



Voices

The Newsletter of the Cleveland Park Historical Society

A New Life for the Uptown?

by Andrea Pedolsky

Could it be? Yes, it could. The art deco Uptown Theater, which closed in March 2020 when AMC Theaters left the space, might become a Landmark Theater. At the time of this writing, the iconic building's owners, the Pedas family, are in discussions with Landmark Theaters about taking over the space. The company is the largest movie theatre chain in the U.S. dedicated to exhibiting independent and foreign films. It's pretty exciting news, and Cleveland Park is abuzz in anticipation.

CPHS's Save the Uptown committee has been engaged since September 2020 in an effort to preserve this centerpiece of our historic commercial district. We are hopeful that these talks continue in a positive direction.

There are many details for the two parties to work out, though, as the Uptown needs renovation work and currently lacks a projector and sound equipment. In support of this effort, the ANC3C commissioners recently voted to approve giving Landmark a liquor license. Beer and wine are sold at Landmark's E Street and Bethesda Row locations.



And there's more: in October 2020, CPHS co-sponsored the DC Preservation League's landmark nomination of the Uptown. While the theater has been protected since 1987 as a contributing structure in the Cleveland Park Historic District, separate landmark status would bring a higher level of scrutiny and protection to the Uptown's exterior. The Historic Preservation Office has assured CPHS that the landmark application will be taken up early in 2022.

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Q&A with Our New President, Bonnie LePard

with Polly Ghazi, Voices editor

In June 2021, Bonnie LePard took over from Rick Nash as president of the Cleveland Park Historical Society. An environmental and historic preservation lawyer, and founder of the Tregaron Conservancy (an historic site that she dedicated 20 years of her life to help save, preserve, and rehabilitate), Bonnie brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role. Here, she shares her vision for CPHS and passion for the neighborhood.



Q: How long have you lived in Cleveland Park and how has the neighborhood changed over that time?

A: My husband Bruce Reed and I moved from an historic townhouse on Capitol Hill to our home on Macomb Street in 1992. The house is a foursquare that was built in 1919. We modernized the interior while leaving the front of the house in its original condition, and have raised two lively children and two big dogs here. As for the neighborhood, it has only gotten better – lovely people who have lived here for decades joined by wonderful new families.

Q: What interested you about leading CPHS?

A: I receive so much joy from living in an historic district and Cleveland Park in particular. The homes, landscapes, and streets are beautiful and welcoming. The people are the best – so friendly and interesting. I love frequenting our local businesses and having a walkable neighborhood. The Cleveland Park Historical Society is dedicated to preserving this wonderful historic community while keeping an eye on the future and welcoming appropriate or needed changes. We are fortunate to have an organization such as CPHS and so many dedicated individuals in our midst, and I wanted to play my part.

Q: What is your vision for the organization?

A: I hope to see the membership of CPHS grow, especially with new and younger families. At CPHS, we want to continue popular past programs such as the gingerbread house decorating event, garden tours, speakers, and walking tours, while coming up with new programs. For example, we will be hiring a graduate student to conduct research on the social, racial and economic history of Cleveland Park. This historian will research and document the story of our neighborhood's past, including compiling a record of any barriers that might have been imposed to exclude people of color.

Q: What is your message to Cleveland Parkers who may not be interested in historic preservation? Why does it matter?

A: Historic preservation matters on so many levels – environmental sustainability, conservation of energy and materials, landscape protection, a sense of place and community, understanding the best of the past and recognizing what we must do better. It connects the past, present, and future of our special neighborhood.

2025 Historic Preservation Plan

In July, CPHS hosted a meeting with State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) David Maloney, of the DC Office of Planning. David shared a draft version of the 2025 Historic Preservation Plan (for the latest version, go to <https://planning.dc.gov/page/dc-historic-preservation-plan>). The plan explores the city's plans and priorities for historic preservation over the next five years, and is intended to guide the operations of the Historic Preservation Office, Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB), and other government agencies involved in implementing preservation laws.



Fulfilling the requirement of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 for a comprehensive preservation plan implemented by the State Historic Preservation Officer, the plan follows the standards and guidelines of the National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Department of the Interior. The final draft of the plan will be submitted to NPS for its review and approval by the end of 2021.

20-Year DC Comprehensive Plan Approved

by Andrea Pedolsky and Leila Afzal

DC's Comprehensive Plan, a 20-year framework that guides the city's future growth and development, was approved in August 2021. Originally adopted in 2006, it was first amended in 2011. This latest update follows many months of very heated public meetings and testimony in Cleveland Park and throughout the city's wards. During this process, CPHS shared its concerns about the plan weakening protections of our historic district with the City Council, its Chairperson Phil Mendelson, and Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh. The final version did not include a number of our proposed changes – most significantly, reducing the proposed height/density of the Connecticut Avenue commercial strip.

You can read the entire revised Comprehensive Plan Act of 2020 (Law number L24-0020) here: <https://lms.dccouncil.us/downloads/LIMS/46201/Meeting3/Enrollment/B24-0001-Enrollment3.pdf>.

The Comp Plan describes implementation actions and includes a policy map showing Future Planning Analysis Areas: (<https://dcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=cd1c29c1481f4ddb9cb45490ce16426f>).

In addition, Small Area Plans have been announced by the city. They provide detailed direction for specific geographic areas to increase development and density. The city claims the Plans will promote revitalization, and/or achieve other long-range planning goals. It appears that for the Connecticut Avenue corridor, the small area plans are targeting the development of residential neighborhoods. Learn more about Small Area Plans here: <https://planning.dc.gov/publication/small-area-plan-information> and see a detailed list of completed plans here: <https://planning.dc.gov/page/small-area-plans-studies-and-reports>.

“A City Doesn’t Stay Good by Default”: The Future of Historic Preservation in DC

by Karen L. Davis

A highlight of CPHS’s 2021 Annual Meeting in June was an informal Q&A with Richard Longstreth, PhD., art historian and Professor of American Studies at George Washington University. CPHS Vice President Leila Afzal guided the conversation which took place against the backdrop of two significant developments for Cleveland Park. These were approval of an in-fill development centered on The Macklin and the D.C. Council’s approval of a new Comprehensive Plan and Future Land-Use Maps which could alter our neighborhood’s designation and zoning.

Longstreth, a D.C. resident since 1983, holds a doctorate in architectural history from UC Berkeley and has been involved in historic preservation efforts here for decades. He began by asserting that D.C.’s neighborhood organizations “are absolutely crucial” to the effectiveness of historic preservation. “I’m not sure there’s another city where there’s such a galaxy of neighborhood groups that have taken the bull by the horns over the years” and been so effective.

On the Macklin building, designed by M. Mesrobian and viewed as a bookend to our historic district, Afzal asked whether the approved changes would be a loss or an “evolution of what happens in a living community?” In response, Longstreth depicted the Connecticut Avenue corridor as a “pioneering example of enlightened zoning,” that integrated a commercial district and a residential district in textbook fashion. He stressed that the corridor’s evolution demonstrates the importance of long-term planning as the foundation for sensible growth and the biggest factor in sustaining long-term property values. The history of many American cities is boom and bust – developing to the max but then losing its appeal – which hasn’t been the history of Cleveland Park.

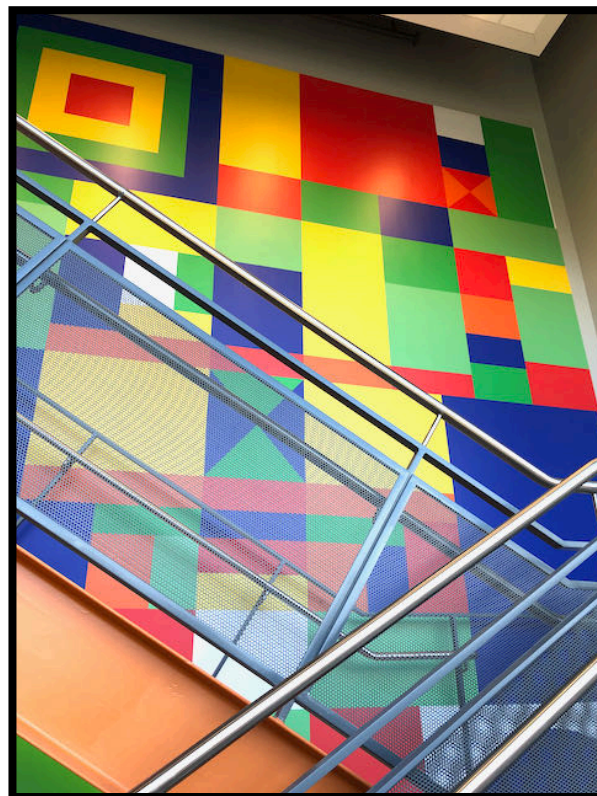
Cautioning that we don’t know what the market pressure for living in the District will be post-pandemic, Longstreth followed the thread to the D.C. Office of Planning’s seeming efforts to jam as much space as possible into as many places as possible. If you stick an apartment block next to a single-family home, he argued, you increase the property values of the adjoining houses from an assessment standpoint, but you reduce the value of their appeal. The homeowners “get higher taxes, but the quality of the environment is ... lowered.”

Recognizing that cities are dynamic, living entities, Afzal inquired, “Why is it important to know about the architecture and the history but also preserve it for future generations?” Longstreth pointed out that “Change is endemic to settled areas,” urban or rural. Yet, there’s also continuity – in the sense that “this place has been around for a while, people have taken care of it ... people value it.” This brings the benefit of stability and a sense of community. “In a changing world, preservation is about managing change. ... It allows the public to have a greater role, if they wish to take it, in managing change.”

Afzal ended the conversation by asking Longstreth to look into his crystal ball and suggest what might happen to Cleveland Park with the “upflumming” of the neighborhood’s zoning. Does he see significant change ahead or might the retained historic preservation language help with managing future growth? Longstreth responded by urging Cleveland Park residents to stir up a hornet’s nest and make their voices heard to elected officials. He denounced the recent changes in zoning as “absolute foolishness,” and said they would destabilize property values and the population. “It’s an unthinkable stupid plan. ... I would hope lots of Cleveland Park residents would start to get very, very active.”

“A good city doesn’t stay good by default. ... never has, never will,” he added, arguing that Cleveland Park could set a significant precedent if it successfully fought the planning office zoning proposals. “Let’s hope this flub of a plan is... rejected.”

John Eaton Elementary Reopens



The renovation of John Eaton Elementary School wrapped up over the summer, and students were welcomed back to a new playground, new classroom and resource areas, sunlit stairwells, and walls covered in art.



Lou Stovall on Exhibit

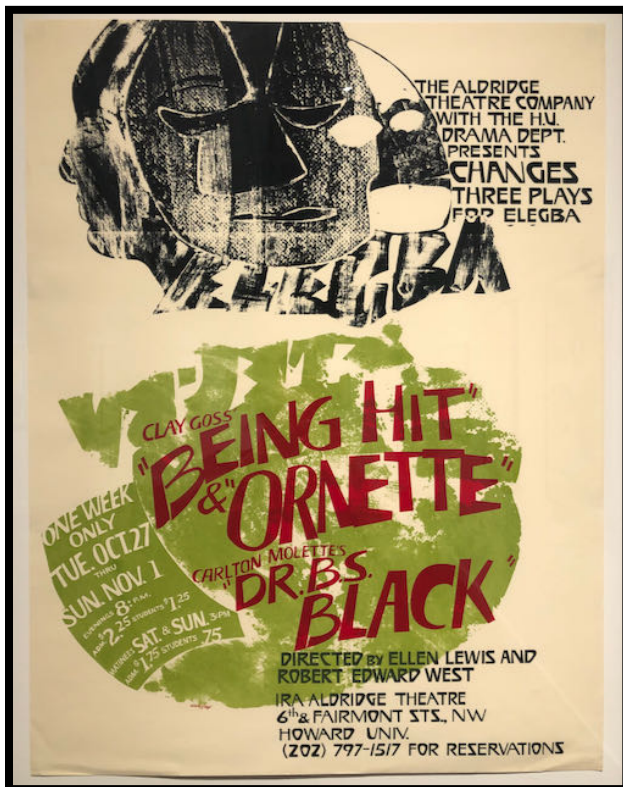
by Roz Beitler

This summer, the Hemphill Artworks gallery in the Mt. Vernon Triangle staged an exhibit of dynamite posters from *WHAT'S GOING AROUND*, Lou Stovall & the Community Poster, 1967-1976. The bold and bright posters show the issues and challenges of the period through striking graphics and dynamic color.

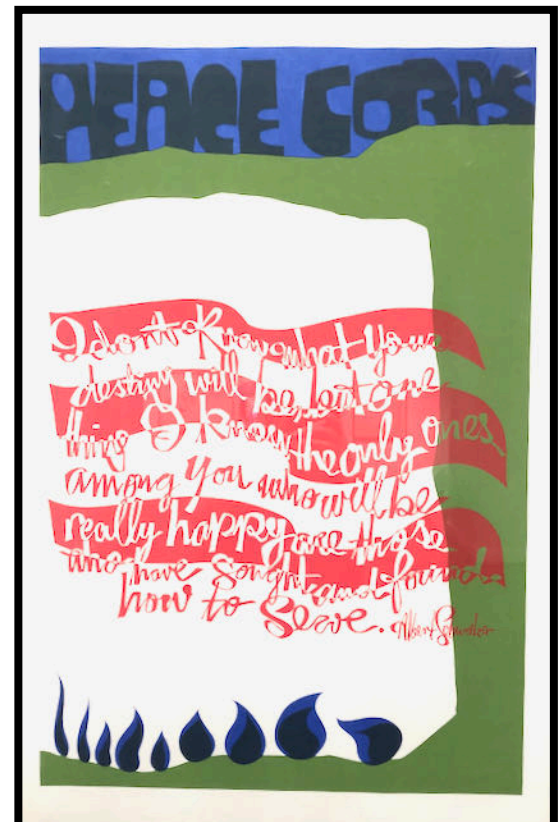
Looking ahead, the Kreeger Museum on Foxhall Road will feature two exhibits by Lou Stovall from January 16-April 20, 2022. *Lou Stovall: On Inventions and Color* will include works from across Stovall's career, giving insight into the artist's innovative approach to screenprinting and his decades-long study of color. *Of the Land: Lou Stovall and the Poetry of Seasons* will examine the master printmaker's 1974 series, a collection of interconnected poems, drawings, and prints inspired by the natural world.



Roz Beitler and Judy Hubbard visited with Lou Stovall's son Chris at the exhibit.



Three Plays at Howard University, 1970



Peace Corps, 1970

2021-2022 Board of Directors

At the CPHS Annual Meeting in June, the newest members of the CPHS Board of Directors were elected, as well as a new slate of officers. The 2021-2022 Officers and Board are listed below, along with bios of our newest Board members.

President: Bonnie LePard, Macomb Street

Vice Presidents: Leila Afzal, Ordway Street and Rick Nash, Newark Street

Treasurer: Julia Rogers, Macomb Street

Secretary: Karen Lightfoot, Ordway Street

Carol Lynn Bamford, Lowell Street

John Buchanan, Newark Street

John Chelen, 30th Place

Karen Davis, Connecticut Avenue

Saveria Emblad, 30th Street

Polly Ghazi, Ordway Street

Christine Hobbs, Norton Place

Shaun Jones, Newark Street

Judith Kennedy, Newark Street

Vicky Marchand, Rodman Street

Ron Ngaim, 34th Street

Lois Orr, 34th Street

Andrea Pedolsky, Connecticut Avenue

Shannon Penberthy, Porter Street

Frank Swain, Newark Street

Barbara Zadina, Norton Place

New Board Members

Carol Lynn Bamford (Lowell Street)

Cleveland Park has been my home since 1993 when I moved here for my job. I first lived on Norton, Macomb, and Conn Ave before buying our home on Lowell Street (in Cleveland Park's "Oak View" section) twenty years ago. My husband Jim and I have raised our two daughters and three dogs in our 1919 Foursquare, home also to the Mondale and Stenhouse families for many decades. We couldn't be happier amidst great neighbors, places to walk, shop and dine, and the lovely landscapes with abundant trees (and cicadas!). During the day I am curator of musical instruments at the Library of Congress and, when not at work, I have been active in our neighborhood serving on the boards of the Cleveland Park Historical Society, Cleveland & Woodley Park Village, Cleveland Park Club, CPCA (forthcoming), or as founder of Girls on the Run-DC and Prince Georges County. For my service to DC residents, I received the Trailblazer Award. During my 20+ years as member or board member of CPHS, I have spearheaded programs such as the antiques auction, geology day, gingerbread house decorating, two house tours, and a garden tour. I enjoy celebrating our neighborhood with activities for all while at the same time finding collaborative ways to support issues that face our changing and growing community.

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2021-2022 Board of Directors, cont'd

Andrea Pedolsky (Connecticut Avenue)

When Andrea Pedolsky and her partner, Nicholas Smith, saw the Broadmoor Cooperative Apartments on one of their where-should-we-live scouting visits to DC in 2002, they immediately knew they had found their new home. In both New York City and DC, Andrea has worked in publishing in various editorial capacities, including as acquisitions editor, executive editor creating new imprints, director of publishing, and literary agent. Andrea currently is providing editorial services to global health organizations. She also volunteers as an ESL writing tutor at the Washington English Center. Andrea served on the Broadmoor's board of directors for three consecutive two-year terms. During her last term, Andrea served as board liaison to the cooperative's Ad Hoc Committee on the DC Comprehensive Plan, which reported to the board on such issues as revisions to the Comprehensive Plan, changes in zoning, and streetscape development.

Barbara Zadina (Norton Place)

Barbara purchased her 1925 home on Norton Place in 2017, after living in the area since the 1990s. When she discovered a satchel in the attic with old photos and letters, she connected with the granddaughter of the original homeowner who told her stories of growing up in early Cleveland Park, so she feels a deep connection to her house. She loves gardening, and is the current co-chair of the upcoming CPHS Garden Tour which will take place in spring 2022. She previously served on the fundraising board of the Montgomery County MD Habitat for Humanity. Barbara is a policy communications executive who has worked in politics, technology, entertainment, and international development in over 20 countries, and is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School.

The CPHS Garden Tour Returns in Spring 2022!

If you are interested in volunteering your time or your garden, please email Barbara Zadina (Bzadina@msn.com) or Kelly Wilder (kellyrwilder@gmail.com) for more information!



Order a Historic House Marker for Your Home

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.

2022 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!

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preservation news in Cleveland Park and DC?
Facebook.com/ClevelandParkHistory
Twitter: @ClevePKHistory
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, either virtually or 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 2021

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