

VIII. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Four Corners is an area with a long history, from its beginnings as a rural crossroads to its first residential developments in the 1920s, to its present day role as a mature, well-established suburban community. Historic preservation offers an opportunity to the people of Four Corners and Montgomery County to protect the remaining vestiges of a rich, local heritage. It is important to preserve significant historic structures and sites so that present and future generations have a sense of the County's beginnings and evolution. Some historic resources are significant by themselves and others are important as a collection of buildings. Montgomery County has recognized the positive benefits of historic preservation and has instituted a comprehensive preservation program, which is described in a separate document, *Historic Resources of the Eastern Montgomery County Master Plan Areas*.

Historic Resources Goal

Preserve Four Corners' architectural heritage for the benefit of present and future residents.

Four Corners Historic Resources

Historic preservation provides a sense of continuity in time, of stability and durability, while enhancing an area's attractiveness as a place to live. Four Corners has two historic resources listed on *The Master Plan for Historic Preservation*: Holly View, a vernacular Tidewater house in the Kinsman Farm subdivision, and the five Art Deco style Polychrome Houses that form a small historic district within the South Four Corners neighborhood. The Brunett House on St. Andrews Lane has been recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to be added to *The Master Plan for Historic Preservation*. Two properties, the Read House on Dennis Avenue, and the Gallagher House on Gilmoure Drive, previously listed on the *Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County*, have been recommended for removal by the HPC.

Holly View

Each of the extant historic resources of Four Corners embodies broad themes in the area's developmental history. Holly View (Master Plan Site 32/2) is a residence that reflects the lifestyle of Four Corners residents for well over a century. James L. Bond, who operated a flour and grist mill on the Northwest Branch between 1858 and 1888, at what is now the site of the Burnt Mills dam (WSSC filtration plant), was a prominent resident of Holly View. At that time Four Corners was a small crossroads village with a population of 125 and its land uses included a chair factory, store, church, and a post office.

By the late nineteenth century, the Washington, Colesville, and Ashton Turnpike Company had constructed a paved road from Ashton to Silver Spring that passed through Four Corners. These road improvements boosted the local agricultural economy, making it easier to move goods and products from farms to markets and also encouraged the development of suburban growth in the County since it became easier to travel to Washington, D.C. Retired Union veteran Colonel Oliver Kinsman, who purchased Holly View in 1886, represented a new breed of Montgomery County

resident. The shifting social composition of the County foreshadowed the rapid middle class suburban development of the region between 1890 and 1950. Holly View would remain in the Kinsman family for more than 100 years and, today, the restored house forms the centerpiece of the Kinsman Farm residential neighborhood.

The Polychrome Homes

The Polychrome Houses (Master Plan Site 32/5) largely represent the real estate boom in the period between 1920 and 1940, when the County's economy was transformed from an agricultural base to a dependence on employment by the federal government, real estate, building and construction, and the insurance industries. The Art Deco style Polychrome Houses (1934-1936) were a remarkable experiment in the construction of well-built affordable houses clad in decorative concrete. Created by renowned artisan John Joseph Earley as a housing prototype for mass production during the New Deal era, the prefabricated buildings were ahead of their time and today represent a unique residential district that captures the social intent and artistic vision of New Deal architecture.

The Brunett House

The Brunett House (Atlas Resource 32/6) is a nineteenth-century structure that underwent a dramatic Neo-classical style remodeling in 1939. It represents a far more traditional expression of architectural style than the Polychrome Houses and its remodeling was indicative of the suburbanization of area farms that took place during the 1930s. The Brunett House, like Holly View, was planned as a focal residence for the development of the bedroom community of North Hills of Sligo, largely marketed to federal government workers in the 1930s and 1940s.

Other nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century farmhouses, such as the Read residence (Atlas Resource 32/3) and Gallagher House (Atlas Resource 32/4), are extant in the Four Corners area. Unfortunately, they have been heavily altered over the years and no longer recall the region's historic agricultural or early-twentieth-century suburban development. All of these resources are summarized in Table 4 and identified on Figure 25.

Recommendations

- Maintain the designation of Holly View and the Polychrome Houses Historic District.
- Add the Brunett House to the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.
- Remove the William Read House and the Gallagher House from the *Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County*.

Table 4

FOUR CORNERS MASTER PLAN HISTORIC RESOURCES

Ident- fica- tion #	Name	Address	Comments	HPC Recommen- dation	Plan Recommen- dation
SITES DESIGNATED ON THE MASTER PLAN FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION					
#32/2	Holly View	130 Kinsman View Circle	Important example of Tidewater hall and parlor I-house with a distinctive full width, double tier gallery. First constructed as a log cabin about 1783 and substantially rebuilt and enlarged between 1850 and 1880. Prominent residents included Burnt Mills merchant miller James L. Bond, Comptroller of the United States Currency James Meline, and Union veteran Colonel Oliver Kinsman.		Master Plan
#32/5	Polychrome Houses Historic District	9900 and 9904 Colesville and 9919, 9923, and 9925 Sutherland Road	Designed by John Joseph Earley with assistance from architect J.R. Kennedy and erected in 1934-36, this district comprises a unique collection of single-family houses that in terms of artistry and craftsmanship rank among the finest Art Deco style residences in the region. Clad with prefabricated "mosaic concrete" panels invented by Early, the houses represent a significant experiment to build attractive and well-built affordable housing with superior craftsmanship and decorative detailing and made a significant contribution to the architectural technology of concrete construction.		Master Plan

Table 4 (Cont'd.)

FOUR CORNERS MASTER PLAN HISTORIC RESOURCES

Identi- fica- tion #	Name	Address	Comments	HPC Recommen- dation	Plan Recommen- dation
SITE RECOMMENDED FOR DESIGNATION ON THE MASTER PLAN FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION					
#32/6	Brunett House	605 St. Andrews Lane	Originally constructed about 1864 and extensively remodeled in 1939, this farmhouse originally was the residence of Louis L. Brunett, a Virginia native of French ancestry with extensive business interests in Washington, D.C. The house later became the centerpiece of the North Hills of Sligo subdivision and was sold to Walter B. Couper in 1939. In that year, Couper remodeled the folk Gothic Revival farmhouse into an expansive Neoclassical style residence that is representative of the economic and cultural transformation of Eastern Montgomery County as the region moved from a predominantly agricultural area to a major suburb of the nation's capital between 1920 and 1940.	Yes	Yes
SITES RECOMMENDED BY THE HPC FOR REMOVAL FROM THE LOCATIONAL ATLAS AND INDEX OF HISTORIC SITES					
#32/3	William Read House	507 Dennis Avenue	Greatly altered two-story side gable frame house built about 1904 for lawyer William Read. The house has been substantially remodeled over the years and no longer represents a distinctive type, period, or method of construction.	No	No
#32/4	Gallagher House	10311 Gilmoure Drive	Two-story frame farmhouse originally built around 1876 that has been extensively renovated in the Colonial Revival style in recent years. These alterations have greatly diminished the historic value of the building and it no longer reflects cultural, architectural, or events and themes in the history of Eastern Montgomery County.	No	No



