



Maryland's

# HISTORIC DISTRICTS

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## MAHDC NEWS

Make sure to check the MAHDC Facebook page for announcements about MAHDC programs and activities and interesting articles from partner organizations about their activities and updates on current programs, including tours, lectures, and book releases. Here is a selection of recent posts.

■ A Special Message from Preservation Maryland Executive Director, Nicholas A. Redding, about the launch of its new campaign, Smart Growth Maryland, on August 23rd.

■ In a letter to the Howard County Council, dated October 12, 2018, MAHDC voiced its concern about the impact of proposed plans for Ellicott City on the irreplaceable features of the historic district and the role of the Historic Preservation Commission in the decision-making process. The text of the letter is on page 6.

■ A stunning example of the importance of urban archaeology, documented in a recent article in the U.K. newspaper, *The Guardian*, and posted by the Archeology Society of Maryland on August 19th. Here is a link to the article: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jul/31/spectacular-ancient-public-library-discovered-in-germany>

■ Articles about upcoming events for two books related to Maryland: *Your Maryland* by Ric Cottom and *The Ghost of Johns Hopkins* by Antero Pietila.



Frank Robinson, Charles Duff, Kirsti Uunila

## THE MAHDC 2018 ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

*Held in Conjunction with Preservation Maryland as part of the Maryland Statewide Preservation Conference in June 2018*

By Leslie Gottert

On Saturday, June 16th, members of the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions attended the MAHDC 2018 Annual Symposium at the University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation - GSAPP, College Park, MD. This year's theme was: "Historic Communities and Affordability - When Money's Tight but the Roof Isn't".

Session topics focused on preservation economics, such as historic tax credits, and the Secretary of Interior Standards and their application in affordable restoration, rehabilitation and maintenance strategies. The full-day program tackled the challenges and opportunities for making preservation more affordable. Over fifty historic district commissioners, local government officials and staff, architects, historic property owners, and preservationists attended sessions led by leading practitioners in the field, including keynote speaker, Charles Duff, President of Jubilee Baltimore, featured afternoon speaker, Lauren O. McHale, President of the L'Enfant Trust, Washington, D.C., and National Park Service, Maryland Historical Trust, and Historic District Commission officials from around the state, to consider:

- Why is making preservation more affordable so critical to our preservation goals?
- What financial incentives and tools (both well-known and less common) are available to lower costs?
- How do commissions and staff guide property owners and architects toward less expensive solutions that are still in accordance with design guidelines?
- How do commission and staff address modern alternative materials?

A day-long exhibition hall showcased vendors and co-sponsors, including Mozer Windows and Community Forklift, Marvin Windows, RBI, Indo- Windows, and Goucher College. ■



2018 Symposium Exhibitor Hall

Save the  
Date!

## 2019 ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM TO BE HELD SATURDAY, MAY 4 IN FREDERICK!

Details to be announced in the Winter 2019 Issue of *Maryland's Historic Districts*.



Providing advocacy, training,  
and program support for  
Maryland's Historic Preservation  
Commissions and local  
governments.

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## NOMINATING THE HUGHESVILLE COMMERCIAL AND TOBACCO WAREHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT FOR LISTING ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

By Cathy Thompson

Using funding from the Certified Local Government Program, Charles County recently hired architectural historian Nicole Diehlmann to complete a National Register nomination for the Hughesville Commercial and Tobacco Warehouse District. Established in the 19th century, Hughesville grew largely as a result to its central location. In 1939, the first loose-leaf auction in Maryland was held in the village, which eventually led to additional commercial development throughout the Old Leonardtown Road Corridor. In recent years Hughesville's economic vitality has declined after the completion of a bypass. Perhaps more importantly, Hughesville was impacted by the Maryland Tobacco Buyout program that largely ended tobacco cultivation in Southern Maryland. However, Hughesville's central location and planned public infrastructure is expected to spur another round of growth in the future which could result in the loss of the surviving historic building fabric and historic context. Through resource survey and preservation planning, staff and residents hope that the past will inform the future and that Hughesville's unique history will inspire innovative adaptive reuse of some of its key buildings.

The tobacco auction houses and warehouses in Hughesville are some of the last remaining physical structures associated with Maryland's short-lived, but consequential loose-leaf tobacco industry, and are the state's best remaining cohesive collection of structures related to tobacco sales, storage and processing. The opening of loose-leaf tobacco auctions in 1939 spurred rapid development in the small town, and within a decade the north end of town along Old Leonardtown Road and east of the railroad tracks was lined with tobacco warehouses and packing plants. During the four-month-long selling season, farmers and their families, as well as tobacco purchasers gathered in town. The town prospered and new commercial structures were constructed in town, including two banks, several office buildings and a firehouse.



The Hughesville Commercial and Tobacco Warehouse Historic District represents the core of a cohesive rural community serving the business and agricultural needs of regional farmers. The northern portion of the district includes several tobacco auction warehouses and packing plants constructed between 1939 and 1961, while the southern portion is more commercial in character with several early- and mid-twentieth-century stores and offices, as well as a firehouse and former auto dealership.

Consistent with building trends throughout the county, the structures are modest vernacular interpretations of architectural styles popular in the early and mid-twentieth century. Overall, the district maintains its integrity as a cohesive collection of early- to mid-twentieth-century commercial and industrial structures that represent the town of Hughesville's rise as regional commercial and tobacco-marketing center.

Charles County plans to pursue National Register listing for the village, making the properties eligible for State and Federal tax credits. ■

For more information contact Cathy Thompson at [thompsca@charlescountymd.gov](mailto:thompsca@charlescountymd.gov).

All photos by Cathy Thompson. All photos represent historical buildings in Hughesville, MD.





# IMPRESSIONS

*from the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions  
NAPC Forum 2018 in Des Moines, IA from July 18 to 22, 2018*

*MAHDC board members, Kathleen Seay and Kirsti Uunila, in front of the image of a historical Iowa covered bridge.*

## SUBMITTED BY CATHY THOMPSON

This July, I was fortunate to attend the *National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Forum (NAPC) - A Preservation Caucus* held in Des Moines, Iowa from July 18 to 22. This was a gathering of over 700 professionals from around the country to share information on a broad range of preservation topics. I was joined by fellow MAHDC board members, Kirsti Uunila and Sheila Bashiri, graduate student representative, Kathleen Seay, and MAHDC Executive Director, Leslie Gottert. Des Moines is a beautiful city in the nation's heartland that has grown from a frontier outpost to a vibrant urban area that truly showcases the arts and culture, and above all, an enduring preservation ethic.

The city is undergoing a transformation fueled in large part by the use of preservation tax credits to preserve the best of the city while propelling it into the future. The Opening Plenary Session was held in the Scottish Rite Consistory, built in 1927 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There we heard from Mary

Means, who is credited with launching the Main Street program and bringing historic preservation into the mainstream. Also as part of the Awards Ceremony, our very own Kathleen Seay was recognized as a NAPC scholarship recipient!

The awards reception followed at the nearby American Enterprise Building, a nationally recognized Mid-century Modern masterpiece by American architect, Gordon Bunshaft. After visiting, it is no surprise that this building was named as one of the most significant Iowa buildings of the 20th century. On Saturday, Leslie and I toured Sherman Hill, a beautiful Victorian neighborhood that was the city's first local historic district. Led by two residents that have been involved in revitalization efforts there for decades, we were able to witness firsthand their many success and to see and hear about the great work still going on.

Sessions that I attended spotlighted the documentation of Mid-century Modern resources, innovative strategies for preservation of African American communities, Main Street programs and the

(Continued on page 4)

use of tax credits, and how small Historic Preservation Commissions across the country are managing and indeed thriving with limited resources and staff. Thanks to all of the NAPC Board, the Steering Committee, and to the City of Des Moines for hosting us. I believe all that attended left a little more empowered and inspired to work even harder for preservation projects in their own communities.

### SUBMITTED BY KATHLEEN SEAY

As a current Historic Preservation graduate student, I was honored to be able to attend the NAPC FORUM 2018. As someone whose only Mid-West travel experience was Chicago, I was pleasantly shocked to explore the time capsule that is Des Moines and experience its culture. It was immediately evident why NAPC chose this location. This stands as a testament to preservation work built for the future and laced with successful adaptive reuse. The immediate corridor of the conference site was a manicured and rebuilt portion of the city that, according to local residents, used to be a seedy part of town. Yet, throughout the redevelopment process, the area has managed to retain certain historic features and feel and maintain lively night 'hot spots' attracting young (and old) people. This was inspiring to see. It felt like historic preservation work has found a rare balance in Des Moines of capturing essential integrity, while also allowing for growth and coveted modern conveniences.

At the conference I learned the most from talking and listening to the locals and hearing their opinions on preservation as an evolving design tool rooted more in functionality than in integrity at its core principle. After taking tours and hearing Iowans speak during conference sessions, it seems as though their success hails from embracing inter-disciplinary relationships and harnessing preservation as a sustainable amenity. This was best shown at Drake University, where the campus was planned by Eliel and Eero Saarinen and is dotted with Mies van der Rohe designed buildings. Despite the esteem of these names, the campus has always been open to adaptations and growth to best serve the community. Presently, the university is in the process of finding funding for a significant alteration to Mies van der Rohe's 1965 Meredith Hall. Touring Meredith Hall was like stepping back into the 1960's with its primarily original furniture, fixtures and all. However, since the campus' needs are not being met by the building, change is needed. The proposed plans for the rehabilitation are inspiring and serve as a testament to Des Moines' openness to letting its historic resources evolve alongside the community. Even Mies van der Rohe's son has given the plan his blessing and stated that his father never intended to keep a building stagnant and not allowed to be modified as needed over time.

While the local ways of preservation were quite progressive, the same could not be said about the majority of attendees at the conference. As a student was heartbreaking to realize that the opinions of a large majority of attendees were disappointingly highbrow and 'old-school'. It became clear quickly that there is a

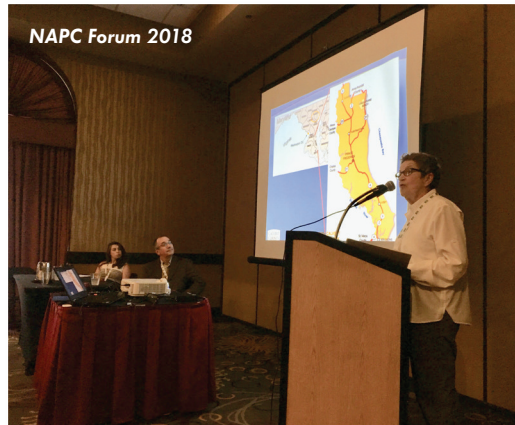
huge disparity nationwide in progressing our field to inclusion. Outlier sessions that did work to promote equity and change included: 'Bikes, Beer and Buildings: Engaging with Young Preservationists' and 'Living Heritage: Strategies for Managing Cultural Properties and Sustainable Development'.

### SUBMITTED BY LESLIE GOTTERT

Before the start of the NAPC Forum 2018, there was a half-day training on aspects of the work of Certified Local Governments for staff, historic district commissioners and others. The dynamic, capable trainers provided condensed versions of NAPC Camp Sessions on Design Review, Law and Legal Procedures and Communications. The lively sessions provided a good example of CAMP's content and format and reminded us that it would be useful and interesting to hold a NAPC CAMP training in Maryland in the coming year.

The Forum organizers included thoughtfully planned and run field trips to historical sites of special significance during the conference. I had the good fortune of participating in the trip to Mason, Iowa, a small town about 100 miles north of Des Moines that is the site of the last surviving hotel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. During the 90-minute bus ride, two preservationists offered background information about the town and the sites to be visited in Mason. Following a guided tour of the hotel, there was a slide presentation about the restoration project during the luncheon held in the former bank building connected to the hotel. In addition to the hotel complex, we also visited a residence designed by Frank Lloyd Wright that is now a house museum and two other residences designed by Wright associates.

During the Forum, there were many sessions that were relevant to preservation concerns in Maryland. In my opinion, two of the most interesting sessions were on 1) revisiting historic districts listed a number of years ago in order to document properties that were not included in the original nomination and to search for stories of under-represented communities and 2) on dealing with controversial monuments. In addition, the evening events to open and close the Forum were held in beautifully restored and maintained historical structures, such as the American Enterprise building and the World Food Prize headquarters, the former Des Moines public library. The next NAPC Forum will be held in Tacoma, Washington in July 2021. Based on personal experience at Forum 2018, I highly recommend planning to attend the next one in two years. ■



# WHAT A PERFECT WAY TO SPEND A FALL DAY!

*Exploring Washington Grove with Local Historic Preservationist and Author, Clare Lise Kelly*

On Sunday, October 21st, a lively group of over forty explorer-preservationists descended on McCathran Hall in Washington Grove, outside of Gaithersburg in northwestern Montgomery County. Their goal was to learn about the history of the village and its unique street plan and architecture from distinguished local preservationist and author, Clare Lise Kelly. Before setting out on the walking tour that beautiful fall afternoon, Ms. Kelly provided participants with fascinating information about the town's origins and the style of its Victorian-era homes. Then

two groups wandered The Grove's lanes and had the opportunity to enter three of the historic properties and ask owners about their unique characteristics and quirks.

A visit to the lovingly restored Kirtz residence capped the afternoon, as Chris and Terry Kirtz invited everyone to explore their home and then stay awhile for a lively reception. They hosted the event on behalf of the Maryland Association of Historic Districts (MAHDC)

that organized the lecture and walking tour in partnership with the Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

MAHDC thanks Clare Lise Kelly and its partners from the Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission for making the fall lecture and walking tour such an outstanding event. It also extends its appreciation for their volunteer service to HPC members, Emilia Stiles and Robert Booher, and MAHDC board members, Sheila Bashiri, Kirsti Uunila, Frederick Stachura, Aaron Marcavitch, and Chris Kirtz, who lives in The Grove with wife, Terry, and serves on the HPC as well as the MAHDC board. ■



Top left to right: Sheila Bashiri, MAHDC board member; Chris Kirtz, MAHDC board member; Robert Booher, Washington Grove HPC board member, with group in front of the Kirtz residence.

## ■ TRAINING CALENDAR

**January 24, 2019**  
**Training Course: HPC 201, Sustainability for Historic District Commissions**  
St. Mary's County • Time and Place: TBA

**May 4, 2019**  
**MAHDC 4th Annual Symposium**  
Frederick, MD  
Venue: TBA

# UPDATE ON ELLICOTT CITY:

## MAHDC ADDRESSED HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE HPC FUNCTION

On October 12, MAHDC sent the following letter to the Howard County Council:

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

The Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions (MAHDC) respectfully requests that the County Council consider the ramifications of the bill **CB75-2018** currently pending before the Council, specifically concerning Ellicott City, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and protection from catastrophic flooding.

As you are well aware, the HPC is responsible for guiding the protection of the contributing features of the historically and architecturally significant buildings, structures and streetscape of the town. The Commission is an appointed body that meets professional standards of excellence in the evaluation of historic resources and is certified under the Certified Local Government program. MAHDC considers the role of the Howard County Historic Preservation Commission as a decision-making body crucial in maintaining the integrity of Ellicott City's historic district. This bill would require the Commission to approve 'certificates of approval' for demolition and/or alteration of historical structures when a public safety concern is put forward. In this case, the definition of the term 'public safety', as broadly defined in the bill, could potentially limit the HPC's role and lead to undesired outcomes, such as demolition of buildings beyond and including those impacted within the plan put forward by the County Council, rather than finding ways to reduce risk while maintaining historical properties.

The Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions is made up of the representatives of forty-seven Historic Districts and Historic Preservation Commissions around the State of Maryland. Its primary mission is to provide training, program support and advocacy for historic preservation commissions and local governments across the state. MAHDC feels strongly that the preservation and the protection of significant historic sites and districts add value to the quality of life and sense of place of all Marylanders. These unique and irreplaceable assets also have significant economic benefits to individuals and communities. Through this legislation, a dangerous precedent is set. The role of other HPCs around the state would be negatively compromised with a movement such as this from Howard County.

In light of recognition of the important role of the Howard County Preservation Commission to provide oversight for the heritage of Howard County and to protect its independent nature, MAHDC and our membership request that the Council oppose and vote no on bill **CB75-2018**.

Respectfully submitted,

*On October 29,  
prior to voting on  
Bill CB75-2018,  
the Howard  
County Council  
amended the  
bill so that it no  
longer restricted  
the independent  
role of the HPC.*



## 2018 COMMISSION TRAINING PROGRAM CURRICULUM

**COMING SOON – New training module on Archaeology for Historic Preservation Commissions.**

To learn more and schedule a training in your community, visit [mahdc.org/training-programs](http://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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