



Voices

The Newsletter of the Cleveland Park Historical Society

My Cleveland Park: Q & A with Camilla Carpenter, new Executive Director

In October 2019, long-time resident Camilla Carpenter took over from Carin Ruff as Executive Director of CPHS. Through this Q&A, the CPHS Board is delighted to introduce Camilla to our members and neighbors in her own words.

Editor: You have a life-long connection to Cleveland Park. Can you summarize your history here?

CC: I first moved to Cleveland Park as a teenager in 1974, when my parents bought an 1896 Queen Anne-style house. Back then, Cleveland Park was a very different neighborhood, a little rundown. There was no Metro stop. The Uptown was here, of course – I remember spending hot summer days inside the Uptown’s air-conditioned theater watching the movie “That’s Entertainment” multiple times. I returned to Cleveland Park as an adult in 2000, with my own family, eventually settling on Quebec Street. Between my parents’ moves and my own, I’ve lived in every type of historic house that Cleveland Park has to offer—except, unfortunately, a bungalow!

My two children grew up here, attended John Eaton ES and Sidwell Friends School, and worked their first jobs at Cleveland Park restaurants and summer camps. In between raising them, and working, I always made time to be active in the community. I was a member of the CPHS Board from 2004 to 2010, ran the popular Eaton Holiday Tree Sale, and volunteered at many school and neighborhood events.

Ed: What attracted you to apply for Executive Director of CPHS, and how do you see the role?

CC: When I was in college, my love of art, historic buildings and places blossomed and I ended up majoring in the history of art and architecture. While my career took me in another direction—I recently retired from Discovery Communications after a 40-year career in the television business—I have always retained a passion for architecture and historic preservation. After leaving Discovery, I was eager to find part-time work, to support an organization that contributes to the greater good, and to fully engage with my community. The opportunity to apply for the CPHS position fit perfectly with these personal priorities and I couldn’t be more excited about this new chapter in my life. While my professional background is largely corporate, I intend to harness the strategic, business, and organizational skills developed over my career to support and grow CPHS. It is a little daunting to follow Carin Ruff, who truly defined the role and really set a high bar. Thankfully for us, Carin plans to remain involved with CPHS.

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Letter from the President

Dear Members,

This has been a busy season for far for the Cleveland Park Historical Society. In September 2019 we welcomed as our new Executive Director Camilla Carptenter, who replaced Carin Ruff who stepped down in June. Camilla is a long-time Cleveland Park resident, with an academic background in art and architectural history and many years of professional experience in television and film programming. We are delighted that Camilla is able to continue Caren's work with our programs, development, outreach, membership, fundraising and management of the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). An interview with Camilla is featured in this issue of voices.

CPHS, through the ARC and the Board of Directors, is also engaged with proposed development and planning and zoning changes that could have the most significant impact on the historic district since its creation over thirty years ago.

In October, Velocity Property Management brought a proposal before the ANC, ARC and the Cleveland Park community to build two new residential/mixed use buildings (see description on page 4) on either side of The Macklin in the historic commercial district. The Macklin apartments and shops were designed as a finished four-sided, mixed-use building by M. Mesrobian, a noted Washington, DC architect, in 1939, and the Macklin building is located on a site at the prominent corner of Connecticut Avenue and Newark Street, N.W. One of CPHS' most popular programs last spring featured Mesrobian's significant work in Cleveland Park and other Washington, D.C. neighborhoods.

Infill development that respects and thoughtfully adapts to the historical context of contributing structures can be appropriate and invigorating. Given the significance of the Macklin in the National Register of Historic Places registration of the Cleveland Park Historic District, however, it is very important to get any infill development at this very visible location right. The National Registry Designation describes the careful siting of the Macklin building as set back and tucked into the hill side "so as not to dominate this very important corner that always marked the entrance into the oldest portion of Cleveland Park." Among other "criteria for significance" are the Macklin's strong connection to the Uptown Theater as forming an "aesthetically unified" and "unusually intact Art Deco commercial strip," which is "one of the best examples in the city," and which "maintains its integrity especially with regard to scale" and is "remarkably unified in appearance"; and the Macklin's preservation of curvilinear character and viewsheds of Newark Street, which "from Connecticut Avenue, the hill – with its houses rising in a nice progression of front porches along the street – is clearly visible."

Given that infill development at this prominent contributing property to the Cleveland Park Historic District will permanently alter the site, the Board resolved that the ANC, HPO and HPRB should give careful, thoughtful review to ensure that it contributes to and does not diminish this contributing property and the Historic District. The project must be well-designed and sensitive to its historical and architectural context and site. The proposal should be modified to respect and address the criteria for significance and other relevant elements in the National Register Designation with respect to the Macklin, the Macklin site, the Macklin's connection to the Uptown Theater, and the viewshed and streetscape from Connecticut Avenue along Newark Street. The Board also endorsed the ARC's preliminary comments, namely that:

- Velocity needs to provide additional pedestrian views from up and down Newark Street, the proposed retaining wall, a cross section of Newark showing the houses across the street, and views from the alley.
- In order to fully evaluate the proposal, the ARC needs additional information including pedestrian views from up and down Newark Street, a rendering of the proposed retaining wall, a cross section of Newark showing the houses across the street, and views from the alley.
- The proposed new apartment building is too large and the penthouse too tall. The new structure should defer to The Macklin and be set back from the street.
- The façade of the new west apartment building, especially where it faces Connecticut Avenue, needs further refinement as it is too commercial looking.
- The design of the proposed new townhouses needs more detail as well.

As Voices goes to press, the HPRB is scheduled to hear the Velocity proposal for the Macklin property on December 19, 2019.

The Board is also reviewing the implications of the Office of Planning's proposed changes to the District's Comprehensive Plan, which guides future zoning and land use decisions. The proposals have very significant implications for the Cleveland Park Historic District and could fundamentally alter a number of the criteria of significance in the National Register Designation. Among OP's proposed changes are up-zoning of the historic commercial area to moderate density commercial and high density residential, specifically raising height limits to 90 feet (and up to 110 feet with occupied penthouses); encouragement of infill development on the historic Broadmoor lawn to bring new buildings out to the corner; weakening of certain provisions related to historic preservation; and possible rezoning by DC agency directive or through designated planning areas, including in Cleveland Park, that would enable higher density apartment/condominium buildings on single family-zoned side streets up to one quarter-mile from major bus routes and one half-mile from Metro stations. The Board expects to have an ongoing dialogue with our members and to be engaged as the DC Council takes up the proposed changes in 2020.

On behalf of the Board, thank you for your membership in the Cleveland Park Historical Society and best wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely,

Rick Nash, President, CPHS Board of Directors

2019 Annual Meeting



At the CPHS Annual Meeting in June, David Maloney, DC's State Historic Preservation Officer, shared highlights of the work-in-progress of the Historic Preservation element of the DC Comprehensive Plan. Published every 20 years, the Plan is intended to serve as a high-level guide detailing a long-term vision for DC's physical growth and development. [Editor's Note: The draft Comprehensive Plan was released in late October and is currently in a 90-day public comments period]. For those who missed the meeting and want to learn more about the draft Plan, including historic preservation provisions, go to <https://plandc.dc.gov/>.

David also shared exciting plans for a forthcoming Ward 3 Heritage Guide. Based on similar guides to other DC wards, ours will offer a wonderfully robust resource for Cleveland Park residents and anyone else interested in the area's architectural and cultural history. To view already-published Ward Heritage Guides, go to the DC Office of Planning website, click on Preservation Planning, then Ward Heritage Guides (<https://planning.dc.gov/page/ward-heritage-guides>). Board members and other attendees at the Annual Meeting also celebrated and thanked Carin Ruff for her contributions and service as Executive Director of CPHS. Thank you, Carin!

At the Annual Meeting, the 2019-2020 Board of Directors slate was approved. For more information about the CPHS Board and the Architectural Review Committee, go to our website at <https://www.clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org/about-cphs/board/>.

Explore Your Neighborhood Online with History Quest DC

by Polly Ghazi

During his presentation, David Maloney also highlighted HistoryQuest DC, an interactive GIS tool that enables residents to view a treasure trove of information about our city's historic buildings. From homes to government buildings, museums and monuments, the application provides information from a variety of sources on original dates of construction, architects, owners and builders of around 127,000 properties.

Cleveland Park is one of many historic subdivisions featured. Using the tool, I managed to unearth details of my 1926 Ordway Street home in a couple of minutes. These included not only the architect and original owner, but the number of original rooms (six), the roof material (tin) and the estimated cost to build – a mere \$10,000. For those wanting to explore beyond a single site, the application includes a Query tool that allows users to analyze historic data within a specified geographic area or citywide.

HistoryQuest DC is part of the DC Historical Building Permits Database project and is still a work-in-progress. The Historic Preservation Office invites anyone with additional information or knowledge about specific buildings that will enhance, enrich, or correct the map, to go to <https://planning.dc.gov/page/historyquest-dc>, and follow the instructions for submitting proposed changes.

HistoryQuest DC Historic Preservation Office Propose Data Change

3614 ORDWAY	
Contributing	Yes
Square	1111
Suffix	
Lot	0000
Year Built	1926
Source	DC Historical Building Permits Database
Permit #	1234
Permit Date	February 28, 1926
Original Owner	Tankersley, Charles L.
Architect	Santmyers, George T.
Builder	Tankersley, Charles L.

Construction Projects of Note

by Camilla Carpenter

3400 CONNECTICUT AVENUE/2911 NEWARK STREET: Owner Velocity Property Management submitted a proposal to build two new structures: a new 31-unit four-story plus penthouse building to the west of the Macklin Apartments (M. Mesrobian, 1939) and a new 4-unit townhouse/retail building to the east, both buildings facing Newark Street. A pedestrian plaza would face Connecticut Avenue. After presenting to the ANC in October, a 45-day review period was initiated in order to provide time for the community to weigh in. The project was presented to the ARC in November and comments were given. It is expected that the owners will come back to the ARC and ANC in the coming months. A zoning variance will also be required due to the lack of resident parking.

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

The Washington International School, Tregaron Campus, is located between Macomb Street and Klinge Road in the middle of what is now the Tregaron Conservancy. A Georgian Revival mansion is the centerpiece of the school and of the property. In order to create additional classroom space, science labs, and dining facilities, among other projects, the school is proposing to move the “Dacha” and construct an addition between the mansion and the existing soccer field. Approximately 70% of the new addition will be underground. The project was presented to the ARC in November, after which the ARC gave comments. It is expected that project will return to the ARC before going before HPRB in early 2020.

JOHN EATON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Since the last edition of Voices, DC Public Schools’ renovation of John Eaton Elementary School has moved from the Design Phase to the first part of the Construction Phase. Work in the coming months will focus on interior demolition, hazmat abatement, and demolition of the center buildings. The school’s approximately 500 students now occupy a designated swing space on the UDC Campus in Van Ness, with the renovation due for completion in August 2021.

Q&A, continued from page 1

Ed: What makes Cleveland Park special for you?

CC: Twenty years ago, I had a conversation that encapsulates how I feel about this neighborhood. It was a warm day in 2000, soon after we moved into our new house across the street from the Cleveland Park Congregational Church. I introduced myself to a gentleman who was gardening there, and who turned out to be Dick Jorgensen (a long-time CPHS member and former co-president who passed in 2018). He welcomed me, and asked: “Do you realize that we live in the best neighborhood in America?”

I am a firm believer in the value of historic buildings and streetscapes to give us deeper understanding of how places can connect the past to our present. People love to visit old cities and buildings because these spaces resonate within us in a unique way. Thompson Mayes of the National Trust for Historic Preservation—who spoke to CPHS members a few years ago—has written a wonderful book called “Why Old Places Matter” about how history and historic spaces can deepen and enrich our conceptions of ourselves and our place in the world. I believe it is up to all of us to honor and protect these special places, including right here in Cleveland Park.

Order a Historic House Marker for Your House

CPHS offers historic house markers for contributing properties in the Cleveland Park Historic District—those built in 1941 or earlier, and those individually landmarked. Email Camilla Carpenter at staff@clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org to check on the date of your house and to get an application.



Markers are \$175 (cost + shipping) 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.

Oral History Project:

Excerpt from Interview with Lou Stovall

Longtime Cleveland Park resident Lou Stovall is a world-renowned artist and printmaker. In this excerpt from an oral history conducted in October 2018 by CPHS member Kay Kohl, Lou reflects on his early years in Washington and the decision he and his wife, Di Stovall, made to move to Cleveland Park. (NOTE: The full oral history will be published on our website in the near future.)



Di and Lou Stovall; photo by Judy Hubbard

Kay Kohl: When did you move to Cleveland Park and what drew you to this neighborhood?

Lou Stovall: Well, I guess I was basically from my very beginning a person who was attracted to people and friendships. And I had met a lot of people by that time. I guess I'd moved to Washington in 1962 and I was here for five or six years between Howard University and sort of getting started in the community. And there were actually an appreciable number of people who were also involved in silkscreen and wanted to learn it because it was a brand new medium and it was economical to do. People were very, very happy to learn it in exchange for lessons of how to do it. And so that's what happened there.

KK: How did you find this particular home?

LS: Well I also, in addition to making the posters for the community, found that I was attracted to D.C. politics and had met certain people and we also realized that we really had a community that we were that we really liked being involved in. Di and I had become married, dating

first and one thing leading to another, and finally married. And we decided that we needed a permanent place to live and work. I just needed more space. At that particular time, we were mostly centered around Dupont Circle ... where everything seemed to be happening. There were lots of artists around Dupont Circle. There was a gallery there and the man who was director of the gallery, whose name was Walter Hopps, and a friend of mine, whose name was Lloyd McNeill, were both fascinated with silkscreen prints and what was happening there and we decided that we should have a permanent place for working [but] places were not that much available. So, we decided we would move north of Dupont Circle and we ended up in Cleveland Park where we found a wonderful home that was adequate, had enough room, had a three-car garage, which we then doubled in size to make a permanent studio which is where we are now.

And it was a wonderful place to work and live. We had great neighbors who didn't seem to be bothered by all the activity that we brought up because we did bring a lot of activity. But there were also lots of young people who came from this area of Cleveland Park, you know, to work with us. And so, it became not a commune, because no one lived here except Di and myself, but it was kind of a 20-hour-a-day workspace. We had people, you know, coming with assignments and supplies and materials, and we made whatever it was that we were making and then they would leave and then another group would come. And so, it was wonderful during that time.

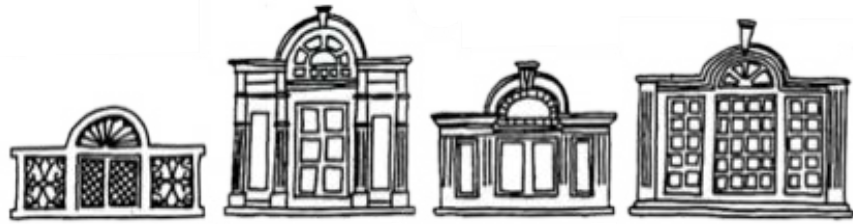
Lou Stovall's work can be found in museums and collections around the world. Closer to home, examples of Lou Stovall's work can be seen at the Cleveland Park Public Library. Three pieces, *Roses XI* (2012), *Rock Creek AM* (2018) and *Rock Creek, Noon* (2018) are located on the main floor next to the check out desk.



Roses XI by Lou Stovall

FROM THE ARCHIVES:

Palladian Windows by Kathy Wood



Palladian window variants, usually located above the front door, in the gable of a roof, or on the side of a house. Drawings by Susan Hornbostel

Palladian windows come in many shapes and sizes and occupy a variety of locations on Cleveland Park houses. Their use transcends stylistic labels since they appear in houses of Queen Anne, Shingle, and Colonial Revival styles. The origin of the window shape dates back to Roman times, when an arch was set in the middle of a colonnade, providing a wider, grander entrance and marking a central axis.

Italian Renaissance architects revived and refined the motif during the 15th and 16th centuries. Palladio, a 16th century Venetian architect, used, illustrated, and popularized it to such an extent that it is often identified by his name. These windows quickly became popular in Georgian England, primarily to flood church altars and stair landings in Georgian mansions with light, while at the same time providing a central decorative feature on the exterior facade. In the colonies, George Washington installed a splendid example at Mount Vernon to light his ballroom addition of the 1770s.

In Cleveland Park, the earliest Palladian windows were used in Twin Oaks, a Georgian Revival Summer House of 1888. (Twin Oaks -- built by Gardiner Greene Hubbard, who founded the National Geographic Society -- is adjacent to Tregaron and is owned by the government of Taiwan). Subsequently, the architects who designed houses for the Cleveland Park Company from 1895 to 1901 frequently used Palladian windows. Sometimes their placement was determined by the exterior appearance of those houses and sometimes by the desire to create an interior effect.



Palladian window on Highland Place



Twin Oaks; drawing by John Wiebenson

WINDOW REPLACEMENT IN CLEVELAND PARK

Window replacement today is a fairly routine process, and can normally be approved by staff of the DC Historic Preservation Office (HPO), whom residents should always consult about any planned exterior changes to their houses. HPO staff can explain what windows they will specifically approve, which will depend on specifics of the house's style, the existing windows, and other information the residents may provide.

The HPO's Cleveland Park Historic District representative is Steve Callcott. Steve reviews Cleveland Park projects and can be reached at 202-741-5247 or steve.callcott@dc.gov to discuss the specifics of any inquiry. Residents can also view the HPO's window guidelines brochure for recommendations on how to approach the process. The brochure is available on the HPO site at <https://planning.dc.gov/page/design-guidelines> and click on "Window Standards".

There are also several reputable firms that rehab historic windows, which is likely to be less expensive than replacement and conserves the old-growth lumber used in prewar construction.

2020 MEMBERSHIP

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: _____

Phone: _____

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 Single-family Household

☐ \$100 Sponsor ☐ \$250 Patron ☐ \$500 Angel

Total enclosed: \$ _____

All levels give membership benefits to everyone in the household. CPHS is a member-supported, 501c3 not-for-profit organization. Membership dues are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Members receive discounts and priority registration for public events, invitations to member-only tours, and discounts on event fees, house markers, and CPHS publications. Thank you for your support!

FOLLOW US! Want to keep track of preservation news in Cleveland Park and DC?
facebook.com/ClevelandParkHistory
 Instagram: @clevepkhist



Planning work on your home in the Cleveland Park Historic District?

Owners of homes and other buildings in the Cleveland Park Historic District share responsibility for helping preserve the historic fabric of the neighborhood, the properties themselves and their relationship to the whole streetscape and natural environment.

Visit our website, ClevelandParkHistoricalSociety.org, for guidance on the design review process in Cleveland Park and the permitting process in DC.

Architectural Review Committee Meetings

All ARC meetings are held the second Monday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Cleveland Park Congregational Church, 3400 Lowell Street, NW. The ARC reviews projects in an advisory capacity before the projects are heard at the DC Historic Preservation Review Board monthly meeting. Note that the ARC does not meet in August (and neither does the HPRB). If you are planning major work on your home next fall, you may wish to start the preservation review process in time for the July ARC meeting.

To request a place on the agenda for ARC meetings, email us at staff@clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org

CLEVELAND PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 4862

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

VOICES 2019

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