



Voices

The Newsletter of the Cleveland Park Historical Society

The Destruction of 3515 Woodley Road What We Have Learned and Why It Matters

By Carin Ruff, CPHS Executive Director

The house that used to stand at 3515 Woodley Road was built in 1912. It had stood for 103 years when it was razed on November 6, 2015 without notice to CPHS or Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3C. The DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs ordered the demolition of the house under the emergency raze provisions in DC Code § 6-801 after contractors working on the house seriously compromised its structural integrity. In February this year, the Historic Preservation Review Board, with the concurrence of CPHS and ANC3C, approved plans to build a replica of the historic house.

This is the first instance of a loss of a historic building in Cleveland Park since the creation of the Historic District in 1987. The loss of 3515 Woodley shocked Cleveland Park residents and preservationists across the city. The destruction of a historic house shakes the very foundations on which DC's 56 historic districts rest. Fundamentally, residents, property owners, and preservationists need to be able to say, "No, of course you can't tear down a house in a historic district!"—and mean it. The events leading up to the destruction of 3515 Woodley, and the weaknesses it revealed in the District's administration of its preservation laws, were a wake-up call. It is now clear that historic district residents must be alert and proactive in the face of potential threats to the historic fabric of their neighborhoods.

The loss of 3515 Woodley, the circumstances surrounding its destruction, and the options governing its rebuilding

reveal the limits of DC's preservation law and its construction inspections system in safeguarding our historic resources. Eight months after the initial shock of the demolition and the meetings and inquiries that followed, we can begin to appraise the implications of this case. In what follows, we consider why the loss of one historic house matters; weak points in the preservation law; failures caused by insufficient capacity in DC agencies; and the role of property owners' responsibility in preservation. In an accompanying FAQ on the next two pages, we address questions CPHS has received from Cleveland Park residents about how the demolition came about, what happens next, and how the demolition and rebuilding relate to other instances of demolition and new construction in the Cleveland Park Historic District.

What Do We Lose When We Lose A Historic House?

Why care about the loss of one historic house among the 1000 contributing properties in the Cleveland Park Historic District?

When we lose one house, we lose a strand in the historic fabric of the street. We lose the historical record embodied in that house. We lose forever any chance of restoring its materials and craftsmanship. And we lose some portion of the mutual trust that sustains the endeavor of historic preservation within a neighborhood. It comes down to this: if we care about the preservation of any historic house, we have to care about the preservation of every historic house.

(Continued on page 9; FAQ follows on pages 5–8.)

Dates to Save: CPHS Events in Fall 2016

- September 24th** CPHS and the DC Preservation League present a workshop on energy efficiency in older homes.
- October 16th** Tony Fleming returns with his popular geology tour of Cleveland Park. Co-sponsored with the Tregaron Conservancy.

Mark your calendars and then watch for more information by email and on our website.

Board and ARC Members

Board Members

At the 2016 Annual Meeting on May 17th, the membership elected six new members of the Board of Directors and re-elected three. The board members elected are:

For a new 3-year term:

Mary Jane Glass (34th Street)
Christine Hobbs (Norton Place)
Tom Hester (Porter Street)
Shaun Jones (Newark Street)
Shannon Penberthy (Porter Street), Secretary
Frank Swain (Newark Street)

For a second 3-year term:

Stefan Hurray (Tilden Gardens)
Nick Netchvolodoff (Quebec Street), President
Abigail Porter (35th Street)

Continuing board members:

Hadley Debevoise Allen (34th Place), Treasurer
Myra Best (Quebec Street), Vice-President
John Buchanan (Newark Street)
Ana Evans (Ashley Terrace)
Roberta Mathews (Macomb Street)
Gwen Wright (34th Street)

Retiring Board Members

We bid farewell with enormous thanks to retiring board members Win Brown, Robert Jenkins, Tina Mead, and Lois Orr. Win is a key member of the Guidelines Committee, whose work is ongoing. Robert has been the guiding (and baking) hand behind the annual gingerbread house decorating party and we hope he will continue to organize that event even now that he has left the board. Lois is a past president of CPHS and serves as our archivist/librarian as well as heading the call box project. Tina is a past treasurer of CPHS. Win, Lois, and Tina will continue to serve on the ARC.

Architectural Review Committee Members

Win Brown (2016–2019)
Phil Eagleburger, co-chair (2016–2019)
Ana Evans (2014–2017)
Christine Hobbs, co-chair (2015–2018)
Danny Ince (2015–2018)
David Kay (2014–2017)
Tina Mead (2015–2018)
Ron Ngiam (2015–2018)
Lois Orr (2015–2018)
Anne Hatfield Weir (2015–2018)

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Contact Us

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Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/ClevelandParkHistory



The Cleveland Park Historic District is home to 15 city police and fire call boxes that were transformed into neighborhood public art by CPHS in 2009, part of a citywide initiative called “Art on Call.” These call boxes date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and were a way to call emergency services before the introduction of the 911 system in the 1970s. The call box at 35th and Macomb Streets commemorating Grover Cleveland’s house, “Red Top.” The paint on the box’s metal structure has faded badly and the artwork needs professional cleaning.

CPHS restored the 15 call boxes located in the Historic District with original artwork and text about Cleveland Park’s history and architecture. Artists whose works appears in the call boxes generously contributed to this project, as did local organizations, businesses, and residents whose names are engraved on the back of the call boxes. The call boxes not only represent a preservation project in themselves; they are the primary interpretive historical signage for our historic district, telling the story of Cleveland Park for visitors and residents.

Now these boxes and their artwork need conservation. \$500 will fund the restoration of one call box. This includes professional cleaning of the artwork on the box, preparing and repainting the box with paint that will better withstand summer sun and winter weather than the paint originally used, restoring the brass plaques, and repairing broken call box elements where necessary.

We invite Cleveland Park residents and businesses to contribute to the restoration of their favorite call box. Will you help ensure the survival of this historic public art installation? **A map of all the call boxes is on the reverse side of this page.** Locate the call box you would like to support and then mail the form below with your contribution to CPHS, P.O. Box 4862, Washington, DC 20008, or give online at www.clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org. Your contribution is fully tax deductible.

YES, I would like to support the restoration of one of Cleveland Park’s call boxes!

(See map overleaf to choose a call box.)

- ☐ I would like my contribution to go to the call box at: _____
or
☐ Please direct my contribution to the preservation of the highest-priority box.

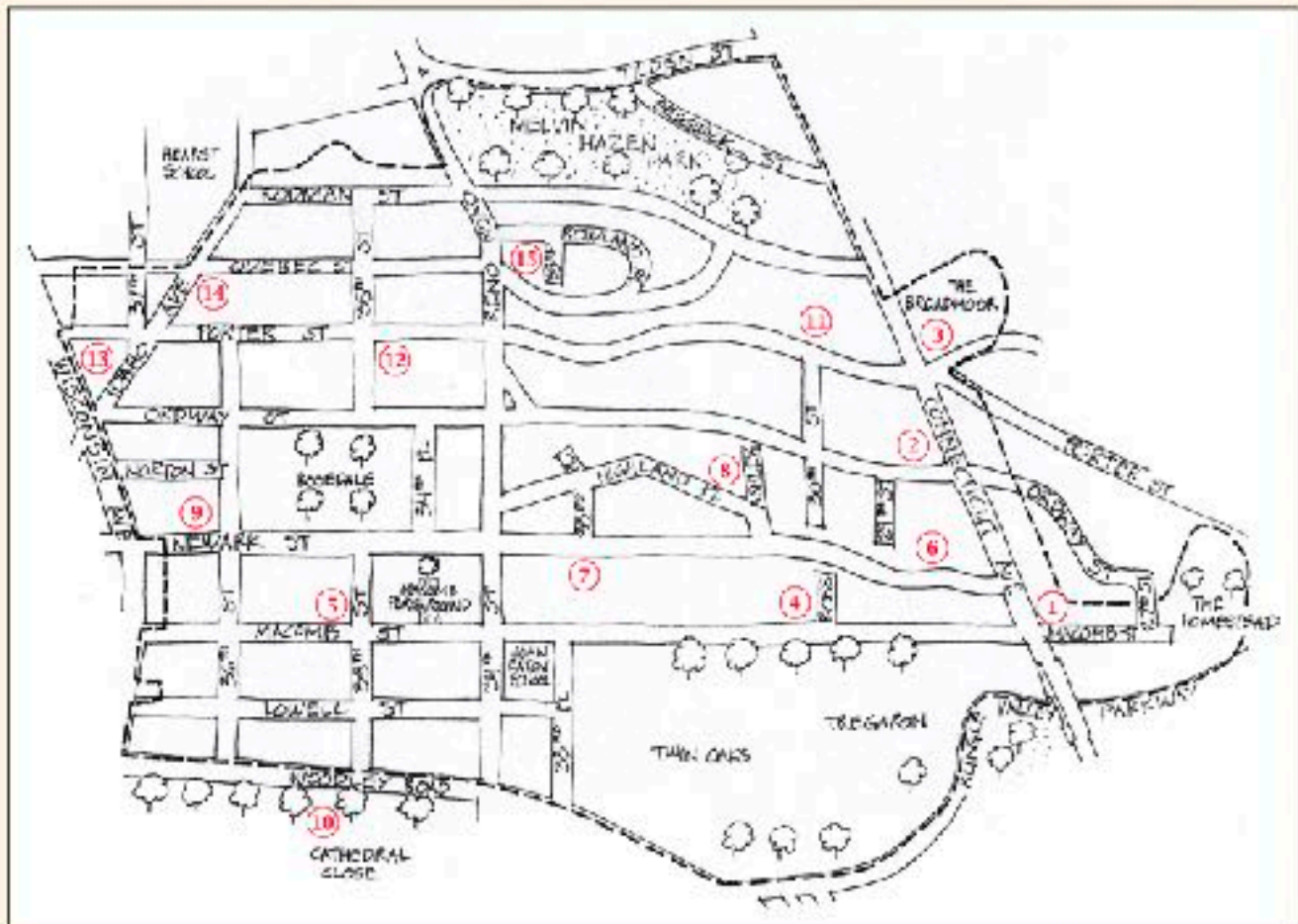
Amount of contribution: ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

CLEVELAND PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT

Art on Call Locator



Art:

1. Roma Restaurant
2. Commerce
3. The Broadmoor
4. Causeway at Tregaron
5. Red Top
6. Queen Anne Style
7. Early Fire Fighting
8. Sherman Cottages
9. Rosedale
10. National Cathedral
11. Bungalow
12. Map
13. Washington Ballet
14. Flower
15. Landscape

Artist:

- Mary Belcher
 Eleanor Oliver
 John Simpson
 John Woo
 John Woo
 Di Stovall
 Caitlin Wernell
 Leslie Oberdorfer
 John Woo
 Diana Cook
 Mary Belcher
 John Wiebenson
 James Symons, Sheila Harrington
 Edith Kuhnle
 Lou Stovall

Choose the call box whose restoration you would like to support and then send in the form on the other side of this page.

FAQs about the Demolition of 3515 Woodley Road

What was the historic status of the house that was destroyed?

As a house built in 1912 standing within the boundaries of the Cleveland Park Historic District, the old house at 3515 Woodley was a **contributing resource** in the Cleveland Park Historic District. (Read more about contributing and noncontributing resources in the article on the period of significance in the Spring 2015 issue of Voices, or look for the link to that article on the home page of our website, www.clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org.) It was an integral part of an ensemble of houses representing a range of building styles from 1880–1941. Cleveland Park's historic status in the National Register of Historic Places as a locally and nationally significant early streetcar suburb rests on the preservation of that ensemble. The house also had a significant association with the Washington National Cathedral, having been the residence until 1937 of Canon William L. DeVries—one of the small group of clergy at the Cathedral's founding—as well as the initial residence of Dean Sayre before a deanery was built on the Cathedral Close. The Cathedral used the house as a rental in recent years before selling it in 2014.

As a contributing resource in the Historic District, the former house at 3515 Woodley was as fully protected as it could be by DC's historic preservation law. That law requires the Historic Preservation Review Board to review any alterations to the exterior of a contributing building, and prohibits the razing of contributing structures in any but the most extraordinary circumstances.

What led to the demolition of 3515 Woodley Road?

Contractors working on the house, following plans for an addition, driveway, and interior modifications approved by the DC Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) and permitted by the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA), compromised the structure through work that exceeded the scope of the permit and the approved plans, including negligent interior demolition and attempting to dig out the basement without proper bracing during excavation. Here is the DCRA inspector's report of his site visit on October 26, 2015:

Inspection type: (check below or list)	<input type="checkbox"/> Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> Complaint	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illegal Construction
<input type="checkbox"/> Proactive <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant Property <input type="checkbox"/> BBL <input type="checkbox"/> Survey <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____			
Violation Description			
<p>On this date, I responded to the location based on a report of a collapsed building. When I arrived at the site, I found a two story SFD Historic house that was under renovation/construction. The rear wall had been completely removed along with most of the interior. The masonry front and side exterior walls were still in place, yet heavily damaged. The contractor, Lado Venus (202-405-6999), had removed all of the interior plaster wall coverings and flooring. He had also removed the floor joist of the first floor in order drive a track hoe into the basement area. The contractor had removed the soil from the basement (5' to 2') area for underpinning. This morning, he had started underpinning when the walls shifter. The damage to the exterior walls were not repairable and the house had to be razed.</p> <p>This house received irreversible damage due to the negligence of the contractor. By removing the plaster wall covering, structural framing, the complete rear wall, the floor joist of the first floor, and all of the soil in the basement directly lead to the collapse of this historic property. The work done was not included in the permit, approved plans, or other approved documents.</p>			
<p>This Inspection Summary Report was prepared in the regular course of business of DCRA and is maintained in the files of the Inspections and Compliance Administration. It accurately reflects the condition of the property on the date written above. The undersigned declares under penalty of perjury that the foregoing information is true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.</p>			
Inspector Signature: 		Date: 10-26-2015	

Above: Report by DCRA Inspector Robert Dion Spriggs, obtained by CPHS via a FOIA request.



Above: Photo of the rear of 3515 Woodley Road taken November 5, 2016, showing the conditions described by the DCRA inspector. Photo by Carin Ruff; annotations by David Kay, AIA, member of the CPHS Architectural Review Committee.

(FAQ, continued) Who razed the house?

The owner of 3515 Woodley brought in a specialist demolition firm to take the house down after DCRA ordered an emergency raze. The demolition was carried out on November 6, 2015, sometime between the hours of 10:30 am, when the CPHS executive director saw the house still standing, and 5:30 pm, when a CPHS board member reported that it had been entirely demolished.

Was there a permit for the demolition?

According to DCRA records, an emergency raze permit was issued on November 10, 2015, four days after the actual demolition. CPHS has been told that the demolition was ordered by DCRA after consultation with the Historic Preservation Office, but we have seen no written documentation of that consultation. The contractors who compromised the structure during construction were cited for exceeding the scope of the building permit and fined \$2000, but apparently not for illegal demolition. Here is the notice of infraction from the DCRA inspector's report on October 26, 2015:

D.C. Official Code AND/OR D.C. Municipal Regulation Citation	Fine for Infraction	Statutory Penalty (if applicable)
DCMR 12A 105.1	\$2 000.00	\$
Nature of Infraction: Exceeding the scope of the building permit.		

Who was consulted before the house was razed?

According to accounts given to CPHS, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3C, and the Historic Preservation Review Board, when the house became compromised, the project architect called in DCRA, which has a construction inspections division. After visiting the property to inspect the damage, a DCRA inspector consulted with the head of HPO and his staff. The unsafe structures provision of the law requires that DCRA consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (i.e., the head of HPO) before an emergency raze permit may be issued for an historic building. DCRA's response to CPHS's FOIA request contained no written documentation that this consultation took place, nor of any other events between October 26 and the demolition on November 6.

Did CPHS or ANC3C know the house was going to be razed?

No. When the structural damage occurred, the project architect told the ANC3C Commissioner for the area about the damage, and on November 3 the Commissioner informed CPHS's director, who informed the CPHS board. But as of the day of demolition, the Commissioner and CPHS's leadership had been told that options for repair or partial demolition of the house were still being evaluated. After DCRA consulted with HPO about issuing the emergency raze order, HPO suggested the project architect inform the community that the raze was imminent. That communication did not happen. The first time CPHS and ANC3C knew of the demolition was when a CPHS board member noticed that the house was gone late in the afternoon of November 6.

What will be built on the site?

A new house that looks like and has the same dimensions as the original house, plus a rear addition, new curb cut and driveway, and modified front walk that were previously approved by the ARC, ANC3C, and the Historic Preservation Review Board, and subsequently refined by the architect in consultation with HPO staff.

What will be the historic status of the new house?

Under DC's preservation law, the new house will be a **noncontributing resource** in the historic district, because it will be constructed after Cleveland Park's period of significance, which is 1880–1941. A noncontributing resource in an historic district has only limited protection under the preservation law: i.e., DC's Historic Preservation regulations delegate review of the demolition of noncontributing properties to HPO staff, without consideration either by the Historic Preservation Review Board or by the ANC and community preservation interests like CPHS, and there is normally no bar to demolition. Thus, under ordinary circumstances, it would be relatively easy for a subsequent owner to tear down a newly-built house and replace it with an entirely different structure.

However, the owner of 3515 Woodley has entered into a covenant with CPHS and ANC3C that requires that any subsequent changes to the property be reviewed as strictly as if the house were a contributing resource. The covenant, which restricts the title to the property, requires full review of any further changes by CPHS, ANC3C, or their successors, and the Historic Preservation Review Board. CPHS and ANC3C do not have the power to make a non-historic house into a

historic one, but the covenant goes as far as is legally feasible in securing the same protections for the rebuilt replica house as for the original contributing structure.



Left: Photo of the site taken by Carin Ruff from the southeast corner of the lot on November 7, 2016 (the day after demolition).

Why is CPHS so concerned about the destruction of this house when it has not objected to the razing and replacement of 3070 Porter Street?

The former house at 3070 Porter was a noncontributing resource in the Historic District, because it was built in 1950. Because it was a noncontributing property under the terms of Cleveland Park's historic designation there was no substantial obstacle under the preservation law to its demolition. There are other officially noncontributing properties in the Historic District for which, if they were threatened, CPHS would feel justified in making an argument for preservation. The Porter Street case did not rise to that level.

Why is CPHS insisting on the replication of the house that was destroyed, instead of advocating contemporary design for the new house, as it has done with other new construction in the Historic District?

In ordinary circumstances, CPHS's Architectural Review Committee (the ARC) recognizes that there are many possible design solutions for new buildings in the Historic District. The ARC follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties in viewing each building as a record of its own time, and welcomes excellent contemporary design. Ordinarily, replicating a historic building would not be the preferred choice for new construction.

In this case, however, CPHS, ANC3C, and the DC Historic Preservation Review Board have all approved the owner's plans to replicate the original house, and would not have supported a proposal to build something different. Two factors warrant replicating the lost house.

First, preservation laws would require that a house demolished illegally be rebuilt forthwith. Although an emergency raze permit was issued for the demolition of this house, DCRA's response to the FOIA request to date has not established that DCRA's administrative process in issuing that permit fully complied with the preservation laws. Requiring reconstruction to the original design is a way of acknowledging the seriousness of the demolition.

Second, the 3515 Woodley experience demonstrates how vulnerable historic houses undergoing renovation may be to structural compromise that results in demolition and new construction. Washington is suffering an epidemic of tear-downs and "McMansionization." Historic districts were created to provide a bulwark against the cavalier replacement of our historic housing stock. In this particular case the developer's agreement to rebuild to the original design and to treat the rebuilt house as if it were a contributing structure speaks well of his motivations. By insisting on these measures here, CPHS hopes to deter any future copycat actions by less scrupulous actors—especially given that the financial and other penalties under the current law are so light.

Whom should I contact if I am concerned about a house renovation project underway in Cleveland Park exceeding the scope of approved and permitted plans?

Call DCRA's Illegal Construction Unit at (202) 442-STOP (7867) or call 311 during non-business hours and you will be routed to an on-duty inspector.

ALSO contact the DC Historic Preservation Office enforcement officers at (202) 442-8800.

(3515 Woodley: Why It Matters, continued from page 1)

The historic protections for any given house in Cleveland Park rest upon the protections afforded the historic ensemble that is the whole district.

Historic fabric matters.

Historic preservation is partly about preserving the aesthetics of a historic place—its proportions, rhythms, size, shape, views—but equally about preserving the historic fabric of buildings. The historic fabric consists of the materials of the building and the way they are put together, which not only give the building its characteristic textures and proportions, but embody the building techniques and craftsmanship of the time of its construction. That is why the historic preservation regulations discourage residents of a historic district from replacing windows and doors or changing roof materials and exterior finishes. Once those materials are gone, they are gone forever, both as artifacts and as a record of the evolution of the house and the work that went into its building. A historic district consisting of modern replicas of lost buildings would not be “historic” at all. It would be Disneyland, or a stage set.

Replacing houses is not a sustainable practice.

You may have heard some people say that the rebuilt house will be “better” than the one it replaces—better built and/or more energy-efficient, and thus good for the environment.

The replacement house will be energy-efficient in the way that 21st-century houses are. But it will also be 50 percent larger than the already generous-sized house it replaces, using resources it would not need if it were not so large, and its existence will rest on the squandering of the embodied energy and historic materials in the old house. Neither is a particularly environmentally-friendly basis for creating a notionally “better” house. **Research by the National Trust’s Green Lab shows that it takes 40-50 years for the energy efficiency of a new single-family house to recoup the energy expended in constructing it and disposing of the materials of the old house**—an expenditure that would not have been necessary if the old house had been properly rehabilitated and retrofitted. In short, the “greenest” house is the one that’s already built.

(For data on the energy costs of building new vs. reusing historic buildings, see the National Trust study *The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse* at www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/green-lab/valuing-building-reuse.html.)

Limits of DC’s Historic Preservation Law

The razing of 3515 Woodley has made clear not just how vulnerable our historic houses are, but also how limited the tools available under our preservation law are to deal with

this kind of situation. But whether or not the penalties under the law are adequate, much of the real work of preservation in Washington happens outside the purview of the historic preservation law.

Penalties are inadequate to deter negligent treatment of historic properties.

The criminal penalty for intentionally violating the provisions of DC’s historic preservation law is a fine of up to \$1000 a day until the situation is remedied, or up to 90 days in jail. The civil remedy is to restore the property to its condition prior to the violation (DC Code § 6-1110). A fine of \$1000 could be applied every day for a year and still amount to a fraction of the millions of dollars that houses in Cleveland Park sell for now. And that’s assuming a case is actually prosecuted and willful violation can be proved.

Provisions for emergency demolition are inadequate to protect historic properties.

The unsafe structures section of DC’s housing law (DC Code § 6-801), which is a separate section of the code from the historic preservation law, provides for the Mayor (i.e., the agencies and officers with authority delegated by the mayor—in this case, DCRA) to order a building in unsafe condition to be “removed or secured.” That section has the following exceptions for historic properties:

(a-1) If the unsafe building or structure is an historic landmark or is located in an historic district, as defined in § 6-1102(5), the Mayor shall not order or cause the building or structure, or portion thereof, to be removed or taken down unless the Mayor determines, in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, as defined in § 6-1102(12), that:

- (1) There is an extreme and immediate threat to public safety resulting from unsafe structural conditions; and*
- (2) The unsafe condition cannot be abated by shoring, stabilizing, or securing the building or structure.*

(a-2) If the building or structure is an historic landmark or is located within an historic district, as defined in § 6-1102, the Mayor shall not order the removal of the structure unless the Mayor determines that there is an extreme and immediate threat to the safety and welfare of the general public resulting from unsafe structural conditions. If the Mayor makes such determination, the Mayor shall require the owner to make the building safe and secure in accordance with the provisions of subsection (a) of this section.

The events leading up to the razing of 3515 Woodley demonstrate that the requirement for consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), which in DC is the head of HPO, is vague enough that both DCRA and HPO could interpret it as requiring only oral consultation. As a result, we have no paper trail for the crucial determination that the state of 3515 Woodley met the standards for emergency demolition. Moreover, the head of HPO has emphasized to CPHS that neither he nor anyone

on his staff has the structural engineering expertise to make a professional evaluation of the degree of danger to, or posed by, a damaged building.

Without an administrative record documenting the consultation between DCRA and HPO, and a detailed, professional structural evaluation of the state of 3515 Woodley, it is questionable whether the regulators could establish that the building posed “an extreme and immediate threat to public safety” or that “the unsafe condition” could not have been “abated by shoring, stabilizing, or securing the building or structure,” as required by the unsafe structures provision of the law. The house stood for eleven days between the initial visit of the DCRA inspector on October 26th and the time it was razed on November 6th. CPHS believes that, as a detached structure on a large lot, set well back from the street, it posed no obvious danger to the adjacent buildings or to those in the public right of way. It is possible that demolition was the only solution, but we are far from convinced that securing the site and the public safety required bulldozing every piece of the historic structure including its foundation.

The law as written does not adequately provide for the historic preservation interest to be considered. Once the possibility of an emergency demolition is invoked, decision-making is effectively removed from the hands of the preservation authorities whose responsibility it would normally be to review such a significant change in a historic district.

DC agencies need cooperation, consistency, transparency, and appropriate staffing.

As will be seen from the account above, the problem is not just with ambiguities in the law. If the Historic Preservation Office lacks the manpower and expertise to inspect and make determinations about the structural status of historic properties, DCRA must be suitably staffed and prepared to act in accordance with preservation priorities.

The bulk of HPO’s work, and that of the Historic Preservation Review Board for which it serves as staff, involves reviewing changes to historic properties at the concept stage. DCRA, on the other hand, has the responsibility for permitting construction drawings and conducting inspections of buildings under renovation—in short, all the aspects of the treatment of historic properties that happen onsite after the plans are approved. The handoff from HPO to DCRA needs to be seamless, and the requirements for consultation and ongoing communication between the two agencies need to be clear.

Unfortunately, as recent reporting and oversight hearings this year have documented, nothing with DCRA is seamless. CPHS supported the DC Preservation League’s testimony in the 2016 Agency Performance Oversight Hearings for DCRA, which emphasized the urgency of improving enforcement

in cases of illegal construction and demolition, coordination with HPO, and transparency for the public in tracking the status of permits and enforcement efforts.

DCRA hands off too much responsibility to owners, creating potential conflicts of interest.

Today, given the trend for underpinning historic structures (excavating basements to create more headroom), it is particularly important that DCRA consistently enforce the requirements for documenting plans for work on older buildings and ensuring that the work is carried out according to plan. At the moment, DCRA allows the handoff of structural inspection of plans to a licensed structural engineer hired by the permit applicant. That option was used in the case of 3515 Woodley, as documented in the permit application obtained by CPHS through a FOIA request.

Similarly, in the unhappy event that an emergency demolition is necessary, DCRA leaves it in the hands of the owners to carry out the demolition, apparently with no effort to coordinate with DCRA or HPO to ensure the demolition is limited to what is truly essential to ensure public safety and consistent with preservation interests.

Property owners’ responsible stewardship remains essential.

In the end, even if penalties for illegal demolition are strengthened and DCRA improves its enforcement, transparency, and cooperation with HPO, there will be limits to what our preservation law can achieve without the goodwill and responsible stewardship of property owners.

The preservation law has no control over what we do to the interiors of our houses, except in the very rare case of the building with a landmarked interior, like Sedgwick Gardens or the I.M. Pei House. But what happens to the interior can have profound implications for the preservation of the building as a whole, as demonstrated by the irresponsible interior demolition documented in the photo and in the inspector’s report reproduced on pp. 5–6. When properties are allowed to deteriorate, they become more vulnerable to being sold to developers, subjected to gut rehabs that destroy every bit of their historic interiors, speculatively enlarged, and otherwise denatured as historic artifacts. Institutional owners and absentee landlords have a particular duty to ensure that this kind of deterioration does not endanger our common legacy of historic architecture.

The vast majority of people who own property in Cleveland Park love the neighborhood’s historic houses, and they follow the spirit as well as the letter of the preservation law by going the extra distance to do right by their homes. We have done remarkably well since the creation of the Historic District at shepherding Cleveland Park’s historic buildings and landscapes from the 20th century into the 21st, and we now have a building stock that is on average a century old. Let us hope that 3515 Woodley is our last loss.

Art Deco Tour of Connecticut Avenue

By Stefan Hurray, CPHS Board Member

On March 5, 2016 CPHS members joined the Art Deco Society of Washington (ADSW) for a walking tour of Cleveland Park and Woodley Park to visit some of the finest examples of Art Deco apartment buildings in the city. ADSW president and architect Steve Knight led the group through the lobbies of numerous apartment buildings with Deco features including Tilden Gardens, Sedgwick Gardens (recently made a historic landmark thanks to a joint effort between CPHS and ADSW), The Broadmoor, Woodley Park Towers, and The Kennedy-Warren. Along the Connecticut Avenue commercial strip Mr. Knight pointed out Art Deco facades and details to an absorbed group of 60.

Kennedy-Warren resident historian James Goode presented a fascinating history of the building in its Art Deco bar after a tour of the public spaces. Goode is author of the noted book *Best Addresses*, which includes histories of all of the apartment buildings toured. One gentleman on the tour had grown up in the 1930s and 1940s in many of the buildings visited; his reaction to the interiors was one of homecoming as they have been lovingly preserved, or in the case of The Kennedy-Warren, completely restored.

The tour was a complete success and sold out quickly with a long wait list. Plans are in the works to repeat the tour, so keep an eye out for upcoming information.



Left: Tourgoers inside the lobby of Sedgwick Gardens, listening to Art Deco Society of Washington president Steve Knight



Right: A detail from inside the Kennedy-Warren



Left: The lobby of the Broadmoor

Right: Detail of the Klinge Valley Bridge, designed by Paul Cret, with the Kennedy-Warren in the background



(Photos by Stefan Hurray)

Rural Remnants of Washington County

By Abigail Porter, CPHS Board Member and Voices Editor

On February 9, 2016 Kim Prothro Williams, architectural historian and staff member at the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (HPO), gave a talk to a sell-out crowd of CPHS members and guests on her efforts to identify extant buildings associated with the District of Columbia's once rural landscape.

The former Washington County, the focus of Williams' talk, was the area within the District of Columbia but beyond the original boundaries of the federal city and Georgetown, on the Maryland side of the Potomac—a separate political entity until consolidation with the city in 1871. Washington County included everything that today is Northwest Washington north of Georgetown; Northwest and Northeast Washington north of Florida Avenue; and everything east of the Anacostia. Throughout the 19th century and even into the early 20th century Washington County was largely rural or semi-rural in character, dotted with large plantations, estates, and smaller farmsteads. Tobacco, vineyards, orchards, and slaves are all part of the area's past.

Prior to 2012, there had not been a systematic inventory of structures that might remain from Washington County's rural days. Williams described the fascinating methodologies she employed to identify still-standing former farm or estate buildings. One approach she took was a systematic comparison of historic and current day maps, such as the 1894 G.M. Hopkins Atlas and current-day GIS maps and aerial maps. By comparing such maps, and looking for structures from older maps on newer ones, Williams was able to pinpoint a number of buildings of interest. The biggest challenge with this approach was that in the past many farmhouses were moved from one location to another, disconnecting them from their original sites on maps. Another method Williams employed was an examination of previous architectural surveys. She also reviewed local histories and consulted local historians.

The results of Williams' work and the survey are significant: 73 extant properties from the 18th and 19th centuries have been identified in what was once Washington County, some of which are now landmarked due to their significance. In one case, a property owner initiated a landmark application in 2014 after learning of the significance of her home. Clusters of these historic buildings are located in Tenleytown, Palisades, Brightwood, and Cleveland Park, but they are spread throughout the four quadrants of the city. Structures that have been identified in Cleveland Park—besides Rosedale, of course—include the springhouse on Springland Lane and the Beauvoir Gate at Woodley Road just west of 34th Street, which used to be the entrance to the Beauvoir estate. In Woodley Park, there is Woodley House, built in 1801 and now part of the Maret School.

Since undertaking the survey, Williams has engaged in intensive research to delve into the history of a number of the properties identified. These further efforts have yielded a fascinating history of the county, its remaining vernacular structures, and early residents that had previously been unknown. In the future, Williams plans to research early subdivision houses and “failed” subdivisions.

Interested readers can access a full copy of Williams' report “Rural Remnants of Washington County: An Architectural Survey of Washington's Farms and Estates” at <http://planning.dc.gov/publication/historic-farms-and-estates-survey-rural-remnants-washington-county>.

Some of the properties discussed in Kim Williams' talk and survey (photos opposite page):

The Tucker-Means Farmhouse, 1216 Upshur Street, NE (Michigan Park), ca. 1854–58, was the center of a 50-acre farm belonging to Enoch Tucker. Tucker grew fruit trees on his rural property and also operated as a merchant in the City of Washington.

The Fenwick Farm Springhouse, on the campus of the Lowell School at 1640 Kalmia Road, NW (Colonial Village) dates from 1855. It served a 145-acre farm at the time it was built.

The Jost-Kuhn Farmhouse at 1354 Madison Street, NW (16th Street Heights) was built in 1859. It was the home of Benedict Joss, a Swiss immigrant who ran a restaurant at 17th and Pennsylvania, NW, and imported wine and Champagne from France.

The Mary Denman Property at 3703 Bangor Street, SE (Hillcrest) was built in 1860 on part of the “Nonesuch” estate given by G.W. Young to his daughter Mary at the time of her marriage. Young was one of the largest slaveholders in Washington County. There were 80 enslaved persons at Nonesuch at the time of the 1860 census.

The Scheele-Brown Farmhouse, 2207 Foxhall Road NW (Foxhall) dates from 1865, when Georgetown-born Augustus Daniel Scheele, a butcher and son of German immigrants, bought the farm from an Irish family. A ca. 1865 photo by Civil War photographer William Morris Smith shows the Scheele house under construction—an amazing archival find by Kim Williams.

(All photos opposite are from Williams' “Rural Remnants” survey.)



The Tucker-Means Farmhouse, 1216 Upshur Street, NE



The Fenwick Farm Springhouse, 1640 Kalmia Road, NW



The Jost-Kuhn Farmhouse at 1354 Madison Street, NW



The Mary Denman Property at 3703 Bangor Street, SE



The Scheele-Brown Farmhouse, 2207 Foxhall Road NW, today...



...and under construction (at right) in an 1865 photo

How Old Are Cleveland Park's Houses?

The oldest house in Cleveland Park is the Rosedale Farmhouse. The main house was built in 1794 and the small wing at the back, which dates to the 1730s, makes it the oldest house in Washington. The next-oldest Cleveland Park houses after that are Twin Oaks (1888) and 3607 Newark (1894), the first house from Cleveland Park's "streetcar suburb" phase of development. The National Register nomination for Cleveland Park identified 1000 buildings built in 1941 or earlier, and 68 buildings from after that date.

Now that Cleveland Park has been a historic district for almost 30 years, even houses that were too new to be recognized as historic in the mid 1980s have passed the National Register's informal threshold of historic age—50 years. These include the Slayton House by I.M. Pei at 3411 Ordway Street (1960) and the 1963 house by Winthrop Faulkner at 3530 Ordway Street. Houses that were merely middle aged at the time we became a historic district are now pushing towards the century mark.

CPHS's **Historic House Marker Program** was designed to raise awareness of the ages of the various buildings in the neighborhood. In this issue of *Voices*, we begin a new feature: **the Happy Hundredth list**. At the bottom of this page you will find a list of the houses in the Cleveland Park Historic District that are turning a century old this year. If your house is turning 100, or if it is one of the 1000 in the historic district that is 75 years old or more, consider giving it a house marker as a birthday present!



Order a Historic House Marker for Your Own House

CPHS offers historic house markers for contributing buildings in the Cleveland Park Historic District—those built in 1941 or earlier, and those individually landmarked. To order a marker, email Carin Ruff at staff@clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org to check on the date of your house and get an application.

Markers are \$175 for CPHS members and \$225 for non-members. (The difference is the price of a one-year household membership.) The markers are forged to order for us by the Erie Landmark Company. We send in orders in batches two or three times a year in order to save on shipping, and it takes several weeks for the markers to be manufactured. We are aiming to send in an order within a month of the publication of this issue, so get in touch right away if you would like to place an order this summer.

Meet the Newest Owners of a Historic House Marker

The Corkran family's house on 36th Street was built in 1923. The Corkrans (above) moved to here from Georgetown last summer. The family they bought their house from had lived there for over 50 years and they hope to be able to do the same.

Happy Hundredth!

Happy Hundredth Birthday to these Cleveland Park houses whose original building permits date to 1916:

3418 34th Street	3516 Lowell Street	3210 Macomb Street	3400 Newark Street	2925 Ordway Street
3420 34th Street	3519 Lowell Street	3301 Macomb Street	2915 Ordway Street	2927 Ordway Street
3100 35th Street	3601 Lowell Street	3501 Macomb Street	2917 Ordway Street	2929 Ordway Street
3105 36th Street	3609 Lowell Street	3505 Macomb Street	2919 Ordway Street	3704 Porter Street
3201 36th Street	2735 Macomb Street	3507 Macomb Street	2921 Ordway Street	3015 Rodman Street
3512 Lowell Street	2737 Macomb Street	3509 Macomb Street	2923 Ordway Street	3017 Rodman Street

2 0 1 6 M E M B E R S H I P

👉 Check the expiration date on your Voices mailing label to see if your membership is current or expired.

Join or renew online at ClevelandParkHistoricalSociety.org/Membership or complete the following form and send it with a check payable to C.P.H.S. to:

CLEVELAND PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 4862, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

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Email: _____

Note! Please be sure we have your current email address so that you do not miss important announcements. We will not spam you with too many emails, but we are now conducting most of our routine communication electronically, which saves us money and allows your membership dollars to go further.

Membership level: ☐ \$35 Apartment resident ☐ \$50 Household (for those in single-family homes)
 ☐ \$100 Sponsor ☐ \$250 Patron ☐ \$500 Angel

Total enclosed: \$ _____

CPHS is a member-supported, 501c3 not-for-profit organization. Thank you for your support!

CPHS's New Oral History Project

Plans are moving forward for our new oral history project! The planning committee (Kay Kohl, Fran Maclean, Myra Best, Abigail Porter, and Carin Ruff) is meeting this summer to start prioritizing interviewees and we hope to start interviewing early in the fall.

We met recently with Anne McDonough, librarian at the Historical Society of Washington (HSW) to talk about archiving the interviews as part of CPHS's papers, which HSW already holds, and making the transcripts available online in searchable form. We want the oral histories the project produces to be preserved in perpetuity, and to be as useful as possible to researchers, and that means deciding up front what form they will take both on paper and in electronic media.

The project aims to document the history of Cleveland Park in the 1960s and 1970s through the experiences of those who lived here then. Interviews will range beyond those two decades, of course, but the focus will be on that period—a time of great change in Washington and the nation, when many of those who are now our older residents were first establishing careers and families here.

If you have suggestions about people we should interview, or if you would like to be involved in the project yourself, please email Abigail Porter at easporter16@gmail.com. We're eager for neighbors' input!

Planning a Renovation or Addition?

We have a new, revised guide to historic preservation procedures on our website, plus new historic district maps. Visit www.clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org and look under "Historic District" in the menu.

CLEVELAND PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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VOICES

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