



November 17, 2023

Re: Historic Designation Application No. 24-03
Chevy Chase Historic District (proposed)
Squares 1746-1750 and 1857-1860, all lots; Square 1863, Lots 1 and 47; Square 1870, Lots 15, 31-33 and 825; and public Reservations 335, 335A, 434 and 468,
including the present street addresses: 5400 through 5600 blocks 39th Street NW; 5400 and 5500 blocks, odd numbers, 41st Street NW; 5500 through 5700 blocks Belt Road NW; all addresses on Chevy Chase Circle NW; 5410 through 5824, even numbers, and 5863 Chevy Chase Parkway NW; 5402 through 5408, even numbers, and 5410 through 5720 Connecticut Avenue NW; 3700 through 3900 blocks Legation Street NW; 3700 through 3900 blocks Livingston Street NW; 3700 through 3900 blocks McKinley Street NW; 3735 through 3945, odd numbers, Military Road NW; 3700 through 4000 blocks Morrison Street NW; 3700 through 3900 blocks Northampton Street NW; 3700 through 3900 blocks Oliver Street NW; 3630 Quesada Street NW; 5601 through 5949 Western Avenue NW; and Reservations 335, 335A, 434 and 468.
Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission: 3/4G

Dear Property Owner:

The Historic Preservation Office and the Historic Preservation Review Board have received an application from the Chevy Chase DC Conservancy to designate the properties referenced above as a historic landmark in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites. A copy is posted to our website at planning.dc.gov/node/1692351. The Historic Preservation Review Board will also consider recommending the properties for listing as a historic district in the National Register of Historic Places.

The principal purposes of designation are: the recognition of the historic or architectural importance of a property; and its protection through the future review, by the Historic Preservation Office, of proposed subdivisions and permit applications for new construction, alteration and demolition.

As soon as the Board's calendar permits, it will consider the application in accordance with the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978 and with the criteria set forth in Title 10C, D.C. Municipal Regulations, Chapter 2, to determine whether the property merits designation.



As there are a number of pending designation applications, it is unlikely that this application will be considered at one of the next few Board meetings, unless there is some urgency, such as a pending permit application, which would trigger a hearing.

As a property owner, you will be afforded 45 days' notice when the Board schedules a public hearing on the application, and you will be advised of the owner's opportunity to testify under the Board's Rules of Procedure, also set forth in the regulations. If you have a preference as to when the application is heard, we can usually accommodate requests.

For additional information you may contact me at timothy.dennee@dc.gov.

Sincerely,



Tim Dennee
Landmarks Coordinator



Frequently Asked Questions

PROPOSED CHEVY CHASE HISTORIC DISTRICT

What is the purpose of historic districts?

Historic districts are a planning tool authorized by the District of Columbia's historic preservation law to advance public policy goals. They call attention to the distinctive character and history of District neighborhoods as important community assets and expressions of the city's diverse cultural heritage. They aim to encourage community pride and a greater awareness of local history. They are used to support development that is compatible with the character of existing buildings, while also encouraging reinvestment that brings vitality and adaptation to meet current needs. Historic districts do not change neighborhood zoning regulations or planning documents. Their broad purpose is to sustain and improve residential quality of life, to support businesses, and to contribute to a healthy citywide economy that will attract visitors and newcomers.

How do historic districts originate?

Historic districts are nominated by filing a detailed application that documents the history and physical character of a neighborhood. The application must describe why the neighborhood meets the test of significance under the District's criteria for designation. To become a historic district, the neighborhood must be determined significant to the history, culture, or heritage of the District, or to its physical development and appearance.

Who can initiate historic districts?

Under the preservation law, a qualified community organization or government entity may file an application to designate a historic district. Its preparation requires substantial research and documentation to compile the required narratives, data, maps, and photographs. Applicants typically engage in significant community outreach before submitting a nomination.

Who designates historic districts?

Historic district designations are made by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB), a nine-member body appointed by the Mayor and approved by the DC Council. By law, the Board includes professional experts and public members reflecting the District's diverse population. A majority of the members are professionals qualified in the fields of architecture, architectural history, history, or archaeology. The Board considers historic district nominations at its regular monthly meetings open to the public.

How does the designation process work?

After accepting a valid nomination, the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) posts the document on the Office of Planning website for public availability. HPO mails notice of the filing to the affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC), each property owner within the proposed boundaries, and those listed on the HPO mailing list.

Before scheduling a public hearing, the applicant is responsible for conducting neighborhood outreach to ensure that there is broad public awareness of the proposed historic district. Outreach can include open community meetings, public information handouts, and publicity on community websites and listservs. Once there has been sufficient opportunity for public awareness, HPO schedules an HPRB hearing on the nomination and mails a second notice to those notified of the filing. The hearing notice includes more information on designation criteria and the process for preparing design guidelines that would apply to the district, if designated.

Before the public hearing, HPO will evaluate the nomination and issue its written recommendation. At the hearing, HPRB will consider the nomination, HPO report, ANC comments, and public testimony before making a final decision on whether the district meets the established designation criteria. The Board gives “great weight” to the duly adopted written comments of the affected ANC in making its decision.

How can I participate?

Historic designations are made through a public process open to anyone who wishes to participate. Interested persons are encouraged to:

- read the application posted on the Office of Planning website
- engage through community organizations
- attend community meetings on the proposal
- provide comments on the nomination by letter or email
- express their views in person at the public hearing on the nomination.

Where can I get more information?

The Historic Preservation Office website has further information on the preservation law, regulations, review process, and design guidelines. See the link for Historic Preservation at <https://planning.dc.gov>.

How can I ask a specific question?

If you have a question not answered by this handout or information on the Historic Preservation Office website, please send an email to historic.preservation@dc.gov.

November 2023