

Pine Hollow Road Historic District-DRAFT

DRAFT

Albany, New York

Name of Property

County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Pine Hollow Road Historic District

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 16, 28, 34 Pine Hollow Rd

City or town: Slingerlands State: New York County: Albany

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A ___ B X C ___ D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	
<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>

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Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH AMERICAN MOVEMENTS

Prairie Style

Colonial Revival

Modernist

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: wood, brick, slate, stone, copper

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Pine Hollow Road is located in the northern section of the Town of Bethlehem in Albany County, New York. The district encompasses this short (about .2 miles) cul-de-sac that extends easterly from New Scotland Rd (NY 85); the road is less than a mile northeast of the Hamlet of Slingerlands, also in the Town of Bethlehem. (Photographs 1 and 2) Three sizable (roughly two to four acres) house lots, each with a house designed by Albany architect Henry L. Blatner (1911–78) during the early 1940s, line the north side of Pine Hollow Road. Open lawns give way to the surrounding wooded landscape, which features trees native to the region's pine bush, or barrens, and non-native trees and shrubs. The three houses express three different stylistic tastes. The Blatner House (28 Pine Hollow Road, built 1941), expresses most fully the aesthetics of Mid-Century Modern, or Modernist, design emerging at the time. The Stein House (16 Pine Hollow Road, built 1942) designed for Samuel and Lucille Stein, recalls the Prairie Style, an eclectic style popularized earlier in the century and still popular in the Albany region in the early 1940s. The Schwartz House (34 Pine Hollow Road, built 1941) is a slightly more modest brick Colonial Revival house, another style typical of the region at the time.

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Narrative Description

Physical and Geopolitical Setting

The Town of Bethlehem is bounded on the northeast by the City of Albany, on the east by the Hudson River, and on the south and west by the towns of Coeymans and New Scotland respectively. A sandy plateau, about 200 feet above sea level, spans the northern half of the town and is drained by the Normans Kill. This watercourse wends its way northwest to southeast in a deep ravine about 100 feet below the plateau and is fed by numerous small streams descending in narrow clefts to the main stream. The main stream joins the tidal estuary of the Hudson River opposite Westerlo Island, nearly at sea level. The name Pine Hollow Road alludes to the glaciated landscape of clay soils cloaked in pine woods that characterizes the part of Bethlehem south of the Normans Kill. (This differs from the Albany Pine Barrens characterizing the upland section of the City of Albany and areas to the north and west on the plateau overlooking the Mohawk Valley.) Pine Hollow Road roughly parallels a slow, westerly flowing tributary of the Normans Kill that meets a larger stream near the town line; that stream slips into a steep ravine to join the main kill. The little stream forms the north property line of the house lots and Pine Hollow Arboretum, more than 800 feet north of the road.

The irregularly shaped 20.22-acre parcel now set aside as Pine Hollow Arboretum forms the lion's share of the nearly twenty-six-acre parcel purchased by Mortimer A. Schwartz in 1939 for his new residence. This woodland area shields Pine Hollow Road from surrounding development and preserves the sense of a secluded rural enclave enjoyed by all three families who built houses there. A fourth, still open, house lot that was part of the original purchased aligns with New Scotland Road. The present arboretum parcel encompasses the residual land of the original Schwartz parcel, which John Abbuhl augmented with a few additional small parcels on the east side of the arboretum after he bought the Schwartz House in 1966. Abbuhl augmented the native landscape with exotic species chosen for their ability to survive in the local climate over more than fifty years of ownership. It became a non-profit in 2007 and was chartered by the state in 2012. The Abbuhl property was divided into a narrowly drawn house lot containing the Schwartz House and the arboretum lot, both owned by the arboretum. The Schwartz House serves as its administrative headquarters.

Circulation systems

Pine Hollow Road, opened ca. 1940, accesses the larger highway system via the historic route of New Scotland Road (NY 85). This early route crosses the plateau southwest of the City of Albany, connecting the city with settlements in New Scotland on the east range of the Helderberg Mountains. This high limestone formation forms a natural barrier to travel into the Schoharie Creek valley. Delaware Avenue (NY 443), a route partially chartered as the Albany and Delaware Turnpike in the early 1800s, parallels New Scotland Road to the southeast and passes through the hamlets of Delmar and Elsmere. Delmar, Elsmere, Slingerlands, and the

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Village of Voorheesville in the Town of New Scotland lie along the southern edge of the plateau slashed by the Normans Kill drainage and became stops along the rail corridor opened in the late 1800s.

Use of the rail corridor greatly declined during the late twentieth century. The associated highway infrastructure that developed around it now offers access for new suburban-style residential development adjacent to historic settlements. Within the past two decades, NY 85 north of Slingerlands has been realigned and rebuilt as a four-lane limited access corridor called the Slingerlands Bypass. It uses roundabouts to connect it at intervals with the old New Scotland Road. The bypass connects with Cherry Avenue (NY 140) about a half-mile north of Pine Hollow Road. Cherry Avenue continues south, wrapping the west side of the developed area of Delmar where it meets the Delmar Bypass. Cherry Avenue forms part of the eastern boundary of Pine Hollow Arboretum. At present, these new routes insulate these older settlements from heavy suburban traffic and automobile-oriented shopping areas.

Adjoining Built Environment

Historically, development facing New Scotland Road was very sparse. Until the railroad era, Slingerlands to the south was a tiny crossroads hamlet. North of Pine Hollow Road, a handful of farmsteads faced the highway on the plateau extending towards Albany. In the postwar era, suburban development has fanned out along all of the historic access routes to the City of Albany. This pattern varies in different sections of the surrounding counties of Albany and Schenectady.

In the Town of Bethlehem, development adjacent to the railroad hamlets south of the Normanskill continues to expand in the twenty-first century. It appears that until recently, the topography of the much divided plateau drained by the kill has discouraged development as the area immediately adjacent to Pine Hollow Road is less densely developed than the nearby hamlets and villages. Infill remains scattered in comparison with postwar suburban development in the larger Albany area. The Slingerlands Bypass appears to anticipate new suburban development in the area immediately adjacent to Pine Hollow.

Resource List

16 Pine Hollow Rd, Stein House

Built 1942

Architect: Henry L. Blatner

One contributing building

The Stein House is a wood-frame Prairie Style house with an irregular plan composed of a two-story, hipped-roof, T-plan main block. A large one-story, enclosed porch spans its southeast end, and a one-story wing set back from the front façade projects from its northwest corner.

(Photograph 4) The flat roof of the east porch is an open deck accessed from the second floor.

The deck is enclosed by a railing composed of three horizontal slats connected by wide piers. A

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two-bay garage is located at the west end of the wing. (Photograph 3) Narrow one-story enclosed porches span portions of the front and rear walls of the main block. Paired doors in the rear porch open to low steps entering the terraced garden area between the house and the woodland that backdrops the house. (Photographs 5 and 6) The wooded area extends nearly 1000 feet to the back line of the 4.5-acre property. Portions of the first story are veneered in panels of randomly laid, irregularly shaped stone slabs; other sections of the exterior feature vertically laid ribbed metal panels mimicking the surface of the original board-and-batten siding.

The main entrance is centered on the arm of the T-plan facing Pine Hollow Road. It features a plain front door flanked by sidelights with six nearly square lights stacked on each side. A flat canopy roof suspended by steel rods secured to the wall above projects over the door. Fenestration is varied with mainly one-over-one, vinyl-clad replacement sash in single and ribbon configurations, the latter at the corners of the enclosed porches and wing and on the second-story northeast corner. Two square Palladian windows — one in the front and one in the rear — light the first floor of the main block. The slate roof has metal flashing and deep eaves. A large stone-clad interior chimney pierces the southeast corner of main block roof.

The rear yard features two shallow terraces held in place by low stone retaining walls. Landscaping is otherwise minimal with a stone wall marking the driveway entrance and a few flowering shrubs.

28 Pine Hollow Rd, Blatner House

Built ca. 1941; children's wing added 1947

Architect: Henry L. Blatner

One contributing building

The Blatner House is a one-story, wood-frame house featuring an irregular footprint composed of three blocks, each capped by a low-pitched, gable roof. The roof of the central block is slightly higher than the other two blocks. The second block, about half the depth of the first one, abuts the southwest-facing wall of the central block and features a curved southeast corner. (Photographs 8 and 9) The third block, similar in height to the second block and slightly wider, projects southwest at an oblique angle from the second block; it was designed as the children's wing (added 1947). (Photographs 11, 12, and 13) The low-pitched roofs and syncopated floorplan allow this house to recede visually beneath the mature conifers that dot the open lawn facing Pine Hollow Road. (Photograph 7) The driveway curves off the road and wraps behind the house to the attached two-car garage attached by a breezeway to the rear (north) side of the building. The house is backdropped to the north by woodland for nearly 1000 feet to the rear boundary of its lot. Light woods also screen it from the houses at 16 and 34 Pine Hollow Road. (Photograph 13)

The house displays varied exterior finishes. Vertically laid wood siding stained deep brown — both of slightly varied widths and board-and-batten — predominates, punctuated by Helderberg limestone and stucco accents. The section below the window sills on the front (west) façade of the first and third blocks is veneered with irregular stone slabs similar to that used on 16 Pine Hollow Road. The open brick patio on the north side of the house features retaining walls of the same material. The southeast corner of the largest block is veneered from ground level to the eaves. The northeast corner of the largest block is stuccoed up to the clerestory windows tucked

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under the eaves, which are accented by an oversized partial return. (Photograph 10) The low-profile gabled roofs are clad in copper panels with standing seams. A large interior chimney veneered in Helderberg limestone pierces the east roof face the main block.

The main entrance is recessed under the west roof face of the main, or largest, block. A single-width door opens opposite the garage breezeway, marking the service section of the house, and paired glazed doors open south from the corner where the second and third blocks meet. The fenestration uses casements and fixed windows in varied configurations throughout the house. The largest block features glazed walls of multiple fixed lights facing north and south. Other parts of the house are illuminated mainly by ganged pairs of casements, each with four vertically stacked lights, capped by a row of transom windows.

34 Pine Hollow Rd, Schwartz House

Built 1941

Architect: Henry L. Blatner

One contributing building

The Schwartz House faces a circular drive forming the end of the Pine Hollow Road cul-de-sac. The house now occupies the smallest of the house lots on Pine Hollow Road with just 2.18 acres; when built its lot encompassed most of the land now forming the surrounding arboretum. (Photograph 14) The house is a modestly scaled one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled brick building featuring prominent opposing gabled dormers on the front (west) and rear (east) roof faces abutting the north end of the main roof. The wood-frame gables are trimmed with partial returns and clad in board-and-batten siding. Another one-story brick-walled wing projects from the rear wall of the main block. This is now raised to two stories with a wood-frame, gable-roofed greenhouse (added ca. 1966). (Photographs 15 and 16) Its ridgeline continues the ridge of the rear dormer eastward. A side-gabled, one-story brick wing set back slightly from the front façade projects from the south wall of the main block. A two-bay, gable-front garage (added 1947) is attached to the south end of the wing. (Photograph 17) A later one-story, hip-roofed wing (housing a breakfast nook; added after 1966) projects slightly off center below the front-facing dormer of the main block. A wood-frame shed-roofed porch glazed with oblong single-light casements appears to have been built in two phases and spans the rear (east) wall of the south wing. The south walls of the garage and of the glazed porch are built with unusual blocks resembling stone that are slightly larger than standard brick and probably made of concrete.

The main entrance is at the south end of the front façade of the main block. The single-width door with a nine-light upper section is flanked by squared pilasters. Matching squared columns support the front edge of the open entrance porch, which features partial returns and a board-and-batten tympanum that match the gabled dormers and tympanum of the main roof. The fenestration varies throughout the brick portion of the building; all openings except for the glazed porch, however, retain soldiered brick sills. Windows with paired six-over-six double hung sash flank the main entrance. A ribbon of four windows with similar sash are centered on the front of the wing. Single openings, also with similar sash, light the rooms at the rear of the main block. French doors open from the rear wall of the main block and from the dining room on the north wall. All retain multi-light configurations.

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The brick walls meet the ground; there is no evident change in materials. The building is roofed with slate. A brick interior chimney pierces the roof of the wing near where the wing meets the main block.

Pine Hollow Arboretum

One non-contributing site due to its construction date falling outside of the period of significance. This 20.22-acre wooded landscape wraps the properties on Pine Hollow Road and preserves the protective woodland enclave envisioned by the people who built the three houses there. This property, with a few small additions at the south and eastern edge, was the original setting for Pine Hollow Road. It was subdivided from the parcel occupied by the house at 34 Pine Hollow Road when the arboretum was chartered as a non-profit in 1966 to conserve the setting and assure its use for education.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

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Period of Significance

1941, 1942, 1947

Significant Dates

1941, Blatner House, Schwartz House
1942, Stein House
1947, Blatner House (children's wing addition)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Henry L. Blatner

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Pine Hollow Road Historic District, located on Pine Hollow Road and surrounding land in the town of Bethlehem, near the hamlet of Slingerlands, is eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. This group of three houses, designed by renowned Albany architect Henry L. Blatner, represents three different house styles in use when they were designed and built during the period 1941–47. The Schwartz House (34 Pine Hollow Rd) presents a Colonial Revival-style, west-facing facade at the end of the road. The Stein House (16 Pine Hollow Rd) exemplifies the Prairie Style, which gained popularity in the early 1900s. The Blatner House (28 Pine Hollow Rd), which Blatner designed for his own family, is distinctly Modernist, or Mid-Century Modern, and embodies a radically different design from the other two houses. The latter two houses face south, overlooking the road. All three houses, however, were designed to integrate within their larger setting in pine woods typical of the region. Few changes have occurred since this small,

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secluded cul-de-sac development was built. The period of significance begins in 1941, when the Schwartz House was built, and ends in 1947, when the garage wing was added to the south end of the Schwartz House.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Henry L. Blatner (1911–78)

A partner in the firm Henry L.[eroy] Blatner founded describes him as “ the preeminent practitioner of contemporary architectural design in Albany during the middle decades of the twentieth century.”¹ Blatner was born August 3, 1911, and raised in Albany, New York. His father was a successful dentist. In 1930, the family — Leroy and Rena with sons Henry and William, Leroy’s German-born mother Mary, and housekeeper Ella Hynds — reported as a tenants in a large Shingle Style house they shared with its owner at 445 Western Avenue in the affluent Pine Hills neighborhood.² Henry earned his undergraduate degree in architecture at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia in 1934. The curriculum there leaned towards neoclassicism. He continued his studies with a fellowship and a master’s degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1935. The curriculum there emphasized more recent “modern” design trends embodied in the Bauhaus and International styles that influenced the majority of his oeuvre, including his own house at Pine Hollow Road. At MIT, he won several student awards for his designs.³

Blatner returned to the Albany area and worked as an architect and draftsman with Colin Cobban until 1940.⁴ That year, the census recorded Blatner as an architect with his own office and living with his parents and younger brother, now an insurance salesman, at 84 Willett Street. This was an early twentieth-century apartment building, handsomely appointed, facing the east end of Washington Park.⁵ On June 6, 1940, Blatner married Elizabeth Mendelson (b. 1918).⁶ She was the daughter of a well-to-do lye manufacturer, Ora Mendelson. She grew up in the Pine Hills neighborhood, only a few blocks from where the Blatners lived in 1930, at 1006 Madison Avenue, with her parents and three older brothers, Alton P., Ira, and Norman. A cook lived in.⁷

¹ John Mesick, “Henry L. Blatner,” in Walter R. Wheeler, *Architects in Albany*. (Albany, N.Y.: Mount Ida Press and Historic Albany Foundation, 2009): 65.

² *United States Census for 1930*, Albany County, City of Albany, New York, 13th Ward, Sheet 34A, lines 14-9. (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GRCJ-XWP?view=index&personArk=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3AX74B-7M7&action=view&cc=1810731&lang=en&groupId=>)

³ Mary Blatner Valentis (MBV, Henry L. Blatner’s daughter). Phone interview with author, 7 December 2025.

⁴ American Institute of Architects (AIA). *American Architects Directory*. First ed. Ed. George S. Koyl. (New York: R.R. Bowker, 1955): 47. (https://aiahistoricaldirectory.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/AHDAA/pages/20644319/1956+American+Architects+Directory?preview=/20644319/2218427337/Bowker_1956_B.pdf)

⁵ *United States Census for 1940*, Albany County, City of Albany, N.Y., 16th Ward, lines 37–40.

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-L9MB-39D5?view=index&cc=2000219&lang=en&groupId=>)

⁶ MBV. Phone interview with author, 7 December 2025.

⁷ *United States Census for 1930*, Albany County, Albany City, New York, 13th Ward, Sheet 5B, lines 71–77. (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9RZP->)

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Like many residences in Pine Hills, this large house is strongly influenced by the low, broad massing of the Prairie Style and features broad porches, deep-eaved roofs, and ribbons of windows. Where the Blatners lived as newlyweds is unclear; possibly they shared this house with the Mendelsons.

In 1940, Blatner formed a partnership with Giles Yates Vanderbogert (b. 1907/8).⁸ Vanderbogert, the son of a physician, grew up in the Stockade District of Schenectady and could trace his family back to the Dutch settlement of New Netherland in the seventeenth century.⁹ Like Blatner, he attended the University of Pennsylvania's school of architecture, which might have encouraged his interest in historic buildings. By about 1940, Vanderbogert headed the Regional Historical Preservation Association. This contrasted with Blatner's Jewish upbringing (his parents were first-generation citizens) and his interest in twentieth-century innovation. Sometime after the United States entered World War II in December 1941, both partners were recruited to work for the war effort. During 1943, they dissolved their partnership and left to work in Washington, D.C.¹⁰

In January 1940, when the war in Europe and Japanese imperialism still seemed distant, Henry Blatner bought a 2.6-acre parcel of land from Mortimer A. and Thelma Schwartz.¹¹ This was a subdivision of a parcel of nearly twenty-six acres that Schwartz had bought in June 1939 for his own house.¹² The larger Schwartz parcel lay east of New Scotland Road, northeast of the Hamlet of Slingerlands. Blatner's subdivision deed used the private road (now Pine Hollow Road) over the parcel as a reference point. Schwartz and Blatner may have met through Elizabeth Blatner; her brother Alton P. Mendelson and Schwartz were childhood friends.¹³

In 1940, Henry Blatner drew plans for the brick Colonial Revival house that Schwartz built at the end of Pine Hollow Road in 1941.¹⁴ About the same time Blatner also designed the house built for his family on Pine Hollow Road. The third and final house was built for Samuel and Lucy Stein in 1942.¹⁵ The Steins also bought a 4.5-acre house lot bounded easterly by the Blatner lot from the Schwartzes in November 1941.¹⁶ In January 1942, Elizabeth Blatner agreed to finance digging a common well on the Blatner lot.¹⁷ Thus, the three houses nestled in the pine woods formed a secluded enclave of well-to-do Jewish families tied by a web of close-knit relationships that lasted into the 1960s.

T6R?view=index&personArk=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3AX741-DS8&action=view&cc=1810731&lang=en&groupId=)

⁸ AIA, 1955, 47. This partnership is reported as inaugurated in on MCBW's website, but the AIA directory is likely more accurate as Blatner and Vanderbogert probably reported it together.

⁹ The Stockade Association, "Walls Have Ears." Print copyright, 1981; electronic, 2003. (<https://www.historicstockade.org/walls-have-ears/>)

¹⁰ "MCWB Architects," Albany, N.Y. (<https://mcwb-arch.com/the-firm/#history>)

¹¹ *Book of Deeds 912/421*. (Albany, N.Y.: Office of the County Clerk) All subsequent deeds are referenced using the format *Book ###/page ###*. All deeds cited here are filed in the Albany County Office of the County Clerk.

¹² *Book of Deeds 912/65*.

¹³ MBV (daughter of Henry L. Blatner), telephone conversation with the author, 7 December 2025.

¹⁴ Pine Hollow Arboretum holds the Blatner drawings.

¹⁵ The construction dates come from tax assessor's records signed by original or second owners of the houses. Building permits were not issued in Bethlehem until May 1945.

¹⁶ *Book of Deeds 931/530*.

¹⁷ *Book of Deeds 940/119*. This well is still used by all three houses.

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It seems Henry Blatner was on active duty throughout the war and possibly for some time after; he reported serving in the Naval Reserve until 1953.¹⁸ At first, Elizabeth Blatner went to Washington with her husband, where she also worked for the war effort.¹⁹ She returned to Albany in October 1944 and lived with her sister Adele Sporborg in the Pine Hills neighborhood until her daughter Mary was born in June 1945. A son Thomas was born eighteen months later.²⁰ It appears that Henry might not have returned to Albany permanently until 1946. That year, he reported opening his own practice in Delmar, a nineteenth-century railroad hamlet in the town of Bethlehem that was quickly developing as a suburb of Albany in the postwar era.²¹

Blatner continued to design houses into the 1950s as a solo practitioner while also taking on larger commercial and occasional industrial projects. He designed a factory for his wife's family business in Chicago in the late 1940s and some bank buildings in the Capital District during the 1950s. He gained recognition for his innovative design for Clarksville Elementary School in the town of Bethlehem in 1948–49 where he combined site orientation with a fenestration and wall system that allowed the classrooms to be illuminated almost entirely by natural light.²² This led to numerous commissions for schools and colleges that followed in the 1950s and 1960s. Most were designed for clients in the Capital District and the adjacent Mohawk Valley and Catskill Mountains.

In 1961, Blatner formed a new partnership with Graham George Williams. They opened an office at 11 N. Pearl Street in the City of Albany. Increasingly, Blatner devoted more of his time to larger commissions. These included churches — Loudonville Presbyterian (1961) and St John's Lutheran in Albany (1964) — and at least one synagogue, Temple Anshe Amunim (1962) in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. There were also banks and office buildings. In 1964, he designed the Saarinen-esque Colonie Country Club, where he was an avid golfer. These projects all emphasized Modernist principles of functionality and minimalism, frequently executed using recent construction technologies and innovative materials combined with traditional, durable ones.

The firm expanded in 1965 to become Blatner Mendel Mesick Architects. While Blatner continued designing contemporary buildings for varied purposes, the firm was increasingly making a name for itself in historic preservation. In 1973, Blatner ceased to be a name partner when the firm he founded became Mesick Cohen Waite Architects. No explanation is offered. By then, he was in his early sixties, and the firm's primary focus differed from his preferred work. Among his later commissions were South Mall Tower Apartments adjacent to the Capital Mall and the Townsend Park Homes on Central Avenue in 1974. The current successor firm is called MCWB Architects.

¹⁸ Blatner's daughter Mary Blatner Valentis (MBV) says that he designed officers' clubs. "Albany Architect Henry Blatner & the Pine Hollow Homes: Mid Century Modern Houses in Upstate New York. A Conversation about the life and work of one of Albany's most well-known architects (with Larry Wilson, MCWB Architects)," 29 March 2025. (<https://pinehollowarboretum.org/>) AIA, 1955, 47.

¹⁹ MBV reports that her mother worked for Pinkerton's. Telephone conversation, 7 December 2025.

²⁰ MBV, email with author, 8 December 2025.

²¹ AIA, 1955, 47.

²² "Rural School brings scientific daylighting scheme within reach of the country purse." Article about Clarksville elementary school supplied by MCWB Architects. Appears to be *Architectural Forum* (or *The Magazine of Building*, published by *Architectural Forum*), ca. 1949.

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Henry L. Blatner died playing his beloved game of golf at Sea Island, Georgia, in 1978 while on holiday with his second wife, Delia Marshall Meneely. His funeral was held at Loudonville Presbyterian Church, the Modernist church that he designed for that congregation in 1961.²³

Property Development

The Town of Bethlehem lies within the bounds of Rensselaerwyck, a tract spanning both sides of the Hudson River and extending five miles east and west from the watercourse acquired in 1630 by Kiliaen van Rensselaer, an Amsterdam (Holland) pearl and diamond merchant. He received the patent from the Dutch West India Company, which purchased the large manor, as it was often called, from two Indigenous groups, the Mahicans and the Mohawks. The Mahicans were Algonquian; the Mohawks were Haudenosaunee. They held lands east and west of the Hudson River respectively. An enduring antagonistic relationship between them extended back several hundred years before contact with Europeans, and their alliances with Dutch and English merchants at Schenectady, Fort Orange (Albany), and in the Mohawk Valley sustained that friction into the eighteenth century. Before the Mohawks and the Mahicans occupied the region for about a millennium, early Indigenous people of previous cultures lived there.²⁴ During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, Rensselaerwyck and adjoining areas along both the Hudson and Mohawk rivers were gradually colonized by European farmers of Dutch, English, Scandinavian, and German extraction. Nineteenth-century maps of the area south of the Normanskill drainage show a lightly settled area and the small hamlet of Slingerlands. Railroad development in the late 1800s engendered hamlets and villages that in the period after World War II offered the centers from which suburban subdivision expanded. Pine Hollow Road is an example of this last pattern.

The three houses on Pine Hollow Road occupy individual lots carved from a larger 25.259-acre parcel sold by Abram LeGallez and his wife Louise Florence to Mortimer A. Schwartz (b. 1901) and his wife Thelma (b. 1912) on June 12, 1939.²⁵ The DeGallez family were electrical lighting contractors.²⁶ At the time, the Schwartzes lived at 8 Glenwood Avenue in the City of Albany.²⁷ In his residential listing in Polk's 1941 *City Directory*, Schwartz was listed as a "proprietor and manager," presumably, of the liquor store at 265 New Scotland Avenue that he was listed in the business section as owning.²⁸

When Schwartz bought the 25.259-acre parcel in the Town of Bethlehem, the area south of the Normanskill was decidedly rural even though only a few miles from the City of Albany.

²³ MBV. Phone interview with author, 7 December 2025.

²⁴ "Adirondacks: Native Americans." (<https://www.nps.gov/articles/adirondacks-native-americans.htm>) This article spans a larger area than its title suggests.

²⁵ *Book of Deeds 912/65*, Office of Albany County Clerk, Albany, New York. The acreage is recorded in the deed and is less than the 32.4 acres of the combined lots in current assessor's records

²⁶ MBV, telephone interview with author, 7 December 2025.

²⁷ *United States for Census for 1940*. Sheet 1, line numbers 20-21. ("United States, Census, 1940", *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KQPR-YNF> : Sun Jan 19 18:09:57 UTC 2025), Entry for Mortimer A Schwartz and Thelma C Schwartz, 1940.)

²⁸ *Polk's Albany (Albany Co.) City Directory*, Vol. 1941 (Boston, Mass.: R.L. Polk and Co., 1941): 439 (liquor store) and 431 (residence). (<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112106515395&seq=5>) The liquor store, a characteristic one-story storefront in a commercial row, now called The Wine Store, is still a going concern. Its sign states, "Since 1933," the year Prohibition was ended by the 21st Amendment.

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Slingerlands is a small crossroads hamlet on New Scotland Road through which the West Shore Railroad passed in the 1880s. West of Slingerlands, the railroad passed through the Village of Voorheesville, and farther east, it passed through the railroad hamlets of Delmar and Ellsmere. In the postwar era, the latter two hamlets expanded rapidly as suburban development around Albany spread southwards. Before that, suburban development spread mainly west into Colonie and north into Niskayuna. Schwartz's choice of location suggests a desire for seclusion that differed from the surroundings where he grew up.

About six months after Schwartz bought the parcel, he and wife Thelma sold to Henry L. Blatner a slightly irregular lot on January 15, 1940. It had about 150 feet of frontage on a "private road" (now Pine Hollow Rd) that extended east through the larger tract. Blatner's parcel encompassed approximately 2.6 acres.²⁹ Both the Schwartzes and Blatner were recorded still living in Albany in that year's federal census. In August, Blatner's deed was recorded a second time to include his new wife Elizabeth as co-owner.

Blatner prepared drawings for the brick house at the end of Pine Hollow Road for Schwartz dated July 8, 1940. The town assessor's records date its construction in 1941. The assessor's records date the Blatner House being built same year.³⁰ When Blatner's house was published in the June 1947 number of *Architectural Forum*, it still lacked the diagonally projecting children's wing that was built later that year. The article emphasized its setting, reporting that it "occupies a level site, half of which is taken up by a magnificent stand of northern white pine."³¹

Polk's 1941 directory listed the Schwartzes "r.[esiding] at Slingerlands," possibly at Pine Hollow in their newly built house. Henry L. Blatner, however, was reported at his parents' address at 84 Willett Avenue.³² Plans were laid for the Stein House, the third at Pine Hollow, soon after. On November 7, 1941, a month before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, the Schwartzes sold a house lot similar to the Blatner lot that adjoined its west line to Samuel Stein.³³ The 1940 census recorded Stein, 36, a paper box manufacturer, living with his wife Lucille in a brick apartment building at 10 Peyster Street near Ridgefield Park in the Pine Hills neighborhood of Albany. They shared the building with Mortimer Schwartz's brother, Rudolph, who reported managing a retail liquor store, presumably the one owned by his older brother on New Scotland Avenue. The apartment building was catercorner from the wood-frame Dutch Colonial house at 32 Ryckman Street, where Elizabeth Blatner's brother, Alton P. Mendelson, 33, and his family

²⁹ *Book of Deeds 912/421*.

³⁰ Pine Hollow Arboretum holds these drawings, which Dr John Abbuhl received when he bought the house and the residual acreage in 1966. The assessor's records are filed in the town officers and were retrieved via a FOIL request.

³¹ "House for a northern climate uses native raw materials to harmonize with rugged surroundings," *Architectural Forum* 86:6 (June 1947): 99–100. (<https://www.usmodernist.org/AF/AF-1947-06.pdf>; retrieved 3 December 2025)

³² *Polk's Albany (Albany Co.) City Directory*, Vol. 1941 (Boston, Mass.: R.L. Polk and Co., 1941): 439 (liquor store) and 431 (residence). (<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112106515395&seq=5>) The liquor store, a characteristic one-story storefront in a commercial row, now called The Wine Store, is still a going concern. Its sign states, "Since 1933," the year Prohibition was ended by the 21st Amendment. Blatner was recorded on page 85 of the directory as a draughtsman in the office of Colin Cobban. Cobban was listed as an architect with rooms at 82 State Street, married to Agnes. They lived at 207 Morton Avenue. (p. 124) Elizabeth was not listed after Blatner's name in parentheses, the style adopted by the directory.

³³ *Book of Deeds 931/530*.

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lived.³⁴ These relationships connect Samuel and Lucille Stein with Pine Hollow. In January 1942, before the Stein House was begun, Elizabeth Blatner agreed to finance a well that would supply all three houses.³⁵

When the Blatner House was published in *House & Garden* in June 1949, Henry and Elizabeth and their three children were living in the house, and the children's wing was nearing completion.³⁶ This roughly correlates with Mary Blatner Valentis's recollection. She claims it was built not long after Thomas Blatner was born and before their younger sister Barbara, the Blatners' third and last child, was born in August 1949.³⁷ *House & Garden* explained that Blatner had designed the house to be further expanded with one more wing for live-in help and a free-standing garage connected by a lengthy covered walkway to replace the first garage.³⁸ Neither of these was built.

Thus, when the 1950 census was recorded in April, the three houses on Pine Hollow Road in Bethlehem were all built and occupied and had mainly reached their present appearance. The Steins had two daughters, Ellen, 9, and Betty, 4. The Blatners had three children. Ella Hynds, 78, who was recorded as a live-in maid in Blatner's boyhood household, lived with them and reported as a maid. Mortimer and Thelma Schwartz had no children.³⁹ No nursemaids were recorded by then.

Mortimer Schwarz added the two-car garage at the south end of the wing at his house in 1948.⁴⁰ Materials used in its construction are similar to those of the glazed porch spanning the rear (east) wall of the wing. He sold his house and the residual acreage (approx. 22 acres) to Alton P. Mendelson in 1954. Mendelson sold the house and land to John W. Abbuhl, an Albany pediatrician, in 1966. Abbuhl and his wife raised three children there. He undertook extensive plantings of native and non-native trees and shrubs, turning the property into an arboretum. He built a small plant nursery *cum* greenhouse above the one-story east wing of the house.

The Stein House was renovated by an architect from MCWB Architects in the early 2000s.⁴¹ Vinyl siding was laid vertically to resemble the original wood board-and-batten siding. Double-hung vinyl-clad window sash replace nearly all of the original casements that matched those used throughout the Blatner House.

³⁴ *United States Census for 1940*, Albany County, Albany City, 18th Ward.

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-89MB-3SFV?view=index&personArk=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3AKQPR-51C&cc=2000219&lang=en&groupId=>)

³⁵ *Book of Deeds 940/119*. Elizabeth Blatner paid for the well's construction with her own money.

³⁶ "This house proves that a modern plan can have all the charm in the world," *House & Garden* (May 1949): 136-7. *Architectural Forum* (May 1947) reported the wing was being built.

³⁷ *United States Census for 1950*, Albany County, Town of Bethlehem, Sheet 1, HH 6. ("United States, Census, 1950", *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6XT5-6K48> : Thu Mar 21 01:44:35 UTC 2024), Entry for Henry L Blatner and Elizabeth Blatner, 25 April 1950.)

³⁸ "This house proves that a modern plan can have all the charm in the world," *House & Garden* (May 1949): 136-7.

³⁹ *United States Census for 1950*, Albany County, Town of Bethlehem, Sheet 1, HH 5, 6, and 7, and Sheet 71, HH 1.

⁴⁰ Assessor's Record, Town of Bethlehem, requested via FOIL.

⁴¹ The precursor firm was Mesick Cohen and Waite. When Jeffrey Baker joined the firm, they officially changed their name to the acronym MCWB.

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The house Blatner designed for his family is the most intact of the Pine Hollow houses. The landscaping of mainly coniferous trees planted around it has matured and now greatly obscures the house from all angles. In contrast, the Stein and Schwartz houses, while heavily backdropped by the pine woods, are foregrounded by open lawns and driveways. This cul-de-sac retains the sense of seclusion surely sought by the families who developed Pine Hollow during the 1940s.

Architectural Analysis

Henry L. Blatner (1911–78) designed the three Pine Hollow Road houses near Slingerlands (Town of Bethlehem) between 1940 and 1942. All were designed as homes for affluent Jewish families. Having their main residences located at Pine Hollow assumed they would travel by car regularly. The Stein and Blatner houses incorporated two-bay automobile garages from the beginning; the one attached to the south end of the Schwartz house was added in 1947. Each house incorporated space for live-in help. For the Steins and the Blatners, this included nursemaids for their children as well as house maids. The Schwartzes had no children, but the house incorporated accommodation for a live-in maid. The grounds were cared for by hired men.⁴² The interior plans all place the most public portions of the house to face the encircling wooded landscape.

The preferences expressed and the choices in Blatner's plans at Pine Hollow generated three houses that incorporate characteristics spanning a range of ideas for individual residential design at the time. They represent Blatner's training both at the University of Pennsylvania with its emphasis on classical antecedent embodied in the Beaux-Arts and at MIT where new styles, especially Bauhaus and International, using new materials design helped launch the American Modernist movement. The houses differ in ways that may also represent the tension between Blatner's Modernist sensibility and the more traditional tastes of the Steins (16 Pine Hollow) and the Schwartzes (34 Pine Hollow), whose houses flank Blatner's own residence at 28 Pine Hollow Road.

The front facades of the three houses differ greatly. The Schwartz house features a one-and-a-half-story, gable-front main block with a one-story south wing and a rear ell of the same height. The irregular form and massing of this additive design is reminiscent of numerous vernacular farmhouses built throughout the region from the mid-1700s into the mid-1800s. The tendency towards "colonial" was especially strong in residential architecture during the Depression, and the taste persisted alongside Modernist design in the early postwar period. On Pine Hollow Road, the one-and-a-half-story Schwartz house represents this taste with its brick walls, gabled slate roofs trimmed with partial returns, and windows with double-hung sash like those of Georgian and Federal-style houses. The back (east wall) of the house departs gently from this idiom with expanses of windows and paired glazed doors facing a narrow garden space and the encircling woodlands, now Pine Hollow Arboretum.

The two-story Stein house is strongly rectilinear, and its exterior design combines both symmetrical and asymmetrical features typical of the Prairie Style. This taste was popularized in well-to-do Midwestern suburbs in the early 1900s. There are several examples in the Pine Hills neighborhood where the Steins lived previously and where both Henry and Elizabeth Blatner

⁴² Mary Blatner Valentis, Conversation with Lawrence Wilson, 29 March 2025.

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grew up. The main entrance of the Stein House is centered on the forward arm of the T-plan main block and flanked by sidelights, a traditional feature. It is capped by a canopy like ones used on well-appointed apartment buildings and hotels in the city or over a theater entrance.⁴³ This symmetry contrasts with the overall asymmetry of the T-plan main block, which is turned sideways to the front façade and enhanced by a large, enclosed porch extending from the southeast wall. The service wing, which incorporates the two-bay garage extending from the other side, adds to this asymmetry. The deep-eaved, hipped slate roof of the main block draws the massing of the overall house into the horizontal orientation typical of Prairie Style design. Like the Schwartz House, the rear of the building offers a visual and spatial connection with its surroundings. There, a narrow glazed porch opens onto shallow terraces descending to an open lawn bordered by the woods.

For his own house, Blatner stepped away from colonial allusion and early twentieth-century eclecticism and designed an entirely Modernist house. The “sprawling” — as described by *Architectural Forum* in May 1947 — plan integrates with its setting in its choice of exterior (and interior) finishes, its intermediate spaces such as porches and walkways, and its fenestration.⁴⁴ *House & Garden* encouraged its readership to keep an open mind for this unusually “contemporary” house: it entitled its 1949 article, “This house proves that a modern plan can have all the charm in the world.”⁴⁵

The Blatner House is a single story throughout and is set back approximately 100 feet from the road on a curving drive that recesses it into the woods that backdrop the Schwartz and Stein houses. To the sides, the encroaching woods screen the house from its neighbors. The low-pitched, deep-eaved gabled roofs further shelter the house visually. Its low profile slides under the carefully sited, now mature conifers, in front of the house. The plan is generally rectilinear and incorporates a slightly taller main block. A lower block with a curved wall spans part of the south wall of the main block, and a later wing of similar height angles away from it to the southwest. The main entrance is set under a roof that curves towards the angled wing and is approached by asymmetrically placed steps partially hidden by shrubbery. A curvilinear patio enclosed by a low stone wall projects generally north, connecting the house with its surroundings. From any vantage point, the house presents a different appearance.

Architectural Forum remarked in its publication of the Blatner House in June 1947, that Blatner used “native raw materials to harmonize with its setting” because this “disturb[ed] the beauty of the natural landscape as little as possible.”⁴⁶ These materials were also highly durable, and Blatner chose similarly durable, mainly traditional exterior finishes for all three houses. These include wood siding, brick, stone veneer, glass bricks, and both slate and copper roofing. The Schwartz house is mainly mortared brick. Its gables are clad in white-painted, board-and-batten siding, a finish common in the nineteenth century outbuildings. It was also popular for Gothic

⁴³ Blatner designed at least one theater, the Moderne Delaware Theatre on Delaware Avenue, now the Spectrum, in the late 1930s.

⁴⁴ “House for a northern climate uses native raw materials to harmonize with rugged surroundings,” *Architectural Forum* 86:6 (June 1947): 99–100. (<https://www.usmodernist.org/AF/AF-1947-06.pdf>; retrieved 3 December 2025)

⁴⁵ “This house proves that a modern plan can have all the charm in the world,” *House & Garden* (May 1949): 136.

⁴⁶ “House for a northern climate uses native raw materials to harmonize with rugged surroundings,” *Architectural Forum* 86:6 (June 1947): 99. (<https://www.usmodernist.org/AF/AF-1947-06.pdf>; retrieved 3 December 2025)

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Revival cottages. Although unusual as an exterior finish in Colonial Revival residential design, it ties the Schwartz house with the Stein and Blatner houses. When built, portions of the Stein house were clad in darkly stained board-and-batten siding.⁴⁷ (This was replaced with synthetic siding during renovation undertaken by MCWB Architects in the early 2000s. The new siding is applied vertically to mimic the original wood finish.) Much of the Blatner House is similarly clad. This finish alternates with expanses of stone veneer made of irregularly shaped slabs of limestone quarried from the nearby Helderberg Hills on both the Stein and Blatner houses. Blatner chose slate for both the Stein and Schwartz house roofs, even though asphalt shingles were standard for residential architecture by that time. For his own house, he chose standing seam copper roofs to reduce the weight of the roofs over the shallow-pitched roofs over broad interior spans in his house.

Blatner's fenestration plans for each of the three houses represent how traditional openings could be adjusted and augmented using advancing technologies during the early twentieth century. Windows went beyond illumination to become prominent design elements that he further used to connect the indoor and outdoor environments. In the Schwartz House, the front façade features double, tripled, and quadrupled ribbons of windows with double-hung six-over-six wood sash, a configuration popular in the early 1900s in many residential styles. The conventional restraint displayed on the front façade of the Schwartz House gives way to an expansive use of glass at the rear of the house. The Stein House fenestration plan relies mainly on paired openings. When built, these were filled with vertically oriented paired and single four-light casements that referenced turn-of-the-century design traditions. While a little old-fashioned by the early 1940s, for people who grew up in turn-of-the-century neighborhoods like Pine Hills in Albany, they were familiar. During the renovation by MCWB Architects that replaced the wood siding, the casements were replaced with vinyl-clad one-over-one double-hung sash.

When it came to planning his own house, *Architectural Forum* noted that Blatner's "... careful study of heating with particular respect to large glass areas, made possible an openness and integration with the outdoors that might otherwise have been impractical in view of the locality's severe winters."⁴⁸ He placed a multi-paneled curtain wall of glass facing south in the main block to illuminate the tallest portion of the house. He used ribbons of four-paned casements similar to those in the Stein House to light the bedroom block, the children's wing, and the kitchen area on the west front facing the drive. These could be opened while the larger single-light "picture" windows that some of these flanked were fixed. Taken as a whole, the variety of configurations are significant to the overall varied appearance of the house from different vantage points.

Comparative Analysis

Residential design formed a comparatively small portion of Henry Blatner's work during the period ca. 1940–1955. After that, his practice turned mainly towards designing for public school districts in the Capital District, beginning with the Clarksville Elementary School in 1949. Collectively, his residential designs fall mainly into two categories, defined at least in part by

⁴⁷ Photograph in Mesick, "Henry L. Blatner," in Wheeler, *Albany Architects* (Albany, N.Y.: Mount Ida Press and Historic Albany Foundation, 2009): page.

⁴⁸ "House for a northern climate uses native raw materials to harmonize with rugged surroundings," *The Architectural Forum* 86:6 (June 1947): 99–100.

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location in either the Buckingham Pond (or Lake) neighborhood in Albany or in the suburban areas of the Town of Bethlehem and by date. The postwar baby boom combined with rapid suburbanization generated significant demand for new schools, and many school districts were eager to embrace Modernist principles and innovative building materials. While there was a concomitant demand for new housing, there are few identified examples of his residential designs.⁴⁹

Blatner designed at least six houses in the Buckingham Pond neighborhood west of South Manning Boulevard between ca. 1945 and 1955. Part of this neighborhood was largely developed in the prewar era and featured mainly large brick Colonial Revival single-unit houses on ample lots accessed via tree-lined streets. Blatner designed three houses (Nos. 10, 16, and 84) that infilled on still-open lots on the first block of Marion Avenue. The established setbacks were comparatively deep and gently sloped, lending prominence to the individual houses overlooking expansive lawns. Most properties incorporated driveways extending to freestanding garages set back still farther from the street. The houses Blatner designed for these three properties alluded generally to the massing of previously built houses in the neighborhood: all three are two stories tall with hipped roofs. While the brick Elkind House (10 Marion Av) copies the predominant building material surrounding it, its fenestration departs from the very regular fenestration plans of the Colonial Revival and uses ganged casements of oblong openings and fixed windows of glass blocks. The house at 16 Marion Avenue is stuccoed with brick detailing and recalls the Prairie Style, similarly to the Stein House at Pine Hollow. The Brenner House at 84 Marion Avenue occupies a corner lot, and Blatner sited it diagonally with its driveway projecting from the lesser street (Cortland Street).

Blatner designed three more houses on the 200-block of Marion Avenue, an extension developed after World War II. This block lacks the grand boulevard layout of the older section farther north, and the lots are narrower with mostly modestly scaled ranch houses. The houses at 223, 229, and 233, occupy adjacent lots and display his Modernist bent. While the house at 223 appears to have been greatly altered with vinyl siding covering a concrete block structure and recently replaced windows, the brick ones at 229 and 233 offer more individualistic designs. The first is two stories tall with a hipped roof; a single-bay garage, also with a hipped roof, projects forward from the main block. The one-story house at 233 is the most Modernistic with asymmetrical single-face roofs and an open portico supported by plain steel posts similar to ones used in Blatner's school and church designs. Its carport projects from one of the front corners of the plan.

In the developing suburban neighborhoods in the Town of Bethlehem, Blatner may have felt less constrained by the existing streetscape of an established neighborhood and possibly also by client expectations. The Witt House, the only residence other than his own house to be published in *The Magazine of Building* (published by *Architectural Forum*), is now entirely subsumed by later additions. It stands nearly opposite Pine Hollow Road at 1433 New Scotland Avenue north of the Hamlet of Slingerlands. It was written up ca. 1950 as an "Apartment-sized House" that

⁴⁹ MCWB Architects prepared a list of Blatner's work for the "Conversation" about the Pine Hollow Houses in March 2025. The houses discussed in this section can be viewed using Google or Bing and sometimes also online realty sites.

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could be expanded using plans Blatner drew.⁵⁰ Like Blatner's own house, it was and is still backdropped by woodland and set back more than 100 feet from the street on a curving drive. When built, it featured an open-plan main room with floor-to-ceiling windows except for a fireplace and brick chimney breast.

One-story, flat-roofed houses at 132 Salisbury Rd, Delmar, and 162 Font Grove Rd, Slingerlands, are sited similarly to the Witt House. While the latter appears to have altered materials that may hide earlier finishes and change the fenestration, the former seems largely unchanged. This brick house features an irregular, strongly rectilinear plan with ganged single-pane casements in varied arrangements that suggest the interior room layout. These seem to be among the last residences Blatner designed as his practice shifted to other kinds of projects. As a group, including also the houses at Pine Hollow Road, these houses span roughly fifteen years of Blatner's approximately thirty-five year career. Unlike much of his other work, which almost all leaned to Modernist taste, these illustrate both versatility and the need to please an individual client. The latter requirement combined with his success in gaining other kinds of work, may go some way to explain why he seems to have largely abandoned house design after the mid-1950s.

⁵⁰ "Apartment-Size House," *The Magazine of Building*: 131-3.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 32.4 _____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 42.635855 | Longitude: -73.854905 |
| 2. Latitude: 42.635003 | Longitude: -73.853241 |
| 3. Latitude: 42.633003 | Longitude: -73.854461 |
| 4. Latitude: 42.634152 | Longitude: -73.856067 |

Or

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UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Refer to the attached map

The Pine Hollow Road Historic District boundary encompasses 32.4 acres in five parcels that form the district’s visual context of three houses set within a secluded, wooded enclave.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary incorporates all of the original 25.259-acre parcel bought by Mortimer A. Schwartz in 1939 bounded on the west by New Scotland Avenue and on the south by the back lines of house lots already subdivided from the north frontage of Maple Avenue. From that original parcel, Schwartz sold two large house lots, one to Henry L. Blatner (2.6 acres) and the other to Samuel and Lucille Stein (4.5 acres) in 1940 and 1941 respectively. These extend to the north line of the Schwartz purchase. The Steins further acquired the land between their lot and New Scotland Road from Schwartz soon after, thus preserving the wooded setting on the east side of New Scotland Avenue. A 1940 survey (provided in Additional Documentation) shows Schwartz’s own house lot was “reserved.” By 1966, however, it was combined into the larger acreage that remained undeveloped when Alton P. Mendelson, the second owner of the Schwartz House, sold both the house and the residual land to John Abbuhl. Abbuhl expanded his property eastward to Cherry Avenue and to the back lines of lots facing McCormack Road. Abbuhl’s aggregate acreage became the Pine Hollow Arboretum. In a subsequent transaction, his house, the Schwartz House, and its surrounding 2.18 acres was subdivided off from the larger arboretum when the latter was chartered as a non-profit. The present 20.22-acre arboretum parcel (85.06-2-9.2) encompasses the original Schwartz parcel and the Abbuhl additions. The Abbuhl additions and the Stein purchase of undeveloped land west of their house additions preserve and buffer the physical setting Schwartz appears to have envisioned for his residence and those of two close friends at Pine Hollow Road. The district boundary does not include all of the current Pine Hollow Arboretum boundary, but rather follows the original property parcels of the period of significance.

Pine Hollow Road Historic District-DRAFT
Name of Property

Albany, New York
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jessie A. Ravage, edited by Julie Maresco, SHPO

organization: unaffiliated

street & number: 34 Delaware St

city or town: Cooperstown state: New York zip code: 13326

e-mail: jrage27@gmail.com

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date: February 25, 2026

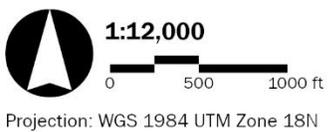
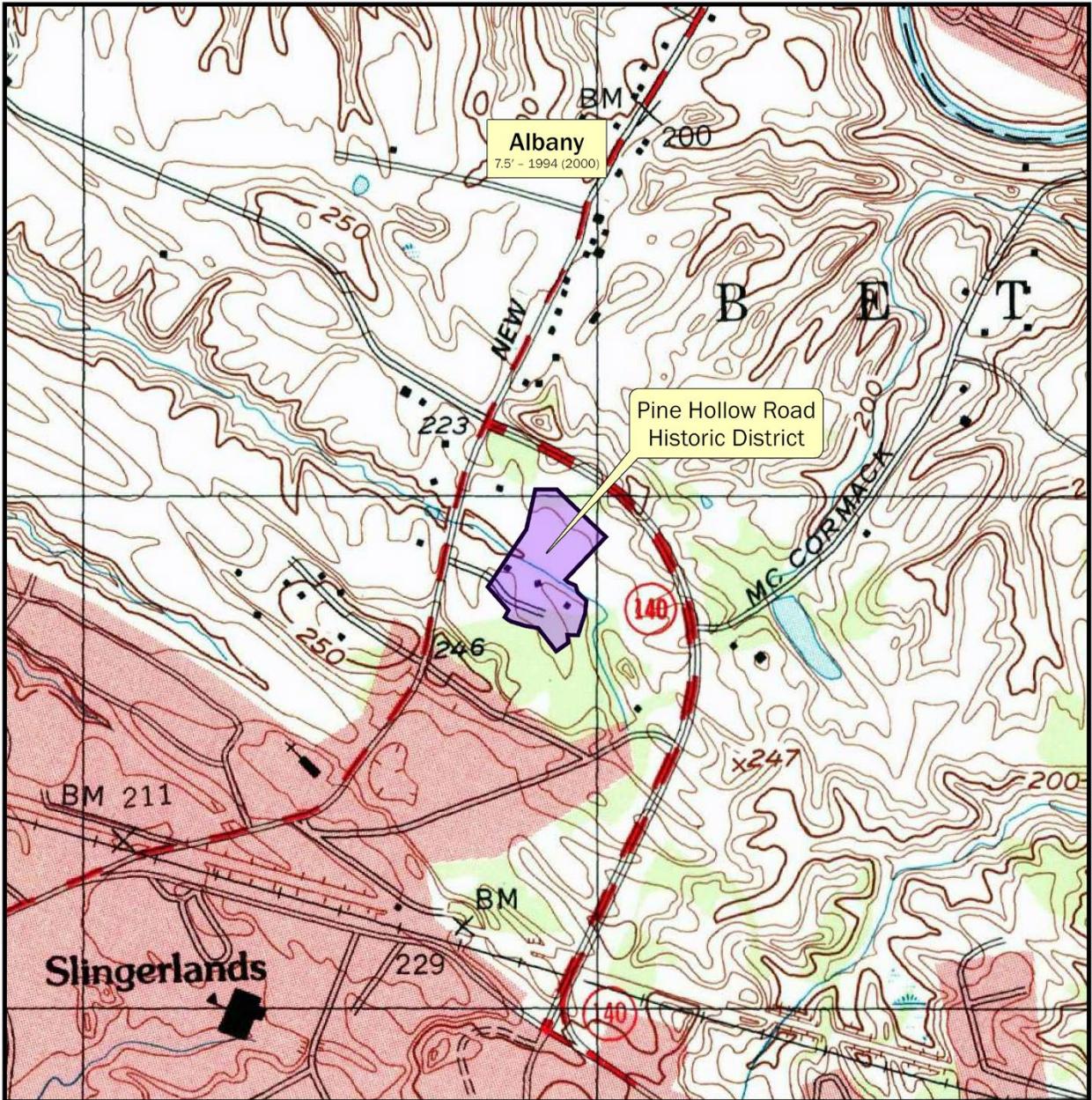
Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

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 Pine Hollow Road Historic District



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

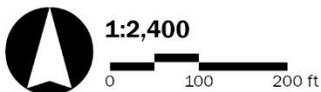
Mapped 12/30/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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Point	Latitude	Longitude	Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	42.635855	-73.854905	3	42.633003	-73.854461
2	42.635003	-73.853241	4	42.634152	-73.856067



Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

 Nomination Boundary (9.54 ac)

New York State Orthoimagery Year: 2024



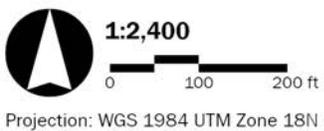
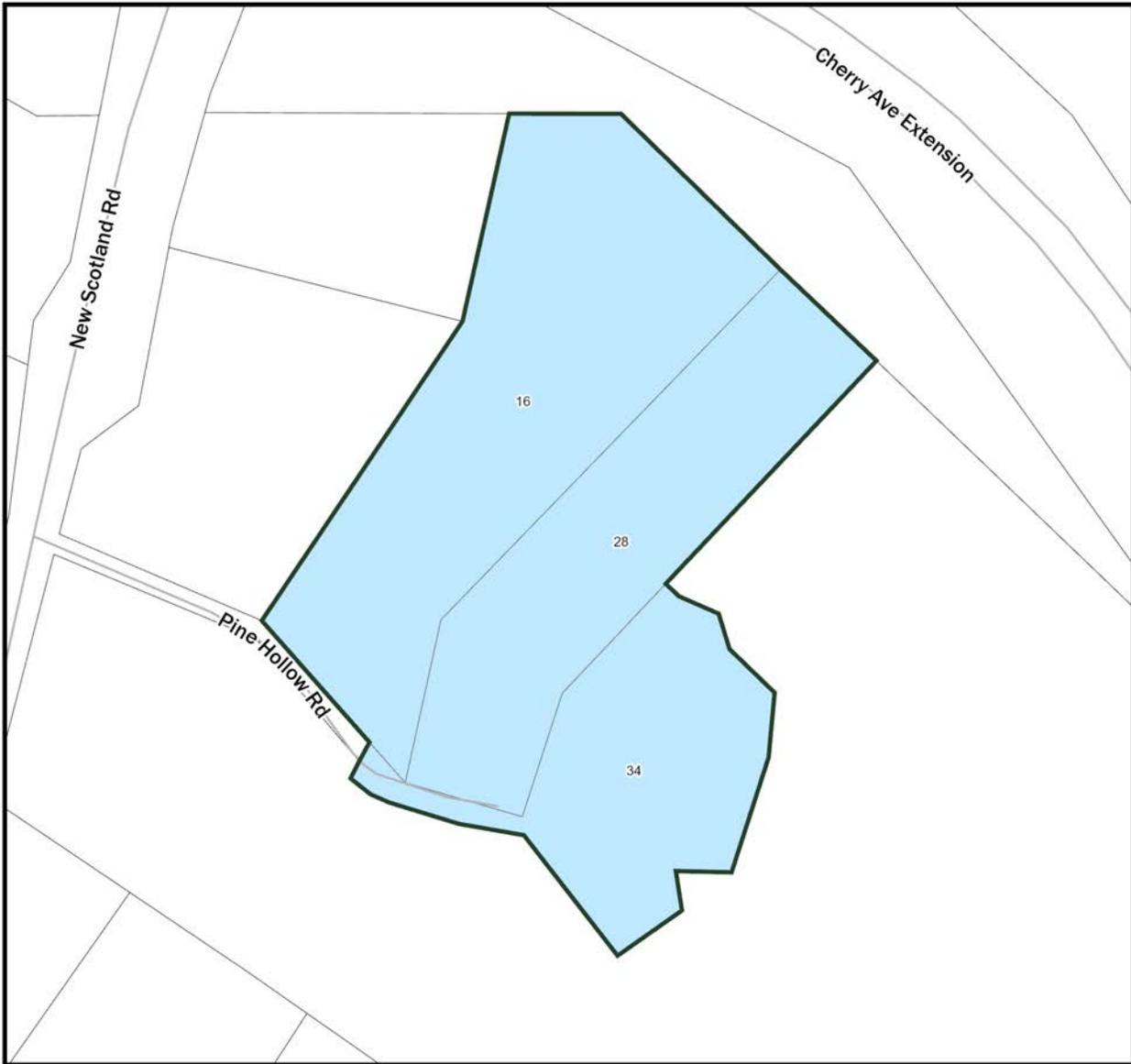
**New York State
 Parks, Recreation and
 Historic Preservation**

Mapped 12/30/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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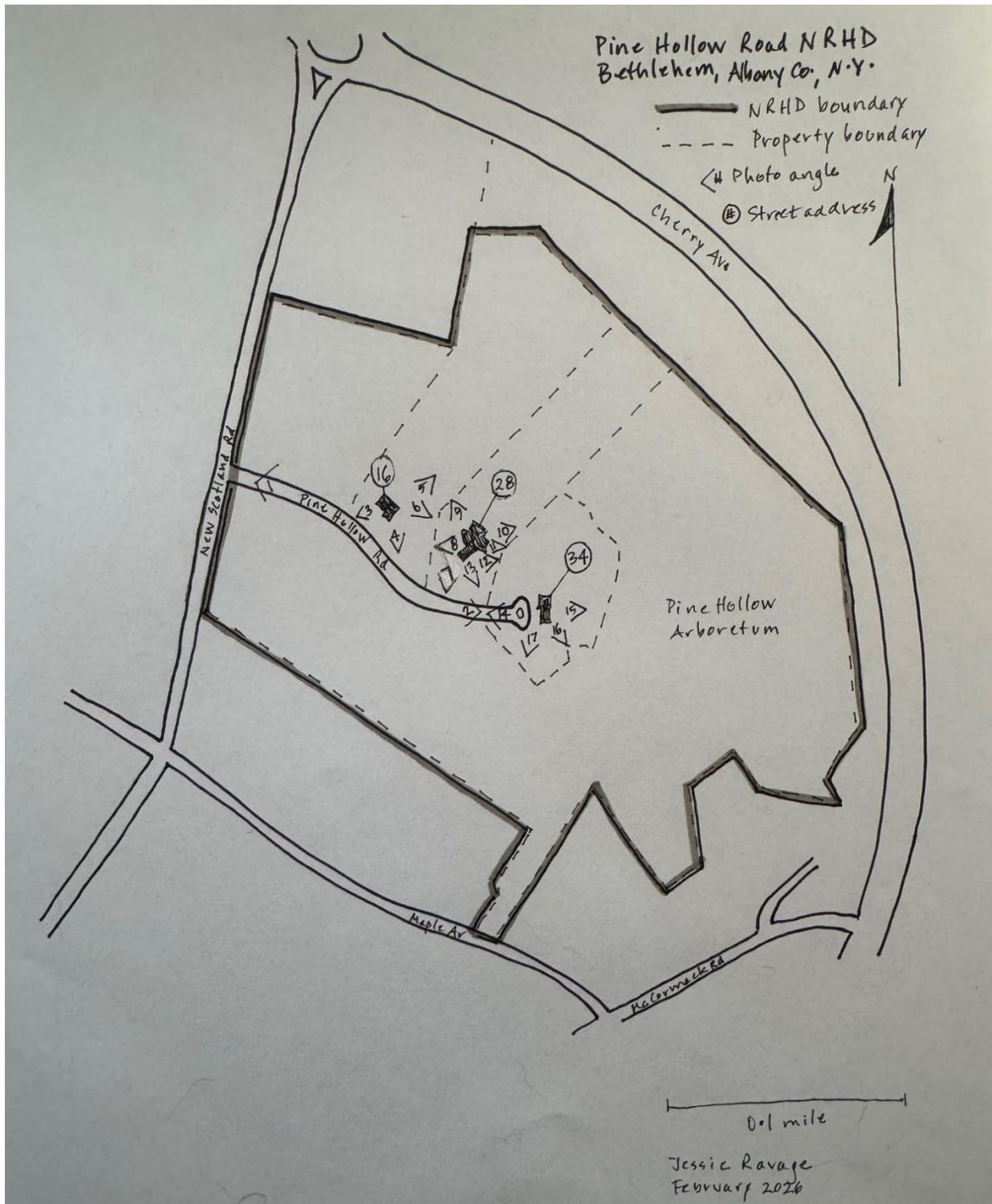
Parcel Status Map
See Resource List for details



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- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.



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- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

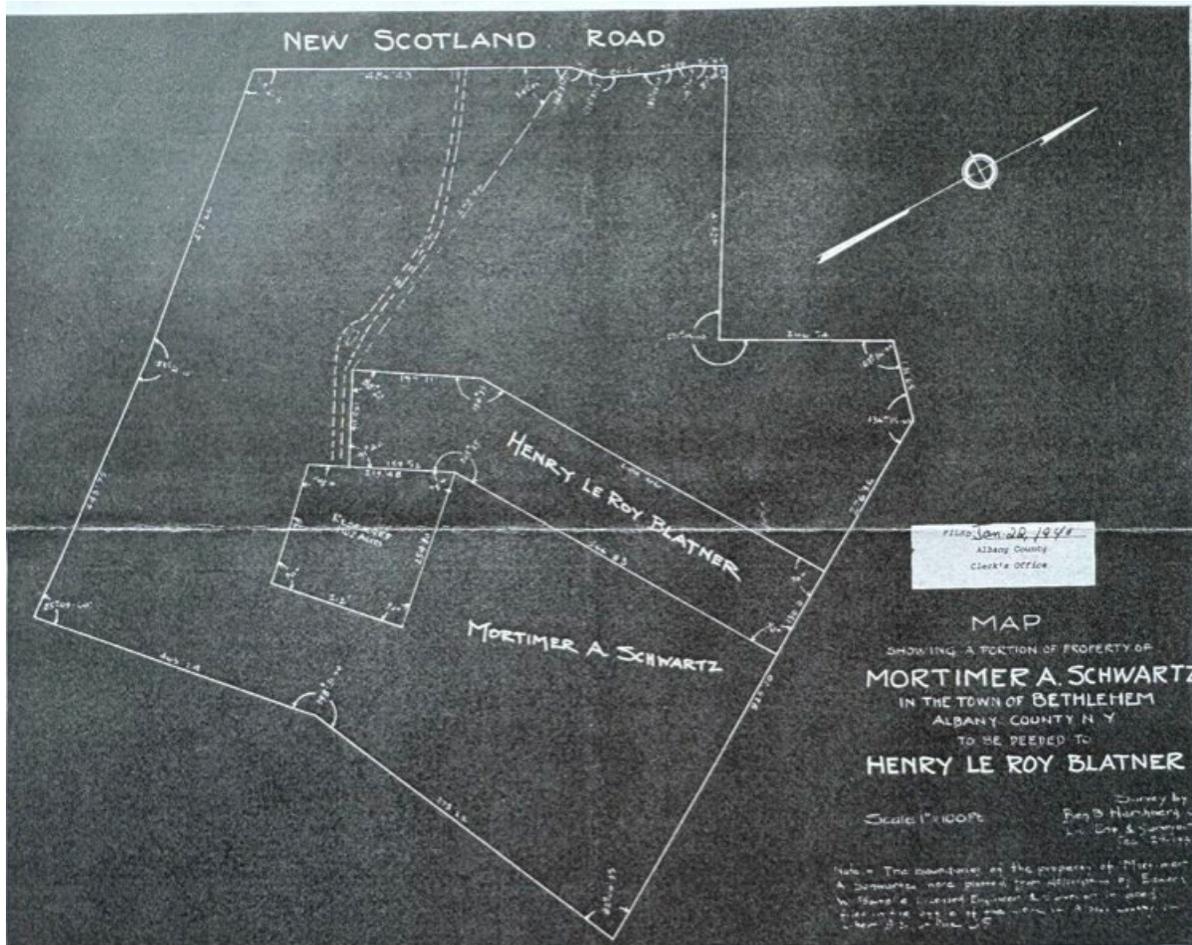


Figure 1. Map showing a portion of the property of Mortimer A. Schwartz in the Town of Bethlehem, Albany County, N.Y., to be deeded to Henry LeRoy Blatner. Surveyed by Ben B. Hershberg, February 29, 1939. Map 1030/Drawer 110. Albany, N.Y.: Office of Albany County Clerk.

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Figure 2. Ca. 1950. Stein House. Wheeler, Walter Richard, *Architects in Albany*. ed. Diana S. Waite. Albany, NY: Mount Ida Press and Historic Albany Foundation, 2009, page 65.

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Figure 3. Photograph by Robert M. Damora, 1947. *House and Garden*, May 1949, pg. 136.



Figure 4. Newspaper clipping of the Blatner House Interior and Exterior. *The Knickerbocker News*, Albany, NY, June 20, 1947. Fultonhistory.com

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Figure 5. Photograph of Blatner House. *Architectural Forum*, June 1947, pg. 199.

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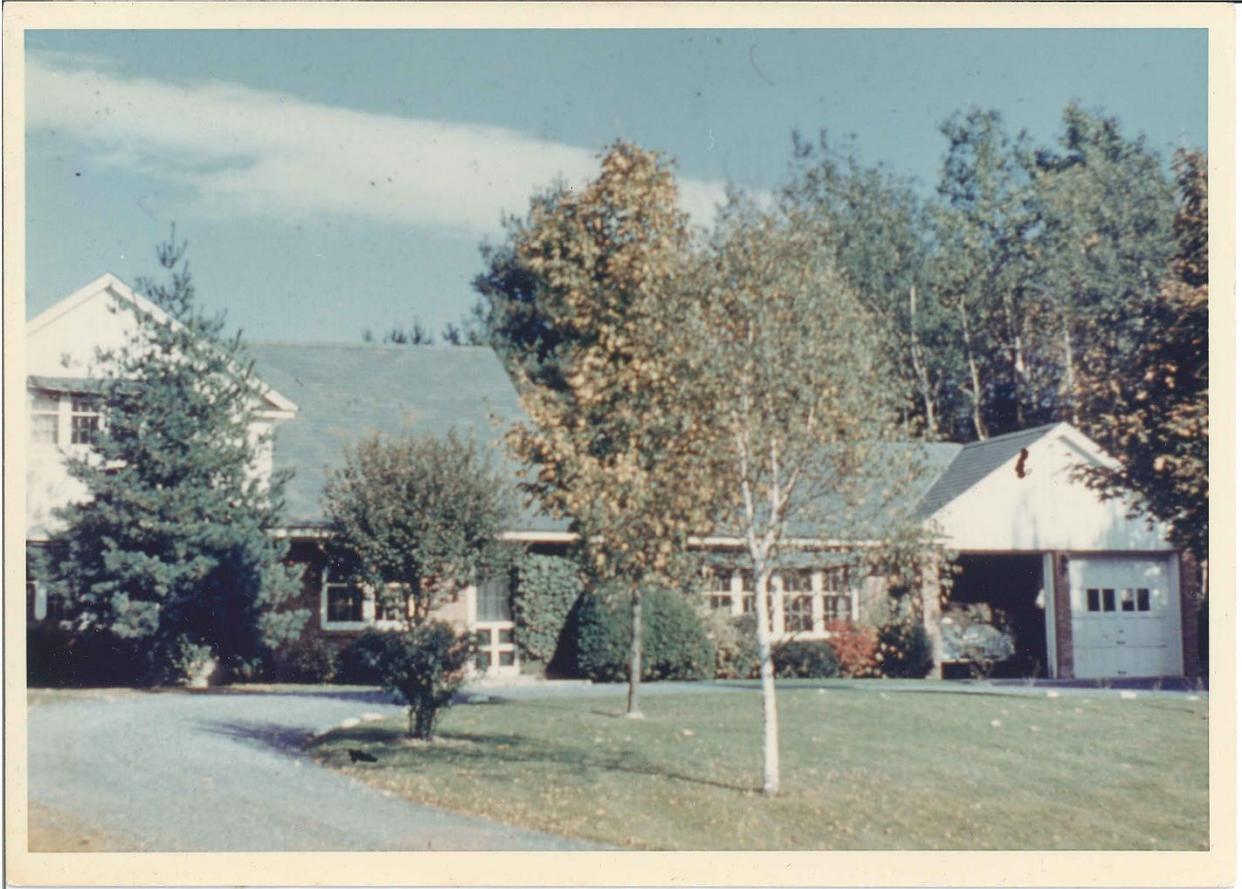


Figure 6. Photograph of Schwartz House. Ca. 1960. Pine Hollow Arboretum Collection.

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Figure 7. Photograph of Architect Henry L. Blatner. *Times Union*, October 15, 1961. Fultonhistory.com

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photograph Log

Pine Hollow Rd National Register Historic District

All photographs labeled **NY_Albany Co_Pine Hollow Rd HD_####**. Photographs shot by Jessie A. Ravage in early March 2024 (no leaves) and late March 2025 (leafy).

- 0001:** View east on Pine Hollow Rd showing curving route through level site framed by woodlands
- 0002:** View west on Pine Hollow Rd from circle in front of 34 Pine Hollow Rd
- 0003:** 16 Pine Hollow Rd (Stein House), view NE of front façade and garage wing from Pine Hollow Rd
- 0004:** 16 Pine Hollow Rd (Stein House), view NW of front façade over enclosed stone veneered porch
- 0005:** 16 Pine Hollow Rd (Stein House), view S of back of house
- 0006:** 16 Pine Hollow Rd (Stein House), view SW of back of house
- 0007:** 28 Pine Hollow Rd (Blatner House), view N from Pine Hollow Rd showing mature landscaping surrounding the house
- 0008:** 28 Pine Hollow Rd (Blatner House), view NE showing front (west) façade of house with main entrance at center, garage to left, and part of children's wing to the right
- 0009:** 28 Pine Hollow Rd (Blatner House), view SE from west side of lot showing children's wing at right, main entrance in center, and garage wing at left
- 0010:** 28 Pine Hollow Rd (Blatner House), view SW showing northeast corner of house with north-facing patio and stuccoed wall capped by clerestory windows of the den or study.
- 0011:** 28 Pine Hollow Rd (Blatner House), view SW of south wall of "great room" area adjoining curving wall of master suite and the children's wing in the background
- 0012:** 28 Pine Hollow Rd (Blatner House), view W of the southeast side of children's wing
- 0013:** 28 Pine Hollow Rd (Blatner House), view N of children's wing. Image also shows the spatial relationship with the Stein House and the light conifer woods screening the houses from each other

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- 0014:** 34 Pine Hollow Rd (Schwartz House), view E showing front façade and circular drive in front of the house
- 0015:** 34 Pine Hollow Rd (Schwartz House), view W showing the back of the house and the gable end of the garage attached at far left
- 0016:** 34 Pine Hollow Rd (Schwartz House), view NW of rear of house showing greenhouse/nursery added ca. 1966 at far right and variety of enclosed porches facing east
- 0017:** 34 Pine Hollow Rd (Schwartz House), view NE of the south wall of the garage and its relationship to the main house

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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