



Maryland's

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

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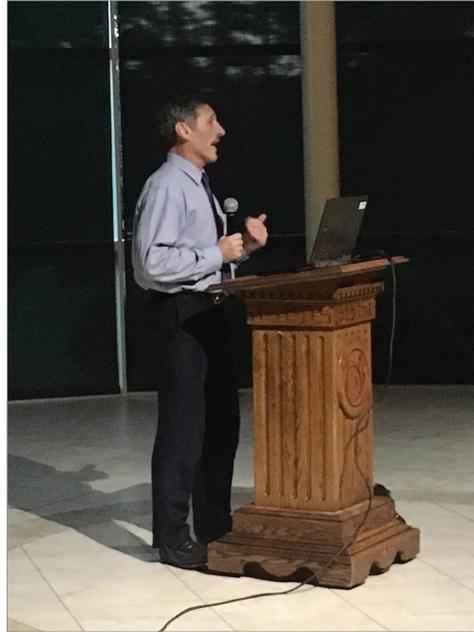


THANK YOU

*for your service, Lisa,
Jess, and Saralyn!*

The board has recently and reluctantly accepted the resignations of Lisa Mroszczyk Murphy, who served as our Vice President of Operations, Jess Phelps, and Saralyn Salisbury-Jones. It is with deep gratitude that we thank you all for your reliable and constant service during your tenures on the MAHDC board. Lisa, you've contributed in so many ways to our work—as editor of *Maryland's Historic Districts*, co-planner of the Replacement Materials Symposium, and host of several commission social hours—that you have left very big shoes to fill. Though we had you, Jess, for less time, you nevertheless made your mark with important contributions in articles to this publication and we will always be grateful. And Saralyn, who started on MAHDC's board as a graduate student board member, you have been an example of what it really means to step up and serve, as you did as organizer of our Historic Preservation Ordinance Symposium in 2016. We wish you all success and happiness!

We are seeking applicants to fill the vacant seats on the board. If you are interested in serving, please contact Melanie Lytle at director@mahdc.org for more information.



John Sandor, National Park Service Architectural Historian, spoke on reasonable approaches to preserving windows in historic buildings

WINDOWS IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS: CONSIDERATIONS FOR A REASONABLE APPROACH TO PRESERVATION

Over 55 commissioners, staff, and preservationists gathered at Newton White Mansion in Mitchellville on September 25 to hear John Sandor of Technical Preservation Services Division National Park Service speak on windows as character-defining features of historic buildings, compatibility, how the National Park Service assesses when a window needs to be retained and when a window may be replaced, and energy efficiency. ■



Co-sponsors Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission and Prince George's County Parks Department hosted us at the historic Newton White Mansion and Prince George's County Historical Society provided the tasty refreshments



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GAITHERSBURG STUDY FINDS LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS PAY

By Chris Berger, Planner and Staff Liaison to Gaithersburg HPC,
City of Gaithersburg

Property rights advocates throughout the nation are attacking the validity of local historic districts. They claim that local designation adds an extra layer of government regulation that negatively affects the economic value of the properties contained within the boundaries. Preservation economic impact studies of communities located throughout the United States have repeatedly found this premise to be false. Nonetheless, legislation has been proposed recently in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Texas that would significantly weaken local historic district regulations in each of those states.

The goal of the report titled *Fiscal Impact of Local Designation on Gaithersburg's Historic Districts*, completed in March 2017, was to determine the quantitative financial effects of designation on the City of Gaithersburg's local historic districts. Economic values for the single-family homes within the city's two residential historic districts—Brookes, Russell, and Walker and Chestnut/Meem—were studied and compared to those within Realty Park, Observatory Heights, and Deer Park, three residential neighborhoods within the city similar to the historic districts in terms of period of construction, architectural styles, and building and lot sizes.



Some residences in Gaithersburg's Chestnut/Meem Historic District

To analyze the impacts of neighborhood designation, two economic value indicators—property tax assessment values and property sale prices—were selected. Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) data were collected from the last five years available: 1997, 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2015. The data gathered for each property included building and parcel square footage and the total assessed value, which is the sum of the land and improvement values. In each study area, the total assessed value was averaged for each of the five years in which data was available and rounded to the nearest dollar.

Available sale price data from 1995 to 2015 was also gathered from the SDAT. If more than one property in a particular study area sold in a certain year the sale prices were averaged and rounded to the nearest dollar. Property sales were grouped into three eras: 1995–2001, 2002–2007, and 2008–2015. These three periods were selected to reflect the recessions as defined by the National Bureau of Economic Research that extended from March 2001 to November 2001 and December 2007 to June 2009.

The results showed that designation of Gaithersburg's two historic districts has not had a negative effect on the value of the properties contained within the district boundaries when compared to properties within the three non-designated neighborhoods. The

(Continued on page 5)



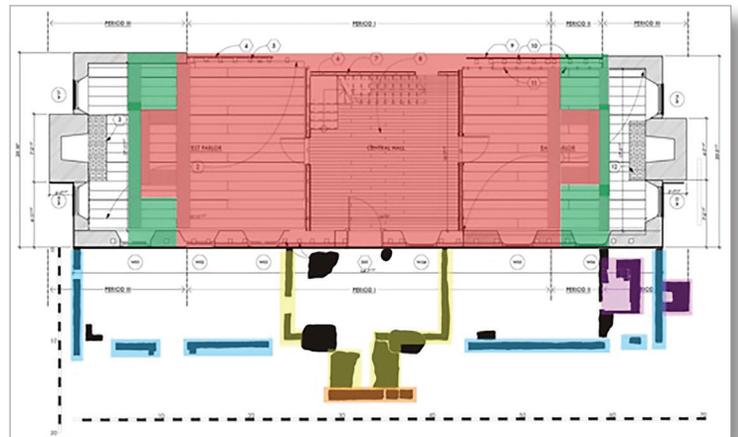
HABS Photo of the South Elevation from the southeast.
Photo by Fred D. Nichols, 1940.

ARCHAEOLOGY at Melwood Park

By Daniel Tana, Planner Coordinator at Prince George's County Planning Department and MAHDC Board Member

Melwood Park is a Prince George's County Historic Site, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and protected by preservation easements held by both the Maryland Historical Trust and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Located in Upper Marlboro and originally patented in 1672, the extant building's earliest period of construction has been dated to 1714 by dendrochronology (performed by Oxford Tree-Ring Laboratory in 2008), making it one of—if not the—oldest buildings in the county. The building is significant for many reasons; In addition to its age, it is also associated with many prominent families from Colonial-era Maryland: the Darnalls, the Carrolls, the Diggeses, and the Lees. But most important for the purposes of this article is the building's unique architecture.

Based on the aforementioned dendrochronology, in tandem with building archeology completed by the Ottery Group in 2017, there is now a much better idea of how the building reached its current form. The first period of construction c.1714 created a one-story timber framed structure with a central hall and two chambers, with brick exterior end chimneys. This was expanded by about five feet in each direction (east and west), likely constructed between



Melwood Park first floor plan (credit: Bell Architects) with building phases and archeological features highlighted. Red = First Period of Construction (c.1714); Green = Second Period of Construction (c.1740-50); Yellow = 4 course, full brick porch footer; Blue = 2 course, half brick porch footer; Orange = stone; Purple = possible hearth. Credit: Matt Cochran, 2017.

c.1740 and c.1750, encapsulating the chimneys. Finally, c.1767, the building was expanded again extending the width of the building, moving the chimneys to the outside ends, and raising the roof on the primary (south) elevation to create a two-story

(Continued on page 4)

Melwood Park (Continued from page 3)



Melwood Park 2016–2017 Ottery Group archaeological excavations. Taken near the southwest corner of the building, looking east. Photo by Daniel Tana, 2017.

facade on one side of the building, presumably, according to Matt Cochran, Field Director with the Ottery Group, to elevate the building from its humble, semi-permanent beginnings by creating the impression of a larger, more Georgian building.

In the last eighteen months, the Ottery Group has returned to Melwood Park to conduct archeological excavations near the south wall of the house ahead of

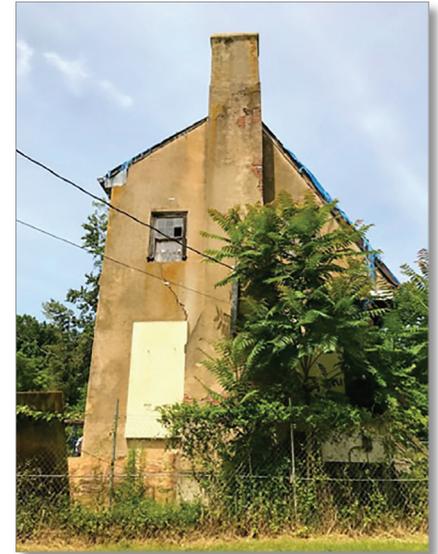
a major rehabilitation project—funded in part by a Historic Property Grant from the Prince George’s County Planning Board—which, in time, will see the building returned to a habitable level of repair. In that time, Mr. Cochran and their archeologists have uncovered a tremendous amount of new information. Approximately 10 feet from the south wall’s foundation, there is a nearly continuous full-width porch footer, two wythes thick by two courses deep, constructed with half-bricks, and connected (abutting but not tied) to the south wall foundation with a series of four perpendicular elements of similar construction. Toward the middle of the house, centered on the first period of construction (1714), is what appears to be a porch footer for a smaller, and most likely earlier, porch, constructed of full bricks, two wythes thick by four courses deep, which runs east to west. Most vexingly, near the southeast corner, there appear to be the remains of a firebox or similar structure, which is difficult to explain in the context of the present building, though notably, it

does appear to line up with where the exterior wall would have been in the second building period (c.1740–1750).

While the Ottery Group’s interpretations are still being finalized for their project report, one possible scenario suggested by the archeological evidence is that the house had a very early full-width porch on its south elevation that was likely added after 1767.

This could tie into Mr. Cochran’s current theory that, in order to give the appearance of a large Georgian manor house, the property was widened, and the unusual roofline was created in order to give the appearance of a taller, two-and-a-half story structure when viewing the primary elevation. So perhaps, to further contribute toward making the building seem larger than it is, this very deep (almost half the depth of the house) full width porch was added to the south elevation.

Hopefully more information will be uncovered in the coming years, as the south wall is deconstructed and rebuilt, and more research can be completed. Until then, we are grateful for the careful excavation and documentation of the archeological resources there. ■



Melwood Park east elevation showing the odd roofline which resulted from raising the roof on the south elevation (but not the north) c.1767. Photo by Daniel Tana, 2017.



Melwood Park south elevation present conditions. Photo by Daniel Tana, 2017.



UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

■ TRAINING CALENDAR

October 17 and 18, 2017
Rehabilitation Tax Credit Workshops
Cumberland and Oakland, MD

October 29–November 1, 2017
Conference: Keeping History Above Water
Annapolis, MD

November 14–17, 2017
PastForward 2017
Chicago, IL

■ MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHOPS: REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT

CUMBERLAND, MD • OCTOBER 17, 2017
OAKLAND, MD • OCTOBER 18, 2017

When planning to rehabilitate a primary or secondary residence or a commercial property, there are state incentives that may help. Join Maryland Historical Trust for free workshops about the Maryland Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program. More dates to be announced soon.

■ CONFERENCE: KEEPING HISTORY ABOVE WATER ANNAPOLIS, MD • OCTOBER 29–NOVEMBER 1, 2017

Keeping History Above Water is an international gathering hosted by the City of Annapolis in partnership with the Newport Restoration Foundation. Conference discussions will examine the increasing and varied risks posed by sea level rise to historic coastal communities, their built environments and traditional lifeways.

■ NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE – PASTFORWARD 2017 CHICAGO, IL • NOVEMBER 14–17, 2017

PastForward is the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s premier educational and networking event for those in the business of saving places.



Gaithersburg Study (Continued from page 2)



A residence in Gaithersburg’s Brookes, Russell, and Walker Historic District

of incentives such as historic tax credits and preservation easements.

The study noted that historic districts should not be created just to increase property values; rather, they should be created to retain the intangible factors they possess such as aesthetics, strong sense of place, and links to significant events and people from the past. However, the financial benefits can be a welcome byproduct for property owners. ■

[Read the entire report](#)

economic value indicators in the Brooks, Russell, and Walker and Chestnut/Meem historic districts often performed comparably with—and sometimes better than—the indicators compiled for the three non-designated neighborhoods. Moreover, the study contended that historic designation can be more financially advantageous to property owners long term because of the availability

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BUSINESS

- Northeast Collaborative Architects, LLC - *New!*
- EAC/Archaeology, Inc. - *New!*

INDIVIDUAL

- Sandra Heiler

Thank you for your support!

**City of Cambridge
seeks planner and
liaison to HPC**

APPLY



NEWS FROM THE COMMISSIONS

Have you visited www.mahdc.org recently? Here are some of the news items you may have missed:

- Annapolis HPC approves plan to re-brick Main Street
- Annapolis City Council to hear remarks on proposed ordinance to clarify HPC's role
- Howard County HPC receives grant to update design guidelines
- City of Frederick HPC votes to permit demolition of Birely Tannery, with conditions
- Chestertown HDC approves marina interpretative center design changes
- Baltimore to repair defaced Francis Scott Key monument
- Annapolis HPC retroactively approves Tsunami mural
- Sunny Pritchard retires as Laurel HDC coordinator
- Development proceeds at Park Hall manor site that inspired City of Frederick Demolition Review Ordinance
- Confederate memorial removed from outside Ellicott City courthouse after HPC review
- Community Health Center celebrates designation as Annapolis Local Historic Landmark
- Confederate monuments taken down in Baltimore overnight
- City of Frederick HPC deems Magnolia Ave property ineligible for designation
- Annapolis Tsunami property owner files for Certificate of Approval after District Court decision
- Berlin HDC wants to increase awareness about historic district with potential buyers
- City of Frederick HPC workshops repercussions of hotel construction in historic district
- Confederate statue removed from City of Rockville property
- City of Frederick HPC votes to designate Birely Tannery
- Rockville City Council rejects appointment of Giammo to HDC
- Calvert County Board of County Commissioners removes Locust Inn historic designation

Please share your commission's news with MAHDC by emailing director@mahdc.org.



2017 COMMISSION TRAINING PROGRAM CURRICULUM

COMING SOON IN 2018 – new training module on Archaeology for Historic Preservation Commissions

To learn more and schedule a training in your community, visit mahdc.org/training-programs.

■ SELF-STUDY

Maryland Historic Preservation Commissions Tutorial and Training Manual

■ FOUNDATIONAL WORKSHOPS

HPC 100. Design Review

HPC 101. Law and Procedures

HPC 102. Ethics and Defensive Decision Making for Historic Preservation Commissions

■ SKILL SESSIONS

HPC 200. Connecting with your Community: Communication, Education, and Outreach

HPC 201. Sustainability for Historic Preservation Commissions

HPC 202. Modernism for Maryland's Historic Preservation Commissions



MAHDC depends on the support of our members, dedicated commissioners and individuals who understand that preservation, at its most vibrant and compelling, takes place locally.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Access to MAHDC training programs at the discounted membership rates
- Subscription to MAHDC's timely e-newsletter
- Participation in a professional network of historic preservation commissioners, preservation professionals, and grassroots activists
- Influence in advocating for responsible government decisions affecting historic resources

PLEASE JOIN US! The membership application and payment can now be completed [online](#).



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