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**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD**  
**Historic Landmark Designation Case No. 10-01**

**The Walde-Carter House**  
4628 48<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (Square 1494, Lot 26)

Meeting Date: March 24, 2011  
Applicant: The Tenleytown Historical Society  
Owner: Mary Lowe Mayhugh  
Affected ANC: ANC 3E  
Staff Reviewer: Kim Prothro Williams

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After careful consideration, staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Review Board designate the Walde-Carter House at 4628 48<sup>th</sup> Street, NW in American University Park under the Multiple Property Document *American University Park in Washington, D.C.: Its Early Houses, Pre-Civil War to 1911*. It is further recommended that the application be forwarded to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Completed in 1899, the Walde-Carter House is among the earliest and most intact of the seventeen houses built in the initial phase of development of American University Park following its residential subdivision in 1896-1897.



**History and Architecture**

The Walde-Carter House is a substantial two-and-one-half-story, frame house characterized by its transitional Queen Anne/early twentieth-century massing, including most notably, a broad pyramidal hipped roof with a central gable-roofed bay/tower and a full-width front porch. The house stands out among its mid-twentieth century neighbors forming part of the present-day neighborhood of American University Park. The house is named for its longest-term owner/occupant, Martha Walde-Carter who lived in the house from 1942 until her death in 1988.

As fully detailed in the Multiple Property Document, real estate developers John D. Croissant and David Stone platted American University Park in 1896-1897 for residential development with the expectation that the growth of the city, emerging infrastructure including a streetcar line, and the new, nearby American University, would encourage residential development in the area. In the period between 1896 and 1911, seventeen houses—substantial, free-standing Victorian

“cottages”—are known to have been constructed in the subdivision, giving rise to the belief that the area would soon become “one of the most popular residential areas” in the city. The original owner/builder, Thomas Giles, was an active architect-builder in the Tenleytown area between 1894 and 1906. Giles was one of the first people to speculate on building in the newly platted subdivision of American University Park and, in partnership with his brother, James Giles, constructed several of the subdivision’s early houses as a speculative venture.

Upon completion of the house, Giles sold the property to a War Department clerk who lived there until 1903 before leaving in frustration after direct streetcar service never materialized. Despite the fact that development in Croissant and Stone’s American University Park subdivision came to a grinding halt after 1911 and until the 1930s, the house remained occupied throughout its history. In 1942 Martha Walde-Carter, a real estate agent in the city for 50 years with a strong interest in history and genealogy, purchased the house where she lived for more than four decades. Upon her death in 1988, Mrs. Carter’s grand niece and current owner, Mary Lowe Mayhugh purchased the house, retaining many of the furnishings from Mrs. Carter’s ownership.

### **Evaluation**

The Walde-Carter House meets National Register Criteria A (*Events*) and C (*Architecture*) under the Multiple Property Document *American University Park in Washington, D.C.: Its Early Houses, Pre-Civil War to 1911* and designation in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites under D.C. Criteria B (*History*) and D (*Architecture and Urbanism*) for the following reasons:

- *History*: The property is associated with historical periods and patterns of growth and change that contributed significantly to the heritage, culture and development of the District of Columbia. In particular, the Walde-Carter House provides an excellent illustration of the second major phase in the evolution of the Tenleytown area as it grew from a rural community in the pre-Civil War era to a residential middle-class suburb of the city. More particularly, the Walde-Carter House reflects the late nineteenth-century speculative development of the formerly rural land into the residential subdivision of American University Park and provides a significant and intact example of a suburban “cottage” illustrating the intentions of the developer to create a bucolic, suburban neighborhood within proximity to downtown
- *Architecture and Urbanism*: The property embodies the distinguishing characteristics of architectural styles, building types, or methods of construction, and is an expression of urban planning, siting, and design significant to the appearance and development of the District of Columbia. In particular, the Walde-Carter House provides an excellent example of a transitional Victorian/ American foursquare frame house intended to be part of a larger “suburban” community of Victorian “cottages.” The building’s overall massing, detailing and its character-defining central projecting bay/tower perfectly illustrate the building type and transitional style.

The Period of Significance for the Walde-Carter House extends from 1899, the year the house was constructed, to 1961, a date fifty years from the present. The house has been carefully maintained retains sufficient integrity to convey the values and qualities for which it is judged significant.