

Historic Preservation 101

Zach Burt,
DC Preservation League



Todd Jones,
DC Office of Planning

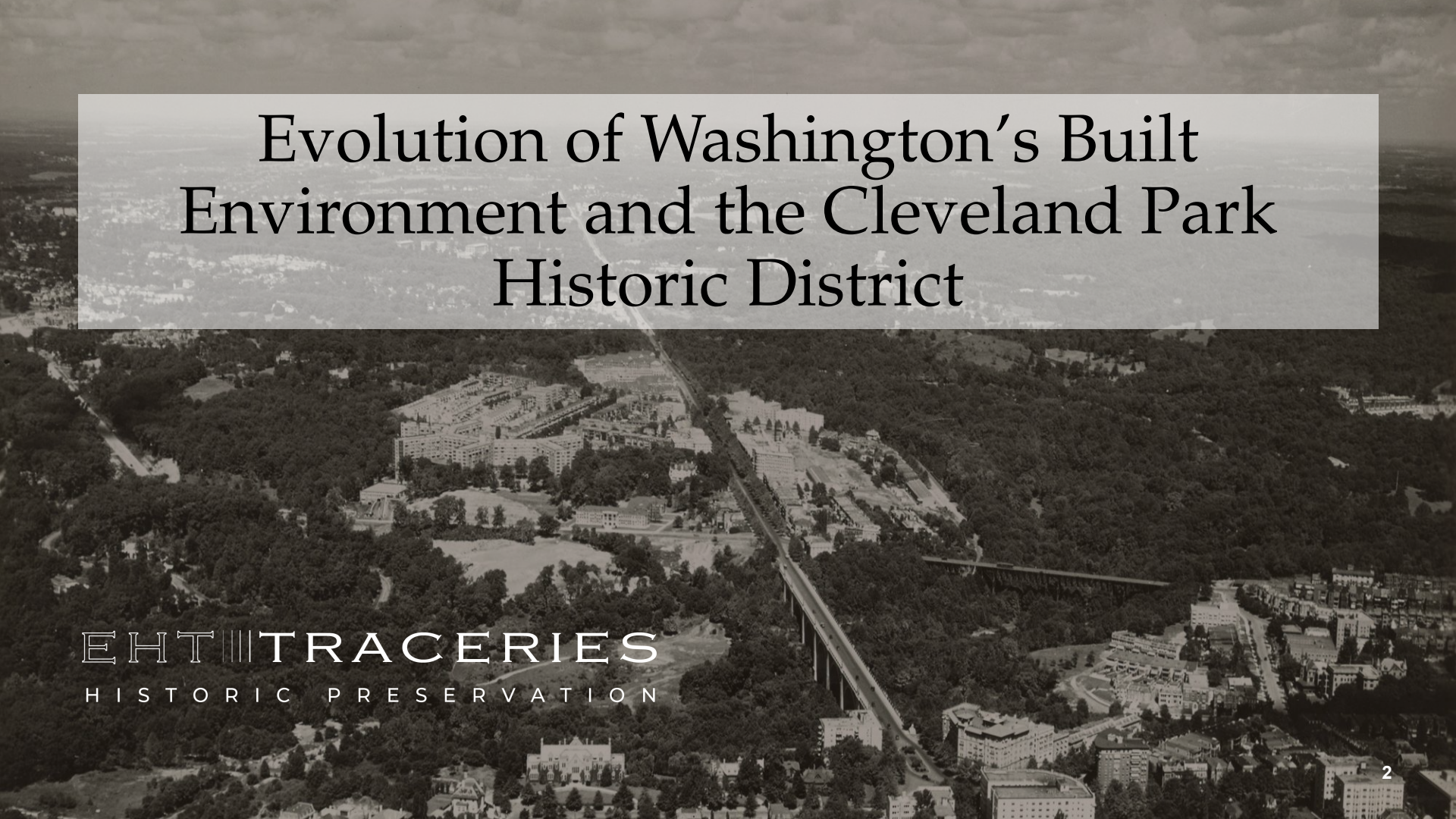


Joel Lawson,
DC Office of Planning



Sarah Vonesh,
EHT Traceries



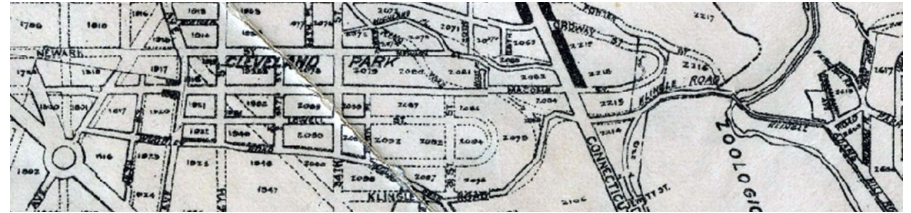
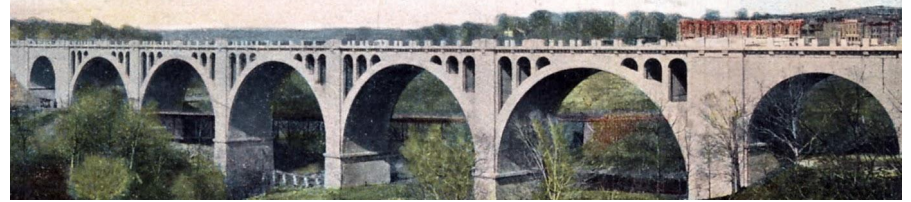
An aerial photograph of the Cleveland Park Historic District in Washington, D.C. The image shows a dense residential area with numerous large, multi-story houses and apartment buildings. A prominent road, likely Cleveland Park Drive, runs diagonally through the center of the district. The surrounding area is heavily wooded, and a bridge is visible in the lower right portion of the image. The title text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white rectangle at the top of the image.

Evolution of Washington's Built Environment and the Cleveland Park Historic District

EHT|||TRACERIES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Built Environment and How City's Evolve

- Human-made physical features that provide the setting for human activities
 - Transportation networks
 - Utilities and infrastructure
 - Buildings
 - Parks and Open Spaces
- Our built environment has evolved, influenced by:
 - Changing styles and tastes
 - Technological innovation
 - Planning, zoning, and building regulation, etc.





Andrew Ellicott, *Territory of Columbia*, 1794 (Library of Congress)



Cartwright and Beck, *Georgetown and Federal City, or City of Washington*, 1801 (Library of Congress)

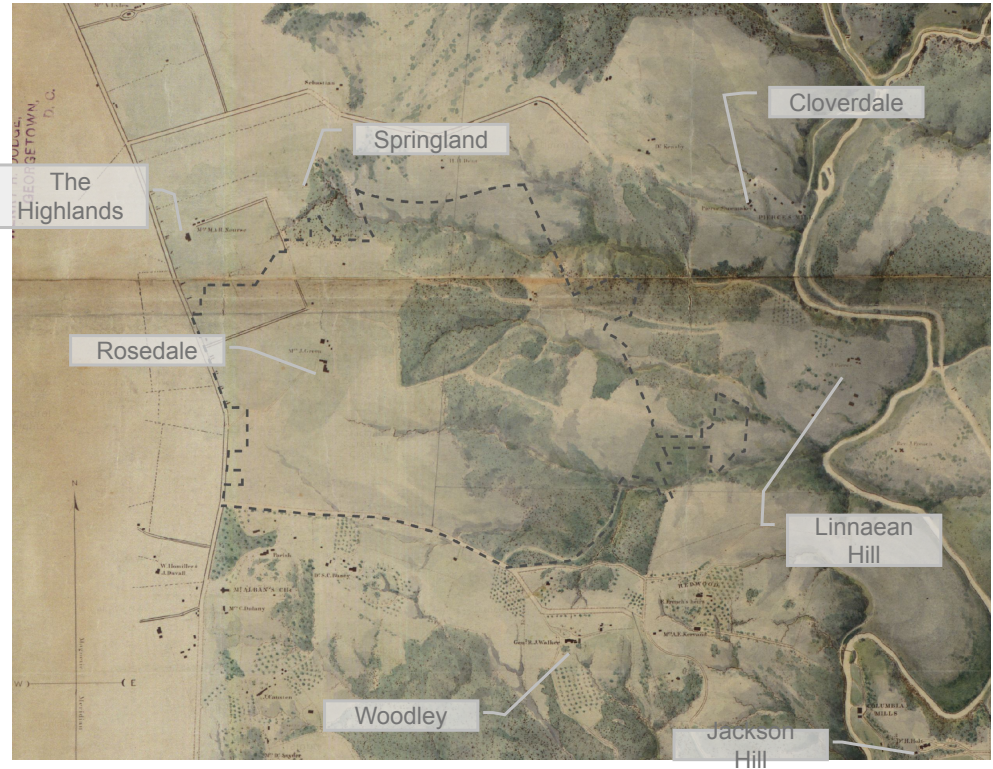


Boschke, *Topographical Map District of Columbia*, 1861 (Library of Congress)



Topographical sketch of the environs of Washington, D.C., 1867 (Library of Congress)

Early Development in Cleveland Park

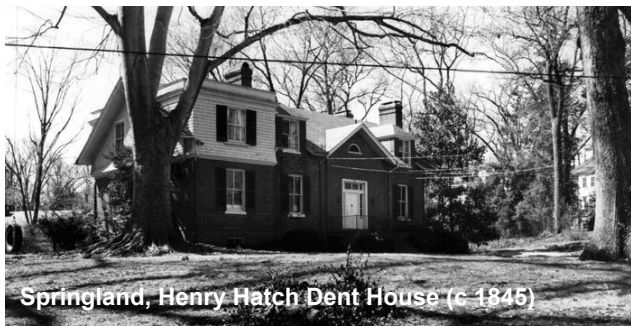




The Highlands, Sidwell Friends School (1817-1827)



Cloverdale, Pierce Shoemaker House (1810)



Springland, Henry Hatch Dent House (c 1845)



Rosedale, Uriah Frost House (1740, 1793)



Jackson Hill, Holt House (c 1827)



Woodley Mansion, Maret School (1801)



Oak View, residence of
President Grover
Cleveland



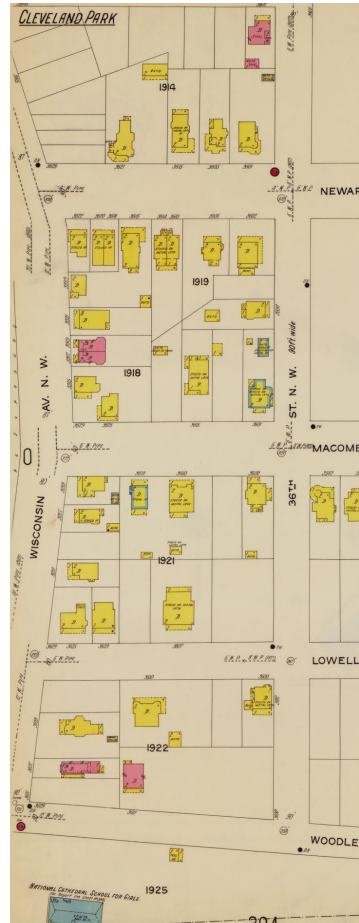
Twin Oaks (1888)



The Causeway/Tregaron (1912)

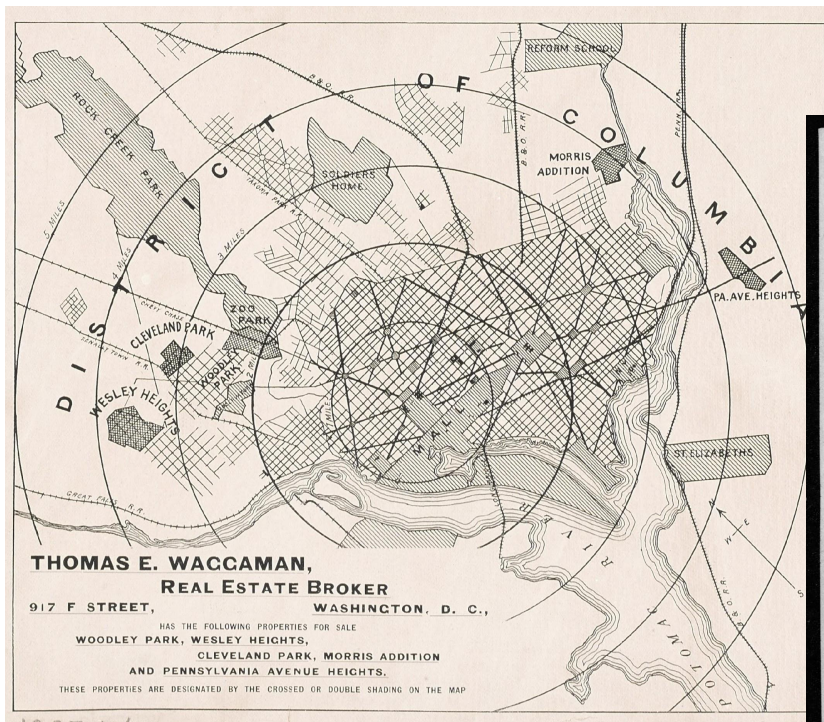
Washington in the Late 19th Century

- Population increase from 75,080 in 1860 to 177,624 in 1880
- Organic Act of 1871 – consolidates Washington City, Washington County, and Georgetown as a unified municipal government.
 - Board of Public Works – citywide infrastructure improvements
- Building Regulations
 - Parking Act of 1870
 - Projection Act of 1871
 - Restrictions on wood construction in populated areas due to fire risk (1872 and 1877)
- New streetcar lines (first horse drawn later electric) enabled growth outside city boundaries and into Washington County





Electric streetcar and early houses in Cleveland Park (*Washington at Home*)



Waggaman Real Estate map, 1897 (DigDC)

THE WASHINGTON TIMES, SUNDAY, MAY 19, 1903.

CLEVELAND PARK: QUEEN OF WASHINGTON SUBURBS

The Street Railroad Station.

A Street in Cleveland Park.

Prettiest of All the Many Beautiful Spots Surrounding the National Capital Within the District Limits Is This Little Community of Palatial Homes Among the Foliage-Bedecked Hills.

Residence of Judge McCusack.

Residence of Mrs. Gardiner Hubbard.

Founded by and Named in Honor of the Distinguished Two-Times Occupant of the White House, Its Residents Are Justly Proud of its Unrivalled Natural and Architectural Beauties.

CLEVELAND PARK is the prettiest suburb of Washington, at this season the reader may smile, and see its mother down the road, or for an enthusiastic and partial suburbanite. But take a car round and ride from one to another of the homes that encircle Washington, compare their beauty, compare their location, and then you will admit that the statements is made in all justice and impartiality. Cleveland Park is not a separate town with a local government. It is within the District limits, and consequently enjoys every advantage which a domestic resident can claim, and in addition, it is as beautiful a spot, and as free from the annoyances of the city as if it were in the heart of the Adirondacks. Its water supply is unlimited, and the water clean and pure, for one here gets

Cherry Chase, and a little to the north and west of the Rock Creek bridge at that point. It was "discovered" accidentally, by the distinguished man whose name it bears. Governor Claiborne, the

of the Library, the Postoffice directly opposite, and the slender white shaft of the Monument to the states. Across the narrow shining ribbon of the Potomac are the Virginia hills, blue and of this distance. Most of the houses

in water warmed for the convenience of persons waiting for the cars. The Park has been sold out to preserve the beautiful rolling character of the land, and is greatly admired because of its location. Most of the houses

100 feet in length, is as comfortable and beautiful a home as it is pleasant to look upon. The ownership of the Park, Mr. McKim, the leading architect of the time, used in architect and effective manner, with his double front. Handsome

mansions once occupied by General Ford, and during its history of Washington, it is still the property of his descendants. Homes of Noted Men.

Schools and Churches.
 The facilities which Cleveland Park has for reaching the city are so excellent that it really has no need of public schools or churches of its own. By two car lines, either of which, and convenient way to the Washington

architect who combined in them beauty, durability and economy. Many of them are of stone, wholly or in part. All are artistic and comfortable.
Moderate Prices for Land.
 Land sells at from 20 to 30 cents a foot, and a house and lot can be purchased at all prices from \$10,000 to \$100,000. A lot large enough for a spacious lawn, a back yard which can be devoted to a garden, a poultry yard, a swimming place, lawn, or anything desired. None of the residents have lawn tennis courts, although their houses, a scene of enjoyment and health, which are rare elsewhere in the city. A well-laid-out and well-kept golf links is also near at hand. The children have all the room, they want for football and kite flying and every game they like.

The Washington Times, May 19, 1903

THE WASHINGTON POST, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1888.

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS!

ARTIST'S CONCEPTION.

RENDERING BY J. L. HARRIS, JR.

ARTIST'S CONCEPTION.

RENDERING BY J. L. HARRIS, JR.

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, D. C.

DISTRICT 100
RANGE 100
RANGE 100

1/2 Mile N.W.

A Rare Opportunity to Own a Country Home with All Conveniences of a City.

READ BELOW.

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS.

WINDY, D. C. is a rare opportunity to own a country home with all the conveniences of a city. The location is in the heart of the city, and the house is a rare opportunity to own a country home with all the conveniences of a city.

There are no other such fine lots in the city, and the house is a rare opportunity to own a country home with all the conveniences of a city. The location is in the heart of the city, and the house is a rare opportunity to own a country home with all the conveniences of a city.

H. P. WAGHMAN,
Real Estate Broker.

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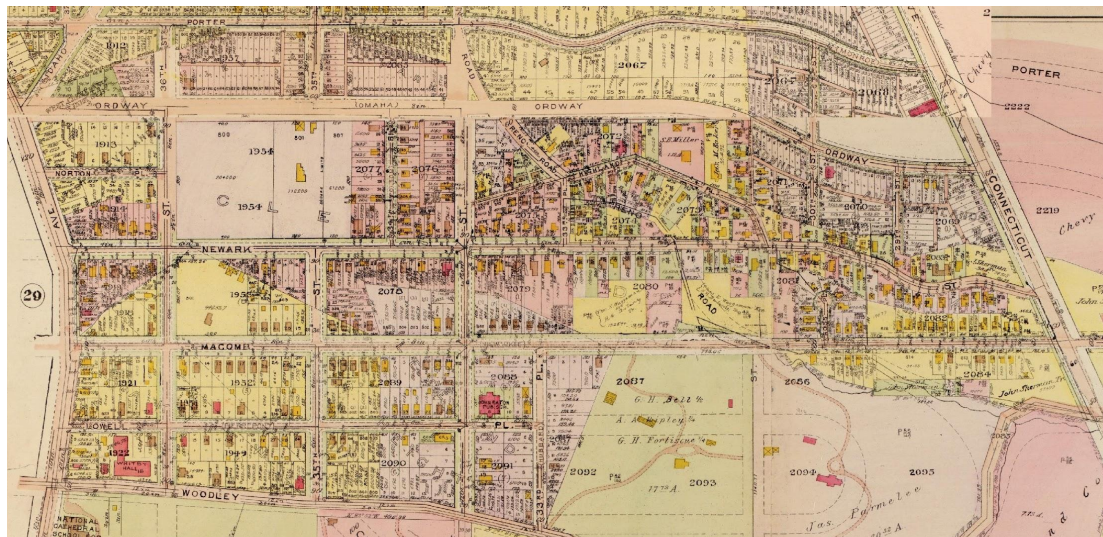
H. P. WAGHMAN,
Real Estate Broker.

RICHMOND PARK.

William F. Matteson
 SUBURBAN REAL ESTATE OPERATOR,
 COLORADO BUILDING,
 WASHINGTON, D.C.

[1917]

COLORED ESTATE 1917-18

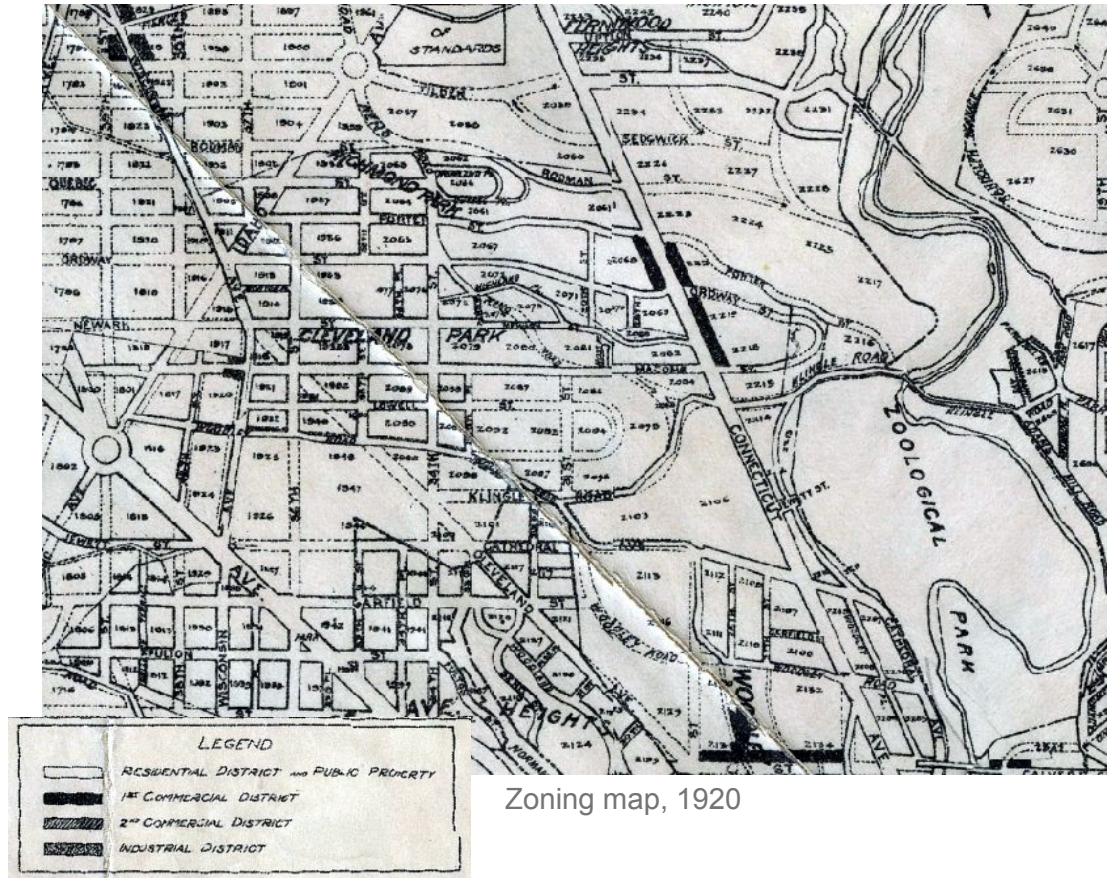


1919 Baist Map



1920 Zoning Ordinance

- 1920 District implemented first comprehensive zoning ordinance
- Incorporated commercial “islands” for low-rise neighborhood shopping districts
- Also allowed for high rise apartment buildings along the Avenue





Broadmoor (1928-1929)



Commercial developments along Connecticut in 1949



Park & Shop (1930)

DRIVE IN... AND PARK!

Easily... Quickly... and Safely!

Here at Park and Shop Stores, Connecticut Ave., at Oakley and Porter Streets, there is always ample space for your car in the prime parking area in front of the stores.

With one convenient stop you can visit several or all of these attractive shops, where you will find courteous, smiling service, prices that please and a uniformly high quality of merchandise in a variety that will satisfy your every smart shopping need.

PEOPLES HARDWARE STORES

Everything in hardware and paint.
It's always all for you.

BARKER (Original) BAKERY

...Old Time Salt Rising Bread.

FRAZEE-POTOMAC LAUNDRY

A unit will continue you of our ability to serve you.

WHITTLESEY'S DRUG STORE

Fast delivery service to all Washington and nearby Maryland.
Phone: C-10-1111

PIGGLY WIGGLY

Adolescents of America

ATLANTIC & PACIFIC

Quality Groceries. Meats. Fruits and Vegetables.
Cashmere Service. Low Prices.

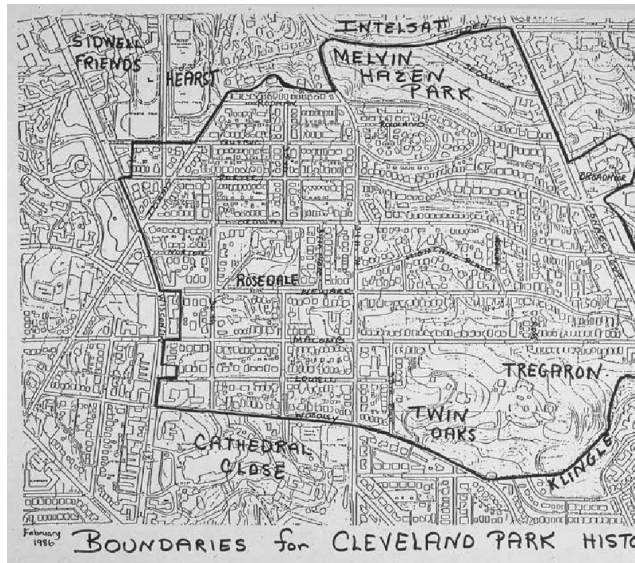




Slayton House (1960)



Metro (1981)



Historic District Map



A flyer from the new Cleveland Park Historical Society's campaign to preserve Park and Shop, 1987. (DC History Center)







Preservation of the Cleveland Park HD

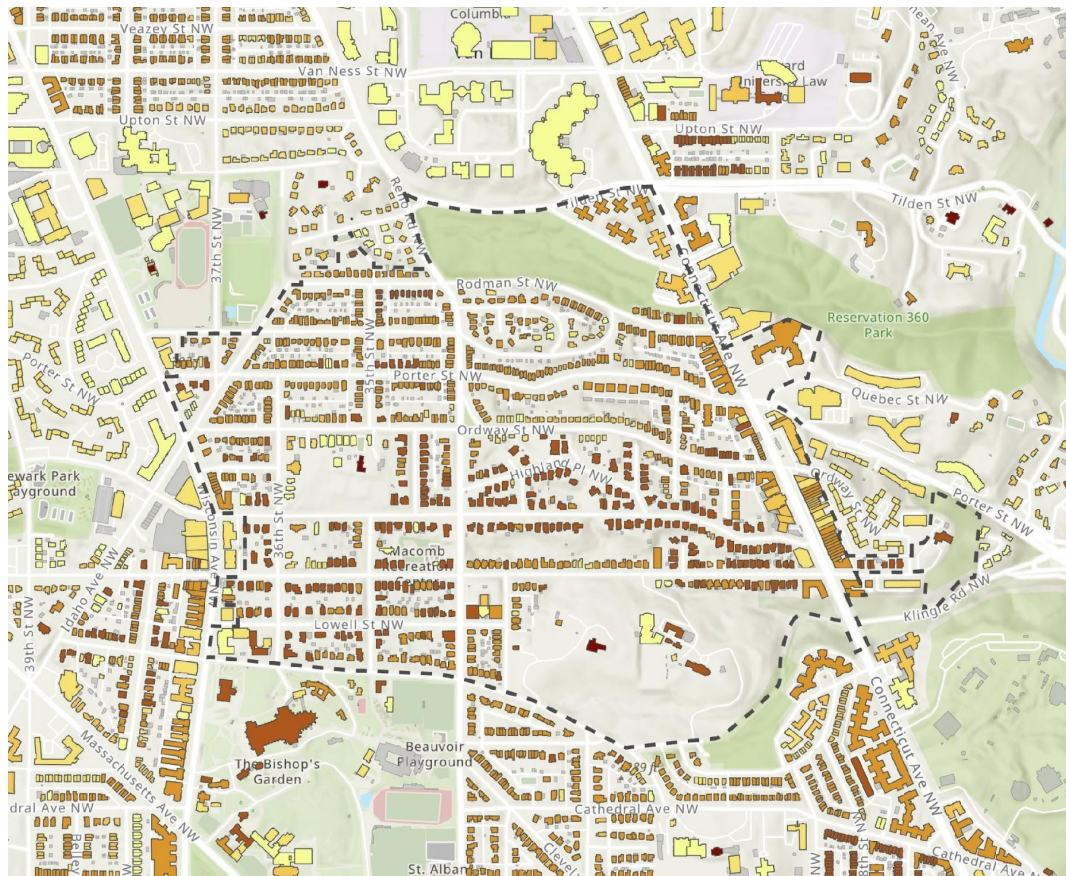


Legend

 Cleveland Park HD

Historical Data on DC Buildings

-  1804 - 1890
-  1891 - 1917
-  1918 - 1929
-  1930 - 1941
-  1942 - 1975
-  1976 - 2016



Source: HistoryQuest DC

<https://dcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=2ab24bc3b6da4314b9f2c74b69190333>

The Historic Preservation Movement and Understanding Historic Designation

Zachary Burt, DC Preservation League
Historic Preservation 101 Panel, CPHS
September 17, 2025



The Historic Preservation Movement

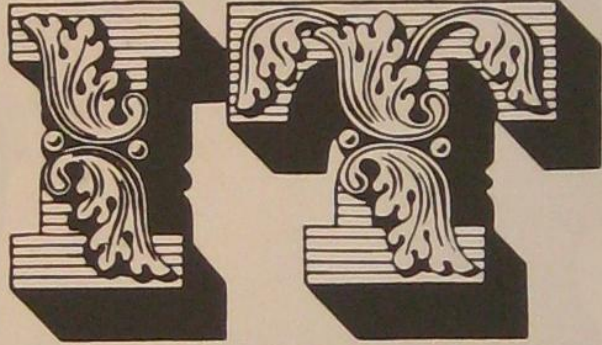
- Historic District in Charleston (1931)
- Historic Sites Act (1935)
- *Urban Renewal*
- Old Georgetown Act (1950)
- DC Joint Committee on Landmarks established (1964)
- New York City Landmarks Law (1965)
- National Historic Preservation Act (1966)
 - National Register of Historic Places



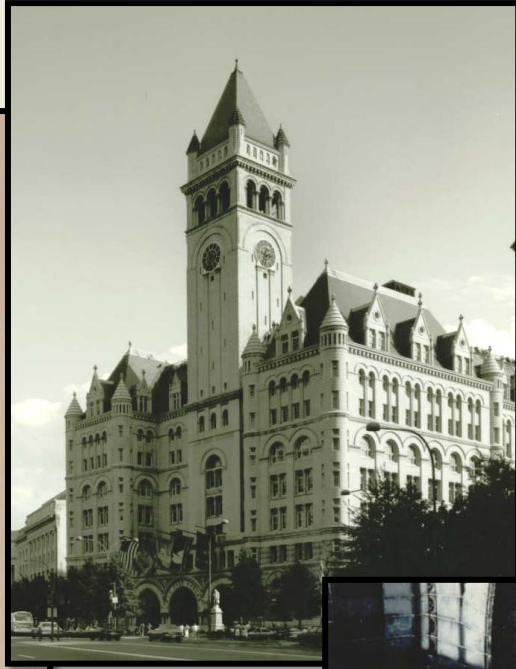
Penn Station, ca. 1920.
Southwest Washington,
1939. Images courtesy of
Library of Congress.

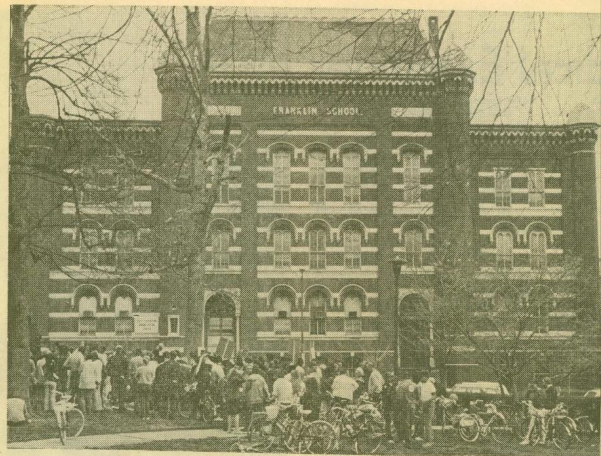


**DON'T
TEAR**



DOWN



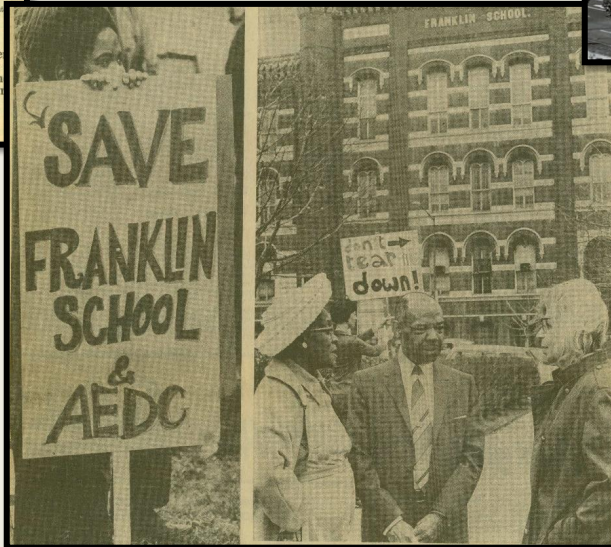


—Star Photographer Walter O...

'DON'T TEAR IT DOWN'

Despite a leaking Sunday sky, members and supporters of "Don't Tear It Down," rallied in Franklin Park across from the old Franklin School, for years the headquarters of the D.C. public school system, hoping that the landmark building can be preserved. The "Second Empire" structure, built in 1865, has

been declared surplus by the school system and the preservationists are afraid that will prove too tantalizing to a developer and go the way of many old buildings—down. (Story and other pictures on Page B-6.) (Pictures on Page B-6.)



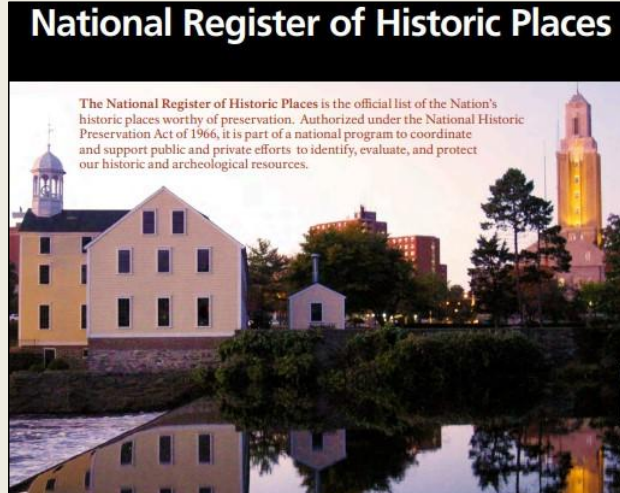
DC Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978

- **Historic Preservation Office (HPO)**
 - Professional staff
- **Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB)**
 - Nine members appointed by the Mayor and approved by Council
 - Historic designation and design review
 - No DC Council approval needed!
- **DC Inventory of Historic Sites**
 - Significance: Events, History, Individuals, Architecture & Urbanism, Artistry, Work of a Master, and/or Archaeology



Historic Designations In DC: Landmarks & Districts

- **DC Inventory of Historic Sites (800+)**
 - More than 27,000 contributing buildings in over 70 historic districts
 - 22 historic landmarks with designated interiors
- **National Register of Historic Places (600+)**
- **National Historic Landmarks (78)**
- Change can happen ☐ Design Review
- Designation does not regulate use
- Property Owner Consent:
 - DC Inventory v. National Register



National Park Service: “Listing in the National Register places no federal restrictions or requirements on a private property owner. You may do with the property as you wish, within the framework of local laws or ordinances.”

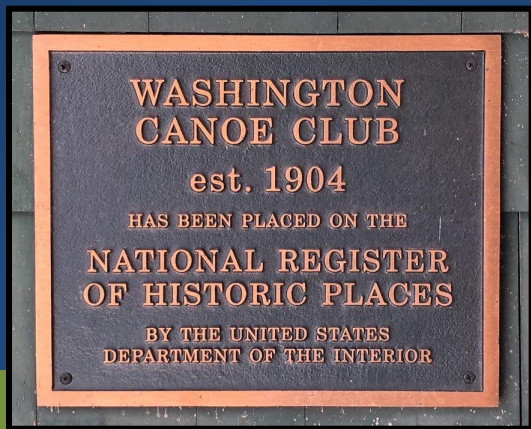


Photo by Zachary Burt

DC Inventory of Historic Sites and National Register of Historic Places

Both Programs Cover...

Historical/Architectural Significance

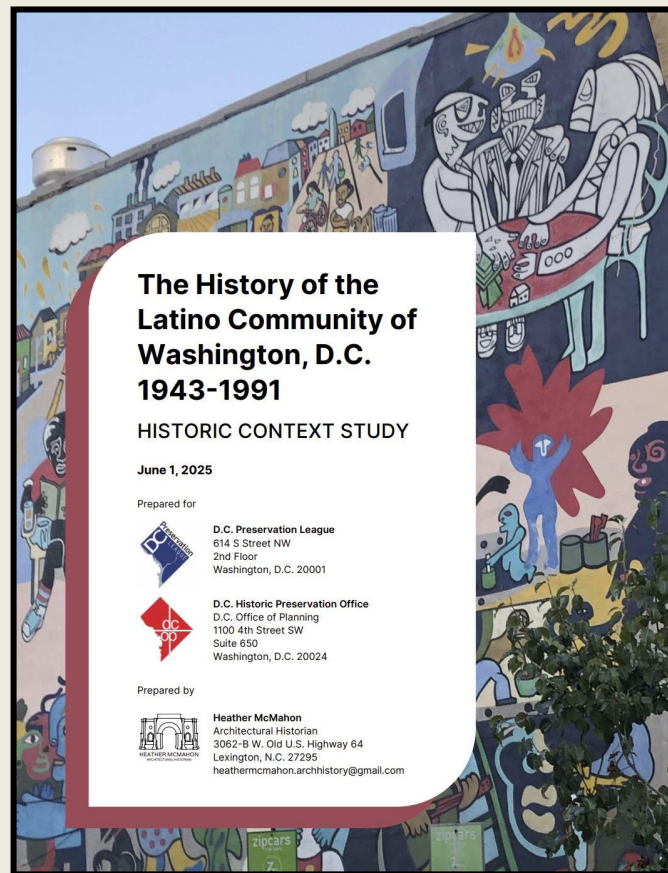
Integrity

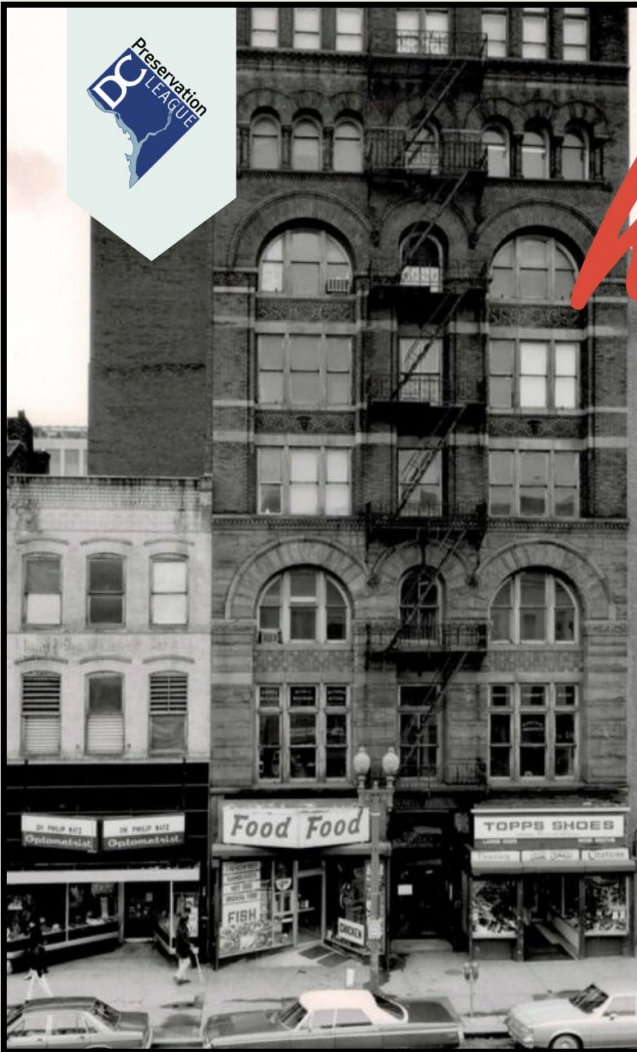
Historical Perspective*

National Register Criteria Consideration G (the so-called “50-Year Rule”):
Listing possible for “a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of *exceptional importance*”

Historic Context Studies and Multiple Property Documents

- Surveying and Evaluating
- *“Surveying is the essential first step without which historic preservation is impossible. Nothing can be preserved unless it is known to exist, nor can an adequate case be made for preservation.” – Carl Feiss*
- **In Progress:** African American Affordable Housing MPD, Black Women Suffrage Context Study, Update to Schools MPD - Implementing Desegregation, and Sites Designed by Black Architects MPD





history is here

Download the free
DC Historic Sites
app to learn more about
Washington, DC's community
history and architecture.





Thank You!



Zachary Burt, DC Preservation League
zach@dcpreservation.org





DC Historic Preservation Office Design Review

Todd Jones
Historic Preservation Specialist

September 17, 2025

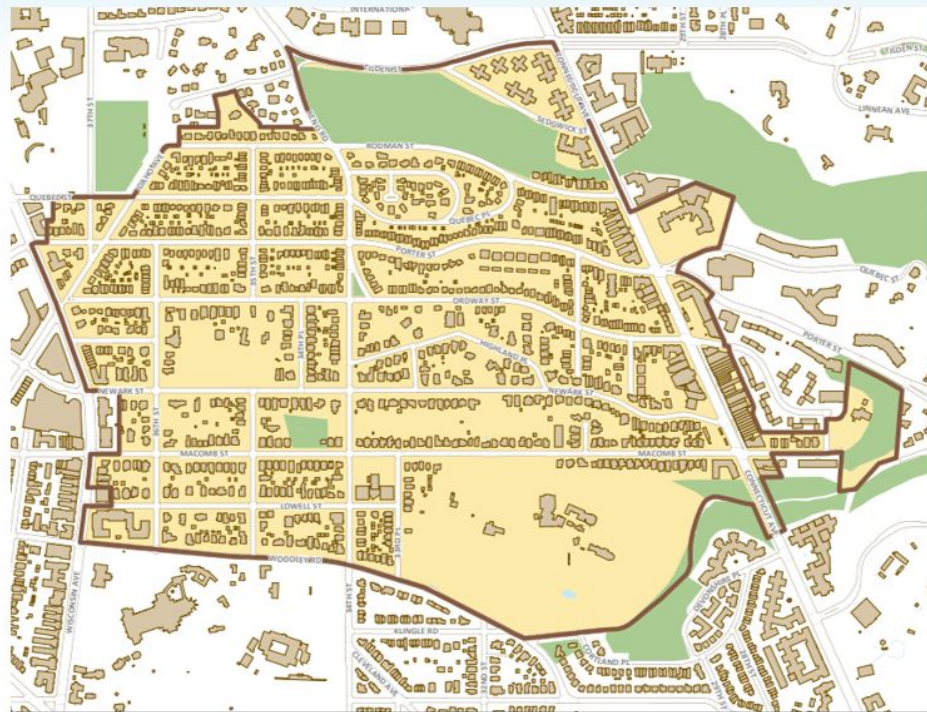
District of Columbia
Office of Planning





DC Historic Preservation Office

- 70 historic districts
- HPO reviews all exterior permit work
- For staff contacts, visit: planning.dc.gov or email historic.preservation@dc.gov



Cleveland Park
Historic District



Staff Level Design Review



Form B. No. 1

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT FOR REPAIRS, ALTERATIONS, ETC.

Washington, D. C., *Feb'y 17 1877*

To the
INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS:

The undersigned applies for a permit to *repair*
the following described building:—

DESCRIPTION OF PRESENT BUILDING.

Where located *on H. St. bet 3^d & 4th*

No. of buildings to be altered *one*

Area of present building *14 x 16*

No. of stories *two*

Style of roof *shingles*

How is the building occupied? *dwelling*

What is the cost of proposed improvement? *\$0.*

Name of owner *Martin McHally*

Name of architect

Name of mechanic *James Maloney*

Name of occupant

Material

If a dwelling, by how many families?

NATURE OF PROPOSED ALTERATION, ETC.

to construct a new floor from foundation up through roof. Lath & plaster, put in necessary windows for a dwelling house no portion of the exterior to be interpend with



HPO Design Guidelines

Visit:
Preservation.dc.gov

PORCH FRONT HOUSES

As the city expanded and began to suburbanize in the first decades of the 20th century, houses with porches became increasingly popular. Sometimes referred to as "daylight" houses, they reflect the era's interest in greater light and more open floor plans. Houses of this era often have Colonial Revival or Craftsman detailing, particularly in the design of the porches themselves. Porch-front houses are found in continuous rows, as paired duplexes, and as detached houses. Porch-front houses date from around 1910 through the 1930s and are found in many districts, including Anacostia, Capitol Hill, Mount Pleasant, Woodley Park, Cleveland Park, and Takoma Park.

Doors on porch-front houses typically had a high proportion of glass to bring in light. Multi-pane configurations are most common.



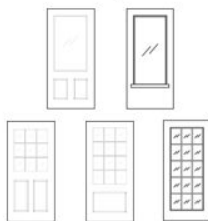
Typical house features and characteristics:

- Porches, often with Colonial Revival or Craftsman style detailing
- Tan or red brick facades
- Pent roofs with dormers

Typical door features and characteristics:

- High proportion of glazing, typically with half to three-quarters of the door as glass
- Single or multi-light configurations
- Sidelights flanking doors in larger openings
- Topped by a transom

Doors often found on porch front houses:



WINDOW RETENTION

FURTHER INFORMATION AND REPAIR CONTRACTORS

The National Park Service has published a series of "Preservation Briefs" on many topics related to the repair and maintenance of historic building elements, including the repair of wood and steel windows and improving the energy efficiency of historic buildings. Each brief also includes a bibliography of sources for further information.

www.nps.gov/history/hps/tips/briefs

The HPO website contains articles and links to further information on improving the energy efficiency of historic windows and doors, and on the sustainability benefits of historic preservation.

www.preservation.dc.gov

Under a cooperative agreement with the HPO, the DC Preservation League maintains an online directory of contractors who specialize in products and services for the repair and rehabilitation of older buildings. The directory includes local contractors who specialize in window repair. To search the directory, visit:

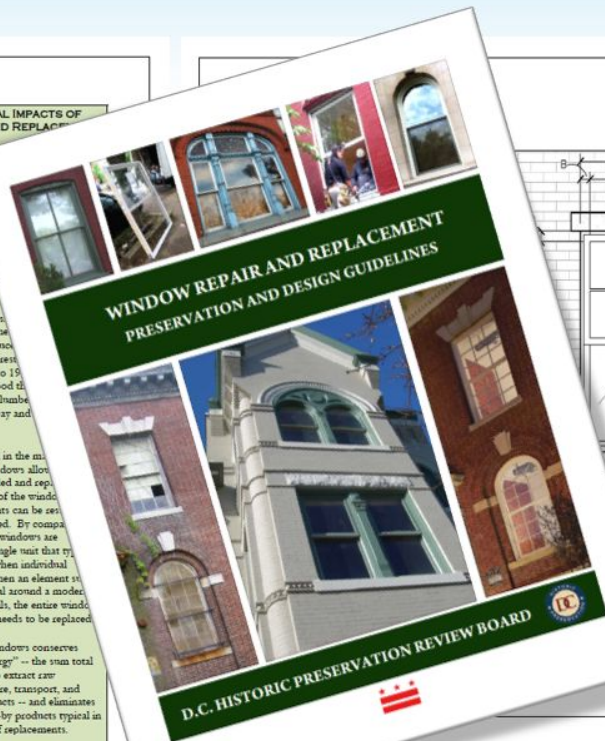
www.dcpreservation.org



THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF WINDOW REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT

Retaining and repairing historic windows not only preserves a feature of the building but also with and reinforces promoting sustainable. The long life span of historic windows and the ability to improve energy efficiency through the addition of storm windows is an environmentally friendly alternative to window replacement.

- The quality and craftsmanship of historic wood windows is peerless. Wood windows produced from slow growth forest, manufactured prior to 1950, constructed from wood that is denser than modern lumber, are more resistant to decay and water and insects.
- The technology used in the manufacture of historic wood windows allows them to be readily disassembled and repaired. Throughout the life of the window, individual components can be repaired, upgraded, and adapted. By comparison, replacement windows are manufactured as a single unit that cannot be repaired when individual components fail. When an element such as the glass or the seal around a modern window breaks or fails, the entire window is thrown away and needs to be replaced.
- Retaining historic windows conserves their "embodied energy" -- the sum total of energy required to extract raw materials, manufacture, transport, and install building products -- and eliminates the energy and toxic-by-products typical in the manufacturing of replacements.





Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB)

- Nine-member review board
- Appointed by mayor
- Only looks at 3% of permit reviews
- Meets every month except August





Character and Context





DC Historic Preservation Office





Compatibility

- Setback
- Orientation
- Scale
- Proportion
- Rhythm
- Massing
- Height
- Materials
- Color
- Roof Shape
- Details and Ornamentation
- Landscape Features



Compatibility

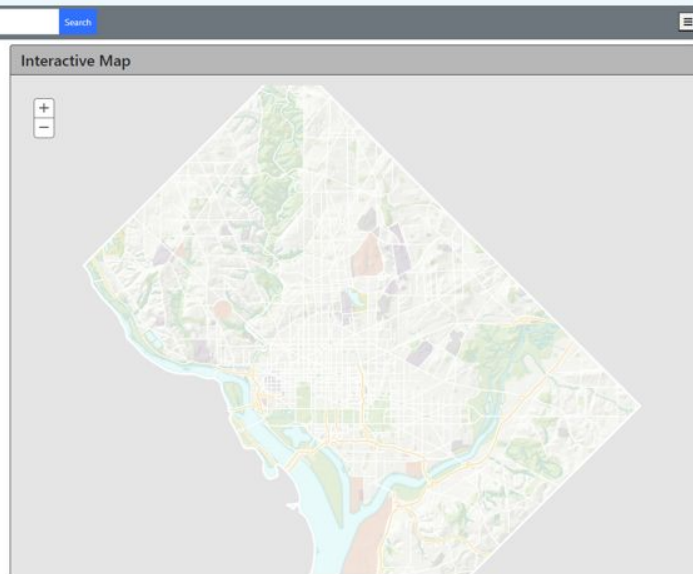
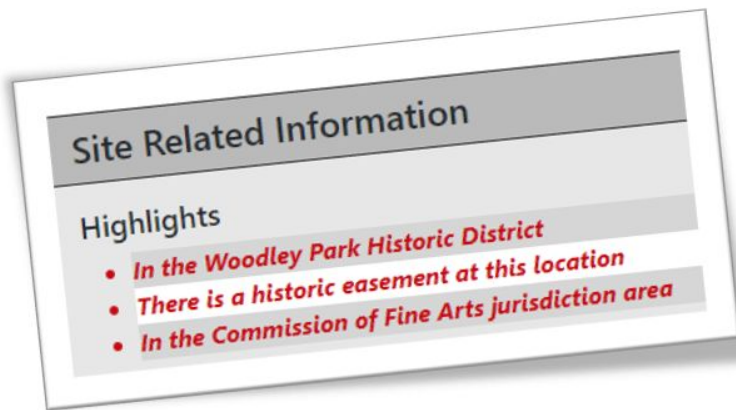
- Setback
- Orientation
- Scale
- Proportion
- Rhythm
- Massing
- Height
- Materials
- Color
- Roof Shape
- Details and Ornamentation
- Landscape Features





Less Frequent Reviews

- Commission of Fine Arts (CFA)
- Historic Property Easement



propertyquest.dc.gov



DC Historic Preservation Office

todd.jones@dc.gov



Cleveland Park Historical Society DC Preservation League Panel Discussion - Zoning Regulations

September 17, 2025

DC Office of Planning

Joel Lawson,
Associate Director Development Review

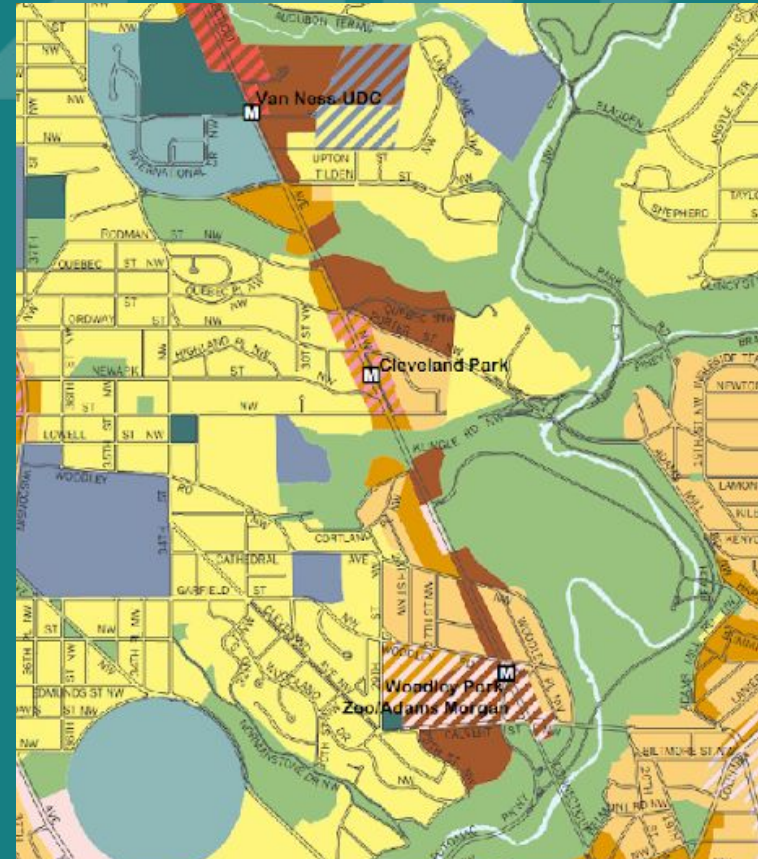
District of Columbia
Office of Planning



WHY ZONE?

Cities use zoning to:

- Guide future development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and SAPs
- Implement adopted Land Use Policy
- Control land use and neighborhood characteristics
- Promote or restrict certain uses in defined areas
- Encourage adequate light and air around property



*2021 Comp Plan Future Land Use
Map*

A FEW DC ZONING MILESTONES

First DC Zoning Regulation, 1920

- Height Districts, Use Districts, and Lot Occupancy
- Established a Zoning Commission

Zoning Act of 1938

- Zoning Commission (ZC) authority to regulate height, bulk, lot occupancy, and uses
- Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) established

1958 Zoning Regulations

- Resulted from the 1950 DC Comprehensive Plan and 1956 Lewis Plan

2016 Zoning Regulation Rewrite:

- Resulted from the 2006 DC Comprehensive Plan
- Initiated in 2007; adopted by the Zoning Commission and effective Sept. 6, 2016

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That to promote the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity, or general welfare of the District of Columbia and its planning and orderly development as the National Capital, the Zoning Commission created by the Act of March 1, 1920 (41 Stat. 500), is hereby empowered, in accordance with the conditions and procedures specified in this Act, to regulate the location, height, bulk, number of stories and size of buildings and other structures, the percentage of lot which may be occupied, the sizes of yards, courts, and other open spaces, the density of population, and the uses of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, residence, recreation, public activities, or other purposes; and for the purpose of such regulation said commission may divide the District of Columbia into districts or zones of such number, shape, and area as said Zoning Commission may determine, and within such districts may regulate the erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, conversion, maintenance, and uses of buildings and structures and the uses of land. All such regulations shall be uniform for each class or kind of building throughout each district, but the regulations in one district may differ from those in other districts.

DC ZONING REGULATIONS and MAP

11 DCMR (ZONING REGULATIONS OF 2016)

TITLE 11. ZONING - SUBTITLE D RESIDENTIAL HOUSE (R) ZONES - CHAPTER 2 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSE (R) ZONES

- 200.3 A principal building on a lot in any of the R-1 zones shall be a detached building.
- 200.4 A principal building on a lot in any of the R-2 zones shall be a detached building or a semi-detached building.
- 200.5 A principal building on a lot in any of the R-3 zones shall be a detached building, a semi-detached building, or a row building.
- 200.6 Except for new penthouse habitable space as described in Subtitle C § 1507.2, the Inclusionary Zoning requirements and modifications of Subtitle C, Chapter 10, shall not apply to any of the R-1 zones.
- 200.7 The Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) requirements and the available IZ modifications to certain development standards shall apply to any of the R-2 and R-3 zones, as specified in Subtitle C, Chapter 10, Inclusionary Zoning, and in the zone-specific development standards of this subtitle.

SOURCE: Final Rulemaking & Order No. CR-06A published at 63 DCR 2447 (March 4, 2016 – Part 2); Final Rulemaking & Order No. 18-16/19-77-19-27B published at 70 DCR 11297 (August 25, 2023).

201 DENSITY

- 201.1 In all R zones, one (1) principal dwelling unit and one (1) accessory apartment shall be permitted per lot of record, subject to Subtitle U, Use Permissions.
- 201.2 A public recreation and community center shall not exceed a gross floor area (GFA) of forty thousand square feet (40,000 sq. ft.) unless approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment as a special exception pursuant to the provisions of Subtitle T § 212.2.
- 201.3 Except as permitted pursuant to Subtitle D § 212.2, public recreation and community centers shall be permitted a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) as follows:
- (a) In any of the R-1 or R-2 zones, the maximum permitted FAR for a public recreation and community center shall be 0.9; and
 - (b) In any of the R-3 zones, the maximum permitted FAR for a public recreation and community center shall be 1.8.

DCR 11-0001 (repealed) and replaced by Order No. CR-06A published at 63 DCR 2447 (March 4, 2016 – Part 2) and Order No. 18-16/19-77-19-27B published at 70 DCR 11297 (August 25, 2023).

Washington, DC

Any proposal to amend the zoning text or map must be “not inconsistent” with the Comprehensive Plan

Establish “Zones” or “Zone Districts” for each part of the city, which tell you:

- Permitted uses, by-right or with BZA or ZC approval
- A maximum of how much *can* be built – how tall, how big, how much land can be covered; but also
- A minimum of what *must* be provided, like rear yards or vehicle parking
- The processes for requesting relief from the regulations

Some level of development or use is allowed by-right in each zone

WHAT DOES ZONING NOT DO?

Zoning does not **set** land use policy –
zoning is a land use policy **implementation** tool

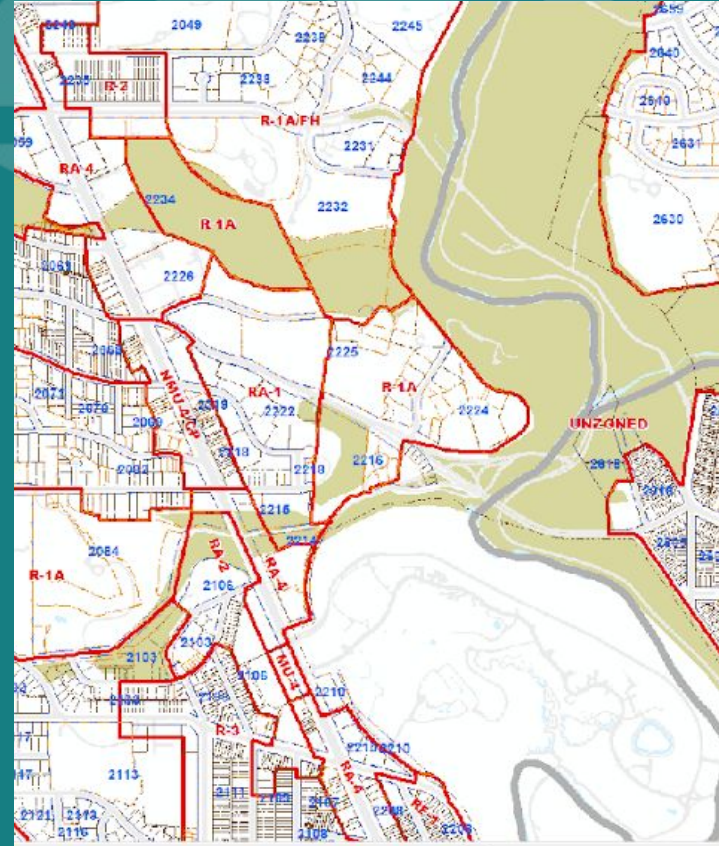
Zoning does not tell you what exactly what **WILL** be built on a property or how it will be used

Zoning does not over-ride other:

- Laws, such as the Height Act
- Regulations, such as the Building Code
- Review processes, such as HPRB

DC Zoning does not apply to public space such as road rights-of-way

Zoning does not apply to Federal Land in



Excerpt from the DC Zoning Map

HOW IS ZONING ESTABLISHED?

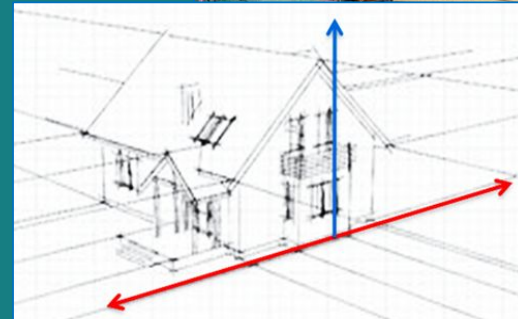
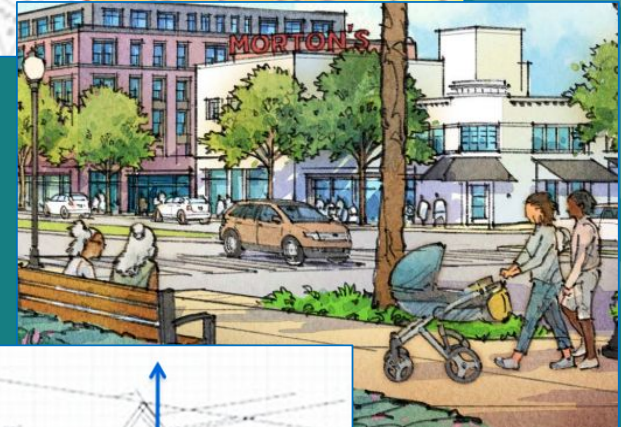
Comprehensive Plan

- Citywide Elements
- Area Elements
- Maps

Area Plan

Zoning

- Zoning Text / Map
- Zoning Report
- Racial Equity Analysis



2016 Zoning Regulation Subtitles

- A** – Authority and Applicability
- B** – Definitions, Rules of Measurement
- C** – General Rules (Subdivision, GAR, Parking, Inclusionary Zoning, etc.)
- D** – R-1, R-2, and R-3 Zones – Low Density Residential
- E** – RF Zones – Residential Flat (2 units)
- F** – RA Zones – Residential Apartment
- G** – Mixed Use Zones – Residential / Commercial
- H** – Neighborhood Mixed Use Zones - Cleveland Park; Takoma, Pennsylvania Ave SE etc.
- I** – Downtown Zones
- J** – PDR Zones - Production, Distribution and Repair)
- K** – “Special” Purpose Zones - Hill East, Union Station North, Walter Reed, etc.
- U** – Use Permissions
- X** – General Procedures – Campus Plans, PUDs, Variances
- Y** – Board of Zoning Adjustment Rules – BZA Application and Review Processes
- Z** – Zoning Commission Rules – ZC Application and Review Processes

A FEW COMMON ZONING TERMS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

Term	Meaning in Zoning – See also Zoning Regulations Subtitle B Definitions
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Ratio of total gross floor area of a building to the area of its lot – establishes the square footage of building allowed
Lot Occupancy	Amount of the lot covered by buildings and structures – varies with zone and use
Building Height	Measured from the Building Height Measuring Point, as defined in the regulations, to either the mid-point of a sloped roof or the top of a flat roof (not including a Penthouse)
Penthouse / Rooftop Structure	An enclosure or other equipment on the roof of the building; can be located above the permitted height under Zoning and the Height Act; typically does not count towards building FAR; has a setback requirement of 1:1 from roof edge below
Setback / Yard	Typically refers to the “open space” between a building and a lot line
Step-back	Typically refers to the distance that upper floors step back from the face of floors below
Pervious Surface	The amount of a property covered in building, or landscape material that does not allow rain infiltration
Accessory Apartment	A second, rental unit constructed within a house or in an accessory building on a property within the low-density residential zones
Inclusionary Zoning (IZ)	Requirement for the provision of dedicated affordable housing as part of most residential developments of more than 10 units, in return for additional density and height / lot occupancy beyond what the zone normally allows
Rule of Measurement	How to measure or calculate aspects of development regulated in zoning, as detailed in Subtitle B of the Zoning Regs

HOW DOES ZONING RELATE TO THE HPRB?

- A proposal must meet both zoning and HP requirements
- Neither can “over-rule” the other
 - Historic Preservation reviews a project for compatibility with the character of an historic district or landmark.
 - Discrepancies between zoning and historic preservation requirements are often identified through the concept review process.
 - If a project requires zoning relief, the applicant would need to obtain the appropriate relief from the BZA / ZC.
- In other words, a development must adequately satisfy both zoning requirements and HP review.

OFFICE OF PLANNING DEVELOPMENT REVIEW ROLE

Zoning Commission Cases

- Review applications against the Comp Plan and planning documents
- Coordinate with applicants, community, other OP divisions, and other agencies
- Provide written and verbal reports with analysis and recommendation
- OP can propose changes to the Zoning Regulations (text amendments) and Maps

Board of Zoning Adjustment Cases

- Review applications against the variance / special exception tests
- Provide both a written and verbal report with analysis and recommendation

OP does NOT:

- Administer ZC or BZA application processing (Office of Zoning (www.dcoz.dc.gov))
- Oversee publication or maintenance of zoning regulations / maps (OZ)
- Provide the official interpretation of the zoning regs (Dept. of Building)
- Review building permit applications (DoB)



OP's CURRENT ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT CASES

1. ALLEY LOT TEXT AMENDMENT- ZC Case 25-06 – email alleylots@dc.gov

- To facilitate use and creation of alley lots
- Public Hearing scheduled for November 13, 2025

2. RA-1 ZONE TEXT AMENDMENT – ZC Case 25-08 – ra1textamendment@dc.gov

- To amend by-right (rowhouse, small apartment) and special exception provisions
- Public Hearing scheduled for November 6, 2025

3. REAR ADDITION TEXT AMENDMENT – ZC Case 25-11 – rearaddition@dc.gov

- To amend “pop-back” from 10 feet to 16 feet for attached dwellings
- Public Hearing scheduled for October 27, 2025

4. “OMNIBUS” TEXT AMENDMENT – ZC Case 25-12 – omnibus@dc.gov

- Broad range of discreet amendments to various aspects of the Zoning Regulations
- Public Hearing scheduled for October 30, 2026

OP's CURRENT MAP AND TEXT AMENDMENT CASES

1. CLEVELAND PARK / WOODLEY PARK – ZC Case 25-09

- Proposed text based on Comprehensive Plan policy direction (including height, density, general use mix)
- Proposed text also reflects the additional design guidance of the Connecticut Avenue Development Guidelines, as reviewed and approved by the HPRB (2023)
- Public Hearing set for December 1, 2025
- email - connecticutavenuenw@dc.gov

2. WISCONSIN AVENUE (FRIENDSHIP HTS TO TENLEYTOWN) – ZC Case 25-13

- Proposed text based on Comprehensive Plan policy direction (including height, density, general use mix)
- Proposed text also reflects the additional design guidance of the Wisconsin Avenue Development Framework for various areas of the corridor
- Public Hearing anticipated to be December 11, 2025
- email - wisconsinavenuenw@dc.gov

Thank You!

- Website: [Office of Planning – Zoning Reviews](#)
- Email: planning@dc.gov