



Maryland's

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

A Publication of The Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions

Volume 17 Number 1

SPRING 2024

LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Greetings!

As we re-launch *Maryland's Historic Districts* in 2024, nearly three years after the last issue, it is an exciting moment! We have realized that even in this time of instant communication and the 24-hour news cycle, there continues to be a place for our newsletter to continue to serve MAHDC members as a quarterly publication. With a new editor and team of journalists in place, we are ready to go! During the Covid-19 pandemic, MAHDC persevered. For example, we began to offer training courses online in May 2020, which led to an expansion of the program and the delivery of nearly 30 courses to Historic District or Preservation Commissions across the state from Cumberland to Cambridge and St. Mary's County to Havre de Grace over the past three-and-a-half years. Recent attendees have remarked on the usefulness of what they learned from case studies that provided insight into issues that they often face. We invite you to consult with us about your training needs and plan to host or attend a course in 2024. Information about the courses is available on the MAHDC website: www.mahdc.org/training-program.

All Commissioners and HDC and CLG staff are encouraged to participate in training. Our next statewide event will be the 2024 MAHDC Annual Symposium on May 23, 2024, at the Newton White Mansion in Mitchellville, MD.

(Continued on page 2)

Maryland's Historic Districts is back as a quarterly e-newsletter!
Your news is most welcome for the next issue!

SAVE THE DATE

2024 MAHDC ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Climate Change and Disaster Resilience &
Preservation of the Historic Sites of Underrepresented Communities

Thursday • May 23, 2024 | 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

followed by

The 2024 Annual Prince George's County Historic Preservation Reception

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.



NEWTON WHITE MANSION

2708 Enterprise Road • Mitchellville, MD 20721

The one-day program for Maryland Historic District/Preservation Commissioners and staff and preservation partners will include:

- Presentations by national and local experts in the fields of:
 - climate resilience and the preservation of historic properties
 - preservation of the heritage of underrepresented communities
- MAHDC 45th Anniversary Luncheon & Annual Meeting
- Session on using art & architecture to honor intangible memory

<https://mahdc.org/event/2024-mahdc-annual-symposium/>

QUESTIONS?

Please contact Leslie Gottert, MAHDC Executive Director | director@mahdc.org

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**ABOUT THE MARYLAND
ASSOCIATION OF HISTORIC DISTRICT
COMMISSIONS**

Since 1979, the mission of the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions (MAHDC) has been to provide advocacy, training and program support for historic district/preservation commissions and local governments across the state.

MAHDC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and sponsorships are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law (Please contact your tax professional about this).

For additional information, please contact:
Leslie L. Gottert, Executive Director
director@mahdc.org

Thank you for your support!

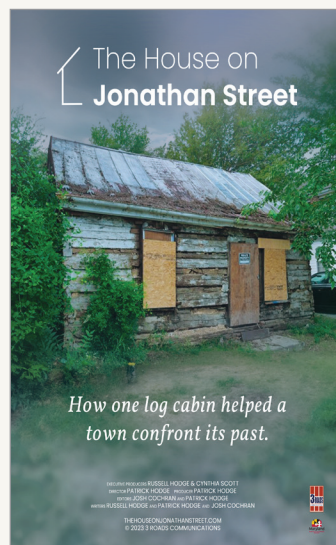
During the luncheon, we will not only hold the Annual Meeting, but also celebrate MAHDC's 45th anniversary. Then in the evening the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission and its partners will host their annual reception and awards ceremony to celebrate Maryland Preservation Month. We look forward to welcoming you to this special one-day event.

We would like to thank all of the Historic District Commissions, Contributing and Business Associates, and individual members for their support. Their annual dues are vital to MAHDC for its Training Program – the courses and the Annual Symposium – as well as publications, the website with its Online Restoration Contractor Directory, and ongoing support services.

We encourage you to send news of your community's activities and articles about your preservation programs for the summer issue of *Maryland's Historic Districts*. Please contact Leslie Gottert, Executive Director, director@mahdc.org about submission guidelines and deadlines. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Frederick C. Stachura, J.D.
President

*The House on Jonathan Street,
a 2023 Three Roads Communications Film.*



Movie poster for *The House on Jonathan Street*¹

MAHDC congratulates Preservation Maryland for its support for the identification and restoration of historic buildings and sites around Maryland. This initiative recently led to the rehabilitation of an overlooked, mid-18th century dwelling that in turn became the genesis of the film, *The House on Jonathan Street*, a 2023 documentary by 3 Roads Communications, that brings to life not only the preservation process, but also the history of Hagerstown, a town with many, varied facets.

To read an article about the project, see a photograph of the completed restoration of the Jonathan Street house, and watch a preview of the film, go to the 3roads press kit:

<https://3roads.com/the-house-on-jonathan-street/>

¹<https://3roads.com/the-house-on-jonathan-street/>

WELCOME



Tabitha Gold

(Graduate Student Board Member)

As a graduate student at the University of Maryland pursuing a Masters of Historic Preservation, Tabitha Gold joined the MAHDC Board of Directors as a Graduate Student Board Member in 2023. She has a Bachelor of Architectural Engineering from Penn State University and five years of experience in project management working in the construction industry in Washington, D.C., and Maryland. She worked with Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) in the Prince George's County, Historic Preservation Section of the Planning Department, and previously worked for the National Park Service documenting at-risk historic resources. Working as an architectural engineer on large design-build construction projects came with unique insights: the history of a place, including the "why" and "how" it came to be; impacts of the design on the community; and the community's needs and how to provide for them. She was inspired by the neighborhoods she worked in to pursue a career in historic preservation. Tabitha believes strongly in mentorship and public outreach. She has served as a volunteer for community engagement events and has hosted workshops for high school and college students aspiring to join the industry. Preservation advocacy is important to her, and she believes that historic preservation is an effective pathway for creating more opportunities for communities in Maryland. Following graduation, Tabitha joined the National Park Service as a trainee and will soon become an employee.



Janice Olshesky

(At-large)

My academic training is in Art, Architecture, and Urban Studies. I have been the lead Architect on many historic preservation projects over the past 27 years. I also have experience working with the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), for which I surveyed and prepared documentation for historic buildings in northeastern Connecticut.

My experience includes renovation projects for my own architectural practice, Olshesky Design Group, LLC (ODG), in which I renovate and design historically sympathetic additions to historic buildings for the private sector and the federal government. ODG's preservation projects include healthcare facilities, memorials, offices, recreational facilities, theaters, and residences. All these projects require a thorough understanding of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation and the provisions of the federal Historic Preservation Act, as Amended (NHPA). I am thoroughly grounded in both the design and structural aspects of rehabilitation work and have as well a broad knowledge of Maryland vernacular building forms, techniques, materials, and detailing.

I purchased the Samuel L. Byrne House in 2007, and have been spending weekends rehabilitating it with the help of others. The house has needed extensive renovation work, including the rebuilding of the foundation, repair of the historic timber structure and new joists and/or sistering existing joists, a new roof and restoration of the siding. We restored the interior of the residence to its original footprint, as it had been broken up into three apartments. We are currently restoring the historic windows and sidewalks. Our next effort is to reconstruct a historic barn on the property, which has been moved from an area that has seen more flooding recently.

I served as a Commissioner on the Cambridge Historic Preservation Commission for five years. Maryland has many beautiful historic districts with a rich cultural heritage and as an MAHDC Director, I look forward to extending my preservation efforts beyond serving as a Commissioner for one historic district. I have also devoted a great deal of time to activities of the American Institute of Architects, and I find that historic preservation coincides with my work on sustainable design and disaster resilience.



Malik E. Wilson, III

(At-large)

A Visiting Fellow at the University of Maryland, Malik E. Wilson, III brings more than twenty years of experience to the MAHDC board. Exploring themes of cultural preservation and site-specific memory, he has assisted the National Museum of African American History and Culture on their architecture, cultural preservation, and historical conservation exhibits. A long-time Maryland resident with deep ties to the community, he taught Literature at his alma mater, Blair High School, before becoming a Visiting Fellow at American University, and now, the University of Maryland, College Park. In 2024, he completed a years-long oral history documentary, *African American Legacies*, which examined the narratives of older African Americans who recalled the transition from segregation to integration. He is currently working to expand awareness of the civilizational accomplishments of various African American communities throughout Maryland by assisting with the identification, preservation and interpretation of cultural landscapes and the contributing features of historical significance to those communities. His own maternal ancestors settled in Frederick County after the Civil War, making his work deeply personal.

MAHDC NEWS

FAREWELL

- **KIRSTI UUNILA**, long-time member of the MAHDC Board of Directors and stalwart instructor in the MAHDC Training Program, retired from her position with Calvert County and resigned from the board. Kirsti created the course on archaeology for Historic District Commissions and continues to serve as an instructor in the training program.
- **KATHY MCKENNEY**, resigned from the MAHDC Board of Directors following her retirement in Cumberland. Kathy spearheaded the development of the MAHDC course for Realtors currently being finalized.
- **CATHY THOMPSON**, served on the MAHDC Board for five years until January 2023. Cathy contributed to the development of the Realtor course and served on the planning committee for the highly successful 2022 MAHDC Annual Symposium at St. Mary's College of Maryland.
- **GRACE DAVENPORT**, joined the MAHDC Board as the Graduate Student Member before becoming a Director, where she served for two years. Grace assisted with the planning and organization of the 2023 MAHDC Annual Meeting at Riversdale House Museum. Currently she is working as a member of the Maryland Historical Trust team.

Thank You for your service Kirsti, Kathy, Cathy, and Grace!

First in a series of articles on *Preservation and the Heritage of Underrepresented Communities in Maryland*

An Interview with Vaughn Holsey

of the historic Scotland community in Montgomery County, about his neighborhood's past and present, and through his ongoing preservation efforts, its future.

By Malik E. Wilson, III

Vaughn Holsey's life sits at the juncture of historic preservation, civic involvement, and community development. The story of his community is indeed one of historical neglect, but it is also a story of collaboration and productive endeavor. A proud son of Scotland, a historic African American community in Montgomery County, Maryland, Vaughn Holsey represents his neighborhood's past and present, and through his ongoing preservation efforts, its future.

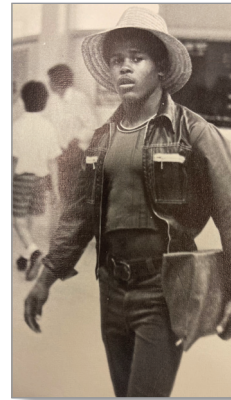
This condensed interview was conducted between January and February 2024 in Silver Spring, Maryland.



Vaughn's illustration from the late 1990s.

and a demand for land and housing, individuals and groups started stealing our land, forcing people off the land – they changed land laws, tax codes, utility requirements, everything. A lot of black people weren't educated in these things or didn't have good paperwork – people moved away, or were duped and cheated out of their property.

I grew up in Scotland, and even as a ten-year-old kid, my shower was when it rained. There was no running water or even trash



Left: Vaughn Holsey, 1976; Right: Vaughn Holsey's great-grandfather James F. Cooper, early 1900s. Photos courtesy of Vaughn Holsey

pick-up. We went to the bathroom in outhouses because there was no plumbing there until the mid-1960s, and most houses didn't have electricity and connected to other houses with extension cords. Yet despite all that, we were a close community.



James F. Cooper's obituary from the *Washington Evening Star* - March 22, 1943.

The Scotland community started organizing in the early 1960s – other churches in other communities, including white churches, came together, and other white people, mostly Jewish people – worked to assist the community.

The story begins with Joyce Siegel, a Jewish lady who was a young mother at the time. She became aware, through her young daughter's friends, of our small community. But when she visited Scotland, she was shocked by what she saw. By that time, Scotland's original 500 acres which had been owned by blacks had dwindled to just 23 acres. A lot of companies and even the Montgomery County government itself were looking to buy people out. Siegel helped to turn that tide by organizing SOS, Save Our Scotland. She also helped create the Scotland Development Board, which was run as a non-profit. When HUD was established, the very first check they ever wrote was to the Scotland community. Scotland set the tone for the rest of the nation.

Today, Mitchell Rales of Glenstone has given \$1 million dollars to help support the restoration of Scotland A.M.E. Zion Church. He is also a big part of helping to raise an additional \$10 million in funding for its ongoing preservation. I am excited to continue this legacy of historical preservation that has literally shaped my life, community, family, and future. ■

For more information on how you can be involved, visit www.scotlandamezion.org



Mozer Works Inc. founder and principal Neil Mozer restores a wood window sash. Photo by Jeff MacMillan

CONTRACTOR PROFILE: Neil Mozer of Mozer Works Inc.

By Chris Berger

In 2010, master carpenter Neil Mozer was at a crossroads in his nearly 25-year-old career. Burned out by his work as a general contractor for remodeling projects, he was inspired to narrow the focus of his company after trips North. "I saw some lovely work that was being done in New England, and I thought that a specialization in old windows and entrance doors would be a lovely way to finish my career," he said.

Fourteen years later, Mozer and his team of seven colleagues at the Silver Spring-based Mozer Works Inc. restore an estimated 500 windows and 40 doors per year in Washington, D.C., Virginia, and Maryland and have won a number of awards for their work. "We kind of feel like we haven't met one we couldn't fix," Mozer said.

Mozer stresses that his company does not strive for perfection but instead seeks to retain the historic character of windows and doors and make certain they work well. "We're not the Smithsonian by any means," he said. "We're trying to be practical."

The company offers three window repair options. The goal of the mechanical tune-up is to simply return the window to functionality while maintaining its existing appearance. For a partial restoration, the window is repaired, cleaned, painted, and

weatherized and is expected to be in good working order for at least a decade. The full restoration is the most comprehensive option and includes stripping the sashes, fixing the hardware, and reglazing the glass. Fully restored windows are expected to operate for decades.

Mozer Works recently completed work at the Knabe House in Baltimore's Mount Vernon neighborhood. The 6,400-square-foot row house was formerly home to the family that owned the Wm. Knabe & Co., a prominent 19th century piano maker and once among Baltimore's largest employers. The Mozer Works crew painstakingly restored a stained-glass skylight with more than 300 pieces that peers down from the top of the home's four-story mahogany staircase. "It's a piece of art and a functioning window," Mozer said. The company has also done work at the Josiah Henson House in Rockville and the Bostwick House and Hilleary-Magruder House, both in Bladensburg.

Mozer has spoken to a number of preservation groups over the years to encourage historic building owners to take on their fenestration restoration projects, and his company's workshop is open to visitors interested in the process. "We have some equipment that helps us, but bottom line you need some elbow grease," he said. ■

For more information on Mozer Works
visit their website at

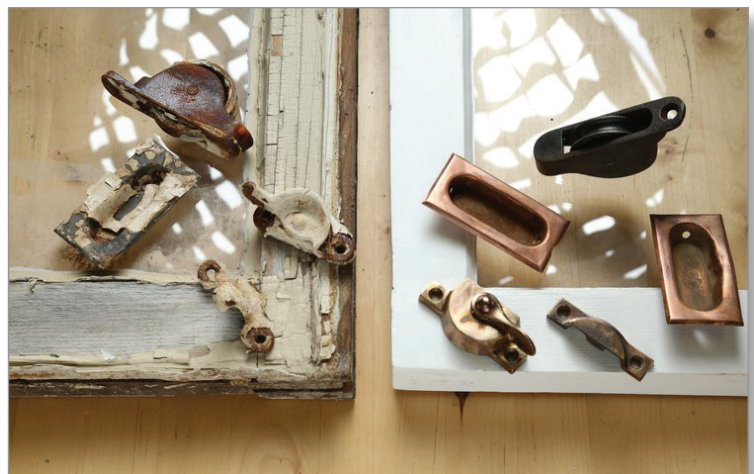
<https://www.windowrestoration.us/>.

To arrange a tour of their Silver Spring workshop or for a consultation on window and door restoration the company can be reached via email at mozerworks@gmail.com or by phone at 301-920-1900.



MOZER WORKS, INC.

RESTORATION OF HISTORIC WINDOWS & ENTRANCE DOORS



Windows before and after restoration. Photo by Jeff MacMillan



MAHDC Online Restoration Consultant and Contractor Directory

The public continues to turn to the MAHDC Online Restoration Consultant and Contractor Directory as a valuable resource to identify qualified experts and firms to work on the restoration and maintenance of historic properties.

MAHDC also welcomes the following new and renewed Business Associate members:

NEW:

- Olshesky Design Group, LLC

RENEWALS:

- Allen Construction and Restoration, Inc.
- Charles Paul Goebel, Architect, Ltd.
- Thomas J. Taltavull, Architect
- Trileaf Corporation

..... YOUR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

Contact information and a description of these firms is available online in the MAHDC Restoration Consultant and Contractor Directory:

<https://mahdc.org/contractor-directory/>




We invite MAHDC Business Associates to serve as sponsors of the 2024 Annual Symposium and consider having a display in the vendor hall so that attendees will have the opportunity to speak directly with you.

COST & SPONSORSHIPS

Securing a table in our Vendor Hall is \$100. However, we encourage you to become a sponsor to increase your visibility and recognition. We recognize sponsors on all event invitations, programs, and digital announcements, and you receive a prime location in the Vendor Hall.

- **PRINCIPAL SPONSOR – \$1000** (Receive recognition as the sponsor of the MAHDC 45th Anniversary lunch on May 23)
- **MAJOR SPONSOR – \$500** (Receive recognition as the sponsor of the MAHDC Breakfast and Coffee Breaks on May 23)
- **SPONSOR – \$250** (Receive recognition as the sponsor of the MAHDC Symposium Flower Arrangements on May 23)

 **Join us on Facebook!** Please “like” us on our [Facebook page](#) and follow for timely policy updates, news, and training opportunities.



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 new quarterly 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](#).

OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE!

MAHDC is looking for one new board member. The MAHDC Board of Directors meets virtually once every two months. Board members carry out various tasks such as editing and contributing to *Maryland’s Historic Districts*, planning the Annual Symposium and social hours, and providing support for Historic District Commissions across the state as requested.

If you are interested in learning more about serving in this capacity, please contact Leslie Gottert, Executive Director, at director@mahdc.org.

Thank you!