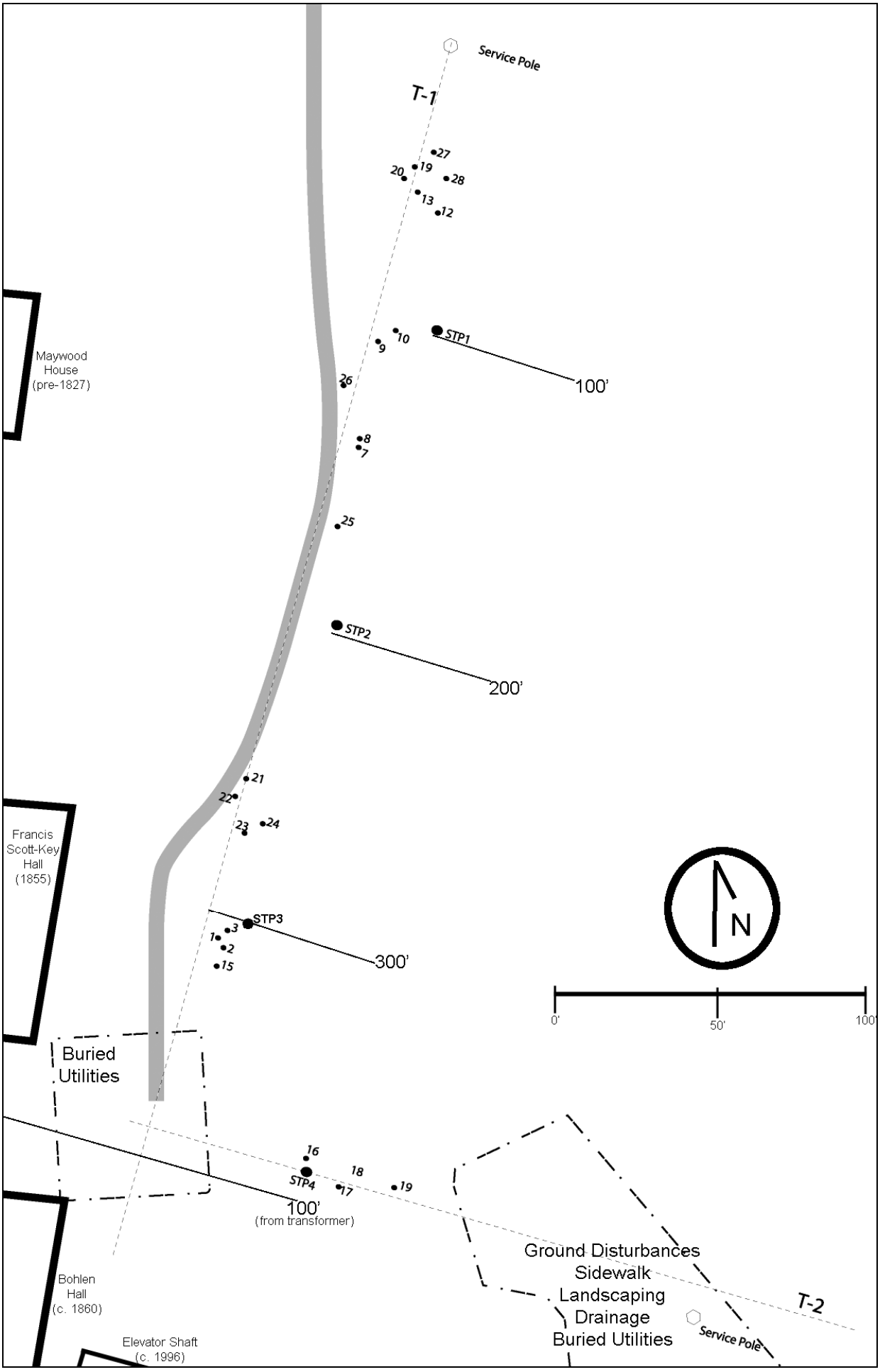
A Suspended Phase I Archaeological Survey for the WAC357 Study Area Shovel Test Profiles		
STP 1	**STP2**	**STP 4**
Stratum I 10YR3/2 Very Dark Grayish Brown Gravelly Sandy Clay Loam 0-2”	Stratum I 10YR3/2 Very Dark Grayish Brown Gravelly Sandy Clay Loam mottled w/ 10YR6/6 Brownish Yellow Gravelly Sandy Clay 0-1”	Stratum I 10YR3/2 Very Dark Grayish Brown Sandy Clay Loam mottled w/ 10YR6/6 Brownish Yellow Sandy Clay 0-9”
Stratum II 10YR6/6 Brownish Yellow Gravelly Sandy Clay 2-9”	Stratum II 10YR6/6 Brownish Yellow Gravelly Sandy Clay mottled w/ 10YR3/2 Very Dark Grayish Brown Sandy Clay Loam 1-8”	Stratum II 10YR6/6 Brownish Yellow Gravelly Sandy Clay mottled w/ 10YR6/8 Brownish Yellow Gravelly Sandy Clay 9-14”
Stratum III 10YR6/8 Brownish Yellow Gravelly Sandy Clay 9-15”	Stratum III 10YR6/8 Brownish Yellow Gravelly Sandy Clay 8-15”	Stratum III 10YR6/8 Brownish Yellow Gravelly Sandy Clay 14-21”

Archeological Survey
Virginia Theological Seminary (44AX0173) Study Area Phase I
Artifact Catalog

STP # or Metal Detector Location	Stratum	Material Description	Quantity
MD1	I	Historic: miscellaneous, wire, O-loop	1
MD2	I	Historic: architecture, brick, fragment	1
		Historic: fuel, coal	1
MD3	I	Historic: miscellaneous wire, U-loop	1
		Historic: brick, fragment	1
MD7	I	Historic: fuel, coal	1
		Historic: architecture, unidentified screw, fragment	1
MD8	I	Historic: miscellaneous, wire, fragment	1
MD9	I	Historic: domestic, glass, clear, container, body, fragment	1
		Historic: domestic, glass, clear, molded, container, body, fragment	1
	II	Historic: domestic, glass, container, clear, body, fragment	1
		Historic: domestic, glass, container, aqua, body, fragment	1
		Historic: fuel, coal	5
		Historic: fuel, charcoal	2
		Historic: architecture, unidentified cut nail, fragment	2
MD10	II	Historic: domestic, glass, container, aqua, body, fragment	1
		Historic: domestic, glass, container, clear, body, fragment	1
		Historic: architecture, brick, fragment	1
		Historic: domestic, glass, container, white, body, fragment	1
		Historic: fuel, coal	2
		Historic: miscellaneous, iron, highly corroded, fragment	1
		Native American: Quartzite, primary flake	1
MD11	II	Modern: hardware,steel, gasket,hex-head, threaded	1
MD12	I	Historic: architecture, nail, machine-cut, fragment	2
		Historic: domestic, glass, container, clear, body, fragment	2
		Historic: fuel, coal	1
MD13	II	Historic: architectural, hardware, bracket	1
MD14	II	Historic: architecture, nail, machine-cut	1
		Historic: fuel, coal	1

STP # or Metal Detector Location	Stratum	Material Description	Quantity
MD14	II	Historic: miscellaneous, iron, cast, triangular, fragment	1
MD16	II	Historic: architectural, brick, fragment	3
		Historic: domestic, glass, clear, molded, body, fragment	1
		Historic: domestic, glass, container, aqua, molded, body, fragment	1
		Historic: domestic, glass, lamp/bulb, clear	1
		Historic: fuel, coal	1
		Modern: asphalt	1
		Historic: architecture, brick, ½-brick	1
MD17	I	Historic: architecture, iron, cast, pipe, fragment	1
MD18	I	Modern: landscaping, wire	1
MD19	I	Modern: landscaping, wire	1
MD20	I	Historic: domestic, glass, clear, container, body, fragment	1
MD21	I	Historic: architecture, brick, fragment	7 (sample)
		Modern: landscape, wire	2
MD22	I	Modern: landscaping, wire	2
MD23	I	Modern: hardware, steel, screw, metal-screw, Phillips head	1
	II	Historic: architecture, brick, ½-brick	1
MD24	I	Historic: architecture, nail, machine-cut, fragment	3
		Historic: architecture, slate, tile	2
		Historic: architecture, brick, fragment	1
		Historic: fuel, coal	1
MD27	I	Historic: fuel, coal	1
		Modern: landscaping, wire	1
	II	Historic: hardware, iron, rake, head	1
		Historic: hardware, iron, strap	2
MD28	I	Historic: architecture, nail, machine-cut, fragment	1
STP1	I	Modern: architecture, steel, nail, brad, 2”	1
		Historic: domestic glass, container, body, fragment	1
STP2	Surface Collected	Historic: domestic, glass, container, molded, aqua, base	1
	I	Historic: architecture, brick, fragment	2
		Historic: domestic, ceramic, earthenware, whiteware, body, undecorated, fragment	1
		Historic: domestic, ceramic, earthenware, whiteware, base, undecorated, fragment	2
		Historic: domestic, glass, aqua, window, fragment	1
		Historic: fuel, coal	5

STP # or Metal Detector Location	Stratum	Material Description	Quantity
STP2	I	Modern: steel, razor, box-cutter, two-sided	1
	II	Historic: architecture, brick, fragments	4
		Historic: domestic, earthenware, whiteware, body, undecorated, fragment	1
		Historic: fuel, coal	3
		Historic: olive green glass, fragment	1
STP4	I	Historic: domestic, glass, clear, container, body, fragment	1
		Historic: fuel, coal	7
	II	Historic: fuel, coal	17
		Historic: miscellaneous, iron, highly corroded, fragment	1
		Historic: architecture, brick, fragment	1
		Historic: domestic, ceramic, earthenware, whiteware, glazed, chip	1
		Historic: domestic, glass, clear, molded, container, body, fragment	1
		Historic: domestic, glass, clear, container, body, fragment	1


Service Pole
T-1
27
19
20
28
13
12
Maywood
House
(pre-1827)
10
9
STP1
100'
26
8
7
25
STP2
200'
21
22
24
23
Francis
Scott-Key
Hall
(1855)
STP3
3
1
2
15
300'
N
0'
50'
100'
Buried
Utilities
16
18
STP4
17
19
100'
(from transformer)
Ground Disturbances
Sidewalk
Landscaping
Drainage
Buried Utilities
T-2
Service Pole
Bohlen
Hall
(c. 1860)
Elevator Shaft
(c. 1996)