

AUG 16 1985

MAP REF. # 65

**HISTORIC AND NATURAL DISTRICTS
INVENTORY FORM**

**DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479**

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

UNIQUE SITE NO. 103-04-0001
QUAD. _____
SERIES _____
NEG. NO. _____

YOUR NAME: NYS PARKS & RECREATION DATE: _____
AGENCY BLDG. #1
YOUR ADDRESS: EMPIRE STATE PLAZA TELEPHONE: _____
ALBANY, NY 12238
ORGANIZATION (if any): _____

1. NAME OF DISTRICT: William K. Vanderbilt Estate/"Eagles Nest"
2. COUNTY: Suffolk TOWN/CITY: Huntington VILLAGE: Little Neck
3. DESCRIPTION:

See attached

4. SIGNIFICANCE:

See attached

5. MAP:

See attached

6. SOURCES:

See item 9 on nomination form

7. THREATS TO AREA: NA

BY ZONING ☐

BY ROADS ☐

BY DEVELOPERS ☐

BY DETERIORATION ☐

OTHER _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

8. LOCAL ATTITUDES TOWARD THE AREA: NA

9. PHOTOS:

See continuation Sheets.

Huntington Multiple Resource Area
Suffolk County, New York

William K. Vanderbilt Estate/"Eagles Nest"

3. The William K. Vanderbilt II Estate, known as "Eagle's Nest" occupies 43 acres along Little Neck Road in Centerport on the central ridge of the Little Neck peninsula. The well-landscaped grounds slope gently eastward to Northport Harbor and include reflecting pools, fountains, formal gardens, arboretums, marble statuary, and a golf course. Although a few greatly altered nineteenth-century residences survive, the area consists predominantly of large, rambling twentieth-century mansions which occupy two-acre subdivisions. In addition to the Vanderbilt Mansion, the nominated property contains an entrance gate, the Hall of Fishes Museum, the former garage/servants' quarters, the boat house, an airplane hangar, a power house, three garages, and the caretaker's cottage, all of which are original to the estate and contribute to its historical and architectural significance. Built in 1971, the Vanderbilt Planetarium is the only non-contributing element within the estate complex. (10 contributing buildings, 1 contributing structure)

The following is a descriptive list of the many components which comprise the William K. Vanderbilt II Estate:

1. Entrance - The entrance to the property is marked by large, decorative wrought-iron gates which have massive black eagles perched on top. Beyond and east of the gates are six marble Byzantine columns taken from the ruins at Carthage arranged in a semi-circle.
2. Mansion - The mansion, the centerpiece of the estate, is located northeast of the entrance, just beyond a small bridge at the foot of a long, sloping drive paved with Belgian blocks. Begun in 1907 and extensively enlarged during the early twentieth century, the mansion was not completed until the 1930's as a 24-room Spanish Baroque style residence. The three-story structure has red tiled gable roofs, white stucco walls, and a quadrangular plan surrounding a large courtyard paved with Belgian blocks. Dominating the mansion's composition is a four-story, tiered bell tower containing an electrically controlled striking clock and a guest bedroom. The belltower has ornate, high relief, polychromed ornament, pilasters, urns, and a wrought-iron balcony. Below the belltower is an arched entrance guarded by a portcullis and large wooden gates. The main entrance to the mansion is enclosed in a six-bay glass arcade. Extending across the entire north side of the quadrangle is the memorial wing, the mansion's only symmetrical and monumentally scaled wing. The mansion has elaborate high relief, polychromed ornament; an overall Spanish and Moorish design; heavy doors of dark wood; quoining; stucco sheathing and detail; wrought-iron balconies; picturesque pavilions; and urn-topped balustrades. Door and window surrounds are particularly ornamental. The varied fenestration includes French doors, round-arched windows, some modern multi-pane sash, and large casement windows. Reflecting pools, fountains, boxwood gardens, verandahs and colonnades complement the mansion's overall composition.

William K. Vanderbilt Estate/"Eagle's Nest, Page 3

The interior of the mansion has carved wood and marble fireplaces, elaborate high relief stucco finishes, Spanish and Moorish inspired decorative details, elaborate paneled ceilings and walls, intricately carved staircases, and marble-clad museum galleries.

3. The Vanderbilt Marine Museum, known as the "Hall of Fishes" or Upper Museum, was constructed northwest of the mansion in 1922 as a high one-story five-bay, hipped roof private museum building with an elaborate frontispiece. In 1936, a flat-roofed second story with square windows was added as were six buttresses with conical caps extending above the roofline. The stucco and polychromed building is distinguished by its elaborate entrance with scrolls, a recessed niche, urns, and four Solomonic columns.
4. The former Garage/Servants' Quarters was built in 1928 southeast of the "Hall of Fishes." Originally a garage/chauffer's quarters, the two and one-half story, five-bay, red-tile hipped roof building reflects the Spanish Baroque design influence of the mansion. The facade has a projecting central gable distinguished by a stucco garland and heraldic design and a wooden balcony on the second floor. The rear elevation features sloping rooflines, round-arched windows and two elongated chimneys.
5. The Boat House, built in 1914, is located at the bottom of a steep drive which leads from the mansion to Northport Harbor. The three-story, four-bay structure has a slate hipped roof with broad overhanging eaves, half timbering and stucco sheathing, multi-pane casement windows, and a wooden patio overlooking the beach.
6. The Airplane Hangar, built in the 1920's is located on a section of heavily wooded property right at the water's edge. The four-story stucco building has a central gabled pavilion and flat-roofed adjoining wings. The hangar is no longer used and the windows have been boarded up.
7. The Powerhouse and Garage Complex is located near (south of) the main entrance. Built in 1914, the two and one-half story, half-timbered and stucco powerhouse has round-arched double doors, six-over-six, double-hung sash windows, a slate hipped roof, and shed dormers. The three one-story, four-bay garages have slate gable roofs and vertical plank double doors.
8. The Caretaker's Cottage, built in the 1920's, is located at the far southern end of the property. The one and one-half story stucco structure has a red tile hipped roof and projecting wings. The building has single-pane sash and six-over-six double-hung sash windows.

9. Built in 1971, the Vanderbilt Planetarium is the only non-contributing structure included within the estate. Occupying an area which originally contained tennis courts, the planetarium has a long, low profile, a massive red tile roof, and stucco walls.
4. The William K. Vanderbilt Estate, known as "Eagle's Nest," is architecturally significant as one of Huntington's most intact early twentieth century estates. The Spanish Baroque style estate is representative of those built on Long Island's celebrated "Gold Coast." A phenomenon which began during the end of the nineteenth century and transformed Long Island's north shore, the "Gold Coast" denotes the development of large estates and country homes built on Long Island Sound by wealthy businessmen and industrialists. Begun in 1907, by William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., president of the New York City Railroad and one of the major philanthropic and civic leaders of the early twentieth century, the estate was originally a small summer dwelling which was extensively remodelled and enlarged throughout the 1920's and 1930's by the renowned architectural firm of Warren and Wetmore. It became Vanderbilt's country retreat and museum for his extensive marine collections. When completed in 1928, the residence had evolved into a 24-room Spanish Baroque style mansion and the estate included such outbuildings as a sea plane hangar, boathouse, power house and garage complex, caretaker's cottage, and a marine museum known as "The Hall of Fishes." The various outbuildings are typical of those built as part of "Gold Coast" estates although their intact survival is relatively rare as many of the estates were subdivided during the twentieth century. Many of the outbuildings are architecturally significant as fine examples of the Spanish Baroque style of architecture; all of them enhance the mansion's estate-setting. During the 1930's, Warren and Wetmore designed a museum-wing addition to the main house and enlarged the "Hall of Fishes." Since Vanderbilt's death in 1944, the estate has continued to serve as a museum of marine life and natural history. Retaining its architectural integrity, including its original outbuildings and estate setting, Eagle's Nest is architecturally significant as one of the most distinctive and largely intact examples of the estates built on Long Island's "Gold Coast" during the early twentieth century. (Period of significance: 1907-1936)

The late nineteenth century marked the beginning of the development of Long Island's "Gold Coast" on its northern shore. Wealthy magnates and business leaders who had amassed large fortunes during the industrial revolution after the Civil War, viewed Long Island's north shore with its beauty, undeveloped land, and close proximity to New York City as the perfect location for their estates. The name "Gold Coast" satirized the development of these mansions and country homes on or near the waterfront. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Gold Coast dominated the north shore of Long Island with a virtually unbroken chain of estates stretching from King's Point in Nassau County to Lloyd's Neck in

Huntington Multiple Resource Area
Suffolk County, New York

William K. Vanderbilt Estate/"Eagle's Nest"
Page 5

Suffolk County. The majority of the town's extant relatively unaltered estates will be added to the multiple resource area nomination at a later date as part of the Eastern Cold Spring Harbor Estates Thematic Resources. In addition to the Vanderbilt Estate, the former George McKesson Brown Estate/"Coindre Hall" (individual component) and the Robert Weeks DeForest Estate known as "Wawapek" (part of Shore Road Historic District) are presently included within the multiple resource area

William K. Vanderbilt, Jr. (1878-1944) was the son of William K. Vanderbilt, Sr. and the great-great-grandson of Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, who established the family transportation empire in the mid-nineteenth century. Educated at Harvard, William K. Vanderbilt, Jr. assumed his place in the family business, the New York Central Railroad, in 1903, and became president in 1918. An avid sportsman, Vanderbilt started the Vanderbilt Cup Automobile races in 1904 and constructed the Long Island Motor Parkway in 1908 as the first high-speed limited access roadway on Long Island. In addition, he was an avid yachtsman who conducted scientific expeditions that collected marine specimens from around the world. Vanderbilt was knowledgeable in all aspects of sea life including marine biology, natural history, astronomy, and marine engineering.

Vanderbilt planned "Eagle's Nest" as his personal retreat and as a private museum to house his marine collection. Begun in 1907, "Eagle's Nest" was originally a small six-room Japanese style house located on the 43-acre estate overlooking Northport Harbor. Through the years, the house was greatly enlarged and extensively remodeled under the direction of the renowned New York City architectural firm of Warren and Wetmore and the relatively unknown architect Ronald H. Pearce. When completed in 1928, the residence had become a 24-room Spanish Baroque style mansion housing private quarters, galleries, and apartments. The estate also included a boathouse, sea plane hangar, power house and garage complex, and caretaker's cottage. During the 1930's, Warren and Wetmore added a museum wing to the house and enlarged the other museum building, known as the "Hall of Fishes." Reflecting pools, a golf course, arboretums, fountains, formal gardens and marble statuary complete the estate complex. These later period additions are indistinguishable from the earlier designs and reflect the last phase in the estate's historic development. After Vanderbilt's death in 1944, the estate was open to the public. In 1974, a planetarium was built on the estate and is the only non-contributing element on the property.

It is uncertain what role Warren and Wetmore played in the design of the Vanderbilt Estate and what Ronald Pearce, of whom little is known, actually designed. The highly successful firm of Warren and Wetmore was formed in New York City in 1896. They received many major commissions from the Vanderbilt family during their partnership, which lasted until 1931. The firm designed Grand Central Station (1903) as well as many of the major

Huntington Multiple Resource Area
Suffolk County, New York

William K. Vanderbilt Estate/"Eagle's Nest"
Page 6

buildings in the general vicinity, including the Biltmore Hotel (1914), the Hotel Commodore (1919), the Vanderbilt Hotel (1912), and the Grand Central Terminal Post Office (1906). In addition to "Eagle's Nest," Warren and Wetmore designed a New York City residence for Vanderbilt at 49 East 52nd Street in 1908, the Deepdale Club at Lake Success, Long Island in 1926 and the William K. Vanderbilt Sr. Estate (c. 1902) in Oakdale, Long Island. The firm also became famous for their designs of grand hotels and resorts including the Broadmoor (c. 1918) in Colorado, the Homestead Hotel in Virginia, the Newport Country Club (1894) in Rhode Island and the Biltmore Country Club (c. 1922) in Rye, New York.

"Eagle's Nest" is an excellent example of the Spanish Baroque style popular in the early twentieth century. A mix of southern European influences, the Spanish Baroque style features stucco wall surfaces, courtyards, and arcades, red tile roofs, and arched entrances. In addition to these design elements, "Eagle's Nest" displays such decorative features as sculpted cartouches, medallions, decorative plaster relief, heraldic emblems, wrought-iron window grilles, shaded and ornamental balcony railings. The bell tower, courtyard cloister, and abundance of decorative fountains completed the Spanish Baroque aesthetic.

The estate retains its original acreage (43) in addition to all of its original outbuildings, many of which reflect the Spanish Baroque style. Virtually intact, the former William K. Vanderbilt Estate remains as one of the best and most complete, unaltered examples of an estate complex dating from Long Island's "Gold Coast" era.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 7

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Huntington Town MRA
State NEW YORK

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

61. Smith, Henry, Farmstead

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/26/85

Attest

62. Smith, Jacob, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/26/85

Attest

63. Sweet Hollow Presbyterian Church Parsonage

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/26/85

Attest

64. Titus--Bunce House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/26/85

Attest

65. Townsend, Henry, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/26/85

Attest

66. Van Iderstine, Charles, Mansion

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/26/85

Attest

67. Vanderbilt, William K., Mansion

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/26/85

Attest

68. Velzer, N., House and Caretaker's Cottage

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/26/85

Attest

69. Weeks, Charles M., House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/26/85

Attest

70. West Neck Road Historic District

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Bruce Van Donge 9/26/85

Attest

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REF #
85002545

Vanderbilt, William K., Estate-Eagles Nest
(Huntington Town MRA)
Suffolk County
NEW YORK

Working No. AUG 16 1985
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/4/86
Date Due: 9/12/85 9/30/85
Action: ACCEPT 9-26-85
RETURN
REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition

- ☐ excellent ☐ deteriorated
☐ good ☐ ruins
☐ fair ☐ unexposed

Check one

- ☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

13. Other

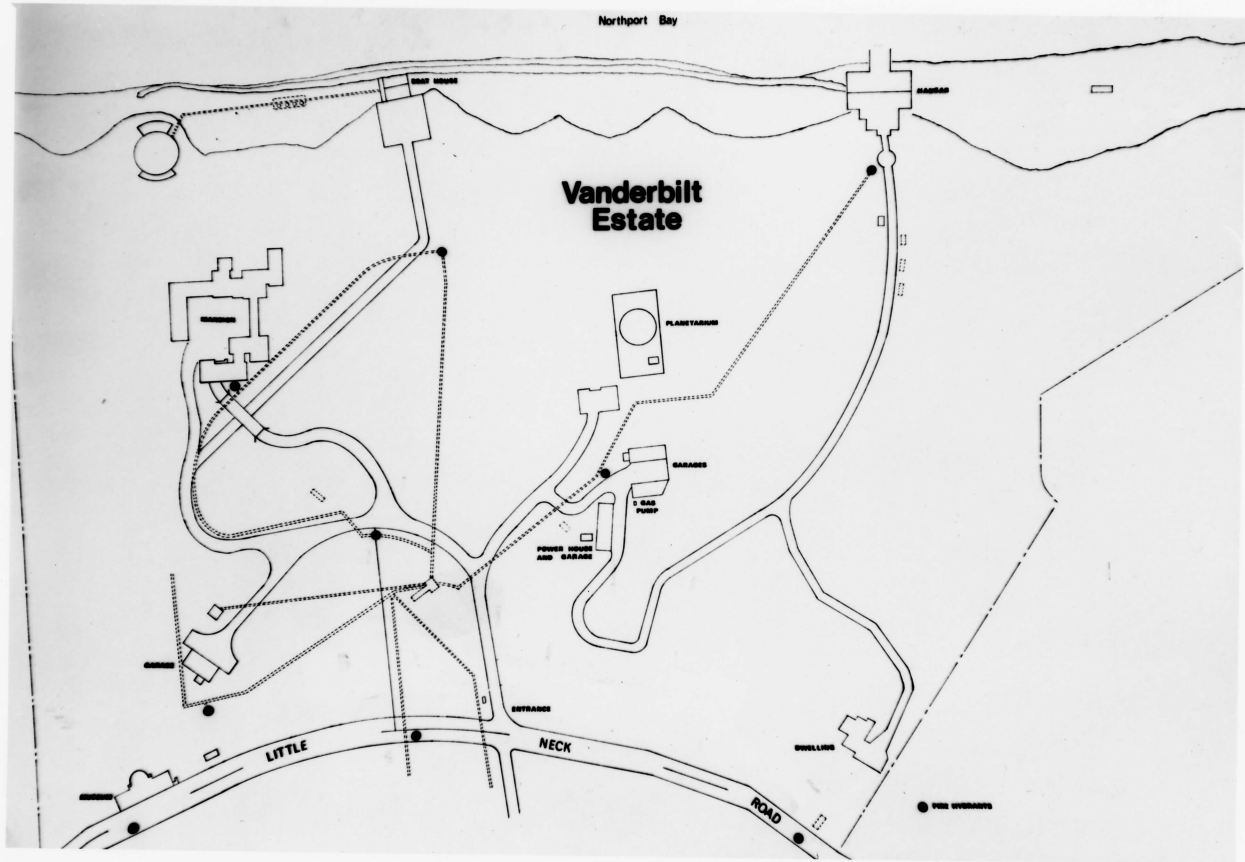
- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOURCE AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ 'EAGLE'S NEST'
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



Map of Estate

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA

SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK

PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984

NEGATIVES: OPRHP

VANDERBILT MUSEUM

WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II

ESTATE/ 'EAGLE'S NEST'

180 LITTLE NECK ROAD

CENTERPORT



Sun porch

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ 'EAGLE'S NEST'
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



Reception Center

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ 'EAGLE'S NEST'
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



Main Living Room

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM

WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ "EAGLE'S NEST"
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



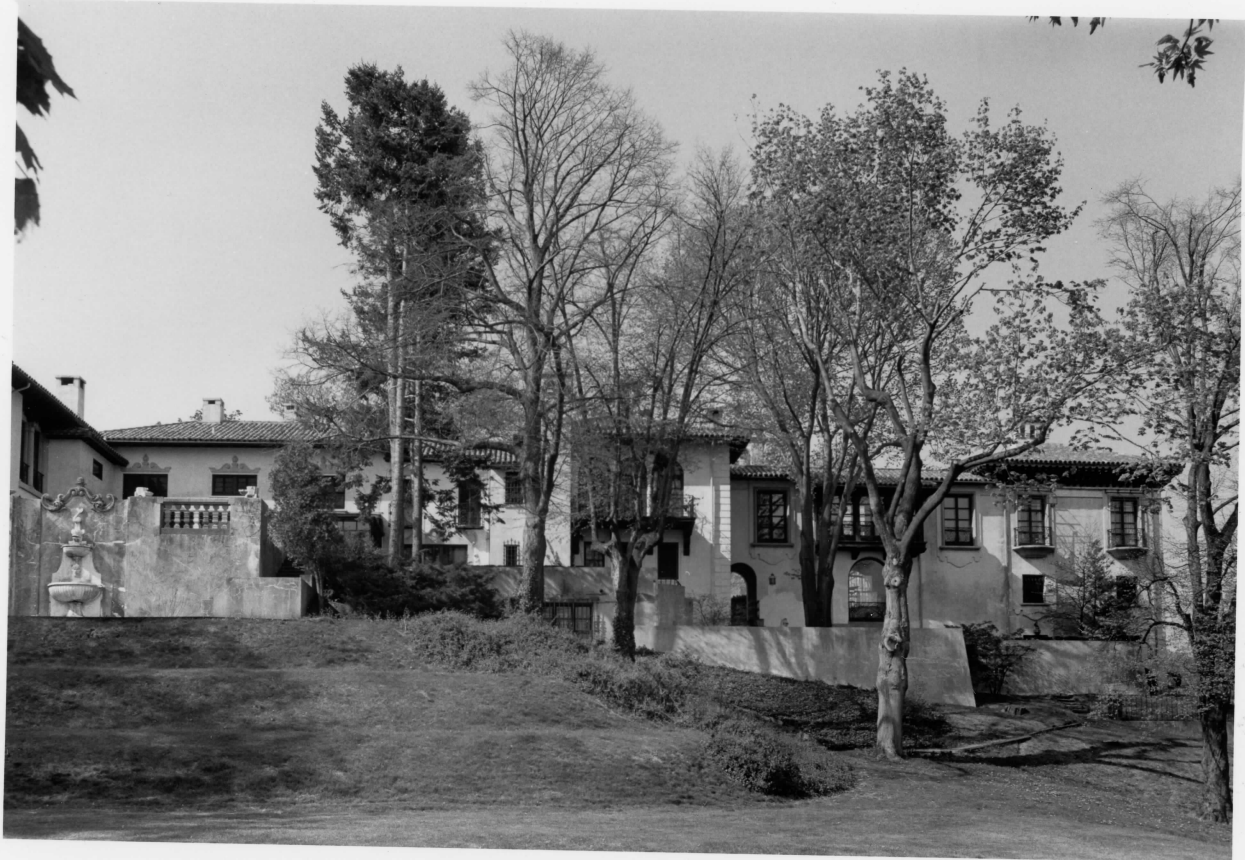
Interior Courtyard

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUE AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ "EAGLE'S NEST"
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



Formal Gardens and View towards
Northport Harbor

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ "EAGLE'S NEST"
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



View of mansion from Northeast

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ "EAGLE'S NEST"
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



Formal Gardens

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUCE AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ "EAGLE'S NEST"
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



Mansion

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ 'EAGLE'S NEST'
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



Aerial View of Mansion

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUE AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ 'EAGLE'S NEST'
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



Belltower

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ "EAGLE'S NEST"
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



One of the Mansion Entrances

HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT I I
ESTATE/ 'EAGLE'S NEST"
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT

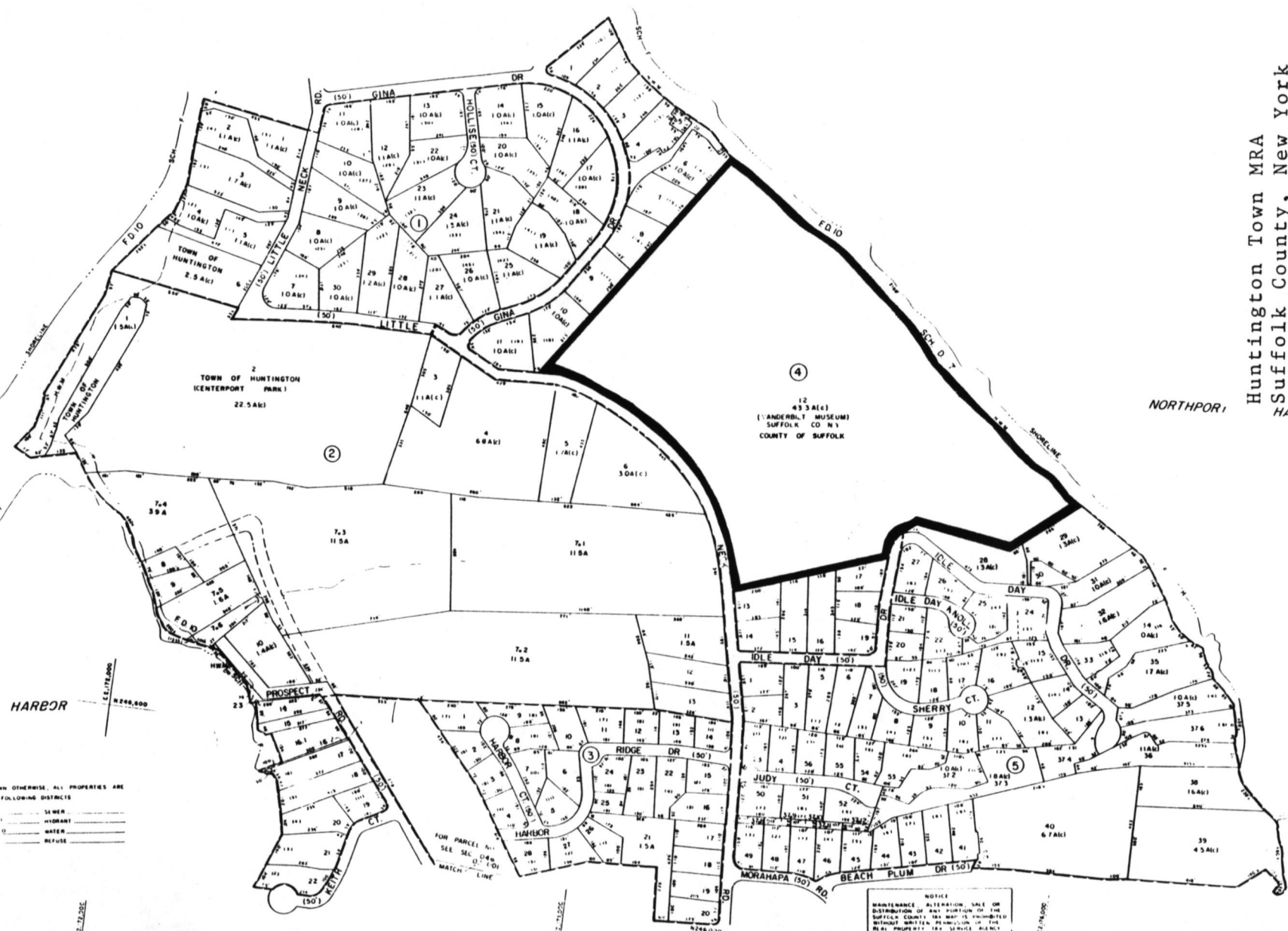


Dining Room

2
HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOUC E AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A. O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
VANDERBILT MUSEUM
WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT II
ESTATE/ 'EAGLE'S NEST'
180 LITTLE NECK ROAD
CENTERPORT



Aerial View of Estate



Huntington Town MRA
 Suffolk County, New York
 Vanderbilt Museum;
 Vanderbilt II Estate/"Eagle's Nest"
 180 Little Neck Road
 Centerport
 400-48-4-12

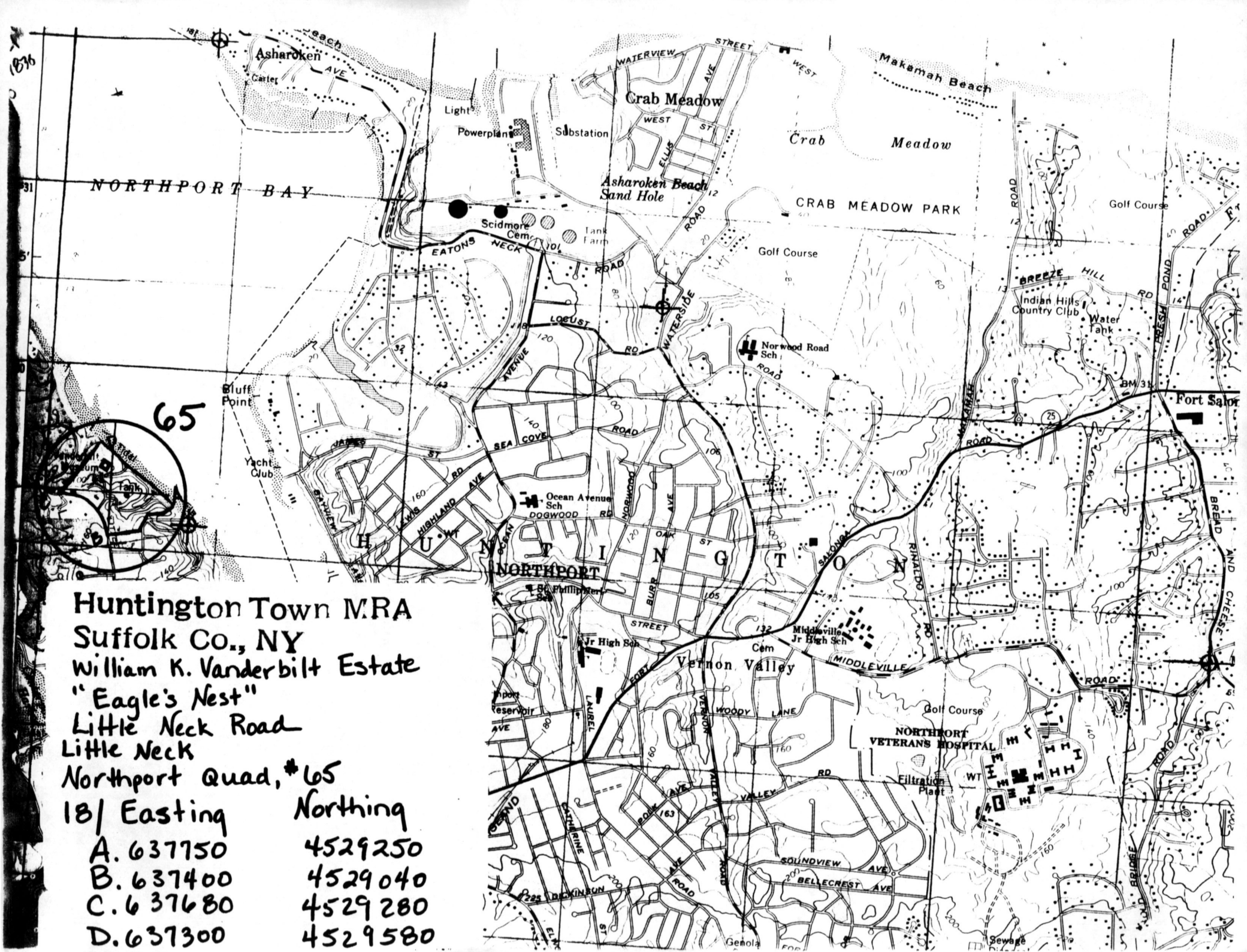
William K.

UN OTHERWISE, ALL PROPERTIES ARE
 FOLLOWING DISTRICTS

SEWER
 HYDRAULIC
 WATER
 REFUSE

Legend County Line Town Line Village Line Check Line School District Line		Fire District Line Water District Line Light District Line Park District Line Sewer District Line		Hydrant District Line Refuse District Line Block No. Parcel No. Subdivision Block No.		Subdivision Lot No. Dead Dimension Scaled Dimension Dead Area Calculated Area		KEY MAP 0 200 400 SCALE IN FEET		© COUNTY OF SUFFOLK Real Property Tax Service Agency County Center Riverhead, L. I., New York		TOWN OF HUNTINGTON VILLAGE OF DISTRICT NO 0400		SECTION NO 048 PROPERTY MAP	
---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Van derbilt
 Museum



Huntington Town MRA
Suffolk Co., NY
William K. Vanderbilt Estate
"Eagle's Nest"
Little Neck Road
Little Neck
Northport Quad, #65

18/ Easting	Northing
A. 637750	4529250
B. 637400	4529040
C. 637680	4529280
D. 637300	4529580