



# HISTORIC RESOURCES PLAN

This chapter opens with a short history of the Bethesda Central Business District (CBD). It then describes historic sites currently designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, those historic resources currently on the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County, Maryland, and other properties of potential historic interest in the planning area that are to be evaluated for historic designation. Properties which this Plan acts to designate as historic are added to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation and are placed under the jurisdiction of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

The majority of the resources discussed in this chapter date from the early “Automobile Era” in Bethesda’s development, approximately from 1920 to the beginning of World War II. Table 9.1 summarizes the current status of historic resources in the Bethesda CBD and Figure 9.1 gives the general location of these properties. Further explanation of the historic preservation designation criteria and the effects of historic site designation conclude the chapter.

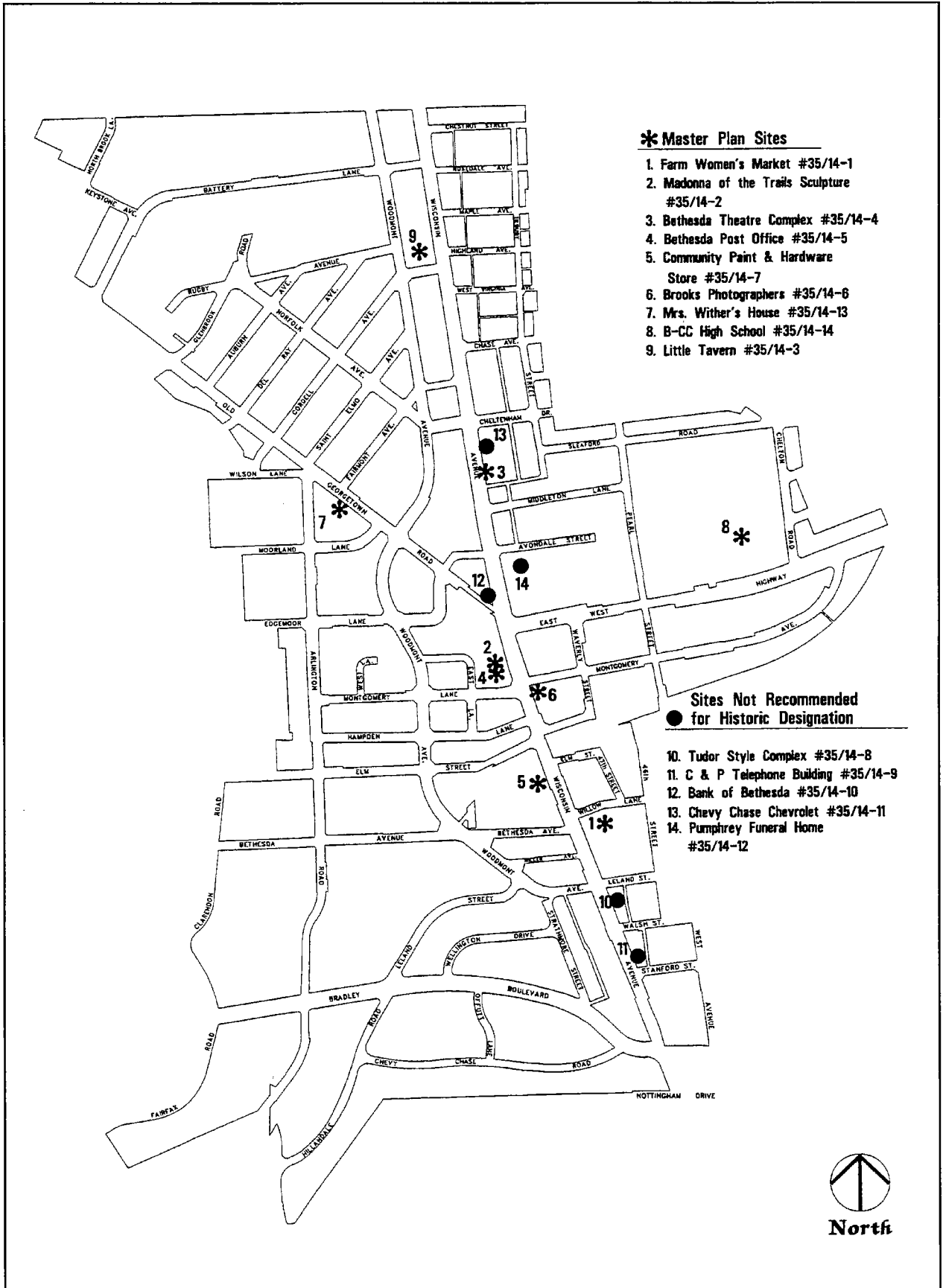
## **9.1 PLAN OBJECTIVES**

1. Highlight the values that are important in maintaining the character of Bethesda.
2. Protect and enhance Bethesda’s historic and architectural heritage for the benefit of present and future residents.
3. Integrate historic sites into new and existing development.

## **9.2 INTRODUCTION**

The intent of the County’s preservation program is to provide a rational system for evaluating, protecting, and enhancing the County’s historic and architectural heritage for the benefit of present and future generations. It serves to highlight the values that are important in maintaining the individual character of the County and its communities.

The Master Plan for Historic Preservation and the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code, are designed to protect and preserve Montgomery County’s historic and architectural heritage. Placement on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation officially designates the property as a historic site or historic district and subjects it to further procedural



requirements of the ordinance. Designation affects only the exterior of structures and their environmental settings. In addition, designated properties can make use of a number of County and State tax credits, as well as other financial aids and incentives.

The 1976 Locational Atlas originally proposed the Bethesda CBD as a historic district. However, when the historic designation of the area was first considered in 1986, it was determined that a cohesive historic district did not exist and that, instead, a thematic collection of individual resources along Wisconsin Avenue should be evaluated for placement on the Master Plan. A total of five sites were designated as historic at this time.

The linear arrangement of the designated historic sites along Wisconsin Avenue reflects the original development and growth patterns in the Bethesda CBD. They create an excellent historic complement to the Bethesda "Discovery Trail" network, which focuses on recent development and public art in the CBD area.

As part of the Sector Plan process, the HPC, the Planning Board and the County Council evaluated all Bethesda CBD resources identified in the Locational Atlas and some additional properties of potential historic interest that members of the Bethesda community recommended for consideration. The Sector Plan includes the HPC's recommendation on each property, as well as the County Council's final action on designation.

## **9.3 HISTORY OF BETHESDA**

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The history of Bethesda CBD can be divided into four general periods: the Agricultural/Crossroads Community period, the 20th century Automobile Era between the two World Wars, the post-World War II expansion period, and the Metro related development in the 1980's. As Bethesda grew over the years, many early buildings were demolished; the Bethesda Community Paint and Hardware Store is the only significant pre-1900 building still intact in the CBD. There are about a dozen other early 20th century resources that reflect Bethesda's evolution in the 1920's and 30's from a rural crossroads to an automobile-oriented, suburban community.

As a small crossroads community surrounded by farms in the post-Civil War era, Bethesda was originally known as Darcy's Store. The store itself was located opposite the toll booth on the Rockville Pike, just south of the intersection with Old Georgetown Road. On January 23, 1871, the name of the community was changed to Bethesda, after the nearby Presbyterian meeting house. Wilson's Store and Post Office (later the Bethesda Community Paint and Hardware Store) was built in 1890, the same year that the Tennytown and Rockville Railroad Company streetcar line was extended along Wisconsin Avenue to Alta Vista. In the same period, George Bradley built a house which later became the Pumphrey Funeral Home.

In the 1890's, the Chevy Chase Land Company began buying farmland for residential development, and by 1912 farming had been virtually eliminated in Bethesda. Commercial development continued to focus on the area along Wisconsin Avenue, both because the Chevy Chase Land Company covenants prohibited commercial development in residential areas and because the streetcar served as a natural catalyst for businesses.



Commercial growth was further enhanced by the coming of the B&O Railroad's Georgetown Branch in 1910. The railroad resulted in the creation of some related industries, including a number of coal yards, lumber yards, a planing mill, and an ice plant.

From 1922 to 1926, escalating land values, the subdivision of farms, and the increasing use of the automobile as a means of commuting created a real estate boom. The book *A Grateful Remembrance* states that the "Bethesda District was by far the most affluent section of the suburban County in the 1920's, and Chevy Chase and Bethesda vied with each other for more expensive homes in landscaped surroundings." Suburban growth in this period was significant. In 1920, population in the County began to shift toward the south, and by 1940, 65 percent of the County's population was in the Bethesda and Wheaton Districts.

The higher land values and residential subdivisions of the 1920's dictated more substantial buildings in the CBD area. Leslie Beall, a prominent Bethesda businessman, built a Colonial Revival house on Old Georgetown Road in 1925 (now known by his daughter's name, as Mrs. Withers' house). South of the railroad, the Warren brothers built the Leland Shopping Center in 1926-27, in a picturesque Tudor style, to provide shops for their nearby residential development. In 1926, the Bank of Bethesda constructed the first major commercial building on the site of an early blacksmith shop, and in 1928 Leland School was built.

Also during this period, C&P Telephone built a two-story stone building for the Bethesda Exchange, and Dr. Benjamin Perry built a new brick office with residence above (Brooks Photographers Building). In the late 1920's, Bethesda had three filling stations, a drug store, a hardware store, a variety store, a grocery store, two feed stores, two barber shops, and three small lunchrooms.

When the Great Depression came in the early 1930's, a group of Montgomery County women formed the Bethesda Farm Women's Market as a self-help effort to sell produce directly to families living in the area. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) built a new post office, and, as a response to increasing numbers of students in the area, the Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School was built in 1935. In 1936, Robert Pumphrey relocated George Bradley's old house closer to the road to create his new concept of a funeral "home." In 1938, the Bethesda Theatre was constructed in the popular Art Deco style. In 1939, the Little Tavern hamburger restaurant was built, as well as Chevyland Chevrolet, one of 23 auto-related businesses in Bethesda at the time.

The development of the National Institutes of Health complex in 1938 and the Bethesda Naval Hospital in 1940 spurred additional commercial activity in Bethesda during World War II. Following the war, a second wave of home building took place. As Bethesda's residential areas matured, the CBD continued to grow and prosper.

In more recent years, the coming of Metro generated additional growth in the 1980's, replacing many of the post-World War II commercial structures. The emphasis of this development shifted from smaller commercial activities along Wisconsin Avenue designed to serve only nearby residential areas to offices, shops, and restaurants that have made Bethesda a new downtown for the southern part of the County.

TABLE 9.1  
BETHESDA CBD HISTORIC RESOURCES

Resource #	Resource Name	Address	Comments	HPC Recommendation	Plan Action
<u>Master Plan Sites</u>					
#35/14-1	Bethesda Farm Women's Market	7155 Wisconsin Avenue	In continuous use since 1934 as a farm market, built as a self help response to the severe economic conditions of the Great Depression by the Farm Women's Cooperative.	Master Plan	Master Plan
#35/14-2	Madonna of the Trails Sculpture	7400 Wisconsin Avenue	Erected by DAR in 1929 to commemorate pioneer women. It is one of 12 such sculptures across the country marking the trail settlers took to the west.	Master Plan	Master Plan
#35/14-4	Bethesda Theatre Complex (Bethesda Theatre Cafe)	7715-7723 Wisconsin Avenue	Art Deco movie theater built in 1938, designed by noted theater architect John Eberson; features distinctive tower, marquee and banded brick facade.	Master Plan	Master Plan
#35/14-5	Bethesda Post Office	7400 Wisconsin Avenue	WPA Project built in 1938 of native Stonehurst Stone by Sofarelli Bros. of Jamaica, NY. Neo-Georgian style featuring hipped roof, cupola and arched windows.	Master Plan	Master Plan
#35/14-7	Wilson Store & Post Office (Community Paint and Hardware Store)	7250 Wisconsin Avenue	Only remaining commercial structure from Bethesda's early cross-roads period. Built in 1890 as general store and post office and later a popular hardware store for generations of Bethesda families. Moved 50 feet south and restored for retail use in 1988.	Master Plan	Master Plan
<u>Sites Under Consideration for Historic Designation</u>					
#35/14-6	Brooks Photographers	7349 Wisconsin Avenue	Three-story brick Colonial Revival commercial structure built in late 1920's by Dr. Benjamin Perry as doctor's office with residence above. Later office of first Bethesda dentist.	Positive	Positive

TABLE 9.1 (Cont'd.)

Resource #	Resource Name	Address	Comments	HPC Recommendation	Plan Action
#35/14-8	Tudor Style Shopping Complex	7003-7029 Wisconsin and 4606 Leland Avenue	Neo-Tudor half-timbered shopping center built by Chevy Chase developers, Monroe and Robert Bates Warren, in 1926-27, to service new homes in the neighborhood. One of 3 left in County. Shops built for owner occupant rather than rental.	Positive	Negative
#35/14-9	C&P Telephone Company Building	6925 Wisconsin Avenue	Built of local stone in 1928 and enlarged in 1940, it marks the rapid growth of telephone communication in the development of Bethesda. Reflects early 20th century interest in revival styles of architecture.	Positive	Negative
#35/14-10	Bank of Bethesda (Crestar Bank)	7500 Wisconsin Avenue	Established in 1919, the Bank of Bethesda built this substantial structure in 1925-26 on site of original blacksmith shop. Built of Stoneyhurst Stone, with quoined corners. Entrance altered. Landmark location.	Negative	Negative
#35/14-13	Mrs. Withers' House (Chevy Chase Garden Plaza)	7740 Old Georgetown Road	American Foursquare home with Colonial Revival features and red tile roof built in 1925 by Leslie Beall, one of the area's first grocers to offer fresh meat. His daughter, Mrs. Withers, leased the property for 99 years to developers of the site in 1986.	Positive	Positive
#35/14-14	Bethesda/Chevy Chase High School	4301 East-West Highway	One of oldest public high school buildings in the County, designed by school architect in 1935 with Colonial Williamburg influence. Replaced the 1917 Chevy Chase High School on Bradley Lane.	Positive	Positive
#35/14-3	Little Tavern	8100 Wisconsin Avenue	Precursor to fast-food restaurant. Early chain of hamburger restaurants constructed in 1939 in "Old English Cottage" style with the latest materials and technology. One of 4 in the County.	Positive	Positive
#35/14-11	Chevy Chase Chevrolet	7725 Wisconsin Avenue	Founded in 1939, it is the only remaining auto dealership opened before World War II. Enlarged 8 times, it is in original location and owned by original founders. One of 21 auto related businesses in Bethesda in 1939.	Negative	Negative
#35/14-12	Pumphrey Funeral Home	7557 Wisconsin Avenue	Possibly the oldest structure in Bethesda, it was originally home of the Wilson Family, purchased by Pumphrey in 1934-35 as an early funeral home—a 20th Century development. Remodeled and expanded in 1949-51.	Negative	Negative

## 9.4 MASTER PLAN SITES

**NAME: BETHESDA FARM WOMEN'S MARKET (#35/14-1)**

**ADDRESS:** 7155 Wisconsin Avenue

**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** A group of Montgomery County women formed the Farm Women's Cooperative as a self-help response to the severe economic conditions of the Great Depression. In 1932, they held the first market in an empty storefront, selling fresh produce and home-made products directly to suburban families. The one-story, 4,750-square-foot frame building at 7155 Wisconsin Avenue was built to house the market in 1934 and has been in continuous use as a farm market ever since. It remains an important link to the County's agricultural heritage.

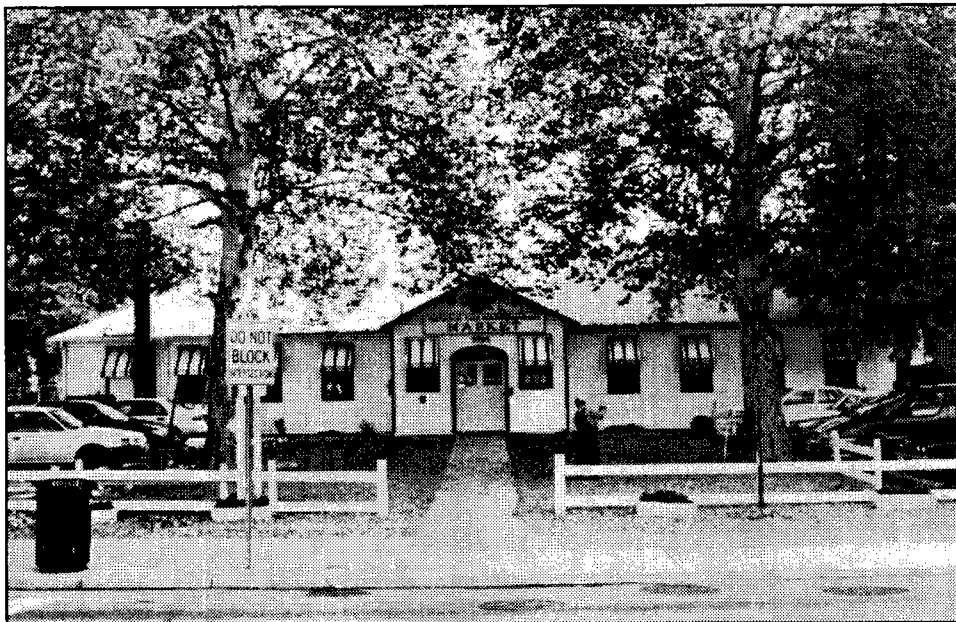
**CURRENT USE:** Farm market

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The building form, open space, and market function make the Farm Women's Market an important Bethesda landmark and gathering place. Major redevelopment is not encouraged. Efforts should be made to support the current use and character while increasing the days of operation, if possible, to enhance activity along Wisconsin Avenue. The site is eligible to participate in the County's historic easement program, as well as other historic preservation incentives. The site is zoned CBD-1.

**STATUS:** On *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:** Entire parcel of 29,967 square feet.

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**NAME: MADONNA OF THE TRAILS SCULPTURE (#35/14-2)**

**ADDRESS:** Located next to the Bethesda Post Office, 7400 Wisconsin Avenue

**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** This sculpture, Madonna of the Trails, depicts a pioneer woman and her children. It was erected on Wisconsin Avenue in 1929 by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) as one of 12 such sculptures across the country marking the route taken by settlers to the West. It commemorates this country's pioneer women and their role in the country's westward expansion. The sculpture was moved during the construction of the Bethesda Metro Center from its place on the corner south of the Bethesda Post Office to its new location north of the Post Office.

**CURRENT USE:** Public art/commemorative sculpture

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The sculpture is part of the Bethesda Metro Center's site plan enforcement agreement. This agreement specifies that the DAR will maintain the sculpture and the Bethesda Metro Center developer will maintain the site. It is located in a CBD-3 Zone.

**STATUS:** *On Master Plan for Historic Preservation.*

**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:** Sculpture only.

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**NAME: BETHESDA THEATRE COMPLEX (BETHESDA THEATRE CAFE) (#35/14-4)**

**ADDRESS:** 7715-7723 Wisconsin Avenue

**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** This Art Deco movie theater was designed in 1938 by John Eberson, a nationally noted theater architect. Its distinctive tower, marquee, and banded brick facade are characteristic of this style of architecture.

**CURRENT USE:** Movie theater/restaurant

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The site is in the CBD-2 Zone. In the event of redevelopment, the building's tower, marquee, and facade must be retained, as stipulated by the County Council in a Consent Order following designation. In addition to sensitively integrating the exterior features into any new construction, the optional method of development should include retention and renovation of the significant interior features that reflect the Art Deco styling. The Land Use chapter includes redevelopment guidelines.

**STATUS:** On *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:** Entire parcel of 17,497 square feet.





**NAME: BETHESDA POST OFFICE (#35/14-5)**

**ADDRESS:** 7400 Wisconsin Avenue

**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** Built in 1938 of native Stoneyhurst stone, this post office was constructed as a WPA project. The builders were the Sofarelli Brothers of Jamaica, New York. The architectural style of the structure is Neo-Georgian, featuring a hipped roof, cupola, and arched windows.

**CURRENT USE:** Post office

**PLANNING ISSUES:** Expansion on this building is only feasible to the rear. Particular attention should be paid to preserving the murals on the interior. The site is zoned CBD-3.

**STATUS:** On *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:** Entire 13,211-square-foot parcel.

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**NAME: WILSON'S STORE AND POST OFFICE (BETHESDA COMMUNITY PAINT AND HARDWARE STORE) (#35/14-7)**

**ADDRESS:** 7250 Wisconsin Avenue

**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** This site is the only remaining commercial structure from Bethesda's early crossroads history. The two-story frame store was built in 1890, on the site of the original Rockville Pike toll booth, and is a good example of turn-of-the-century rural village commercial architecture. Originally the community's general store and post office, this property became a popular hardware store for several generations of Bethesda families in the 20th century. The store building was relocated 50 feet to the south and restored for retail use in 1988 as part of the Apex Building's optional method development.

**CURRENT USE:** Retail store

**PLANNING ISSUES:** This site retains its landmark status. It is zoned CBD-2.

**STATUS:** On *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:** The footprint of the building.





## 9.5 SITES UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION

**NAME: BROOKS PHOTOGRAPHERS BUILDING (#35/14-6)**

**ADDRESS:** 7349 Wisconsin Avenue

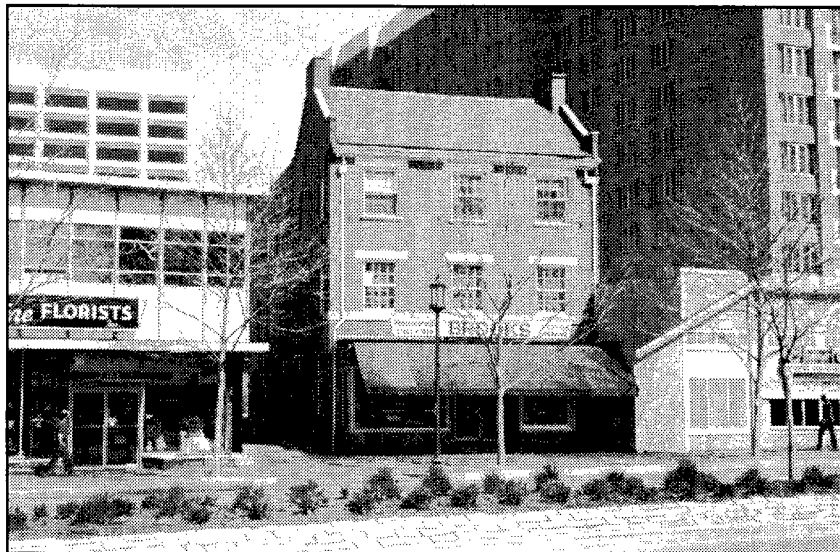
**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** This three-story brick building is a narrow, Colonial Revival commercial structure built in the late 1920's by Dr. Benjamin Perry. Dr. Perry had his office on the first floor and a residence above. The building was later occupied by Bethesda's first dentist, Dr. Clendenin. Brooks Photographers, a longtime Bethesda business, has been located in the building for 20 years.

**CURRENT USE:** Photography studio

**PLANNING ISSUES:** Redevelopment of this 10,338-square-foot site is unlikely, since it is only large enough for a standard method project. Should the parcel assemble with adjacent properties to a size suitable for the optional method, the historic integrity of the site should be preserved. The site is zoned CBD-2.

**HPC RECOMMENDATION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Meets ordinance criteria 1(A) and 1(D) as an exceptional early 20th century office building with residence above which reflects Bethesda's commercial center in the early part of this century; 1(C) for its association with Dr. Benjamin Cissel Perry and Dr. George B. Clendenin; and 2(A) for its Colonial Revival style architecture. The environmental setting would be the entire 10,338-square-foot parcel.

**PLAN ACTION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, under the same criteria and with the same environmental setting as noted by the HPC.



**NAME: TUDOR STYLE SHOPPING COMPLEX (#35/14-8)**

**ADDRESS:** 7003-7029 Wisconsin Avenue and 4606 Leland Avenue

**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** This one-and-a-half-story stucco and frame shopping complex was designed in the Neo-Tudor half-timbered style popular in both commercial and domestic architecture in the early 20th century. The complex was built in 1926-27 on an 18,665-square-foot parcel by residential developers of the era, Monroe and Robert Bates Warren. It was constructed as a neighborhood shopping center with store bays adjacent to the sidewalk and a strong pedestrian orientation, predating the Automobile Era development. The complex is one of three Tudor style shopping centers remaining in the County. There are nine small owner-occupied businesses in this complex, excluding the later two-story business on the south end.

**CURRENT USE:** Retail shops

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The site is zoned CBD-1. Either standard or optional method redevelopment providing residential use in addition to existing retail would be allowed. Because the shops are in separate ownership, optional method redevelopment would require assemblage among the owners as well as with the adjacent site to meet the 22,000-square-foot site requirement.

**HPC RECOMMENDATION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Meets ordinance criteria 1(A) as a unique neighborhood commercial development that predates automobile shopping centers; 1(D) for representing a builder-planned amenity which helped encourage the sale of homes in the Leland area; 2(A) for its Tudor Style design; and 2(E) as an established and familiar visual feature. The recommended setting would be the entire parcel of shops at 7003-7029 Wisconsin Avenue and 4606 Leland Avenue, excluding the two-story, southernmost shop at 7001 Wisconsin Avenue.

**PLAN ACTION:** Remove from the Locational Atlas, because of substantial alterations to the facades of the various shops, and because the property does not clearly meet the criteria of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.





**NAME: C&P TELEPHONE BUILDING (#35/14-9)**

**ADDRESS:** 6925 Wisconsin Avenue

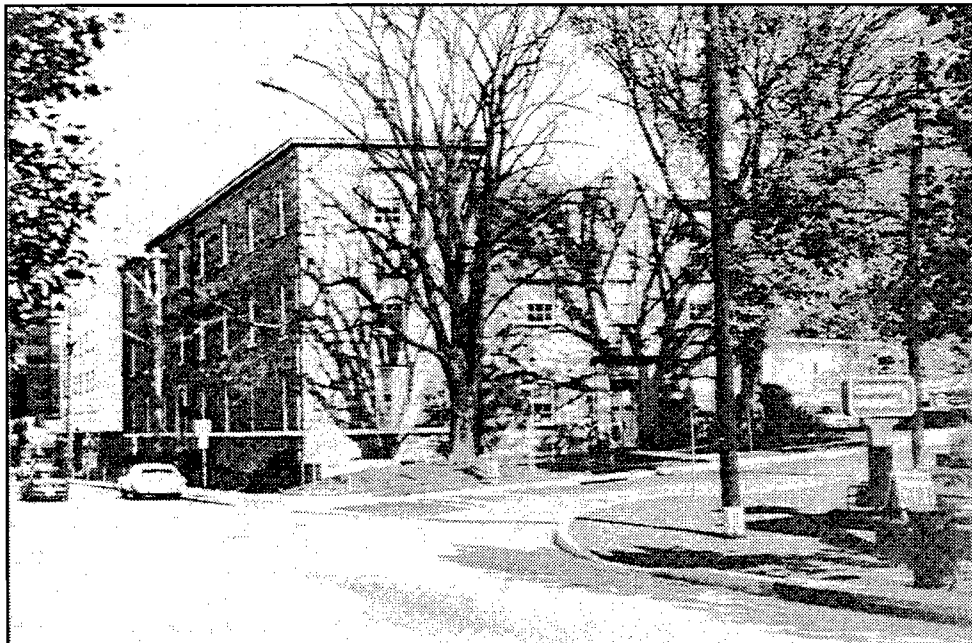
**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** This large stone building was built in 1928, with a major two-story addition in 1940. It is now four stories, including a mansard roof. Built of local stone from Stoneyhurst Quarries, it reflects the early 20th century interest in revival styles of architecture; though altered, it is similar to other stone commercial structures in Bethesda from the same period. There are some fine stone carvings on the entrance facing Stanford Street. The parcel contains 16,072 square feet.

**CURRENT USE:** Office/telephone building

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The site is zoned CBD-1.

**HPC RECOMMENDATION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Meets ordinance criteria 1(A) and 1(D) as a reflection of the exponential growth of the community and the use of the telephone as part of the suburban way of life; 2(A) for its construction material-local Stoneyhurst stone as well as its fine classical details and mansard roof; and 2(E) as a familiar visual feature along Wisconsin Avenue.

**PLAN ACTION:** Remove from the Locational Atlas because of substantial alterations to the structure specifically the 1940, four-story addition which fronts on Wisconsin Avenue and obscures the original 1928 building.



**NAME: BANK OF BETHESDA (CRESTAR BANK) (#35/14-10)**

**ADDRESS:** Corner of Old Georgetown Road and Wisconsin Avenue

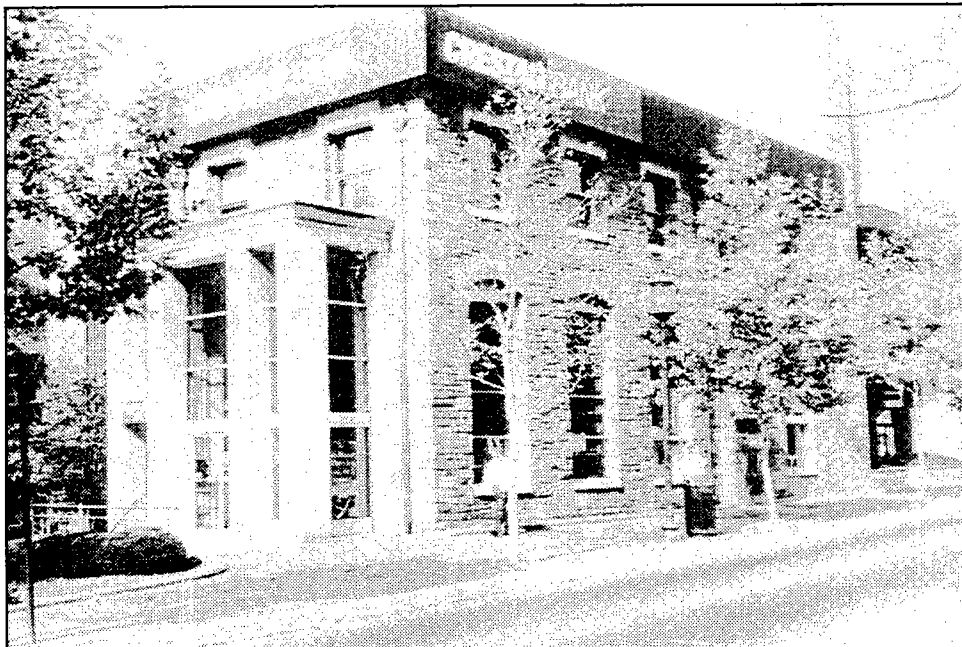
**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** The existing Bank of Bethesda building was built in 1925-26 on the site of Bethesda's original blacksmith shop. Established in 1919, the bank had originally occupied a one-story structure across the street, which later became the community library-now the Metro site. The Bank of Bethesda is constructed of local stone with quoined corners. The shape of the entry has been altered from a one-story, tile-roofed enclosure to a two-story columned portico. The structure is a prominent landmark as one approaches the Bethesda Core from the south. The parcel contains 4,496 square feet.

**CURRENT USE:** Bank

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The site is zoned CBD-2.

**HPC RECOMMENDATION:** Do not place on the Locational Atlas or the Master Plan because of major alterations and additions to the exterior of the structure which have diminished the resource's architectural and historical integrity.

**PLAN ACTION:** Do not place on the Locational Atlas or the Master Plan for the reasons cited by the HPC.





**NAME: MRS. WITHERS' HOUSE (#35/14-13)**

**ADDRESS:** 7740 Old Georgetown Road

**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** Leslie W. Beall, one of the first grocers in the Bethesda area, built this two-and-a-half story, frame, American Four Square style house with Colonial Revival features and a tile roof in 1925. Mrs. Withers is Leslie Beall's daughter. She leased the property in 1986 for 99 years to the developers of the site with the specification that the house was to be incorporated in the design of any new development. It is now part of the Chevy Chase Garden Plaza, which covers the entire block at the corner of Arlington and Old Georgetown Roads.

**CURRENT USE:** Antique store

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The site is zoned CBD-1. Preservation of the house was part of the optional method agreement when the site was redeveloped.

**HPC RECOMMENDATION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Meets ordinance criteria 1(A) and 1(D) as a reflection of the residential character of the Bethesda CBD in the early 20th century-which has been largely lost in recent years; 2(A) as a characteristic and distinctive style of residential architecture popular in the first quarter of the 20th century; and 2(E) as an established and familiar visual feature of the Bethesda community, now incorporated into a new development. The environmental setting would be the footprint of the structure only.

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**PLAN ACTION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, under the same criteria and with the same environmental setting as noted by the HPC.



**NAME: BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE HIGH SCHOOL (#13/14-14)**

**ADDRESS:** 4301 East-West Highway

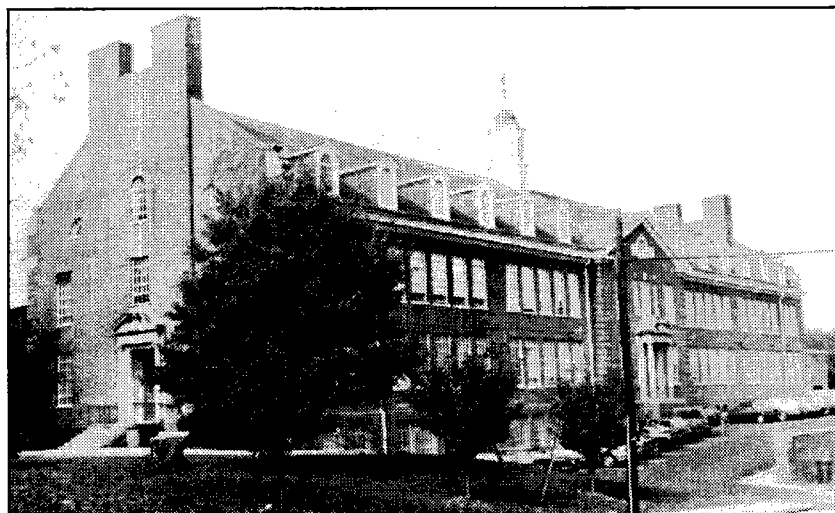
**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** Howard Cutler designed the Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, which was constructed in 1935. Thomas W. Pyle was the first principal of what was then the largest school in Maryland. Leland Junior High school, built in 1928, had served both junior and senior high students. The present high school was constructed in response to the area's population growth and was expanded in 1938, 1941, and 1946. It is one of the oldest public high school buildings in the County and was also the first home of Montgomery Junior College in the late 1940's. The Georgian Revival two-story structure with cupola reflects the interest in Colonial revival styles in the 1930's. It was influenced by Christopher Wren's academic building at William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Virginia, and Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

**CURRENT USE:** High School/Language Arts Building

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The school lies outside the CBD Zone, and is zoned R-60. It contains 16.36 acres, comprising most of the block between Sleaford Road and East-West Highway.

**HPC RECOMMENDATION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Meets ordinance criteria 1(A) and 1(D) as the first four-year high school in the County which reflects the area's growth and interest in education; 2(A) for its fine architectural features and distinctive characteristics of Georgian Revival architecture; and 2(E) as an established and familiar visual feature of the Bethesda community for over 50 years. The environmental setting would be the footprint of the building, excluding attachments of connecting passageways to other buildings on the campus.

**PLAN ACTION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, under the same criteria and with the same environmental setting as noted by the HPC. In reviewing Historic Area Work Permit applications on this site, the HPC should balance the Board of Education's concerns regarding cost and energy efficiency with appropriate historic preservation and rehabilitation.





**NAME: LITTLE TAVERN (#35/14-3)**

**ADDRESS:** 8100 Wisconsin Avenue

**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** This early chain of hamburger restaurants is of cultural interest as a pioneer of the now ubiquitous fast food industry. The Bethesda eatery, believed to have been constructed in 1939 in the “Old English Cottage” style, integrates the latest materials and technology of the “moderne” age—vitrolite, tile, formica, aluminum alloys, and neon signage. It is one of four Little Tavern restaurants left standing in the County. Its green roof is its identifying symbol, much as the orange roof of Howard Johnson’s roadside restaurants of the same period attracted customers.

**CURRENT USE:** Restaurant

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The site is zoned CBD-1. If not designated historic, it is likely to redevelop under the standard method.

**HPC RECOMMENDATION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Meets ordinance criteria 1(A) and 1(D) as a reflection of the early automobile era in Bethesda and as a culturally significant representation of a type of restaurant which would become symbolic of the American lifestyle in the late 20th century; and 2(A) for its distinctive roadside architecture which typifies the early automobile era. The environmental setting would be the parcel on which the structure is located.

**PLAN ACTION:** Designate on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation under the same criteria and with the same environmental setting as noted by the HPC.



**NAME: CHEVY CHASE CHEVROLET (CHEVY CHASE CHEVYLAND) (#35/14-11)**

**ADDRESS:** 7725 Wisconsin Avenue

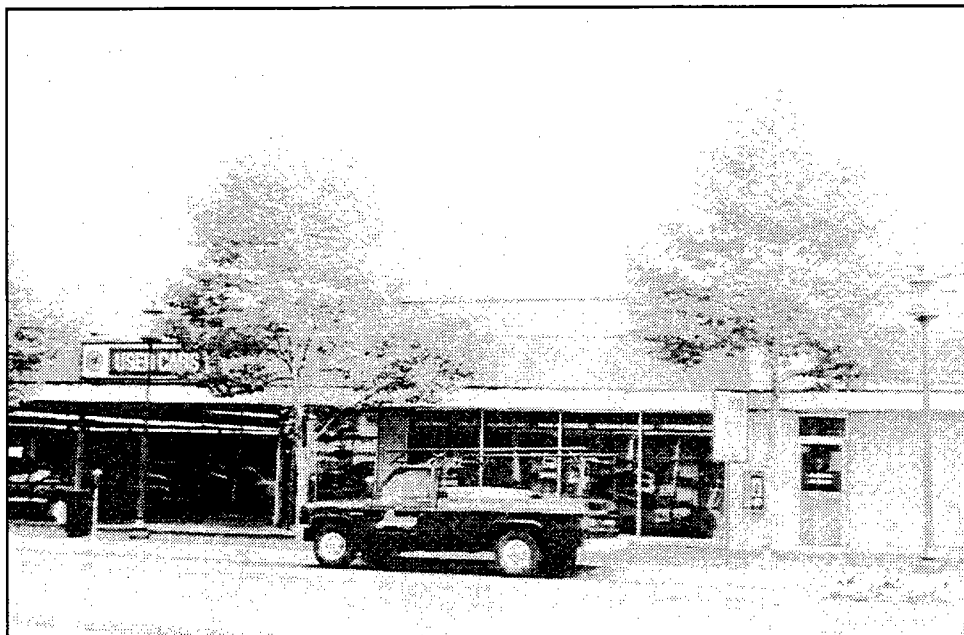
**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** Founded in 1939, Chevy Chase Chevrolet is the only remaining Bethesda auto dealership from the pre-World War II era. The Bowis family has owned the business since its founding. Its location and orientation toward NIH acknowledged the impact government development would have on the community. The building is still in its original location, but has been obscured by later additions. The curved facade has remained, but the large vertical glass and aluminum addition facing NIH predominates and reflects the 1960's.

**CURRENT USE:** Auto dealership

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The auto dealership is a prominent northern gateway to the CBD and symbolic of Bethesda's auto-era development. The site contains three parcels of 22,000, 27,498, and 7,307 square feet. It is zoned CBD-2. The Plan allows 4 FAR office redevelopment under the optional method. If the site were designated historic, such redevelopment would not be recommended unless the designated portions were incorporated into the project.

**HPC RECOMMENDATION:** Do not place on the Locational Atlas or the Master Plan, because of substantial alterations and additions to the exterior of the building, which have obscured the original structure.

**PLAN ACTION:** Do not place on the Locational Atlas or the Master Plan for the reasons cited by the HPC.





**NAME: PUMPHREY FUNERAL HOME (#34/14-12)**

**ADDRESS:** 7557 Wisconsin Avenue

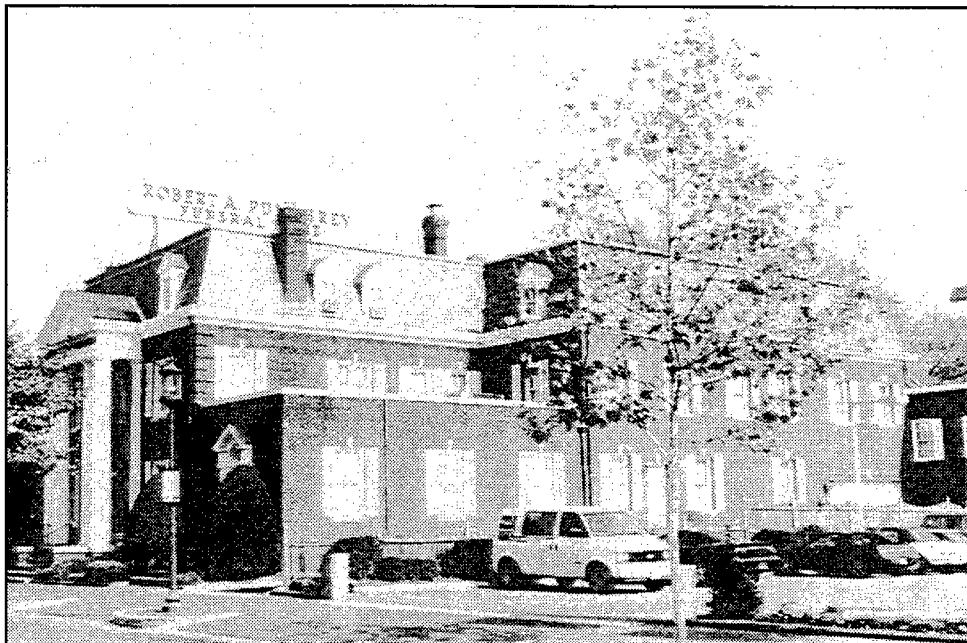
**HISTORY/DESCRIPTION:** Five generations of Pumphreys have served Montgomery County as undertakers. William E. Pumphrey, a Rockville cabinetmaker, started the original business in the 19th century. Branch offices, located around the County, included the horses, carriages, hearses, and coffins to meet any emergency functioning also as early ambulances. Until the 20th century, funerals were held in the family home of the deceased. William R. Pumphrey, Jr. created an innovative "funeral home" concept in 1928, in Rockville. He purchased the old George Bradley family home in Bethesda circa 1934 and moved it closer to Wisconsin Avenue. The structure was extensively remodeled in 1949-51 with a new roof, an addition on the back, and a side portecochere. It occupies a 12,897-square-foot parcel.

**CURRENT USE:** Funeral home

**PLANNING ISSUES:** The site is zoned CBD-2.

**HPC RECOMMENDATION:** Do not place on the Locational Atlas or the Master Plan because of substantial alterations and additions to the exterior of the building.

**PLAN ACTION:** Do not place on the Locational Atlas or the Master Plan for the reasons cited by the HPC.



## 9.6 HISTORIC DESIGNATION

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION DESIGNATION CRITERIA:

The following criteria, as stated in Section 24A-3 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, shall apply when historic resources are evaluated for designation on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation:

#### 1. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The historic resource:

- a. has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the County, State, or Nation;
- b. is the site of a significant historic event;
- c. is identified with a person or a group of persons who influenced society;
- d. exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political or historic heritage of the County and its communities; or

#### 2. ARCHITECTURAL AND DESIGN SIGNIFICANCE:

The historic resource:

- a. embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction;
- b. represents the work of a master;
- c. possesses high artistic values;
- d. represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- e. represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or County due to its singular physical characteristic or landscape.

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### EFFECT OF HISTORIC DESIGNATION:

Once designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, historic sites are subject to the protection of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Any substantial changes to the exterior of a resource or its environmental setting must be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission and a Historic Area Work Permit issued under the provisions of Section 24A-6 of the ordinance. In accordance with the Master Plan for Historic Preservation and unless otherwise specified in the amendment, the environmental setting for each site, as defined in Section 24A-2 of the ordinance, is the entire parcel on which the resource is located as of the date it is designated on the Master Plan.

Designation of the entire parcel provides the County adequate review authority to preserve historic sites in the event of development. It also ensures that, from the beginning of the development



process, important features of these sites are recognized and incorporated in the future development of designated properties. In the case of large acreage parcels, the amendment will provide general guidance for the refinement of the setting by indicating when the setting is subject to reduction in the event of development, by describing an appropriate area to preserve the integrity of the resource, and by identifying buildings and features associated with the site which should be protected as part of the setting. It is anticipated that for a majority of the sites designated, the appropriate point at which to refine the environmental setting will be when the property is subdivided.

Public improvements can profoundly affect the integrity of a historic area. Section 24A-6 of the ordinance states that a Historic Area Work Permit for work on public or private property must be issued prior to altering an historic resource or its environmental setting. The design of public facilities in the vicinity of historic resources should be sensitive to and maintain the character of the area. Specific design considerations should be reflected as part of the Mandatory Referral review processes.

In the majority of cases, decisions regarding preservation alternatives are made at the time of public facility implementation within the process established in Section 24A. This method provides for adequate review by the public and governing agencies. To provide guidance in the event of future public facility implementation, the amendment addresses potential conflicts existing at each site and suggests alternatives and recommendations to assist in balancing preservation with community needs.

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In addition to protecting designated resources from unsympathetic alteration and insensitive redevelopment, the County's Preservation Ordinance also empowers the County's Department of Environmental Protection and the Historic Preservation Commission to prevent the demolition of historic buildings through neglect.

The Montgomery County Council passed legislation in September 1984 to provide for a tax credit against County real property taxes to encourage the restoration and preservation of privately owned structures located in the County. The credit applies to all properties designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation (Chapter 52, Art. VI). Furthermore, the Historic Preservation Commission maintains up-to-date information on the status of preservation incentives including tax credits, tax benefits possible through the granting of easements on historic properties, outright grants, and low-interest loan programs.