

## HPC SUBMITTALS RECEIVED 8-12-09

### Greenwich Forest Historic District:

7-14	Christine Parker	8020 Hampden
8-4	Korhonen	7836 Hampden
	Wood	5602 Midwood
8-4	Hertzberg	5620 Lambeth
8-4	Deluca	8100 Hampden
8-6	Huntington Parkway Neighbors	
8-10	Burks	8025 Hampden
8-11	McDonnell	5507 Lambeth
8-11	Wolff	7819 Overhill
8-11	Becker	5605 York
8-11	Schindel	5605 York
8-11	O'Prey	7821 Hampden
8-11	Sherman	8004 Westover
8-11	Gupta	8000 Overhill Road
8-12	Ranganathan	8005 Overhill
8-12	Alison McBride & David Weather	7827 Overhill
8-12	Kathy Hahn	8001 Overhill
8-12	Woody Brewer	7828 Hampden
8-12	McCarrick	5501 York
8-12	Daly	7824 Hampden
8-12	Paretzy	
8-12	Sinick	7824 Overhill
8-12	Pankopf	7819 Hampden
8-12	Wall	5609 Midwood

Higgins Cemetery:

8-4 Peerless Rockville

8-12 Knowles Little

8020 Hampden Lane  
Bethesda, MD 20814

July 14, 2009

Clare Lise Kelly  
Research and Designation Coordinator  
Historic Preservation Office  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Kelly,

When my daughter was a student at Amherst College, one of her professors, who owns a house behind Suburban Hospital, asked if anyone lived in the DC metropolitan area. She responded that she lived in Bethesda, MD and he commented that his favorite place to walk was a small neighborhood called Greenwich Forest. He is not alone in this sentiment. Many, many people walk through Greenwich Forest to take in its grace and physical beauty. There are few places with a virtual catalog of revival architectural styles, nestled in a park-like setting, where towering trees and an undisturbed natural terrain have allowed a woodland area to exist so close to downtown Bethesda. Greenwich Forest is a treasure for many.

Over twenty years ago, when I first moved to Greenwich Forest, I became curious about how this piece of Bethesda had been so sensitively developed. My research included oral histories, newspaper and journal articles, maps, and historic documents. The amount of historical information available surprised me. The neighborhood association minutes from 1937 to the present are themselves a gem of cultural history. They document how residents responded to World War II and other national trends, the importance of community and civic activism in their lives, and the challenges and petty irritations of neighbors struggling to create a livable place when the roads were unpaved and Bethesda was still undeveloped forest. There are letters and other documents that evince the importance of gardening as social glue when Bethesda was a hotbed of horticultural activity.

After seeing how much history was represented in this place, it was a short step to concentrating on those who actually built Greenwich Forest and their vision of what they wanted to achieve socially, environmentally, and architecturally. Although many esteemed architects like Alvin Aubinoe, Harry Edwards, and V.H. Bien designed houses here, the most important person behind Greenwich Forest was Morris Cafritz. He was a well-known force in Washington, but surprisingly no one has looked closely at what he attempted to achieve in his favorite project: Greenwich Forest. In a way this was his expression of a utopian dream. He has become one of my heroes. He believed, as did Life Magazine, that Americans deserved better housing regardless of their income level. In Greenwich Forest, Cafritz built both large and small houses to suit a range of paychecks. No matter the size, each house was well designed in one of several clearly identifiable revival styles and constructed with unusually fine materials. This ideal of creating a community with a diversity of income levels worked because each house was notable architecturally. A fine sense of scale, setting, and architectural detail ensured visual harmony and created an integrated whole.

Nor has anyone looked at the collaboration between Cafritz and Aubinoe, his primary architect. My house is designed by Aubinoe, but shows the heavy influence of Royal Barry Wills, a one

man architectural phenomenon, known as Mr. Colonial Architecture. Aubinoe must have been an ardent student of national architectural styles and trends, which in Greenwich Forest, he applied locally.

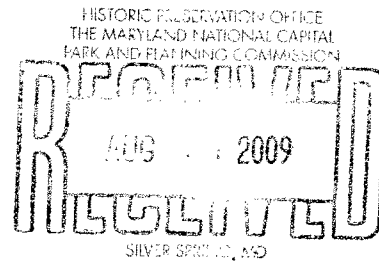
Cafritz was also an environmentalist. He did not change the terrain. And although it undoubtedly made construction more expensive and difficult, he cut down trees only within the actual footprint of the house. Early photos of the houses attest to this. He also was unusually sensitive to diversity at least in terms of ethnic and religious background. The deeds to the houses carry no offensive covenants. There were covenants, separate from the deeds that covered architectural and regrettable social restrictions. The social restrictions seem not to have been enforced. The architectural restrictions focused in part on the placement of garages, which was an issue in house design at a time when the car was becoming more dominant. The architectural covenants live on today as new owners have for the most part preserved the streetscape by choosing to build out behind their houses.

When one of my daughters learned of a particularly wrenching tear-down in the neighborhood, she said, "This is all about money. How do people who only care about money wake up and look in the mirror everyday?" Indeed, where would we be if no one in the early twentieth century had been willing to preserve their more recent past? Where will we be if we in the early twenty-first century do not preserve anything from the early twentieth century? What will give Bethesda a unique identity when all of its distinctive early development is replaced by generic architecture straight out of "Something's Got to give?" What will happen when we have destroyed the habitats of indigenous birds and other animals? Will we all grow hothouse impatiens and let Maryland wildflowers fade from view? How will we save the Potomac River as a critical water resource when the watershed has been allowed to become degraded? As our economy changes, do we need more inordinately large charmless houses sitting unsold? Where are the Morris Cafritz's of today?

A sense of history is what guides and informs a people. Tangible signs of history include monuments and artifacts. Even more important are places where architecture can be seen, not just in exquisite stand alone solitary examples, but as evidence of a community fabric in a particular time and place, and even better when American life was in a state of flux. History is not just battles, wars, dominion, and famous people. It is how everyday people of all stations lived and contributed to social change. Greenwich Forest meets this standard as an example of a response to the depression, the growth of Washington during the Roosevelt administration, the creation of a major suburb, and the vision of an important Washingtonian.

Respectfully,

Christine Parker  
Co-President  
Greenwich Forest Citizens Association



**Michael and Patricia Hertzberg**  
**5620 Lambeth Road**  
**Bethesda, MD 20814**

August 4, 2009

David Rotenstein, Chair  
Historic Preservation Commission  
c/o Clare Lise Kelly  
Historic Preservation Office  
1109 Silver Spring, Suite 801  
Mail: 8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Application of Greenwich Forest as a Historic District: Opposition

Dear Mr. Rotenstein,

Please consider this letter our formal motion to postpone the decision on the application to make Greenwich Forest a Historic District in Montgomery County.

We have read many recent emails, pro and con.

We believe this decision needs to be further discussed among the neighbors and brought to another vote at a time when many neighbors are not on vacation.

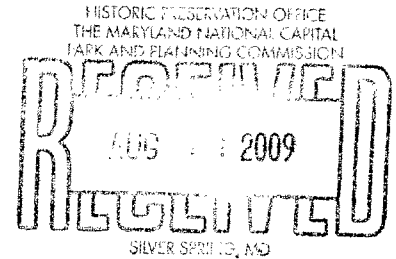
Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mike and Pat Hertzberg

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The top signature is "Mike Hertzberg" and the bottom signature is "Pat Hertzberg".

**Michael and Patricia Hertzberg**  
**5620 Lambeth Road**  
**Bethesda, MD 20814**  
August 4, 2009



David Rotenstein, Chair  
Historic Preservation Commission  
c/o Clare Lise Kelly  
Historic Preservation Office  
1109 Silver Spring, Suite 801  
Mail: 8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Application of Greenwich Forest as a Historic District: Opposition

Dear Mr. Rotenstein,

We have been residents of Greenwich Forest for over 30 years. We love our neighborhood and value the unique character of the homes and gardens. However, we are opposed to having Greenwich Forest designated as a Historic District for several reasons.

We strongly believe that individuals owning or buying homes in our neighborhood have the good judgment and taste to make their own decisions regarding improvements to their property. Even though we might disagree with certain choices a property owner might make in the color or style of their home, we respect their right to make it. In our long experience living in Greenwich Forest, we have found very little that "offends" us.

We agree with most of the points in the letter submitted by Esko and Jane Korhonen regarding the historical district issue.

We have attended several neighborhood meetings and we do believe a strong motivation for the Historic District designation is to prevent the "mansionization" of the neighborhood, i.e., the tearing down of older homes and replacing them with larger homes. On our street, two older homes were demolished and replaced by larger homes. One could argue that the new homes are too big for the lots on which they were built. But, the bottom line for us is that the new homes replaced two eyesores. We were glad to see them go.

We believe the vote on this issue was poorly timed, during the summer when many residents were away. We would like to see this issue open to further debate and open to another vote by the Greenwich Forest Citizens Association when more of our neighbors are available and not on vacation.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
Mike and Pat Hertzberg

**Kelly, Clare**

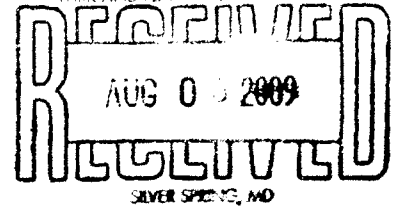
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**From:** Silvana De Luca [deluca.silvana@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 04, 2009 3:34 PM  
**To:** Kelly, Clare  
**Subject:** Greenwich Forest Hystorical district

I would like to support the designation of Greenwich Forest as an hystorical district. My husband and I have lived in Greenwich Forest for 37 years.

Sincerely,

Silvana and Luigi De Luca, 8100 HAMPDEN LANE BETHESDA, MD 20814



July 31, 2009

Clare Lise Kelly  
Research and Designation Coordinator  
Historic Preservation Office  
Historic Preservation Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Kelly,

As neighbors in the Greenwich Forest neighborhood in Bethesda, but not part of the group seeking historic designation, we would like to convey several points to the Commission and the county. Please consider these issues at your meeting scheduled for August 12.

- We would like it to be noted that there is the Huntington Parkway Citizen's Association (HPCA). We have now contacted the county so we receive any further information disseminated to citizen's associations about the proposed historic area. Huntington Parkway is part of the Greenwich Forest subdivision, as are Lambeth Road neighbors who back to Huntington Parkway.
- Although we are not part of the historic designated area, we are contiguous to it. While we appreciate that neighboring associations were contacted by the county, and houses within the designated area, the county should have identified ALL houses in the Greenwich Forest subdivision and notified all residents within the area. In fact, several of the houses excluded are original to the Greenwich Forest construction. The Edgemoor Citizen's Association and Chevy Chase West Association are not in the Greenwich Forest district, but received notification because they are within a mile of the proposed designated area. Homeowners in Greenwich Forest, some right across the street but not associated with the Greenwich Forest Citizen's Association, were not notified. We should not have to read an article in the newspaper to find out about a change in status that may affect our subdivision.
- How does the county allow one self-identified citizen's association to designate a particular area that is within a subdivision, and get approval to do so by the county without preponderance of all citizens within that subdivision? It should not be because they draw the borders based on unclear criteria.
- What does "Historic Designation" mean in practical terms? If some Greenwich Forest homes are designated as historic and others are not, will there be confusion, among realtors and potential buyers of homes, that could affect the resale price of properties? Will cost of construction be affected for all subdivision owners, because of confusion over historic designation? Will the designation drive away young families from the Greenwich Forest subdivision because of misunderstandings about which houses are or are not included in the historic designation?



Ms. Clare Lise Kelly

July 31, 2009

Page Two

- How did one county agency approve the tear down of the house on Overhill (and allow an appeal to override the Greenwich Forest Citizen's Association efforts) before a hearing took place? The possibility of up to three houses being built on that lot has a direct affect on Lambeth Road and Huntington Parkway neighbors, because of drainage issues (which have multiplied due to the increasing size of houses in our area and the corresponding diminished size of the lot). We also have concerns about trees in Greenwich Forest. Several older, healthy shade trees are being cut to make way for larger houses (In fact, several trees were cut on the Overhill property) and trees along Huntington Parkway are not being cared for and few shade trees are being replaced. We have a vested interest in our entire subdivision and the potential impact of any changes to the landscape and construction of the area.
- Another consideration is the Moorland public right of way. The possibility of a change to that area is of great concern to us, especially with the development of the Overhill lot. If there is a historic designation area, what impact will it have on public spaces within our subdivision?
- While we do not necessarily want to be included in the historic designation, we want the right to be notified of considerations within our subdivision, not allow one citizen's association to exclude us from such efforts to change our neighborhood, and for the county to allow us to understand zoning considerations that may impact our properties and their value.

We look forward to receiving further information about the consideration of the Greenwich Forest historic designation and the status of our subdivision as a whole. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrea and Michael Witt  
5408 Huntington Parkway

Eric and Pamela Melby  
5416 Huntington Parkway

Jonathan Isaacs and Liz Krauss  
5409 Huntington Parkway

Gary and Jackie Davis  
5405 Lambeth Road

Craig Margolis and Carrie Flaxman  
5403 Lambeth Road

Panos Varangis and Barbara Lyman-Varangis  
5413 Lambeth Road

Beth Burnside and Robert Pilato  
5604 Huntington Parkway

Susan Sylvester  
5602 Huntington Parkway

Jim and Betty McDonald  
5405 Huntington Parkway

Bethany and Sergio Mancilla  
5411 Lambeth Road

My name is Stephen Burks and I live in the historic core of Greenwich Forest. My wife Rita and I **favor the adoption of an historic district in our neighborhood.**

The GFCA (Greenwich Forest Citizens Association) Historic District debate is a microcosm of the "culture war" that now takes many forms in America. The "me vs. us" issues that divide the nation are many years old. This debate is difficult and sad, but it is not why we are here. Your issue tonight is law and policy. Montgomery County law says that when a neighborhood has addressed the issue of historic preservation in good faith and polled its membership on its preferences, that the community preference shall be respected. You have heard the GFCA history on this issue, and our preference. We have studied the alternatives available to us in Montgomery County, and we have concluded that an historic district is our only option. We ask that you endorse our choice.

Others will speak about individual rights and GFCA policies. However, the record is long, clear, and speaks for itself. We have talked with all parties. We have exhaustively explored other options. Historic preservation is the last and only mechanism we have to protect what is unique and valuable in our neighborhood.

In my view, special neighborhoods are worth preserving. There are too few of them, and they can't be replaced. Developers, in the name of "renewal," should not have the right to destroy what cannot be replaced. At some point neighbors need to be able to say "no" to such developers. If we don't have such tools, the free market will dictate the future of our neighborhoods. In Montgomery County, special places are disappearing. We say "enough." Where a majority of residents in an area say they want to preserve something of the past, they should have standing.

Montgomery County is thoughtful about growth. You are in a position to help decide how it grows. At some point, you will have to decide if, where, and how growth is counter-productive. Developers promote "Renew Montgomery." Renewal should not undermine what made Montgomery County great in the first place.

Thank you.

Stephen W. Burks  
Rita Burks  
8025 Hampden Lane  
Bethesda, MD 20814

## Whipple, Scott

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**From:** MCP-Historic  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 11, 2009 1:04 PM  
**To:** Whipple, Scott  
**Subject:** FW: Greenwich Forest - Application for Historic Designation

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**From:** jcmcdonnell@comcast.net[SMTP:JCMCDONNELL@COMCAST.NET]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 11, 2009 1:03:35 PM  
**To:** MCP-Historic  
**Cc:** mcdonnell01@comcast.net  
**Subject:** Greenwich Forest - Application for Historic Designation  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

David Rotenstein, Chair  
Historic Preservation Commission  
[mcp-historic@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mcp-historic@mncppc-mc.org)

I am opposed to designating Greenwich Forest an historic district. I have always been opposed, but when the boundaries of the proposed district were modified to exclude a number of homes that are clearly not historic, including my own, I came to the conclusion that if the residents within the proposed boundaries want to pursue historic district designation, I will not stand in their way. However, I have learned that there is significant opposition to pursuing the designation among my neighbors who are included within the proposed boundary. I support their efforts to have this application denied.

Unfortunately, because of a previous commitment, I cannot attend the hearing tonight.

Thank you,

Jim McDonnell

5507 Lambeth Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
301-718-7321  
[jcmcdonnell@comcast.net](mailto:jcmcdonnell@comcast.net)

7819 Overhill Road  
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

August 10, 2009

**BY FAX AND EMAIL**

David Rotenstein, Chairperson  
Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Application of Greenwich Forest as a Historic District (Resource No. 35-165)  
Hearing Scheduled for Wednesday August 12, 2009

Dear Mr. Rotenstein:

This letter is written to support the application to designate Greenwich Forest as a historic district. For the reasons set forth below, I believe that Greenwich Forest clearly satisfies all of the requirements necessary to receive this designation.

I have owned a home in Greenwich Forest for over 21 years. I first learned of the neighborhood in the middle 1980's, when a friend opined that if we were ever thinking of moving, we should consider the Greenwich Forest neighborhood. Because he lived on Harwood Road, he had frequent occasion to walk through Greenwich Forest. He praised the neighborhood for its beauty, serenity, attractive homes and beautiful trees and shrubbery. Two years later, our house search brought us to two open houses in Greenwich Forest and our observations immediately confirmed our friend's recommendation. Shortly thereafter, we had signed a contract to purchase our house.

I have always considered Greenwich Forest to be special and I consider myself very fortunate to call it my home. Because of the superb location of the neighborhood and its charming nature, in normal economic times, the houses have always sold quickly. Because open lots are a rarity in close-in Bethesda, developers have been buying homes, tearing them down and constructing huge houses that dwarf others in the neighborhood and that are frequently of a style alien to the other homes in the neighborhood. Greenwich Forest has not been immune to the damage inflicted by developers. Two of the most damaging invasions involved the Aubinoe and Coupard properties, two of the signature properties in the neighborhood that form its back boundaries. With respect to the Aubinoe property, the house was fortunately saved, but the two back lots, which had been used for community picnics and which gave the neighborhood a sense of space, were sold to a developer. The developer promptly cut down the large trees and erected two large, nondescript houses that consumed the lots and that were constructed of brick on the front and siding on the remaining sides. The architecture of these houses was neither distinct nor of the same character as the traditional Greenwich Forest homes. Most recently, Sandy Springs Builders purchased the Coupard property. It quickly leveled the distinctive house and removed many of its trees and valuable plantings. Sandy Springs has indicated that it intends to place three new homes on this property. Based on their prior construction in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area, these homes will occupy every allowable inch of the property. In addition to their size, Sandy Springs homes

have a distinctive look about them. Although standing alone these homes may be attractive to some, their size, selection of construction materials, their architectural style and their placement in the neighborhood landscape differ dramatically from the homes in Greenwich Forest.

I have always known that Greenwich Forest is a neighborhood with a special history. Over the last several of months, as I have read more historic materials about the neighborhood, I became newly impressed with the historical significance of the neighborhood and the tremendous loss that would result if its integrity were not protected. The neighborhood was conceived and built by Morris Cafritz, a legend in the world of Washington real estate and a significant local philanthropist. In planning Greenwich Forest he wanted to create a small community of well constructed homes of various architectural styles that would be affordable to families of varying income levels. Recognizing that a neighborhood is more than a single house, Cafritz was interested in the physical environment in which the Greenwich Forest homes would be placed. Drawn to the Greenwich Forest property because of its hills, trees and plants, Cafritz was intent on trying to preserve the natural environment as much as possible and to place the homes gently into the landscape rather than destroying the landscape and then having to create new physical surroundings. Cafritz selected Alvin Aubinoe, who later became a long time resident of the neighborhood, to be the architect of many of the houses.

Most of the homes in the proposed historic district are built predominantly of brick or a combination of brick and stone. The outside walls are thick and the interior walls are made of plaster. The houses are extremely well built and were constructed using building materials and techniques that are no longer economical to use in most modern housing construction. The houses represent a number of different architectural styles and contain many interesting architectural details. A number of the homes have also received architectural awards. Although my house is one of the smallest in the neighborhood, I delight in its slate roof, brick and stone construction, massive stone and brick chimney, lead glass window and its large decorative timbers.

However, the Greenwich Forest neighborhood is historically significant not only because of the physical characteristics of its individual homes, the community concept of which it is a part and the sylvan setting in which the homes were placed but also because of its connection to the period of history in which the neighborhood was developed. The houses were built as our country was struggling to survive after the Great Depression and before we found ourselves consumed in the World War II. The philosophy behind the concept of the neighborhood embraced the progressive thinking of the time and represent a slice of Bethesda history in its early stages of development.

The continuing threat of developers encroaching into the neighborhood and the inability to control massive renovations that destroy the character of Greenwich Forest has prompted neighbors to consider our options. At this point in our history, I believe that designating Greenwich Forest as a historic district holds the most promise of preserving the unique character and fabric of the neighborhood.

Historic designation requests, however, frequently tend to ignite strong passions on both sides of the issue and this request appears to be no different. A few opponents of the Greenwich Forest designation have raised a panoply of complaints and made multiple allegations against the proposed designation yet have failed to provide any substantive support for their claims. Their

complaints can be divided into four broad categories: (1) the process leading to the designation was unfair, precipitous and not well considered; (2) the houses in Greenwich Forest are neither distinctive nor historic; (3) historic designation will harm property values; and (4) if the neighborhood becomes a historic district, the approval process to make improvements and renovations will be burdensome and costly. In my view, none of these claims are valid.

At the outset opponents challenge the process leading to the filing of the application and attempt to portray it as capricious and lacking in fairness. Such claims are without merit. For at least the last three years, the Greenwich Forest Citizen Association has been exploring options to protect the neighborhood from random and incongruent development. Having the neighborhood designated as a historic district has always been one of the major options that was seriously considered and explored. During this period multiple meetings were held and a large volume of information concerning possible options, including historic designation, was distributed. Notice of these meetings was given to all Greenwich Forest residents and all residents were invited to attend and participate. Although it had been hoped that legislative changes would protect Greenwich Forest from mansionization, unfortunately these changes did not materialize.

The recent destruction of the Coupard house, the removal of the trees on the property and the plan to construct three houses on the property where only one house previously stood was painful evidence that developers are anxious to encroach into the neighborhood and in doing so have no concern for the design integrity of the neighborhood or for the trees and shrubs that are its hallmark. For many residents this recent event made us painfully aware that drastic changes to the neighborhood could happen quickly and that we had little control over insuring that future development was consistent with the architecture of the neighborhood. This served as an impetus to move to have Greenwich Forest designated as a historic district. The source of the impetus, however, neither impacts, diminishes or invalidates the reasons why Greenwich Forest is deserving of historic designation. Considering the neighborhood's previous discussions and in-depth analysis of the issue, such a decision was certainly not precipitous. Furthermore, the meetings and events leading up to the recent vote to seek historic designation were well publicized to all neighbors and were conducted according to the bylaws of the citizen association. Voters were given three weeks to review and consider pertinent materials, to discuss the issues and then to submit their votes. The process was well publicized, open and fair.

Next, some opponents argue that there is nothing distinctive or historic about the homes in Greenwich Forest. I disagree. As the materials filed in support of the application for historic designation will convincingly demonstrate in careful detail, there are abundant reasons why the neighborhood merits to be protected as an historic asset. The architectural details present in the homes, the variety of architectural styles represented, the tree covered physical setting of the neighborhood, and the underlying plan and concept of the neighborhood combine to form a unique and historically significant area worthy of historic designation.

Opponents also contend that historic designation will have a negative impact on property values. Existing studies indicate the contrary. Rather than decreasing property values, in most cases, historic designation has usually been found to increase property values. In a minority of cases the impact was found to be either negligible or if slightly negative, the result was so small as not to be statistically significant. The reasons for the positive impact of historic designation are not really

surprising. Historic designation insures a level of consistency in a neighborhood in part because it ensures design stability in a neighborhood and protects against the encroachment of development that is not in character with the neighborhood. For some, historic designation also provides a special status to a neighborhood thereby increasing the value of the property. In this regard, it is important to remember that property in Greenwich Forest is valuable for a number of important reasons, in addition to the attractiveness and history of its homes. First, it is located in Bethesda, an area well known for lovely neighborhoods, excellent public and private schools, and its highly educated citizenry. Greenwich Forest is also extremely close to downtown Bethesda with its restaurants, entertainment and other business establishments. Adding to the value of the neighborhood is its close proximity to the Metro and Washington, D.C. Designating Greenwich Forest as a historic district will not diminish any of these positive attributes. Indeed, as existing studies suggest, historic designation should be expected to enhance the value of the properties in the neighborhood.

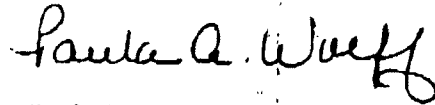
Opponents have failed to provide any documentary support – other than hearsay from unidentified real estate agents or developers – that historic designation will harm property values. They seem to want a guarantee that historic designation will improve property values. Unfortunately, such a prediction involves a multitude of variables none of which is subject to control. Since none of us is prescient, we are certainly unable to predict with exactitude the precise impact of historic designation. The best that we can do is to examine available evidence and make reasonable projections and predictions based on existing knowledge. In my view, the available information indicates that historic designation would have a positive value on the property value of homes in Greenwich Forest. Certainly allowing the neighborhood to remain unprotected and to have developers determine the size and style of construction to place in the neighborhood creates an extremely high risk that old homes will be destroyed and huge homes will take their place. Once this occurs, neighborhoods start to lose their identity and begin to assume an uneven appearance. An outcome that can be observed in many close-in Montgomery County neighborhoods. Such a result makes a neighborhood less attractive and can be expected to have an adverse impact on the marketability of its homes.

The last major issue raised by opponents to historic designation is that the historic preservation regulations will make property maintenance, modifications and renovations burdensome and costly. Again the articulated fears appear to be largely fed by unsubstantiated information that makes the rounds whenever historic preservation is raised. Contrary to the beliefs held by some, a permit is not required for interior changes to a house, ordinary maintenance, in-kind repair of exterior features or for the choice of exterior paint colors. Although permits are required for exterior modifications to the property, this extra step does not seem to be overly burdensome or disruptive to the flow of a construction project. In my view, claims that historic designation will drastically increase the cost of a project are unfounded. Even though "in-kind" replacements are encouraged, alternatives that match the original "in scale, color and texture" would probably be acceptable. Thus, if the owner found it prohibitively expensive to replace a slate roof, an acceptable alternative might be to use a less expensive alternative that replicates the look and features of a slate roof.

As mentioned previously, I live in an original Greenwich Forest house that was built in 1936. Although we have made some updates to the interior of the house, it has never had an addition

placed on it. It is my hope that sometime in the future I will be able to add an addition to the house that is in proportion to the house and consistent with the style and materials of the original house. If Greenwich Forest receives historic designation, I realize that I will need to have my plans reviewed and approved. I am comfortable with such an outcome. It seems to me that the modest inconvenience of obtaining a permit is a small price to pay for preserving the special character of the neighborhood and its homes. The alternative is to leave the Greenwich Forest neighborhood without any way to protect its integrity. In an ideal world, it would indeed be nice to trust owners, heirs and developers to "do the right thing." However, such a view is naive and the result hoped for unrealistic. It is for all of these reasons that I support the designation of Greenwich Forest as a historic district.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paula A. Wolff". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Paula A. Wolff



Kathryn L. Becker  
5605 York Lane  
Bethesda, Maryland, 20814

August 11, 2009

David Rotenstein, Chair  
Historic Preservation Commission  
Historic Preservation Office  
1109 Spring Street, Suite 801  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Application of Greenwich Forest as a Historic District- Opposition

Dear Mr. Rotenstein:

My name is Kathryn Becker and I'm writing to support the proposed Historic District designation for Greenwich Forest. My family has lived in a home built in 1938 for the past 20 years. It is one of the homes included in the proposed Historic District. We are the second owners of the house.

The proposal to become a Historic District is not a new idea. The Greenwich Forest Citizens Association (GFCA) has been concerned about the destruction by developers of the original homes in the neighborhood for a long time. I was a co-President of the GFCA in the early 1990s. At that time, we discussed the possibility of trying to obtain Historic District status for the original houses in the neighborhood built by developer Morris Cafritz. We decided to explore other mechanisms to prohibit tear-downs, and we did so for several years. Those possibilities have turned out to be impossible, so we are now seeking the protection that would be provided as an Historic District.

Some neighbors have complained that GFCA's process of proposing Historic District status has been rushed and not well thought out. Based on my experience as an officer in GFCA and my participation in discussions of historic preservation in the neighborhood for 20 years, I can state with conviction that we have been considering this proposal for many years.

Very truly yours,

Kathryn L. Becker

## STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION GREENWICH FOREST, BETHESDA

My name is David E. Schindel and my family has lived at 5605 York Lane in Greenwich Forest since October 1989. Our house was built in 1938 and is within the proposed Historic District. My wife, Kate Becker, and I are the second owners of the house. We are both in favor of historic district designation for Greenwich Forest. Many of our neighbors will speak with greater eloquence than I can about the architectural integrity, historic significance, and beauty of the neighborhood. I wish to address two other points.

I am not concerned about the additions and improvements that my neighbors want to make to their homes. I trust that they share the respect I have for the architectural integrity of the neighborhood. I am only concerned about tear-downs by developers. For more than ten years, the Greenwich Forest Citizens Association has been looking for ways to prohibit the destruction by developers of the original, distinctive homes in the neighborhood, and the construction of large homes that disrupt the visual harmony of our neighborhood. We looked into voluntary measures, overlays on building codes, and other measures. None of them could be implemented. We have only Historic District designation as a safeguard. I therefore support it. In researching this topic, I came across two statements that summarize my views:

*Historic district designation may serve a function similar to that of a designer label; it guarantees the quality of the merchandise, reducing the uncertainty facing the buyer regarding the future value of the purchase. (from a 1991 study of Washington DC neighborhoods by the National Trust for Historic Preservation)*

*A historic district may stabilize value swings. A historic district may show significant appreciation. A historic district may attract investment. What a historic district will not do is reduce property values. Does a local historic district impose restrictions? Usually. What comes with those restrictions? In many instances, additional revitalization tools become available. But even when they don't, the restrictions on one property constitute protections for the next property. (from the Canadian Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office Code of Practice)*

These are two of the fears and objections that have been raised by some of our neighbors. You will probably hear some of these concerns tonight. I have looked into each of these concerns and I am satisfied that their fears are unfounded

- 1. Ability to improve the neighborhood under historic district designation**
- 2. Loss of property values under historic district designation**

**1. Ability to improve the neighborhood.** Some neighbors have voiced concerns that the Historic Area Work Permit process will keep them from making improvements to their homes, and that contractors will avoid projects in our neighborhood because of red tape. They seem to imagine that Historic District designation will turn the neighborhood into a rule-crazy condominium association, in which neighbors sit in judgment of each other's choice of house paint and landscape design. I have read the County's Design Guidelines for Historic Districts and I am satisfied that the process is reasonable and flexible. For example, one neighbor complained that he would not be able to change his slate roof for a more energy-efficient material. I pointed out to him that the guidelines allow for substitutions of materials that match the texture and color of the original. The guidelines of the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions even suggest materials that can be used to replace slate roofs.

**2. Loss of property values.** Some of our neighbors who oppose Historic District designation are afraid of falling property values. I've now read about a dozen studies on the impact of historic designation and I've done my own research on local trends. Here are my conclusions:

- A. None of the studies match the exact situation of Greenwich Forest, so it's possible to nit-pick at the details of particular studies, as some of our neighbors have done:
- Methodologies vary (some use tax assessments, others use sale prices);
  - Timing of a study relative to general market upswings or downturns is important;
  - Timing of historic designation relative to gentrification/rehabilitation is important;
  - Type of designation is important (National designation can have less restrictive renovation guidelines than local designations);
  - Results vary by type of district (commercial versus residential); and
  - Source of the study may have an effect (Was it done by a disinterested party?)
- B. Advantages of historic designation come in several different forms, not just sale price:
- Increased security of investment;
  - Higher return on investments in property improvements;
  - Greater resistance to market downturns; and
  - Reduced time-on-market.
- C. ***NEVERTHELESS, the clear majority of studies conclude that historic designation is either neutral or beneficial to property values in one form or another. We have found no studies that demonstrate negative effects of historic district on property values, even from clearly biased sources.***

Given the lack of studies of neighborhoods that are exactly analogous to Greenwich Forest, I looked for the best available information on property value trends in our area. I compiled the following table of sale prices for zipcode areas in and around Bethesda using the Washington Post websites tables based on Trulia.com's databases.

The following table shows all the zipcode areas around Greenwich Forest, sorted in descending order of the change in median sale price between April-June 2008 and April-June 2009. Zipcodes that contain historic district are highlighted in yellow, and the 20814 area, which contains Greenwich Forest, is highlighted in green. I understand that there are non-designated areas in each of these zipcodes. Nevertheless, the 20815 and 20895 zipcodes have very high rates of increase in sales prices. They are very close to Greenwich Forest and they contain three historic districts (Somerset, Chevy Chase Village, and Kensington). It is therefore very hard to argue that historic district designation would decrease property values.

Zipcode area	Average listing price, week ending 29 July 09	Median sale price April - June 09	Change in median sale price, year-on-year	Trulia Popularity	Area
20852	\$496,517	\$575,000	49.7%	9	Rockville Pike West
20815	\$1,267,779	\$882,000	16.7%	4	Somerset, Chevy Chase Village
20895	\$621,415	\$528,000	14.5%	17	Kensington
20910	\$501,811	\$497,500	8.2%	10	Silver Spring
20850	\$570,235	\$520,000	7.2%	5	Rockville
20814	\$816,066	\$715,000	2.1%	2	C. Bethesda
20817	\$1,303,783	\$729,000	-0.1%	1	N. Bethesda
20878	\$524,675	\$476,750	-0.7%	7	Gaithersburg

## Manarolla, Kevin

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**From:** Kevin O'Prey [koprey@palisadesllc.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 11, 2009 11:42 AM  
**To:** Manarolla, Kevin  
**Cc:** councilmember.knapp@montgomerycountymd.gov;  
Councilmember.Berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov; 'Anil Gupta'  
**Subject:** Letter to David Rotenstein  
**Attachments:** oprey letter to David Rotenstein.pdf

Mr Manarolla,

I understand that you will distribute the attached letter to David Rotenstein in advance of tomorrow's meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. Thank you in advance for taking the steps to ensure that he receives the attached copy.

Kevin P. O'Prey, Ph.D.  
7821 Hampden Lane  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
202-494-3124 (o)  
301-654-3313 (f)

10 August 2009

David Rotenstein, Chairperson  
Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Resource #35-165 – Vicinity of Hampden Lane, Overhill Road, Lambeth Road in Bethesda

Dear Mr. Rotenstein,

Although I plan to speak at Wednesday's hearing, I would also like to provide you with some written arguments opposed to a historic designation of Greenwich Forest.

**Greenwich Forest is Not Historic.** I find the arguments that Greenwich Forest should be designated as architecturally historic to be extremely dubious. Fundamentally, my neighbors and I live in *suburban sub-division*. It is a beautiful neighborhood, but it is still a sub-division. The centuries-old homes and buildings of downtown Georgetown, Frederick, or Leesburg clearly pass the reasonable person test. Many of the sites portrayed on the Historic Preservation Commission's website seem similarly appropriate. But my home is a reasonably attractive brick block. My family and I love it dearly, but we are under no illusions that it has any historic value, architecturally or otherwise. (Incidentally, we are somewhat pleased to learn that it actually has a defined architectural style – "colonial revival" – but that does not change the fact that the closets are too small.)

While there are certainly some individual homes in the neighborhood that have attractive architectural elements, it appears that every one of them has undergone substantial improvements, including improvements that have made them more functional for their families. The GFCA submission to the Commission applauds the novelty of the neighborhood's attached, rear-entry garages. My attached, rear-entry garage today is my kitchen. The same is true for my next door neighbor. In fact, I do not know of any home in the neighborhood that has retained this historic architectural element.

**Historic Preservation Creates Unintended and Unwanted Disparities Among Greenwich Forest Residents.** If I were finished with all the improvements that I would like to do on my house and my daughter were grown up, I might find Historic Preservation appealing on some level. However, neither fact is the case. My family and many other residents who have moved to the neighborhood in recent years are more sensitive to the architectural axiom that "form follows function". We and like-minded neighbors seek to retain some flexibility in how we improve our properties. It is unfair that we are not given the same opportunities as are neighbors that have already finished their home improvement efforts.

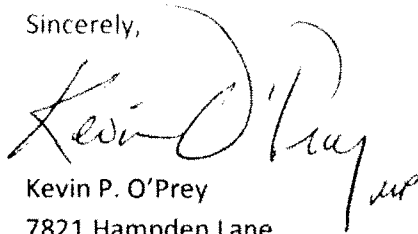
**Historic Preservation Changes My Property Rights without My Agreement.** I moved into this neighborhood and bought into a set of property rights. Now, without my approval, the Historic

Preservation Commission is considering restrictions of those property rights. I understand that government can remove or reduce property rights in times of dire need. But the concerns of GFCA hardly seem to meet that standard.

**Historic Preservation Will Likely Have a Negative Impact on Home Prices.** While I am not convinced that this question can ever be answered definitively, I am troubled that all of the studies arguing for a positive effect on home values were drafted by groups with an interest in promoting the preservation agenda. I do not go to pharmaceutical companies for drug safety data; nor do I trust studies published by groups with an agenda. When in doubt, I oppose intervening into markets for fear of unanticipated outcomes.

Finally, when all is said and done, this historic designation initiative is about blocking developers from developing homes in the neighborhood. In this regard, I find it very ironic that the GFCA and Historic Preservation Commission staff are heralding the work of one developer and architect in order to deny the work of another. In so doing, these well-meaning efforts are having the very unfortunate effect of hurting many of Greenwich Forest's current residents. I understand why some of my neighbors oppose tear-downs, but to me and other needs, the Historic Preservation cure is worse than the disease.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin P. O'Prey" with a stylized flourish at the end.

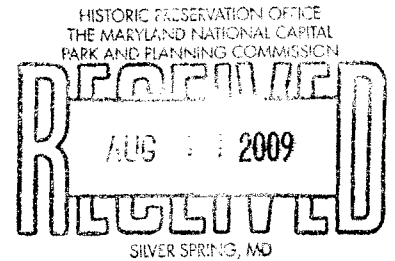
Kevin P. O'Prey  
7821 Hampden Lane  
Bethesda, MD 200814

*A very pleasant, but not historically significant residence*

cc: Councilmember Roger Berliner, District 1  
Councilmember Mike Knapp, Chair of Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee

8004 Westover Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814

August 7, 2009



**Via Fax: 301-563-3412 and U. S. Mail**

David Rotenstein, Chairperson  
Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Resource #35-165 – Vicinity of Hampden Lane, Overhill Road, Lambeth Road in Bethesda

Dear Mr. Rotenstein,

We are property owners and 12 year residents within the “Vicinity of Hamden Lane, Overhill Road, and Lambeth Road” (“Neighborhood”). We understand that the Neighborhood is under consideration for inclusion in the County’s Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Because of previously-scheduled travel plans that will preclude our attendance at the August 12 hearing and our testimony in person, we are submitting this letter to express our views that the County should deny the application. Despite our views, we are mindful and respectful of those who advocate a different viewpoint and believe that they, like us, are similarly motivated by the desire to maintain Greenwich Forest as a wonderful neighborhood in which to live. Where we digress however, is in the way we believe such an objective can best be achieved.

By this letter, we hereby register our opposition to an historic designation for the Neighborhood or our home and respectfully urge the Historic Preservation Commission (“HPC”) to **DENY** the application for that purpose as submitted by the Greenwich Forest Citizens Association (“GFCA”).<sup>1</sup>

At issue before the HPC is whether taken as a whole, the Neighborhood, an attractive and pleasant, but essentially typical down-county subdivision with a broad array of housing stock constructed at various times between the 1930’s and the present, should be deemed to possess a particular architectural and design significance that would support a determination that the Neighborhood merits designation as an Historic District.

Sec. 24A-3 of the Montgomery County Code (“Code”) sets forth the master plan for historic preservation; criteria for designation of historic sites or districts. In pertinent part, it describes the criteria as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> We are and have been dues-paying GFCA members in good standing since we took up residence in Greenwich Forest.

David Rotenstein, Chairperson  
August 7, 2009  
Page 2

(2) *Architectural and design significance.* The historic resource:

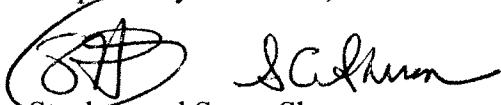
- a. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;
- b. Represents the work of a master;
- c. Possesses high artistic values;
- d. Represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- e. Represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or county due to its singular physical characteristic or landscape. (Ord. No. 9-4, § 1; Ord. No. 11-59.)

We believe whatever character that may be evidenced by any particular dwelling or dwellings situated within the Neighborhood is insufficient to support a conclusion, on the basis of applicable Code provisions, that the Neighborhood as a whole, merits designation as an Historic District.

It is worth noting that the underlying motivation of the effort seeking the Historic District designation pertains to “widespread concern that the growing trend toward ‘mansionization’ and over [sic] development... cannot be arrested or influenced.” See attached notice of January 26, 2006 Meeting to Consider Greenwich Forest for Historic Designation. We believe that an Historic Designation is not necessary to “arrest or influence” the aforementioned concerns but rather Ordinance 16-31 (effective for any building or construction after April 28, 2009), which implements ZTA 08-11, thoughtfully and fairly does so in a way that respects and balances the rights of property owners seeking to improve their properties and the rights of neighbors to enjoy their properties in a way that suits their needs and desires.

For the foregoing reasons, we respectfully urge the HPC to **DENY** the application.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Stephen and Susan Sherman

Attachment: As stated



## **MEETING TO CONSIDER GREENWICH FOREST FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION**

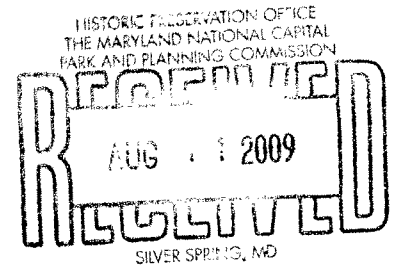
**THE GREENWICH FOREST CITIZENS ASSOCIATION WILL BE HOLDING A MEETING AT 7:00 PM WEDNESDAY JANUARY 25<sup>TH</sup> AT STEVE BURKS HOME, 8025 HAMPDEN LANE, BETHESDA TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS ON THE DESIRE TO HAVE ALL OR PORTIONS OF THE GREENWICH FOREST SUBDIVISION DESIGNATED FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION PURPOSES. MS CLARE KELLY, HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLANNER FOR THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING HAS GRACIOUSLY AGREED TO MAKE A PRESENTATION AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS.**

THE ASSOCIATION HAS BEEN INTERESTED IN PROTECTING THE UNIQUE AND VALUABLE CHARACTER THIS COMMUNITY HAS ENJOYED SINCE ITS DESIGN OVER 80 YEARS AGO. THERE IS A WIDESPREAD CONCERN THAT THE GROWING TREND TOWARD "MANSIONIZATION" AND OVER DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORICALLY UNIQUE NEIGHBORHOODS LIKE GREENWICH FOREST CANNOT BE ARRESTED OR INFLUENCED. THE MARYLAND STATE AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER PLANS GIVE RESIDENTS AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES A VOICE IN WHAT HAPPENS TO THEIR COMMUNITIES. IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PROVISIONS OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE IS THE CREATION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION. THE COMMISSIONERS SPEAK TO PUBLIC GROUPS, TESTIFY BEFORE THE PLANNING BOARD AND COUNTY COUNCIL, ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM INDIVIDUAL RESIDENTS, AND VISIT PROPOSED HISTORIC SITES AND HISTORIC PROPERTIES WHERE OWNERS WANT TO MAKE CHANGES.

THE COUNTY WILL CONSIDER SUCH A REQUEST TO KEEP FROM DEMOLITION ONE OF THE ORIGINAL HOUSES OF GREENWICH FOREST NEAR THE ENTRANCE TO THE SUBDIVISION. THIS WOULD BE THE FIRST SUCH DEMOLITION OF AN ORIGINAL HOUSE IN THE GFCA AREA. YOUR OPINIONS AND SUPPORT CAN PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN DETERMINING WHETHER GREENWICH FOREST WILL SURVIVE OR GO THE WAY OF OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS. AS THE HISTORIC DESIGNATION OF NEARBY WOODHAVEN NEIGHBORHOOD, AND THAT OF THE VILLAGES OF SOMERSET, CHEVY CHASE, AND KENNSINGTON DEMONSTRATE, RATHER THAN LOSING PROPERTY VALUES AND CONTROL, HISTORIC DESIGNATION CAN ACTUALLY INCREASE HOME PRICES, GIVES STATE AND FEDERAL TAX BREAKS, AND MAKE AFFECTED PROPERTIES MORE VALUABLE AND SOUGHT AFTER.

PLEASE COME TO THE MEETING AND HAVE YOUR CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY THE EXPERTS.

Dr. Anil K. Gupta  
8000 Overhill Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
Email: [agupta@umd.edu](mailto:agupta@umd.edu)  
Mobile: 301-537-6738



August 11, 2009

Mr. David Rotenstein, Chairperson  
Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Rotenstein:

**Re: Proposed Designation of a Part of Greenwich Forest Neighborhood as a “Historic District”**

I send this letter via email because, at the time of the MC-HPC hearing on August 12, 2009, I will be out of the country on a long-committed business trip. I am also copying Mr. Kevin O’Prey, my neighbor, so that he can bring a physical copy of this letter to the Aug 12 hearing. I believe that Mr. O’Prey is planning to attend.

I own one of the oldest homes in the Greenwich Forest neighborhood. I bought it in the mid-1990s from the Aubinoe family (Bethesda real estate developers) who built this house for themselves in the 1930s. Thus, I have one of the highest stakes in preserving the neighborhood’s character. Yet, I would like to argue that the proposed historic designation for the Greenwich Forest neighborhood would be an extremely ill-considered move.

1. While some of the houses in the neighborhood could be considered as charming, I would consider none of them (including mine) to be historic. Built in 1936, my house is one of the oldest (maybe, *the* oldest). However, on my section of the street, right next door to me, 8 out of the 12 houses are less than ten years old. I would estimate the average age of the houses in Greenwich Forest to be about 30-40 years *or less*. Even for a young country such as the U.S., this duration does not even remotely meet the common sense interpretation of the term “historic.” If we were talking about personal computers, maybe. But, not in the case of houses and neighborhoods.
2. Many of the features that the GFCA submission notes as worthy of preservation are simply old and inconvenient rather than historic. Take the case of the two small single car garages in my house that I can reach through a rear driveway. Given their size and location, they are extremely difficult to access. In the process of using them, my wife has caused damage to our cars on more than one occasion. Since these factors have made the garages quite unusable, we have been forced to park our cars in the open driveway, subject on occasion to falling tree limbs. It would be patently unjustified (and an injustice) to impose restrictions on our ability to make alterations that would make these garages more useful, more convenient, and less dangerous to access. Merely because a house or a feature of it is old does not make it historic. Sometimes, it is just old.
3. The entire philosophy underlying the U.S. as a society rests on the foundation of a belief in progress. Obviously, progress does not mean throwing out the past. By the same token, it also does not mean glorifying everything about the past and trying to preserve it as it was. If we did that, there would

have been no NIH, no antibiotics, no Silicon Valley, and no President by the name of Barack Obama. Every society, every community, and every individual must try to achieve a delicate balance between preserving/building upon the past and creating/embracing a new future. Assigning a "historic district" designation to the Greenwich Forest neighborhood needlessly glorifies the character of some old properties or old features while putting unfair and unjustified restrictions in the path of badly needed renovations and improvements.

4. The boundaries proposed by the GFCA for a historic district designation appear illogical. By way of illustration, on my section of Overhill Road (between York and Lambeth), the proposed boundaries include my house but not the four houses next to me on my side nor the four houses on the other side of the street. A neighborhood is not made up of isolated houses. Rather, it includes *all* families who live contiguously. The proposed boundaries fundamentally violate this basic principle. In addition, in the process of drawing up a seemingly contiguous boundary for the proposed historic district, the proposed boundaries include many of older houses as well as some very new houses while excluding many other older as well as newer houses. It is not even the case that the proposed boundaries include all old houses and exclude all new houses. In short, there is little merit to the boundaries proposed in the GFCA submission.
5. The GFCA vote in support of a designation was marginal at best (36 in favor, 18 opposed). Since then, at least some of the families have given the matter further consideration and changed their minds from "in favor" to "opposed." Please note that the 54 families that voted constitute only about 60% of the 90+ families that make up the GFCA. In other words, the 36 votes in favor constitute only 40% of the families living in Greenwich Forest. On a measure as critical as this one, this does not constitute the kind of "support" that should sway the County towards a historic district designation.

I thank you and your colleagues for your attention to my views. I very much hope that the Montgomery County HPC will be inclined to agree with much of what I have to say.

Sincerely,



Dr. Anil K. Gupta  
8000 Overhill Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814

## **Greenwich Forest: A Prototype Sustainable Community**

Submitted by Janet Ranganathan, 8005 Overhill Road, Bethesda, MD 20814,  
August 12, 2009

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of historic designation.

You may not have heard of Morris Carfritz, but Greenwich Forest is his creation. A hardworking Russian Jewish immigrant he put his architectural stamp on Washington DC from the 1920's to the mid 1960's. His downtown building developments stretch from K Street toward Georgetown and north to Dupont Circle. His name adorns a hospital, a leading private foundation devoted to Washington causes and a Jewish community centre.

Clearly, Carfritz was no ordinary developer. But of all the thousands of developments he created, Greenwich Forest stands out as his crown jewel. It was the fulfillment of Carfritz's personal vision of creating a community in harmony with nature, a vision to which he applied all his professional talent. Carfritz used high quality materials to build homes in Greenwich Forest that would last. He took meticulous care to preserve the natural beauty of the surrounding landscape, particularly the trees (Appendix A(i-iv): Washington Post Articles from the 1930's). Carfritz focused on the aesthetic value of preserving nature. But we now know that the trees he carefully preserved also help to regulate the local climate, reducing the need for energy-intensive heating and cooling, improve air quality and limit nutrient pollution run-off to the Chesapeake Bay.

Eighty years on, the gently rolling terrain, majestic trees, and winding roadways that follow the land contours that characterize Greenwich Forest never fail to captivate visitors. They also represent a radical departure from the standard gridiron of cookie cutter homes and evenly planted trees on leveled sites that characterize much of American suburbia. In retrospect, Greenwich Forest represents a prototype "sustainable community" – one on which new and existing communities should seek to model themselves.

Greenwich Forest has weathered well the forces of change and time. But today the threat of mansionization knocks loudly at its door. As steward of Carfritz's legacy, Greenwich Forest Citizens Association has not been able to halt the corrosive forces of growth. Tear downs steal from the Carfritz legacy. They steal from future generations by using up increasingly scarce resources. And they contribute to the destruction of precious old growth trees – the final remnants of the once great temperate forests that covered eastern North America. One magnificent tree, felled last week in Greenwich Forest, was over 150 years old.

There is another reason we should seek to protect old homes. In terms of lifetime carbon dioxide emissions, a recent study found almost no difference in operational CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per m<sup>2</sup> between new and refurbished old homes. The study debunks the myth that new homes are more energy efficient than old ones. It also takes 35-50 years for a new, energy efficient home to recover the embodied carbon expended during the

demolition and construction process.<sup>1</sup> Preservation is equally compatible with other environmental values such as protecting natural landscapes and preserving scarce resources.

It took a significant act by Carfritz 80 years ago to create Greenwich Forest. It will take an equally significant act by the Preservation Commission tonight to sustain it for future generations. Historic preservation is our only hope of linking the past with the future. I strongly urge the Commission to recommend Greenwich Forest for historic designation.

Thank You.

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<sup>1</sup> *New Tricks with Old Bricks: How reusing old buildings can cut carbon emissions*. The Building and Social Housing Foundation, March 2008 at <http://www.emptyhomes.com/documents/publications/reports/New%20Tricks%20With%20Old%20Bricks%20-%20final%2012-03-081.pdf>

# Best Materials Are Featured In Stone House

**Careful Construction and  
Design in Greenwich  
Forest Homes.**

Prospective home owners interested in building their own homes have been delighted with the type of construction used at Greenwich Forest, the restricted, new, suburban community of the Cafritz Co. Finished homes do not reveal the many details that careful planning and expert workmanship achieve to give added strength and protection to a residence, increasing its value and decreasing the cost of upkeep.

From cellar to roof the specifications for homes in Greenwich Forest call for the finest materials, most approved methods of design and careful construction that assure the best types of residences. The attractive English stone home now under construction at Wilson and Hampden lanes affords the visitor an opportunity to note these features and representatives on the premises will gladly explain them.

#### **In Club District.**

Greenwich Forest is located in the heart of the Country Club district adjoining Battery Park and directly opposite Edgemoor. It is reached by driving out Wisconsin avenue, Bradley lane or the East-West Highway, to the traffic light at Bethesda, turning left along Old Georgetown road three blocks to Wilson lane and following this highway to the entrance of the development at Hampden lane.

It affords desired protection for those who appreciate restrictions to control the architectural features of the development and assure the social standards of its residents.

Homes in Greenwich Forest are designed in accordance with the individual ideas of owners, incorporating in the plans architectural style, interior plan and details of equipment and decoration to meet the owner's individual requirements. These plans are prepared by the company's architects and all homes must be approved by the organization. This feature maintains the architectural harmony of the community and prevents the erection of unsightly or inappropriate residences.

The plan of construction is as follows: When the prospective home owner has made a selection

Continued on Page 12, Column 7.

## Materials in Stone House Are of Best

Continued from Page 2.

of a homesite that appeals to him, the company's architects will prepare plans and submit specifications, giving the price complete on the house and lot. They will also take care of the financing. If, however, the prospective home owner desires to have his own architect and builder, he may do so, but in either case all plans must be approved by the company.

### All Modern Innovations.

Homes built in Greenwich Forest include all modern innovations, such as paneled recreation room with open fireplace; automatic oil heating, modern electric kitchens with electric range, refrigerator, ventilating fan and clock, stepdown living room, library with built-in bookcases, timbered studio living room, guest rooms on the first floor and a host of other features to meet the special needs of the home owner.

Insulation, waterproofing, copper gutters and downspouting and furred walls leave nothing to be desired in beauty and permanency in these attractive residences.

The natural beauty of Greenwich Forest makes a striking appeal to the visitor. This 100-acre tract, located between Wilson lane and Old Georgetown road, is richly wooded with glorious trees. Chestnut, oak, tulip, poplar, dogwood and many other varieties cover the gently rolling contours of this development, affording charming vistas through the winding roadways following the topography of the land. It is hard to estimate the value of a tree and, in all construction, homes are laid out to preserve the trees on each homesite.

The smart log cabin field office, with stone open fireplace, on Hampden lane, contains an attractive reception room and office, where visitors may go over plans and learn the details of this smart, new, restricted suburban community and the advantages it offers to the home owner.

## **Forest Region Is Attractive to Home Owners**

**Sound Homes in Woodland  
Setting at Greenwich  
Are Admired.**

Greenwich Forest, Washington's newest, restricted, suburban community, offers a combination of advantages that have attracted many prospective home-owners. Government officials, business executives and professional people prominent in the life of the Nation's Capital have admired the beauty of its woodland setting and the sound construction of its homes.

Greenwich Forest is conveniently located at the intersection of Wilson and Hampden lanes. From the traffic light at Bethesda, at the intersection of the East-West highway, Wisconsin avenue and Old Georgetown road, it is reached by driving out Old Georgetown road to Wilson lane and following this highway to the development.

Greenwich Forest adjoins the established communities of Edgemoor and Battery Park, well known for their beautiful homes and the character of their residents. As one enters Greenwich Forest he is impressed by the charming vistas of natural scenic beauty with a gently rolling terrain, thickly wooded with towering trees of many varieties. Winding roadways, following the contour of the land, laid out in accordance with the most approved ideas of community development, afford an interesting relief from the usual gridiron plan.

### **Protected by Restrictions.**

In Greenwich Forest one is protected by adequate restrictions for architectural and social control. Plans for all homes to be constructed must be approved by the company, preventing the erection of residences not in harmony with the character of the development. From this standpoint of social control Greenwich Forest assures one of congenial neighbors, whose stand-

**Continued on Page 2, Column 1.**



## Greenwich Forest Is Proving Popular

Continued from Page 1.

ards of living maintain the exclusiveness of this community.

The plan of construction at Greenwich Forest permits the prospective home owner, after making a tentative selection of a desired homesite, to consult with the company's architects regarding a plan for his home along the lines of his own individual ideas and requirements. Expert counsel is given in the matter of design, arrangement, equipment and decoration, resulting in a satisfactory set of drawings, complete in every detail.

From these drawings specifications are prepared and the prospective home owner is given a price on the house and lot complete. The Cafritz Construction Co. will build the home and take care of the financing or the purchaser may select his own architect and builder. In either case all plans must be approved by the company.

### Prices Are Reasonable.

Those who visited the model home at Greenwich Forest were amazed at the sound construction and reasonable prices of the charming residences being built there. Homes built to the owner's specifications include such attractive features as modern electric kitchens, automatic oil heating, finished recreation rooms with open fireplace and a host of other smart innovations for added comfort and convenience.

The charming English stone house now rapidly nearing completion at the entrance of the development is outstanding in its beauty of design and soundness of construction. There seems to be fascination in watching a house grow and seeing the type of materials that are used. Many visitors have carefully gone over this new home, noting all of its features, and have been enthusiastic in their praise. This home gives the public an opportunity to see the details of construction being used at Greenwich Forest.

Representatives of the company are in attendance at the field office at the development daily and Sunday to show visitors through this charming new community.

## Home Seekers Given Advice About Building

*The Washington Post* (1877-1954); Sep 17, 1933; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The Washington Post* (1877 - 1992)  
pg. R1

# Home Seekers Given Advice About Building

Officials of Greenwich  
Forest Offer Services  
of Experts.

The shortage of ready-built new homes has left little choice for the prospective home owner so that those desiring a new residence to meet their requirements in architecture, plan and location, have manifested increased interest in building a home of their own.

The woodland beauty of Greenwich Forest has attracted many such prospective home owners from among Government officials, business executives and professional men.

Here, in this new restricted suburban community adjoining two of the finest developments in Washington, one may select a homesite and have plans prepared to meet individual ideas in design and construction at prices that mean a substantial saving.

Greenwich Forest is located at the intersection of Wilson and Hampden lanes. From the traffic light at Bethesda, at the intersection of the East-West highway, Wisconsin avenue, and Old Georgetown road, it is reached by driving out Old Georgetown road to Wilson lane and following this highway to the development.

### Adjoins Old Communities.

Greenwich Forest adjoins the established communities of Edgemoor and Battery Park, well known for

their beautiful homes and the character of their residents.

As one enters Greenwich Forest he is impressed by the charming vistas of natural scenic beauty with a gently rolling terrain, thickly wooded with towering trees of many varieties.

Winding roadways following the contour of the land, laid out in accordance with the most approved ideas of community development, afford an interesting relief from the usual gridiron plan.

In Greenwich Forest one is protected by adequate restrictions for architectural and social control. Plans for all homes to be constructed must be approved by the company. From the standpoint of social control, Greenwich Forest assures one of congenial neighbors.

### Expert Council Provided.

The plan of construction at Greenwich Forest permits the prospective home owner, after making a tentative selection of a desired homesite, to consult with the company's architects regarding a plan for his home along the lines of his own ideas and requirements. Expert counsel is given in design, arrangement, equipment and decoration, resulting in a satisfactory set of drawings. From these drawings specifications are prepared and the prospective home owner is given a price on the house and lot complete. The Cafritz Construction Co. will build the home and take care of the

financing, or the purchaser may select his own architect and builder.

Homes built to the owner's specifications include modern electric kitchens, automatic oil heating, and finished recreation rooms with open fireplace.

Representatives of the company are in attendance at the field office at the development daily and Sunday.

## Cafritz Firm's Homes Project Is to Expand

Greenwich Forest Exhibit  
House to Be Opened  
on Hampden Lane.

Foremost in real estate news of the week is that of immediate expansion of the beautiful, wooded and restricted development of Greenwich Forest. Extension of this sylvan home area of 100 acres with space for 300 homes will be promoted at once, according to announcement of L. E. Smith and James H. Holmes, in charge of sales in this operation.

Mr. Smith has had more than 11 years' experience with the firm of L. E. Breuninger & Sons, Inc., and Mr. Holmes has been engaged in the real estate and construction business here 20 years. Impetus will be given to their effort in enlarging this subdivision of the Cafritz Construction Co., by the opening of an exhibit home at 7121 Hampden lane. It will be on display daily.

Greenwich Forest extends from Old Georgetown road to Wilson lane and is adjacent to Battery Park, Edgemoor and Bradley Hills. It may be seen by driving out Connecticut or Wisconsin avenue to Bethesda, Md., and following old Georgetown road to Wilson lane, then turning left along Wilson lane to the entrance at Hampden lane.

### 30 Minutes From City.

Preserving the seclusion, coolness and healthfulness of a rural community, it is but 20 pleasant motor minutes away from downtown Washington and immediately accessible to schools, churches, stores, country clubs, motion picture theater and other entertainment. It is close to stores with immediate delivery service and convenience by a satisfactory bus service, soon to be augmented by that replacing the car service being discontinued on Wisconsin avenue. This will give frequent motor service to Greenwich Forest over this broad route with a 30-mile speed limit and fewest traffic lights.

The restrictive program applied to Greenwich Forest was modeled after those of the finest subdivisions. Architectural harmony of home structure with respect to the dwelling itself and in relation to the entire locality, is insisted on. Harry Edwards, who has resigned some of the most handsome homes and apartments in and around Washington, is assistant to Alvin L. Aubinoe, architect and engineer of the developing company. All residences will be of brick or stone construction of various types of architecture.

The development will be traversed by broad, hard-surfaced, winding roads and is now served by every city utility. Huntington Parkway, a parked boulevard, 100 feet wide, will traverse the entire section from old Georgetown road to Bradley lane and from this thoroughfare, the community will be serviced by convenient intersecting roadways.

### 15 Houses Completed.

Fifteen houses already have been completed and 16 more are under construction. Their erection is ruled by as high structural standards as those applying to their architecture. Just as exacting attention is paid to their equipment and surroundings.

Their walls are insulated completely by an arrangement of nailcrete, cypress furring and sheet rock lath and their ceilings, by 4 inches of rock wool. Kitchens and baths are walled with Keene cement, the highest sanitary treatment such as is used in hospitals. All of their window shades, trim and wallpaper are washable.

No lot in the development will have less than 75 feet frontage. All houses will be designed to conform to their natural settings and no outbuildings such as garages, sheds or kennels will be permitted. Homes in this community will range in size from six rooms and two baths to ten rooms and three baths and their prices will run from \$11,500 upwards.

The entrance to Greenwich Forest is on Wilson lane at Hampden lane. It is 125 feet wide and flanked by artistic lights suspended from ornamental standards. Projecting arms support the lettering "Greenwich Forest," which is illuminated at night. Back of the entrance and fringing the driveways is a triangular park embellished by a cascaded pool with indirect lighting.

### Houses Set Back 40 Feet.

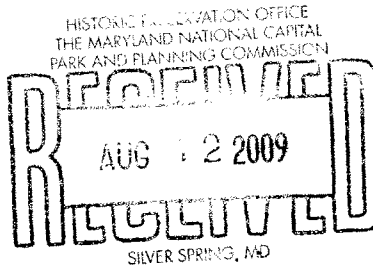
Great care has been taken to protect the many oaks, hickories and dogwoods gracing this section. Houses are set back 40 feet, permitting fine lawns and greater vistas. Downspouting, guttering, flashing and valleys of all houses are of copper as are the hot and cold water pipes. All downspout-

ing is carried under ground and the heavy concrete footings are flanked with tile drains. All roofs are either slate or tile.

The kitchens of complete homes are arranged to give maximum facilities for easy operation and are equipped with electric refrigeration, range with clock control and ventilating fans. Double drain sinks are of greatest width and there is indirect lighting and heavy inlaid linoleum as well as an abundance of cabinet space. Heating problems of the dwellings are solved by the most improved automatic systems and all residences have illuminated numbers.

Residents of Greenwich Forest are assured planned development, architectural harmony and social control. To maintain its selectness and protect the character of its homes, social and structural restrictions are made a part of each deed, insuring neighbors whose standards of living are comparable to the purchaser's own and residences that are congenial in design and suitable.

Discriminating home owners realize that the basis of enduring value and sound investment is built on these fundamentals and the developers of Greenwich Forest have restricted it to meet these requirements. It is the intention of Morris Cafritz, president of the developing company, to make this subdivision one of the finest in the country.



7827 Overhill Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
8/12/2009

David Rotenstein, Chair  
Historic Preservation Commission  
Historic Preservation Office  
1109 Spring Street, Suite 801  
Mail: 8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

c/o Clare Kelly  
by email to  
[clare.kelly@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:clare.kelly@mncppc-mc.org)  
[scott.whipple@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:scott.whipple@mncppc-mc.org)

Dear Mr. Rotenstein,

We are strongly in favor of historical designation of Greenwich Forest, Bethesda as we see it as the only means left available to us to preserve our unique neighborhood.

We believe that Greenwich Forest is unique, notable and historic. One of the original owners who grew up in the adjacent area described "The patch of mature oaks where Greenwich Forest was developed was the only virgin forest nearby"<sup>1</sup>. The forest abuts the highest point in Bethesda and Morris Cafritz designed winding shaded lanes, following the contour of the land, to preserve the woodland setting and charm of the rolling hills and streams. The development was designed as a woodland English village. The houses have several architectural styles, but each was designed to blend with the others and to conform to the forest setting. Only the finest natural materials were used and the workmanship was outstanding. The architect, Aubinoe was known to have bricklayers dismantle many courses of bricks if the work did not meet his exacting standards<sup>1</sup>. Clearly, Morris Cafritz he was a man of vision.

I would also like to clarify some of the facts submitted to you in letters opposing the historical designation of Greenwich Forest. It has been stated that the neighborhood vote in favor of historical designation has been rushed and there has been no time for research. However, this is inaccurate. Greenwich Forest Community Association has been exploring ways to preserve the distinctive nature of our community for several years. Clare Kelly of the Montgomery County Historical Society attended a GFCA meeting in January 2006 to explain the process of historical designation and there have been many, many meetings since then. The GFCA have produced historical booklets and information pamphlets, they have held history nights and coffees to discuss and explain the options available to us to protect the neighborhood. Because of the importance of the issues facing our community, new, and more stringent, GFCA Bylaws were voted on and adopted in November, 2006, stating that any significant initiative must be approved by two thirds of those voting. Two thirds of the entire Greenwich Forest community voted in favor of designation, as did more than 70% of homeowners

within the proposed historic district. Thus, this process has been fair and democratic. Other comments, disputing the proposed boundaries or inclusion of non-contributing properties, indicate that the authors have not taken the time to learn about the process of historical designation. Information about historical designation has been provided to all homeowners in Greenwich Forest by email, by hand delivery and at meetings over the last few years. This has not been a rushed process.

To date, our community has attempted to preserve Greenwich Forest in several ways. We have tried to obtain a demolition moratorium from the county, we have developed voluntary guidelines and we have pursued conservation overlay. None of these measures were effective and we are rapidly losing notable properties and much of the forest canopy. Historical Designation is the only means left available to us to preserve our beautiful and unique community. Yes, it will be inconvenient to have another layer of oversight, but this is a very small price to pay to preserve the beauty and historical character of Greenwich Forest. It is time for us to step up to the plate and do what it takes to protect Morris Cafritz's vision, not only for ourselves but for the generations that follow us.

Sincerely Yours,

Alison McBride and David Weatherer  
7827 Overhill Rd  
Bethesda,  
Md 20814

1. 1995 Letter from Dr. F.W. Coe, original owner of 8001 Overhill Rd. On file with the Montgomery County Historical Society.

**Kelly, Clare**

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**From:** Kathy Hahn [khahn7000@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2009 11:50 AM  
**To:** Kelly, Clare; Whipple, Scott  
**Subject:** FW: Opposition to Inclusion of Greenwich Forest Neighborhood in Locational Atlas and Master Plan for Historic Designation

Please include in the record at the meeting held Thursday, August 13, 2009.

**Ms. Clare Kelly**  
**Research & Designation Coordinator**  
**Historic Preservation**  
**8787 Georgia Avenue**  
**Silver Spring, MD 20910**

**Mr. Scott Whipple**  
**Supervisor of Historic Preservation Unit**  
**Historic Preservation**  
**8787 Georgia Avenue**  
**Silver Spring, MD 20910**

**Dear Ms. Kelly and Mr. Whipple:**

**We are writing to express our opposition to the designation of portions of a vicinity of Greenwich Forest, a neighborhood near downtown Bethesda in Montgomery County, Maryland, for inclusion in the locational atlas and in the Master Plan for Historic Designation. In particular, we oppose the inclusion of the vacant lot at 8001 Overhill, which we own, as the lot does not constitute an historic resource. While we appreciate the desire of certain included or nearby homeowners to limit construction and development in the area in order to preserve "the neighborhood", designation of the area as a historic district will neither preserve the "idyllic" setting nor prevent development. Rather, it will simply increase the cost of maintenance and improvements as well as limit the market appeal of any home located within its gerrymandered boundaries.**

**Most importantly, we do not believe it is possible for any recently vacated lot to constitute a "historic resource" within the meaning of the ordinance, which requires significance in national, state or local history, architecture, archeology or culture. Ground that has only recently become vacant simply cannot attain the status of "significant" without some national, state or local recognition as vacant ground. Such significance should arise from local recognition over a period of years at minimum, and should not be created by the Commission.**

**Sincerely**  
**Erich and Kathy Hahn**  
**[Khahn7000@verizon.net](mailto:Khahn7000@verizon.net)**

## Whipple, Scott

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**From:** MCP-Historic  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2009 11:21 AM  
**To:** Whipple, Scott  
**Subject:** FW: Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission's Master Plan Evaluation of Greenwich Forest Historic District

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**From:** Brewer, Woody[SMTP:WOODY\_BREWER@FANNIEMAE.COM]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2009 11:20:30 AM  
**To:** MCP-Historic  
**Subject:** Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission's Master Plan Evaluation of Greenwich Forest Historic District  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

Greetings:

I am writing this email to let you know that many of my neighbors in Greenwich Forest oppose the County's intention to designate our neighborhood historic and to ask the HPC and County to deny the request. I also intend to speak at HPC's meeting this evening in an effort to express one neighbor's opposing view.

While I can't speak for my dissenting neighbors, my primary reasons are:

1) Land Owner Rights - I chose to buy a house in Greenwich Forest not just because of the beauty and convenience of the neighborhood and the friendly and welcoming nature of the neighbors, but also because it was not burdened by the restrictions, haughtiness and pettiness of Chevy Chase. To me, Greenwich Forest offered everything Chevy Chase did, but did not suffer the burdens of excessive government oversight mandated by a historic designation nor the indignities and petty jealousy inherent in an empowered HOA. When I decided to purchase my house, I remember saying a little prayer of thanks that the original developer so valued land rights and open markets that he decided not to form an HOA or to overly restrict land use. Such is the Greenwich Forest that was originally created and how I'd like the neighborhood to stay. Beyond standard zoning intended to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood, I do not want my neighbors or my government deciding on how I should improve my property.

2) Bigger Government is Not Necessarily Better – While I love my neighborhood, I do not find anything about it historically dissimilar to the surrounding neighborhoods (except possibly the neighborhood sign in our little triangle facing Wilson Road). The streets surrounding Greenwich Forest have similarly vintage homes, tall trees, etc. And, based upon the information that I have read, HPC agrees. It appears to me that HPC is really trying to use their powers related to historic Master Plan Evaluations to stop tear downs and “mansionization” versus protecting the public good by saving historically significant homes and neighborhoods. I would sleep better at night if I knew that my government stayed within the boundaries that we as a people set for them. By letting government agencies expand their mission, we risk losing the very land rights that we purchased for reasons other than those intentioned. This is simple; if my neighborhood is fundamentally or uniquely historic, then use your powers to classify Greenwich Forest a historic neighborhood. If it is not, then please stay away from my land. Finally, if you are going to take my land rights away from me, then please have the courtesy to pay me for any loss in value that might occur as a result of your preserving the neighborhood for the pleasure of the public.

3) Cost - I recently replaced windows on my house with architectural integrity & continuity as my foremost concerns. I could have done as most of my neighbors have done throughout the years and replaced my windows with double-hung windows and achieve the same energy efficiency & cost savings. But, this wouldn't have kept with the original architecture of the house. Matching the windows cost me 2x the cost of simple double hung windows and I'm not sure we as a community should dictate that every family desiring to achieve reasonable energy efficiency be forced to shell out 2 times

the necessary money. Nor should we be able to dictate more expensive roofs, building exteriors, etc. Though I could afford it and therefore spent the incremental money, I wouldn't ever presume that my neighbors should be forced to do the same.

4) Value - Because of the higher cost of ownership and extra burdens placed upon homeowners wishing to modernize their homes, current homeowners should expect any subsequent rational buyer to adjust their purchase prices down to compensate them for the increased cost of ownership. If this happens, every current homeowner and the county should expect some depreciation in home values. I know this is correct because the seller of my home accepted 10% less to make sure the house was purchased by someone who wouldn't tear it down. While I benefitted greatly from their behavior, I can't help but ask "what if they needed the extra \$100,000?" I do not believe it is our right to tell another citizen or neighbor that they must accept a lower price for their property because it is in our best interest; I believe it is the homeowner's right to do what is right for them. If the sellers of my home had needed the extra cash to pay medical bills for instance, they should have the right to do so. Passing this request will take that right away from them, which is wrong in my belief.

For these reasons and more, I oppose designating Greenwich Forest a historic neighborhood and I look forward to returning to a community that trusts and respects its neighbors and a government that finds the restraint required to properly govern its people. Thanks.

Woody Brewer

Fannie Mae

[woody\\_brewer@fanniema.com](mailto:woody_brewer@fanniema.com)

W - (301) 204-8936

M - (202) 276-8905

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This e-mail and its attachments are confidential and solely for the intended addressee(s). Do not share or use them without Fannie Mae's approval. If received in error, contact the sender and delete them.



## Manarolla, Kevin

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**From:** Whipple, Scott  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2009 12:27 PM  
**To:** Manarolla, Kevin  
**Subject:** FW: 5501 York Lane, Bethesda, 20814 (Lot 11)

**From:** Kristen McCarrick [mailto:kristen.mccarrick@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2009 12:22 PM  
**To:** Kelly, Clare; Whipple, Scott  
**Cc:** Bob McCarrick  
**Subject:** 5501 York Lane, Bethesda, 20814 (Lot 11)

Dear Claire,

I am writing you in reference to the aforementioned property which husband and I recently purchased- Lot 10/Block Eye (5501 York Lane). We understand that other properties in the neighborhood are being considered for historic designation and wanted to convey our views. We are opposed to the Greenwich Forest neighborhood being declared an historic district. Further, we do not recognize anything historically significant about the homes. As the owner of this property we concur with your staff report that our property should NOT be included if the designation is granted. We ask you to please let the Historic Preservation Commission know our views.

Sincerely,  
Kristen and Robert McCarrick  
(301) 320-1744

ORAL PRESENTATION TO THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION  
MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

AUGUST 12, 2009

Hello! My name is Maureen Daly. I have lived in Greenwich Forest since I was three years old. When I entered there, it was a fully canopied forest with old growth trees. A calm comes over me. The temperature on a day like this drops 10 degrees. I am enveloped in the woods as I walk on curving lanes, and up hills. The homes lay on their land so quietly. They were part of a whole.

Morris Caffritz was a visionary – save the trees and build beautiful English and Norman houses in a way to save the forest. We all had lots of land around us and green. There were no fences. As children we could walk from one end of the neighborhood to the other through backyards. I know of no other neighborhood like Greenwich Forest. Over the years many very wealthy and influential people lived in Greenwich Forest. They could have lived anywhere, but they chose to live here in the Forest. I remember Admiral Wilcuts who operated on the President's daughter Margaret Truman. I remember my 10 year old brother was afraid to deliver the paper to General Hershey because he was afraid he would be drafted. I remember having picnics in Doctor Coe's beautiful azalea garden and we did not even have to ask permission. He was a nationally known authority on azaleas.

Now we are losing our houses. New houses in very different styles and sizes are replacing them. I have a new house next to me that is 3 times bigger than mine. It looms and all the trees are gone and my air conditioning bills have gone up. Greenwich Forest was slowly changing for years. Now it is fast changing. We are losing our houses, trees, and open spaces between our homes, and fences are encapsulating everyone.

Please help us save our neighborhood! This community is not just individual homes, but a whole to be enjoyed by all who live here and walk or drive through it.

Thank you for your attention.

Maureen A. Daly  
7824 Hampden Lane  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Testimony of Raymond Paretzky, Treasurer, GFCA

My name is Raymond Paretzky, and I am the Treasurer of the Greenwich Forest Citizens Association. I am submitting this statement to attest to the efforts by the GFCA Board to be as inclusive as possible in the voting procedures for the historic district question.

According to Article I:3 of the By-Laws of the GFCA, "All families or households residing within the limits of Greenwich Forest ... who have paid their dues for the then-current fiscal year (or, during the first three months of the fiscal year, for the preceding fiscal year), shall be deemed members of the Association, and shall be entitled to vote" on matters such as this one.

Because the historic district vote was taking place in the first three months of the fiscal year, the Board needed to interpret the clause for the first time since the By-Laws were adopted. The view of the Board was that the clause meant that, to be eligible to vote on a matter during the first three months of a new fiscal year, a household had to have paid its dues for the preceding fiscal year. This interpretation was stated on the ballot.

During the voting period, the Board realized that, because Article I:3 also provides that "Members may pay their dues at any time during the fiscal year," some families that did not pay dues during the previous fiscal year for whatever reason might be unable to vote even if they offered to pay their dues late. In addition, a resident pointed out that Article I:3 could be interpreted differently, to read that families could vote on matters during the first three months of a new fiscal year if they paid dues for either the preceding fiscal year OR the current fiscal year. The Board agreed that this interpretation was the better one because it ensured that no resident who wished to vote would be precluded from doing so.

Consequently, on July 1, 2009, GFCA President John Jessen sent out an e-mail reminding residents to vote and setting forth the new, more expansive interpretation. The e-mail explained that "the reference on the ballot concerning paying dues needs adjustment and clarification. Board members believe that this clause can be interpreted differently than described on the ballot. Please be advised that members are entitled to vote if they paid their dues last fiscal year (ended May 31, 2009) OR this fiscal year (began June 1, 2009). Also note that dues can be paid at any time during the fiscal year. If you didn't pay dues last year or this year, you can still pay in order to cast a ballot."

A copy of this e-mail is attached.

Thank you very much.

Raymond Paretzky  
Attorney at Law  
Telephone: 202.756.8619  
Facsimile: 202.756.8087  
rparetzky@mwe.com  
www.mwe.com

McDermott  
Will & Emery

McDermott Will & Emery LLP  
600 Thirteenth Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20005-3096

## John Jessen

**From:** John Jessen  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 01, 2009 4:20 PM  
**To:** jjessen@voa.com  
**Subject:** ballot reminder and clarification  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg

bcc: (bethzeiterchan@yahoo.com); (bzchan@serv.net); (ealden@cfr.org); Ace & Linda Lipson; AE Spilker; Alison McBride; Anil & Haiyan Gupta (Wang); Ann Fowler (afowler@sheehy.com); Belinda Lai (belinda.lai@at-dc.com); Bert Spilker; Betsy Bennett; Bill & Kit Mansfield; Bob & Ginger Essink; Brand Fowler (brandfowler@sheehy.com); Brent Weingardt and Danielle Srouf; Buddy and Leslie Riley; Buddy Riley (buddyriley@mris.com); Charles & Hilda Smith-3; Charles & Patricia Lundelius; Charles and Hilda Smith (chucksiii@gmail.com); Christine Parker (cparker@w-e-s.org); Church, Colin B.; Clifford & Deborah Hendler (Neipris); Craig Small; D Spero; Dale & Michael Rosenthal; Dale & Tom Stahl; Dan & Kay Kaplan; David and Nancy Nathan; David Bennett; David Pankopf; David Schindel; David Weatherer; Dawn Lowrie; Debbie and Bob Bruskin (deborah.bruskin@gmail.com); Debbie Feldman; Diane Reinke; Ed and Pat Nuzum; Eddie & Carolyn Correia (Osolinik); Eddie Correia (ewcorreia@aol.com); Elizabeth Ross (elizabethross\_05@hotmail.com); Ellen Kleinknecht (ellen@novo1laurel.com); Emily Hiestand (ehiestand@earthlink.net); Emily Hiestand-2 (hiestand@mit.edu); Esko and Jane Korhonen; Feldsteins (home); Graham & Sheila Dower (cheston); Harold Levy (harold.levy@bingham.com); Ilene Solomon (solomonilene@aol.com); JessenM@macrogenics.com; (alexandragwalker@gmail.com); (np@prillcomstruction.com); ap@prillconstruction.com; Nancy Chasen; Nena Ewing; Pat Nuzum (panuzum@rcn.com); Paula Roberts; Paula Wolff (paula.a.wolff@usdoj.gov); Peter Clepper; Phillip and Christine Parker (pdcparker@verizon.net); Phoebe Liddle; Raymond Paretzky and Karen Zacharia; Rick Lowrie; Rita H. Burks; Sam and Renee Worthington (rsworth@aol.com); Scott & Denise Feldstein; Scott & Kurt Bally; Scott & Lauren Layman; Scott Kleinknecht (scott@novo1laurel.com); Scott Layman; Shannon Small; Stephen and Rita Burks; Stephen and Susan Sherman (s\_c\_sherman@hotmail.com); Stephen Sherman (num1sherm@hotmail.com); Steve Valentine; Steven & Roberta Morcone; Susan Cotter (susankotter@yahoo.com); Susan Mathews; Ted Meltzer and Kati Robinson; Todd & Jill Lubar; Tom & Judy Termini; Tom & Phoebe Liddle; Tom Termini (jwtermini@comcast.net); Victor & Maureen; Walt ( the man) Wood (walt@wrwood.com); Walt and Beverly Glover-Wood (beverly@glover-woodinteriors.com); Woody Brewer (woody\_brewer@fanniema.com); (Kate.wyckoff@verizon.net); Fiona James (fcjames@verizon.net); Jack and Winnie Flyer (jackflyer@gmail.com); Jack Flyer; Jack Flyer 2 (jflyer@cardiocarellc.com); Janet Ranganathan; Jim Davis; Jim McDonnell and Anne Elisa; John & Kate Wyckoff; John and Susan Cotter (susankotter@yahoo.com); John Shlaes; Joseph and Paula Wolff Mott; June Broadstone; Karen Zacharia; Kate Becker; Kay Shlaes (heykayhey@gmail.com); Ken Smurzynski (smurzynski@comcast.net); Kevin O'Prey (koprey@palisadesllc.com); Kumar and Janet Ranganathan (kranganathan@aol.com); Laurel Malson; Laurie & Colin Church; Laurie Adams (LaurieB.Adams@Hotmail.com); Luigi and Silvana De Luca (ldeluca@jhsp.edu); Luigi Deluca; Lundelius, Charles; Lyne Larochelle; Maren Proulx; Margi Kramer (margikramer@hotmail.com); Mark & Josie Cogen; Mark & Margi Kramer; Marshall & Joan Willenbucher; Marshall and Heidi Sinick; Marvin & Ilene Solomon; Matthew Bode; Mccarthy Marina; Melissa Ballinger (melissaballinger@yahoo.com); Michael & Lisa Dobbs; Michael Dobbs; Mike & Pat Hertzberg

### Message:

Folks, this is friendly a reminder that the ballots on Historic District are due Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup> by 5pm. You are encouraged to vote on this important measure regardless of whether you are For or Against.

Several of you have asked about the issue of paying dues to vote. I included this (and other information) on the ballot in the interest of having a legitimate vote according to the GFCA bylaws. I recognized that some neighbors will be in favor of this and some opposed and I felt it was important to follow the rules as outlined in the bylaws to make it fair. I especially didn't want any ballot to be disqualified because someone wasn't aware of or didn't remember the pertinent bylaw requirements.

That being said, the reference on the ballot concerning paying dues needs adjustment and clarification. Board members believe that this clause can be interpreted differently than described on the ballot. Please be advised that members are entitled to vote if they paid their dues last fiscal year (ended May 31, 2009) OR this fiscal year (began June 1, 2009). Also note that dues can be paid at any time during the fiscal year. If you didn't pay dues last year or this year, you can still pay in order to cast a ballot.

I'm very sorry for my mistake on the ballot and for the confusion it caused and for this late adjustment. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks - jgj



John G. Jessen, AIA, IIDA, NCARB  
Managing Principal  
VOA Associates Incorporated  
722 12th Street, NW  
Suite 100  
Washington DC 20005

Marshall and Heidi Sinick  
7824 Overhill Road  
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

August 12, 2009

David Rotenstein, Chair  
Historic Preservation Commission  
c/o Clare Lise Kelly  
Historic Preservation Office  
1109 Spring Street, Suite 801  
Mail: 8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Email:clare.kelly@mncppc-mc.org

**Re: Greenwich Forest – Historic District Designation**

Dear Chairman Rotenstein:

Our family has resided in Greenwich Forest for more than 37 years. We lived in our first home for 34 years and because of our attachment to the community moved 3 years ago to a new home just 1 ½ blocks from our first home. We strongly support the pending proposal before the Commission to recommend the designation of Greenwich Forest as a historic district.

The strength of our feelings for Greenwich Forest comes from a number of considerations including the unique Tudor and Colonial architecture, the many slate roofs that are all too rare elsewhere, the extraordinary verdant canopy of trees that line the streets of Greenwich Forest, the fact that Greenwich Forest (fortunately with only a few glaring exceptions) remains largely as it has been since its inception and Greenwich Forest's close proximity to downtown Bethesda. Other notable factors include the well-manicured triangle which marks the entrance to Greenwich Forest and the absence of sidewalks. Whatever the season, our family never ceases to enjoy our Greenwich Forest weekend walks which only reinforce our affection for the history and uniqueness of our neighborhood.

We would be remiss in not acknowledging the special contributions of John Jessen, the head of the Greenwich Forest Citizen Association and Ms. Christine Parker, Greenwich Forest's historian and librarian, who has spent years compiling her publication, the History of Greenwich Forest. Indeed, Christine Parker's efforts and the contents of the History of Greenwich Forest on their own more than establish that Greenwich Forest deserves recognition as a historic district.

We understand that a minority of our Greenwich Forest neighbors are not supporting the historic district designation proposal – and that their opposition reflects sincerely-held opinions.

We would like to briefly respond to one argument advanced by a number of such opponents – their view that a historic designation would lead to a lessening of their property values. That view, however, is refuted by the April 2008 Chevy Chase study titled "The Economic Impact of Proposed FAR

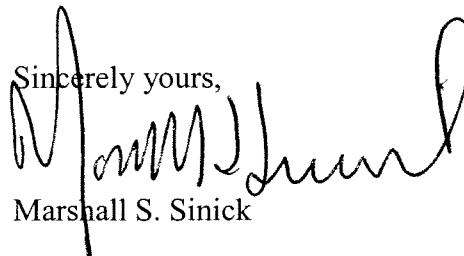
David Rotenstein, Chair  
August 12, 2009  
Page 2

Regulations” prepared by a George Mason University professor. That study first concludes that the three principal determinants of average Montgomery County home prices over a 24 year period do not include lot or unit size – but rather the neighborhood median family income, proximity to place of employment and the age of the home. And when it comes to the overarching issue before us, historic designation or not, the Chevy Chase study examined other studies comparing four communities in the State of Washington, nine cities in Texas, several communities in South Carolina, and historic and comparable non-historic districts in New York City. After reviewing each of these other studies, the conclusion of the Chevy Chase study’s author is that “historic district designation has been associated with higher property prices and faster rates of growth in those prices than prices of comparable properties in non-designated areas.” As a corollary to this finding, the Chevy Chase study’s author said “there is no evidence that such designation or the restrictions it entails cause a decline, on average, of the affected properties.” (emphasis added).

To be sure, the Chevy Chase study does not deny that one or two homes in a designated neighborhood may experience lesser price appreciation or even a decline. But when the designated neighborhood is viewed as a whole as it should be in the context the Commission is considering, the conclusion that property values increase appears irrefutable. We would respectfully submit that this recent study including its review of a number of other historic designation studies should put to rest any doubt that historic designation will on average contribute to the enhancement rather than a lowering of neighborhood property values.

We look forward to the Commission’s recommendation that Greenwich Forest should be designated as a historic district.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marshall S. Sinick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping tail.

Marshall S. Sinick

August 11, 2009

Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission

Dear Sir or Madame:

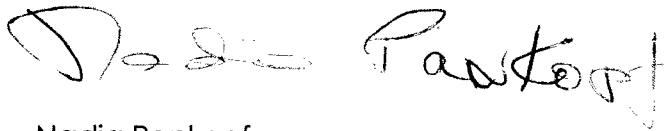
I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed designation of Greenwich Forest as a historic district. I have been a resident of Greenwich Forest for over 42 years. During that time I have raised three children who still love this neighborhood as their first home. I oppose the designation for the following reasons:

1. I do not agree with the contention that Greenwich Forest is any way historic. I have read the materials developed by the Greenwich Forest Community Association (GFCA) as well as the Historic Preservation Commission's staff. In both cases, it is clear to me that the arguments for historic preservation are not so thinly veiled arguments against tear-downs in the neighborhood. As a resident of the neighborhood since the 1960's, I can attest that this neighborhood has always been evolving, usually in ways that improve the overall housing stock and, more important, the quality of life for Greenwich Forest homeowners. Virtually every home in the neighborhood has been subject to fundamental changes. While I do not believe that any of us wants the house next to ours to be torn down, I find it a double-standard to declare that any changes before now were acceptable but any further changes must not change the "historic" nature of our homes. Fundamentally, the purpose of this or any neighborhood is to provide a home that meets the needs of its owner/residents; not to serve as some static museum display.
2. Designation of Greenwich Forest as a historic preservation district will punish me financially almost immediately. I live on a fixed income. The need to maintain my home according to some historic standards means that I must pay substantially more than I would otherwise for items such as a roof. Moreover, tax credits do not appeal to me as I would prefer to have the disposable income up front and claiming tax credits would complicate my tax preparations. Finally, asking for the approval of the Historic Preservation Commission for home improvements is an additional step that, no matter how you measure it, costs time and money that I do not have to pay today.
3. I also believe that historic designation will hurt my home's resale value. I have read the many studies describing some positive economic effect of a neighborhood's historic designation. But I am struck that all the cases cited

involve districts with commercial properties or are written by groups with a clear agenda. The recent experience in the neighborhood of high bids being offered by developers is clear indication to me that a decision to sell one's home with the interest it be preserved translates directly into a lower selling price.

In summary, a historic district designation would hurt me financially. I cannot understand why I should be punished for an initiative that strikes me as a misuse of the very worthy efforts of the Historic Preservation Commission to save County sites that have true historic value.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nadia Pankopf". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "N".

Nadia Pankopf  
7819 Hampden Lane



Clare Lise Kelly  
Research and Designation Coordinator  
Historic Preservation Office

Dear Members of the Historic Preservation  
Commission,

I had made plans and was scheduled  
to testify at the Montgomery County  
Historic Preservation Commission public  
hearing on Wednesday, August 12, 2009.  
Unfortunately due to an emergency I  
am unable to attend the hearing. I  
am strongly in support of the Greenwich  
Forest Historic District's inclusion in the  
Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Sincerely,  
R. W. Wall  
5609 Midwood Rd.  
Bethesda, Md 20814

Below are statements from residents who were unable to attend the public hearing held by the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission. They are in favor of designating Greenwich Forest Neighborhood as an Historic Preservation area. Please enter them into the record.

“The GFCA (Greenwich Forest Citizens Association) Historic District debate is a microcosm of the "culture war" that now takes many forms in America . The "me vs. us" issues that divide the nation are many years old. This debate is difficult and sad, but it is not why we are here. Your issue tonight is law and policy. Montgomery County law says that when a neighborhood has addressed the issue of historic preservation in good faith and polled its membership on its preferences, that the community preference shall be respected. You have heard the GFCA history on this issue, and our preference. We have studied the alternatives available to us in Montgomery County , and we have concluded that an historic district is our only option. We ask that you endorse our choice.

“Others will speak about individual rights and GFCA policies. However, the record is long, clear, and speaks for itself. We have talked with all parties. We have exhaustively explored other options. Historic preservation is the last and only mechanism we have to protect what is unique and valuable in our neighborhood.

“In my view, special neighborhoods are worth preserving. There are too few of them, and they can't be replaced. Developers, in the name of "renewal," should not have the right to destroy what cannot be replaced. At some point neighbors need to be able to say "no" to such developers. If we don't have such tools, the free market will dictate the future of our neighborhoods. In Montgomery County special places are disappearing. We say "enough." Where a majority of residents in an area say they want to preserve something of the past, they should have standing.

“Montgomery County is thoughtful about growth. You are in a position to help decide how it grows. At some point, you will have to decide if, where, and how growth is counter-productive. Developers promote "Renew Montgomery." Renewal should not undermine what made Montgomery County great in the first place.” **Stephen W. Burks, past President of Greenwich Forest Citizens Association, & Rita Burks, 8025 Hampden Lane, Bethesda , MD 20814**

“When my daughter was a student at Amherst College , one of her professors, who owns a house behind Suburban Hospital , asked if anyone lived in the DC metropolitan area. She responded that she lived in Bethesda , MD and he commented that his favorite place to walk was a small neighborhood called Greenwich Forest . He is not alone in this sentiment. Many, many people walk through Greenwich Forest to take in its grace and physical beauty. There are few places with a virtual catalog of revival architectural styles, nestled in a park-like setting, where towering trees and an undisturbed natural terrain have allowed a woodland area to exist so close to downtown Bethesda . Greenwich Forest is a treasure for many.

“Over twenty years ago, when I first moved to Greenwich Forest , I became curious about how this piece of Bethesda had been so sensitively developed. My research included oral histories, newspaper and journal articles, maps, and historic documents. The amount of historical information available surprised me. The neighborhood association minutes from 1936 to the present are themselves a gem of cultural history. They document how residents responded to World War II and other national trends, the importance of community and civic activism in their lives, and the challenges and petty irritations of neighbors struggling to create a livable place when the roads were unpaved and Bethesda was still

undeveloped forest. There are letters and other documents that evince the importance of gardening as social glue when Bethesda was a hotbed of horticultural activity.

“After seeing how much history was represented in this place, it was a short step to concentrating on those who actually built Greenwich Forest and their vision of what they wanted to achieve socially, environmentally, and architecturally. Although many esteemed architects like Alvin Aubinoe, Harry Edwards, and V.H. Bien designed houses here, the most important person behind Greenwich Forest was Morris Cafritz. He was a well-known force in Washington, but surprisingly no one has looked closely at what he attempted to achieve in his favorite project: Greenwich Forest. In a way this was his expression of a utopian dream. He has become one of my heroes. He believed, as did Life Magazine, that Americans deserved better housing regardless of their income level. In Greenwich Forest, Cafritz built both large and small houses to suit a range of paychecks. No matter the size, each house was well designed in one of several clearly identifiable revival styles and constructed with unusually fine materials. This ideal of creating a community with a diversity of income levels worked because each house was notable architecturally. A fine sense of scale, setting, and architectural detail ensured visual harmony and created an integrated whole.

“Cafritz was also an environmentalist. He did not change the terrain. And although it undoubtedly made construction more expensive and difficult, he cut down trees only within the actual footprint of the house. Early photos of the houses attest to this.

“When one of my daughters learned of a particularly wrenching tear-down in the neighborhood, she said, “This is all about money. How do people who only care about money wake up and look in the mirror every day?” Indeed, where would we be if no one in the early twentieth century had been willing to preserve their more recent past? Where will we be if we in the early twenty-first century do not preserve anything from the early twentieth century? What will give Bethesda a unique identity when all of its distinctive early development is replaced by generic architecture straight out of the movie “Something’s Got to Give?” What will happen when we have destroyed the habitats of indigenous birds and other animals? Will we all grow hothouse impatiens and let Maryland wildflowers fade from view? How will we save the Potomac River as a critical water resource when the watershed has been allowed to become degraded? As our economy changes, do we need more inordinately large charmless houses sitting unsold? Where are the Morris Cafritz’s of today?

“A sense of history is what guides and informs a people. Tangible signs of history include monuments and artifacts. Even more important are places where architecture can be seen, not just in exquisite stand alone solitary examples, but as evidence of a community fabric in a particular time and place, and even better when American life was in a state of flux. History is not just battles, wars, dominion, and famous people. It is how everyday people of all stations lived and contributed to social change. Greenwich Forest meets this standard as an example of a response to the depression, the growth of Washington during the Roosevelt administration, the creation of a major suburb, and the vision of an important Washingtonian.”  
**Christine Parker, Co-President, Greenwich Forest Citizens Association, 8020 Hampden Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814**

“We are completely in support of the designation as a historic district.” **Ginger Essick, former President of Greenwich Forest Citizens Association, and Bob Essick, 5606 York Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814**

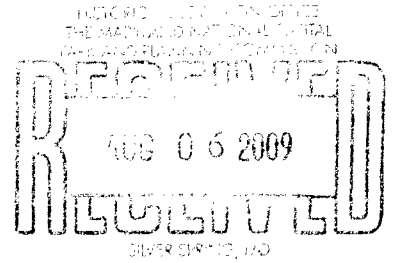
**"I am in favor." Jill Lubar, 7835 Hampden Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814**

**" John, I want to express my support for the Historical District initiative and believe that the reasons for most objections would either be economic or difficulties in being able to modify one's home. You have provided the Chevy Chase report which addresses the first as well as anyone can, and the second was addressed by the Montgomery County person in charge of this area (at the meeting at your home) when she said that 98% of all applications were approved. I wonder if this message has clearly been made to the others living in Greenwich Forest since that should provide assurance that the county will not act as a block for homeowners wishing to make modifications." Bert Spilker, PhD, MD, 8004 Overhill Road , Bethesda, MD 20814**



PEERLESS ROCKVILLE  
FOUNDED 1974

August 4, 2009



Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Higgins Family Cemetery

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of Peerless Rockville, I am writing to voice our organization's support for Higgins Family Cemetery to be designated historic and placed on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.

Higgins Family Cemetery qualifies for inclusion based on criteria set forth in Section 24A-3(b) of the Montgomery County Code. We feel the Cemetery meets Criterion 24A-3(b)(1) a, c, and d for the following reasons:

- James B. Higgins, who is buried there, is representative of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century planter and a soldier in the Revolutionary War.
- Slaves, owned by the family, may be buried in the cemetery, a highly unusual practice for that time period.
- Luraner Higgins Knowles, granddaughter of James Higgins, and her husband, George Knowles, sold a portion of their land, which was south of the Cemetery, to the B&O Railroad for a new line through Maryland. For years, it was known as Knowles Station until 1891 when it was changed to Kensington. Both Luraner Higgins Knowles and George Knowles are buried in the Higgins Cemetery.
- Higgins Family Cemetery is the last surviving vestige of pre-1920s life in this area.
- This is the only historic family burying ground in the area except for one other cemetery (Twinbrook Cemetery).

Peerless Rockville urges the Commissioners to nominate the Cemetery. We can think of no better way to protect this site so we can continue to tell the many stories of this family to the community.

Sincerely,

Mary A. van Balgooy  
Executive Director

**Higgins Cemetery Historic Preservation Association, Inc.**  
**Statement to Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission**  
**Public hearing, August 12, 2009**

I am Knowles Little, speaking on behalf of Higgins Cemetery Historic Preservation Association, which enthusiastically supports designation of our property on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Individuals in our organization have worked hard to rescue this small family burial ground. We formed our nonprofit association and took title to the land in 1999 with the idea of documenting those who are buried here and bringing the property to a condition that would aid its ongoing maintenance and interpretation. Our partners included Peerless Rockville and the Kensington Historical Society, the Chevy Chase Chapter of the DAR, neighbors and community groups, and members of the Higgins family, and we received HPC support for clean-up and development of a master plan. We have removed hundreds of dump-truck loads – ¼ acre and about 12” deep -- of household trash, landscaping debris, and trees, from a burial ground that had been abandoned and unrecognizable for half a century. At every work session, new information and new gravestones were uncovered.

HCHPA wants recognition on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. We don't need the tax credits, but we do want to ensure the continuation of our work. We want your advice and review of future work identified in our master plan, and we do want the protection this designation may provide as Higgins Cemetery becomes even more of an oasis in an area that now is used for light industry but will hold more intense uses and higher density in the future.

We agree with HPC staff that Higgins Cemetery meets several criteria for designation. It is one of a very few family burying grounds and the final remnant of pre-1950s life in this area. Its associations with Revolutionary War soldier James Higgins and Kensington land owner George Knowles and their families represent the history of this farm over a period of more than 200 years.

I ask that the other board members who are present stand to be recognized.

We thank Clare Kelly for her excellent work on this nomination and thank the HPC for your positive consideration.