



Voices

The Newsletter of the Cleveland Park Historical Society

Latest Redistricting News

The city's Redistricting initiative continues to be a serious issue for the Cleveland Park Historic District. The Ward 3 task force proposal submitted to the DC Council proposed dividing the Historic District across two ANCs and five Single Member Districts (SMDs). A coalition of Ward 3 neighborhood groups, including CPHS, submitted an alternate map that keeps our neighborhood within a single ANC.

A Subcommittee of the DC Council is currently reviewing the task forces' recommendations and will continue to receive community feedback until May 13, though we recommend submitting comments before the second public hearing on April 28.

Below is the testimony to the Subcommittee provided by CPHS President Bonnie LePard at the first hearing on April 7. For more information on how to share your comments with the DC Council, see the links at the end of this article.

Good afternoon, Council Members Silverman, Henderson, and Bonds,

I'm Bonnie LePard, President of the Cleveland Park Historical Society. Our mission is to maintain and enhance the character and strength of Cleveland Park as an historic, multi-faceted, urban residential neighborhood. As such, I am here today to ask this Subcommittee to reject the proposal of the Ward 3 Redistricting Task Force, which would divide the neighborhood of Cleveland Park into two different ANCs and five SMDs.

As you know, redistricting is essentially an exercise in adjusting ANC and SMD boundaries to reflect population changes. Instructions to the task forces prioritized maintaining "neighborhood cohesiveness." The Ward 3 task force ignored this guiding principle in favor of an abstract construct giving priority to commercial corridors, not neighborhoods.

For example, the Redistricting Task Force proposes a new ANC with an SMD (ANC3A05) that runs north-south for 1.7 miles, spans only a single block at the north end, divides the Cleveland Park Historic District in half, and essentially creates a corridor of portions of communities that have no relation to each other, cutting people off from neighborhoods of which they are part and with which they share actual uses and interests. This proposed SMD contradicts the core purpose of an SMD by interfering with and unnecessarily complicating the ability of communities within the Ward to engage on issues and uses important to them. On Porter Street alone, three contiguous blocks are in two different ANCs and three different SMDs.

I attended every public meeting of the Ward 3 task force, and in every meeting, I asked the task force members to keep the Cleveland Park Historic District within a single ANC. Several task force supporters claimed that historic preservation issues “took up too much time” on the ANC calendar. This position denies the reality of living in an historic district. Dividing the Cleveland Park Historic District across multiple ANCs will not reduce the number of preservation matters. In fact, it will only complicate efforts to have a consistent approach to these issues and to approach problems in a holistic manner. Neighbors will have to attend multiple ANC meetings, represented by commissioners who serve a hodgepodge of neighborhoods, lacking the very connection and familiarity with a neighborhood that every ANC commissioner should possess. There's no reason to split an historic district if it can fit in one ANC as Cleveland Park's clearly can.

Because the Ward 3 Task Force embraced a principle of corridor-centric mapping (apparently unique among the Wards) and rejected community input urging the task force to change course, a Neighborhood Voice coalition of community organizations, including Cleveland Park Historical Society, Cleveland Park Citizens Association, and numerous other groups from across the Ward came together and created a viable alternative map proposal. On behalf of the Cleveland Park Historical Society, I urge you to adopt the Ward 3 Neighborhood Voices map.

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration of this very important matter.

Bonnie LePard, President, Cleveland Park Historical Society

Fingers Remain Crossed for Reopening the Uptown

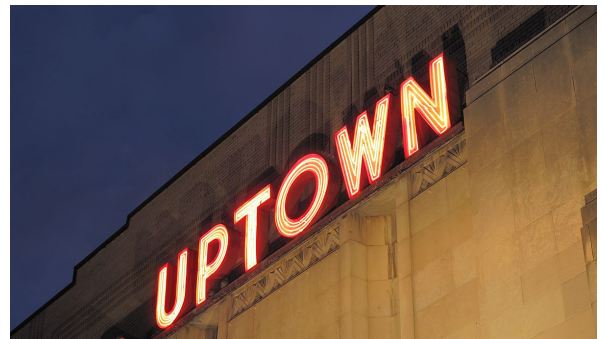
by Andrea Pedolsky

The Historic Landmark nomination of the Uptown Theatre, submitted in 2020 by CPHS and the DC Preservation League (DCPL), will be heard by the Historic Preservation Review Board on May 26, 2022. 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 its exterior.

The online Capital News Service recently reported on the status of the theatre. According to CNS, a permit for electrical work describes the proposed use of the space as a motion picture facility. In addition, a permit application for construction inside the theater was made to DC's Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs.

The article also quoted CPHS president Bonnie LePard, who has learned from the Pedas family which owns the building that the electrical work is major and will take a lot of time.

Our understanding is that discussions continue between the Pedas family and Landmark Theaters about taking over the space.



Historic Cleveland Park Community Garden Supports District Families in Need

by Cathy Newman

Spring has arrived, and the 110 or so households who farm 20ft by 10ft plots in the Community Garden located just west of Sedgwick Garden Apartments are busy planting beets and lettuce. The land was set aside by the National Park Service in 1943 as one of the Victory Gardens established during World War II, when food rationing impacted domestic supply. To conserve food for the military, the government encouraged people to cultivate gardens for their own use, and patriotic Americans responded. Roughly one half of all families—“soldiers of the soil”—kept a victory garden and by war’s end had grown about 8 million tons of food.

Today, the tradition of sharing produce continues. The garden’s “Grow a Row” initiative encourages gardeners to donate their excess harvest to So Others Might Eat (SOME), an interfaith, community-based organization that helps the District’s low income and homeless families. An additional plot on the Connecticut Avenue side has been set aside for SOME to supplement individual food donations.

June in the garden brings a harvest of early crops like radishes, but August is its Cinderella month—the season of vegetable-heavy vines and flowers. There are peppers, squash and vine-ripe tomatoes, of course, even an ambitious artichoke or so, but beyond the produce lies a no less important harvest of admirable values: a sense of community, the cultivation of generosity and a commitment to the responsible and light footprint of organic gardening.

A polite, but firm, list of rules ensures responsible gardening. No chemicals, either in the form of pesticides or fertilizer. Monoculture—an unsound practice for organic gardens—is discouraged: no more than 50 per cent of a plot may be allotted to a single crop. In synchrony with its origins as a source of food, no more than 10 per cent of a plot may be used for flowers—ideally native species pollinators, and cover crops like rye or clover are encouraged in winter. Finally, boundaries are maintained; members who allow plants to overstep their barriers and creep onto walkways receive a gentle reminder from the Inspection Committee.

The garden is currently undergoing a name change, reflecting the recent renaming of Melvin Hazen Park to Reservation 630. The proposed name will be “Cleveland Park Community Garden”. Annual fees are a modest \$30. The waiting list is currently about 130 names long, representing a seven to eight year wait, but those who are patient are more than rewarded.

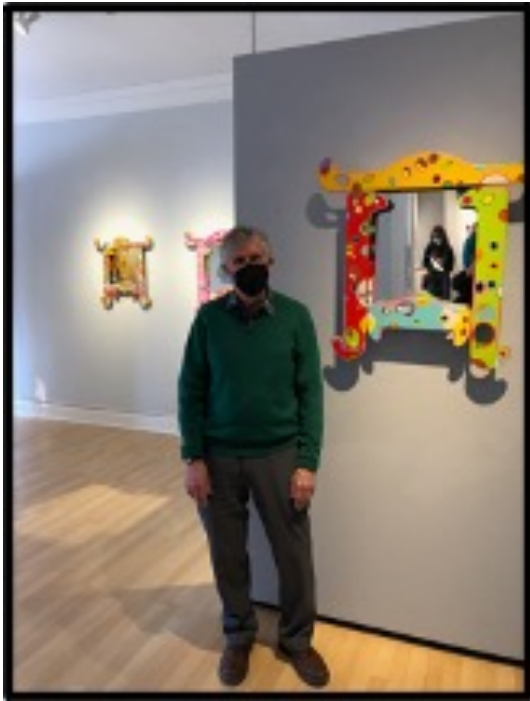
“The first thing the garden teaches,” says community garden president John Mitchell, “is the cycle of seasons.” The next lessons are those you learn from others: What varieties do best. How to pinch back tomatoes. How to cook your harvest. “Everything becomes richer,” he says. The interrelationship between your garden and those of others becomes clear. “You understand, ‘if I don’t weed my garden, it will go to seed and affect others.’”

For more information on the Cleveland Park Community Garden see: <https://sites.google.com/view/mhggarden/home>



Dickson Carroll's "Mirror Variations"

Dickson Carroll, long-time Cleveland Park resident, architect, and artist, was the subject of a recent exhibition entitled "Mirror Variations" at the Addison/Ripley Gallery in Georgetown. The show featured 15 of Carroll's colorful, whimsical mirrors, which he described as both sculpture and decorative art.



Cleveland Park residents will recognize stylistic similarities to the gazebo at the Macomb Street Playground, which Carroll designed and built in the late 1990s. Unfortunately, the stepped benches (seen here) were removed in a 2013 playground renovation.



And Behind Door #3 at the Broadmoor...

by Andrea Pedolsky

The Broadmoor Cooperative Apartments at 3601 Connecticut Avenue occupies one of the most storied buildings in our historic neighborhood. Below, resident and CPHS Board member Andrea Pedolsky describes the building's History Archive.

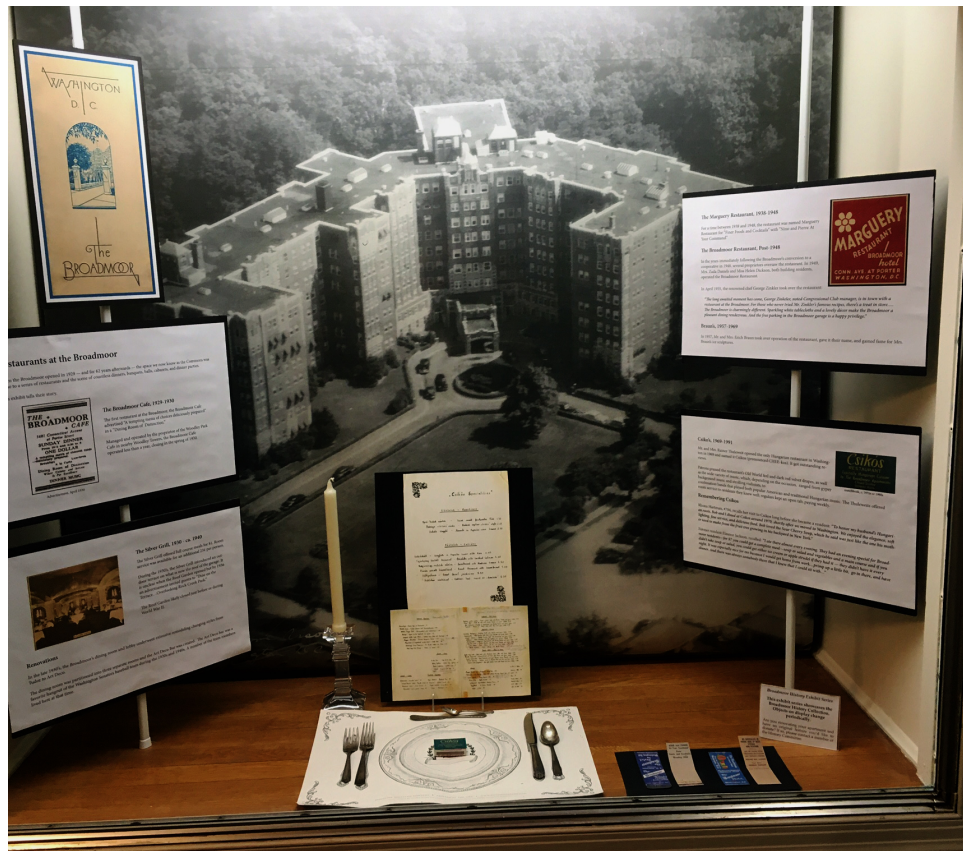
There are so many mysterious nooks and crannies, winding nonresidential corridors, different levels of basements, and doorways opening into surprising rooms at the Broadmoor Cooperative Apartments, that it's no wonder that, when the General Manager offers an occasional behind-the-scenes guided tour, residents quickly sign up.

Behind one of those doors is the History Archive. This is where the Broadmoor's History Committee—avid collectors of artifacts from the building's storied past—come to catalog and store items donated by residents when they renovate their apartments. The room is filled with lighting fixtures, appliances such as an early refrigeration unit, glass door knobs and metal doorplates, a china cabinet, towel racks, kitchen flooring, bathroom tiling, a medicine cabinet, photographs, and more.

What was once the display window for the beauty parlor that operated in the building for decades is where the History Committee shares its finds with the community. The first display was of the building architect's floor plans, various building systems, and marketing materials to entice the “first residents.” Other displays have presented original hardware, including wonderful hinges, living room sconces, and chandeliers. The story of the WAVES (AKA, Women Accepted for Voluntary Services—the Navy's corps of female members established in 1942) who resided at the Broadmoor during World War II formed another exhibit, which included the well-preserved uniform of one of them.

Currently, we are enjoying the history of the various restaurants that served meals to hundreds of DC and Broadmoor residents over 62 years. On display are a timeline of the restaurants and their owners, a menu from Csikos restaurant, an advertisement for the Broadmoor Cafe, and matchbook covers advertising the Broadmoor and the Marguery, a French restaurant.

Broadmoor residents can also enjoy a sense of living history in their daily lives, for example, when they drop letters into the lobby's Art Deco mailbox, share a glass of wine with friends in the Art Deco bar, or find their unit number on the original 1929 switchboard in the guest room corridor.



Protecting Our Heritage Trees

by Cathy Newman



Source: Casey Trees

Trees are nature's memory stick. "Each growth layer that they put on every year contains a bit of the air from that year, transformed into carbon, and so the tree physically holds the years and years of the life of the city," said Benjamin Swett, author of a book on New York City trees.

So, imagine the stories embedded in Washington's heritage trees—defined as those great giants on private property with a circumference of 100 inches or more.

"These are trees that have been through a lot, including the ebb and flow of population changes," says Earl Eutsler associate director of the District's Urban Forestry Division. "Because of Washington's height restriction, they dominate the skyline."

Fortunately, heritage trees, including those that grace Cleveland Park, are protected by Section 8—651.04a of the DC Code and cannot be removed unless dead, dying or hazardous. Fines for removing them are calculated at \$300 per circumference inch, a deterrent that doesn't always succeed. Developers have been known to cut the trees and pay the fine, simply calculating it as the price of doing business. In response, the District is strengthening and expanding the law. New provisions will include explicit protection for the critical root zone of

the tree, include protections in the permitting process, and expand protection of heritage trees to public lands.

While waiting for the law to be finalized, the D.C. Council passed emergency legislation in March enabling city officials to issue stop-work orders to protect heritage trees from removal.

Order a Historic 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 \$200 (cost + shipping) for CPHS members and \$250 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.

CPHS Contributes to 48th Annual DC History Conference

Since 1973, the DC History Conference has attracted history buffs, scholars, and researchers annually to consider the past, present, and future of the District. This year's conference ran from March 31–April 2, opening with the annual Letitia Wood Brown Memorial Lecture at the Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives. At this sold-out event, featured speaker Marcia Chatelain used her award-winning research on Black communities and McDonald's to delve into the District's role in the complicated relationship between Black consumers and drive-thru civil rights.



The rest of the conference took place at the recently renovated Martin Luther King Library. Conference sessions (some livestreamed) offered experiences ranging from panel discussions to video presentations and live performances. Topics included: DC's Asian American heritage; the untold story of DC hip hop, capturing the voices of Black career educators; race, place, and real estate; environment and society; and archiving and activating DC's art history. Presenters also shared their research visually in poster sessions.

The DC History Network was also present, with conference attendees able to meet representatives from community-based history practitioners. These representatives, including from CPHS, showcased their organizations' role and work and explained how to follow, join, or volunteer with them.

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.

For guidance on design review in Cleveland Park, and the permitting process in DC, go to this [link](#) on our website.

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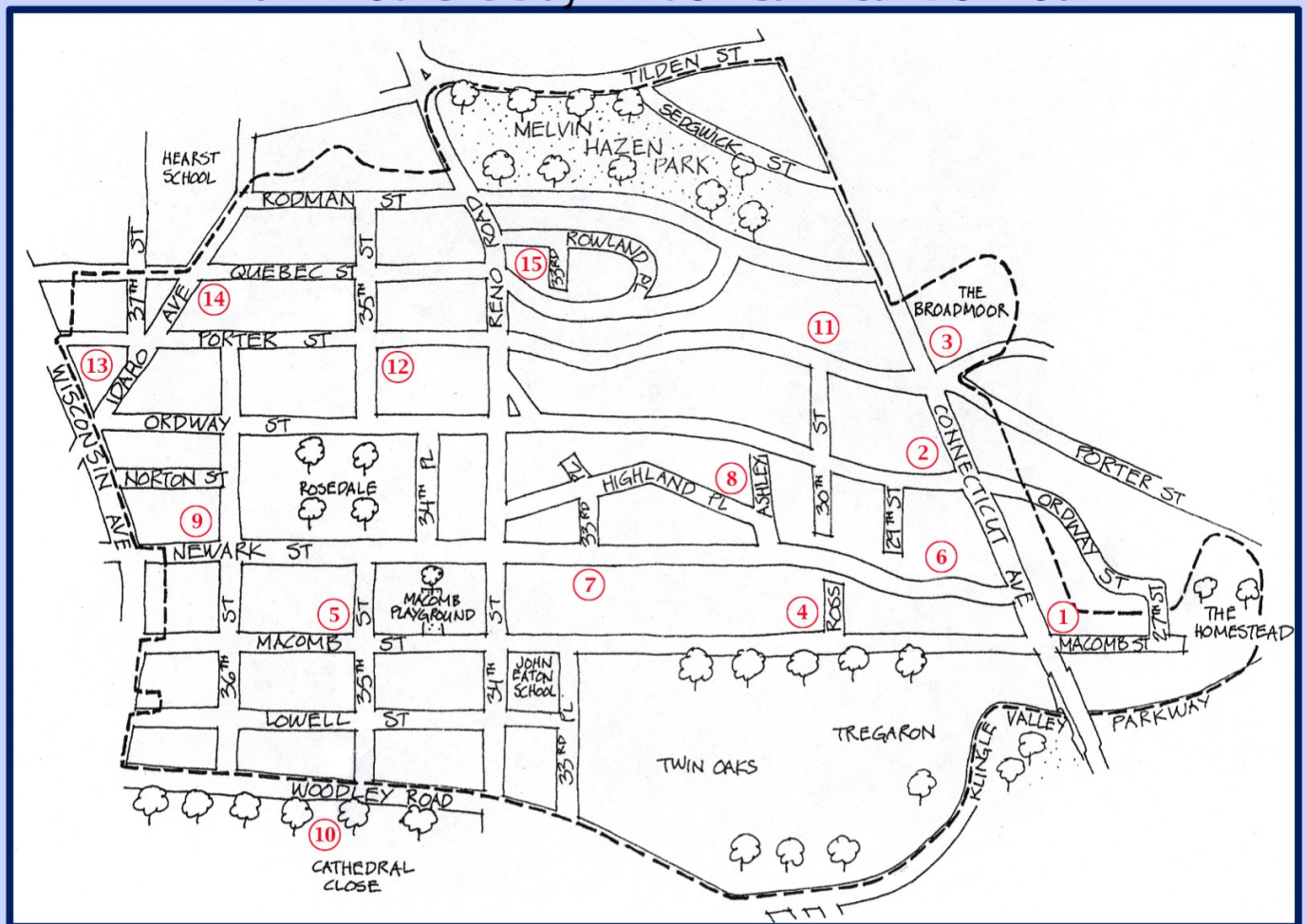
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Cleveland Park Historical Society

2022 Mother's Day "Art on Call" Call Box Tour



How many
can you
check off?

	Art:	Artist:
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Roma Restaurant	Mary Belcher
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Commerce	Eleanor Oliver
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. The Broadmoor	John Simpson
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Causeway at Tregaron	John Woo
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Red Top	John Woo
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Queen Anne Style	Di Stovall
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Early Fire Fighting	Caitlin Werrell
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Sherman Cottages	Leslie Oberdorfer
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Rosedale	John Woo
<input type="checkbox"/>	10. National Cathedral	Dana Cook
<input type="checkbox"/>	11. Bungalow	Mary Belcher
<input type="checkbox"/>	12. Map	John Wiebenson
<input type="checkbox"/>	13. Washington Ballet	James Symons, Sheila Harrington
<input type="checkbox"/>	14. Flower	Edith Kuhnle
<input type="checkbox"/>	15. Landscape	Lou Stovall