



WARD 7 HERITAGE GUIDE



**A Discussion of Ward 7
Cultural and Heritage Resources**



District of Columbia
Office of Planning



Ward 7 Heritage Guide

Text by Patsy M. Fletcher, DC Historic Preservation Office

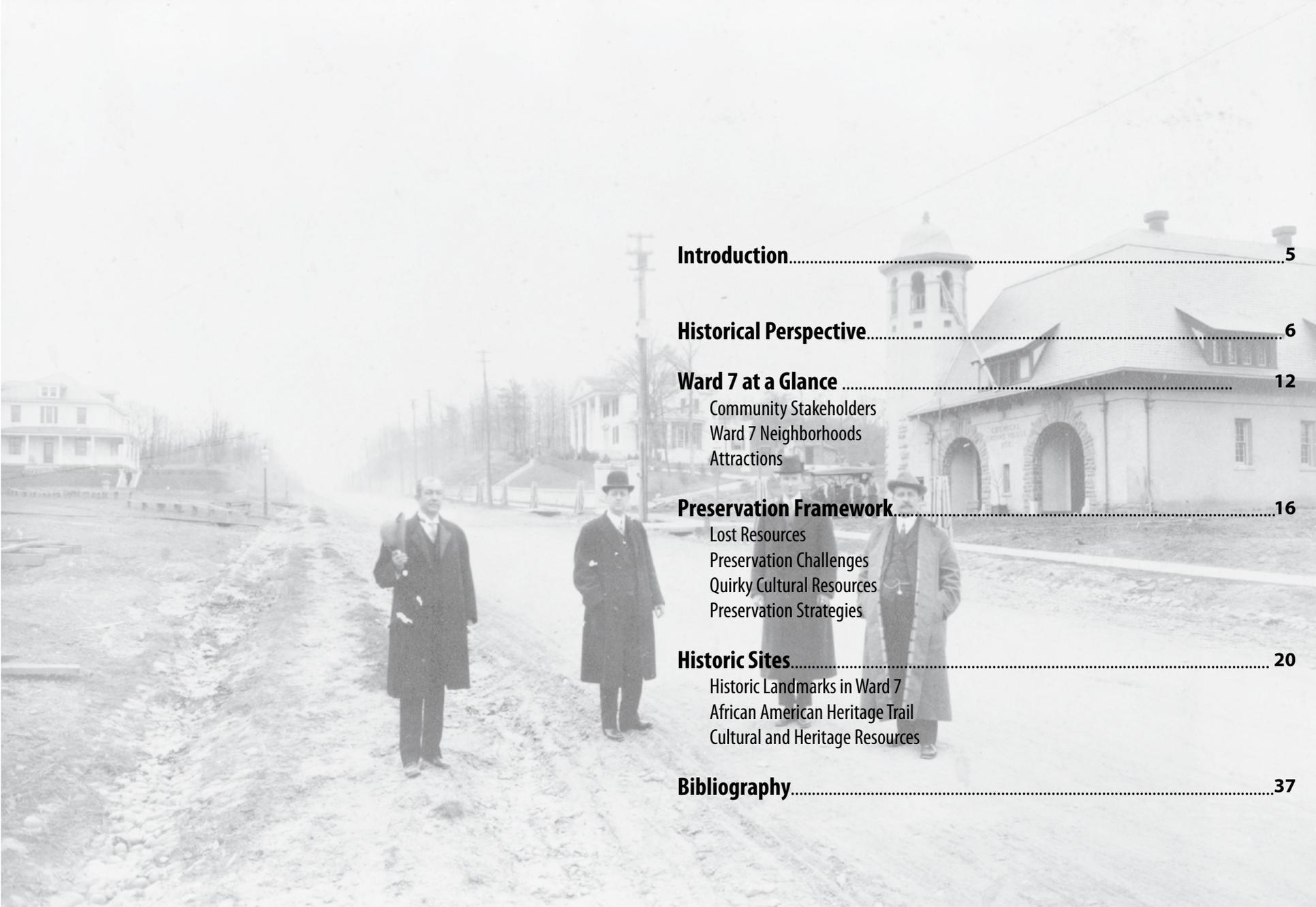
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Published 2013

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This project has been funded in part by U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund grant funds, administered by the District of Columbia's Historic Preservation Office. The contents and opinions contained in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

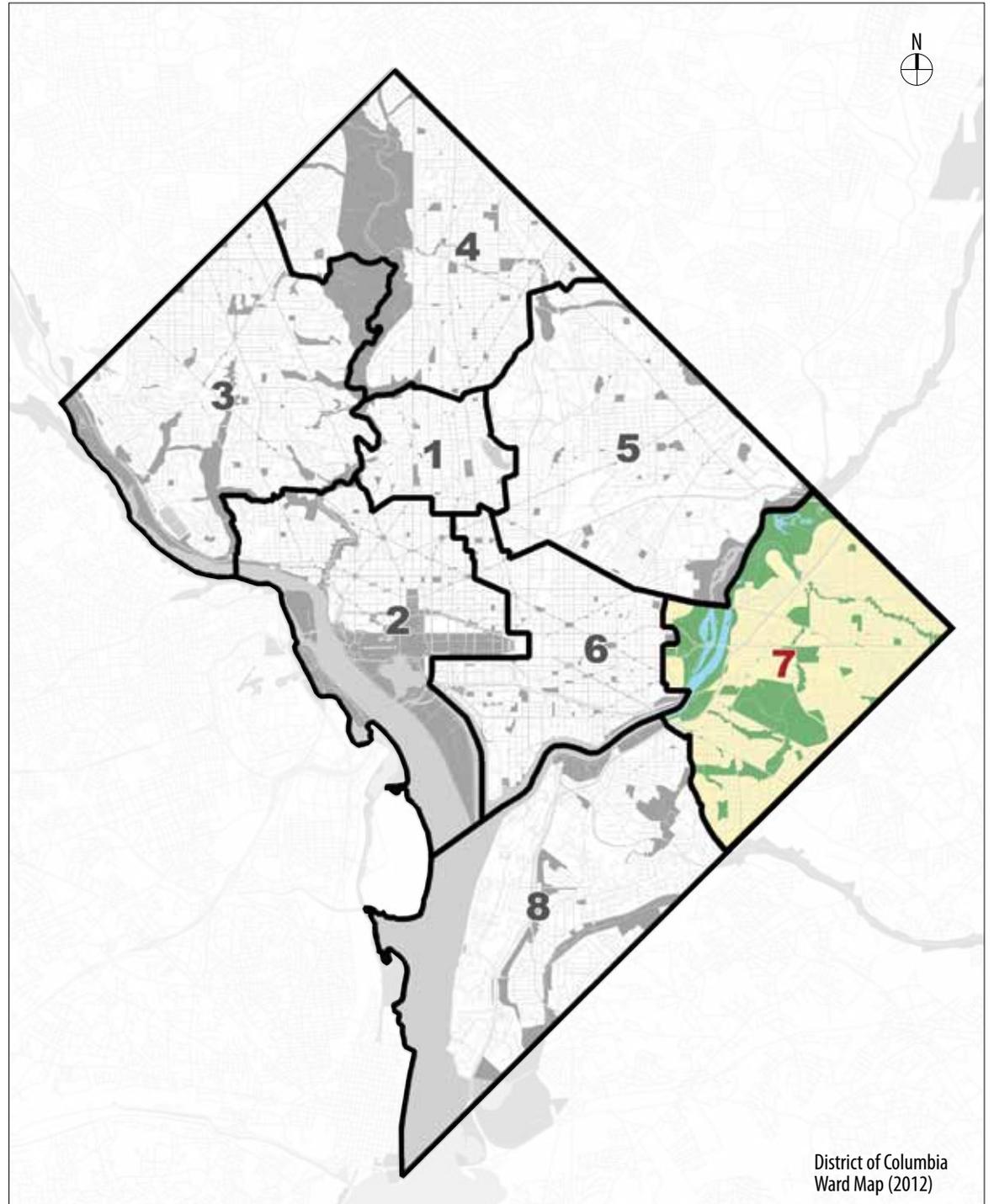
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Arthur Randle, developer of Randle Highlands, with colleagues on Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, circa 1915. Chemical Engine Company No. 2 and Randle's home, the "Southeast White House" are in the background.

WARD 7



In the far eastern corner of the District of Columbia east of the Anacostia River lies Ward 7, an area that straddles the dividing line between Northeast and Southeast Washington at the city's Maryland border. Considered the greenest ward in Washington, its distinctive location includes a river boundary that has contributed to the ward's relative degree of isolation. This in turn has fostered the sense of self-sufficiency that pervades the ward's development and persona.

Ward 7 possesses a wealth of buildings, structures, and sites that provide concrete evidence of its unique history and culture formed over the past. The richness of the ward's heritage encompasses its pre-seventeenth century settlement by the Native Americans, its setting as farmland and sparse villages in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, to its burgeoning urbanization starting in the mid-twentieth century.

This guide is intended to identify historic or culturally important places in Ward 7 and to provide a framework for developing strategies necessary to capitalize on, and, if necessary, protect these historic resources.

A cultural or heritage resource is defined as a site, building, structure, object, or ritual of importance to a community or culture. The significance, whether traditional, historic, religious, educational, or other, is one of several factors that illustrates the hallmarks of a community's way of life or identity.

For many residents in Ward 7, one such resource is the Shrimp Boat at the intersection of Benning Road and East Capitol Street. The Shrimp Boat, under its various owners, first opened in 1953 and was one of the few integrated restaurants in a still racially segregated Washington. The restaurant served then as it does today as an unofficial landmark for Ward 7. Although it would not necessarily qualify for formal historic designation in the same way as another Ward 7 historic site, the Nannie Helen Burroughs campus, the Shrimp

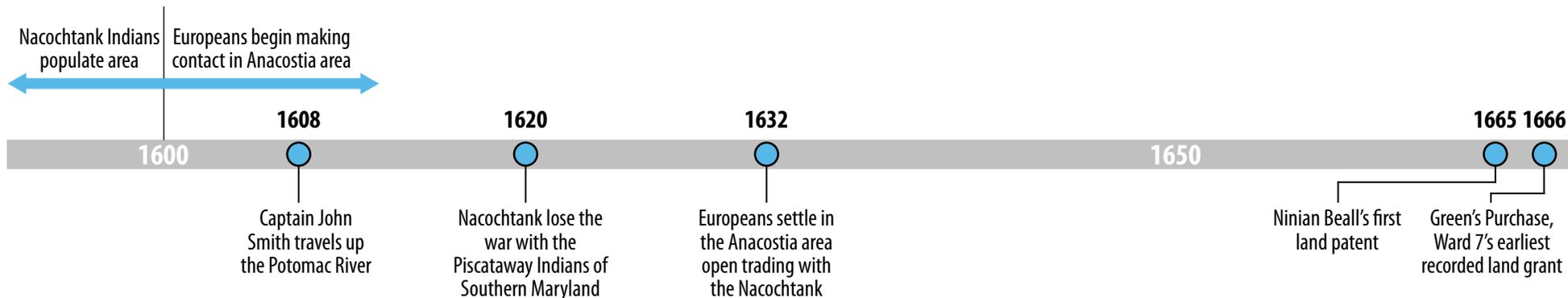
Boat is nevertheless a visual landmark and significant historically to most Ward 7 residents.

There are a number of other cultural resources in Ward 7, many of which are not widely acknowledged. Left unrecognized, they become vulnerable to devaluation and even loss as the ward seeks investment and development. The DC Historic Preservation Office, along with community partners, hopes to promote stewardship of the ward's heritage by assisting residents in identifying important cultural icons and places, and by facilitating initiatives to promote, preserve, and reuse the ward's significant historic resources.



The Shrimp Boat building circa 1954

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE



Ward 7 is defined by its varied history, abundant natural beauty, and its traditionally self-sufficient residents. The ward is composed of 29 neighborhoods, almost 72,000 people, and of the city's eight wards, has the second largest number of the District's children living within its boundaries. Ward 7 is bordered roughly by the Anacostia River on the west, Prince George's County, Maryland on the north and east, and Ward 8 on the south.

From the District of Columbia's founding in 1790, the area was within Washington County; it remained within the county until 1871 when the unincorporated areas were consolidated under a single municipal government. Primarily a rural community until the mid-1900s, Ward 7's early distinctive settlements included Benning, Deanwood, and Twining. In 1968, a new ward system and the general locations known today were set up, and the ward has remained the same geographic area with minor boundary changes.

Though currently a predominantly African-American community, the earliest residents were the Nacochtank Indians who fished, hunted and traded along the banks of the Eastern Branch River. The artifacts they left behind were scattered along the river later renamed the Anacostia in their honor. Many of these artifacts were later recovered and collected by non-Indian settlers including a member of the nineteenth century Ward 7 land- and slave-holding family, the Sheriffs.

Following explorations in 1608 by adventurer John Smith, Europeans claimed the land and gradually began to settle the area eventually forcing the local Native American population from their traditional hunting and fishing camps



Andrew Ellicott map, showing the Potomac and Eastern Branch-Anacostia Rivers and the bluffs along the Anacostia, 1791
Library of Congress

through disease and conflict. Some of the earliest land grants within what is now Ward 7 had fanciful names such as Beall's Adventure, Virgin Garden, and Fortune. The new settlers immediately set about cultivating tobacco, a

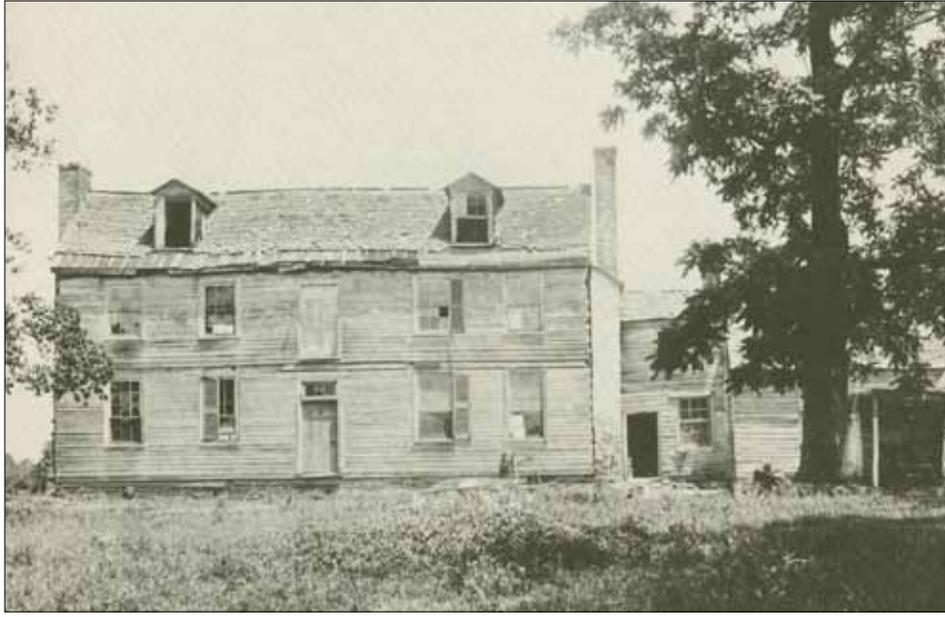


cash crop for nearly two centuries, particularly for adjacent Prince George's County, Maryland. By the 1700s, the labor-intensive tobacco production relied almost exclusively on the labor of enslaved Africans and African-descended people as necessary for maximum profitability.

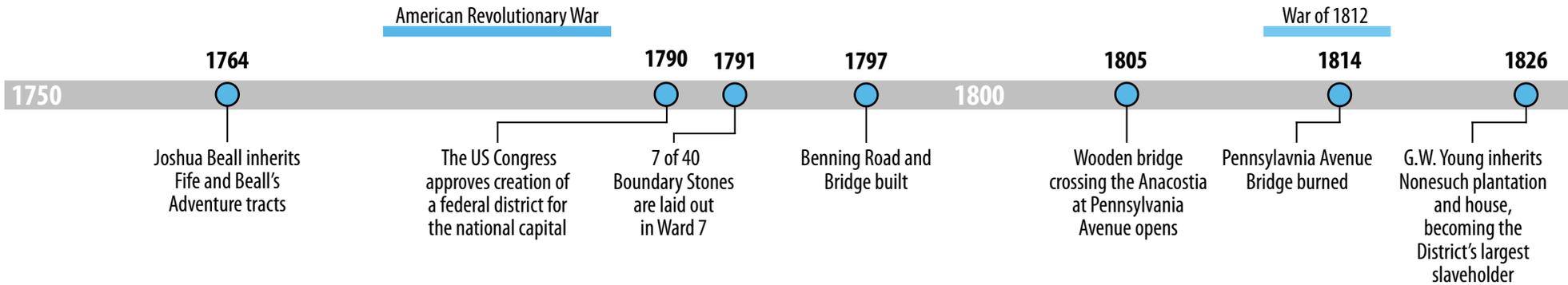
Although the terrain in many parts of the ward was too hilly to successfully raise tobacco, the crop was an important influence on the transportation routes established between Maryland and Washington City. The Anacostia River was the earliest route to Bladensburg, founded in 1742 as a tobacco port. A road from Bladensburg, known as Eastern Branch Road, was carved through the ward to Piscataway, Maryland, a port on the Potomac River. Its route in Ward 7 was roughly Minnesota Avenue today. In 1797, William Benning who had earlier purchased a portion of Beall's Adventure partnered in a venture to build a bridge across the Anacostia River from Maryland to Washington. In 1836, the Bennings rebuilt the bridge and established a toll. The bridge and road were called Benning and Bennings Road by Stony Hill.

In spite of these transportation incursions and the formation of the nation's capital in 1790 that appropriated from Maryland the area that is now Ward 7, very little development took place until after the Civil War. In the period between the establishment of the District of Columbia and the Civil War, Bennings, as much of the area was referred to, was characterized mostly by large landholdings and small-scale agriculture. Names of some of the farmers are familiar as they survive today as place names – Sheriff, Lowrie, Dean, Lee, Naylor. Several held blacks as slaves. In 1855, for example, the Sheriff heirs had 16 slaves; Thomas Talbert, whose farm was near what is today Alabama

and Pennsylvania Avenues SE, had 9 slaves; Henry Naylor, near Fairlawn, had 6. George Washington Young, whose 150-acre Nonesuch Plantation straddled Wards 7 and 8, and who owned 640 acres in Ward Eight, was the District's largest slaveholder. On the eve of the Civil War, he held at least 70 black people in bondage. The mid-nineteenth century home he had built for his daughter still stands in Ward 7.

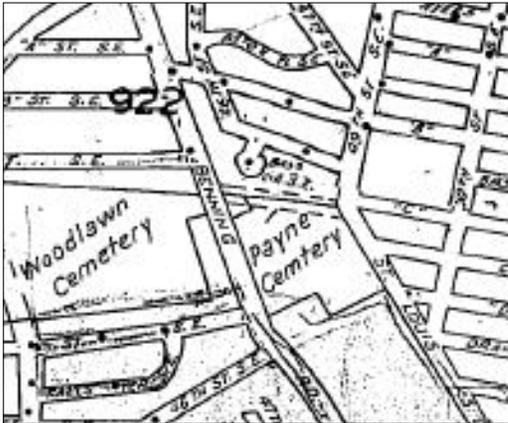


'Nonesuch', George Washington Young Plantation house, now razed, show here in the 1920s. Historical Society of Washington, DC



There were also a few free families of color in the area, among them John and Ellen Payne and their children. Payne was a carpenter but also a landholder and entrepreneur. He operated part of his land as a cemetery primarily for African Americans. It was known as Payne's or Payne Cemetery and operated from 1851 until the 1950s.

The Civil War brought increased development and population to the area. Several forts were erected to protect the city, the river and the bridges, taking advantage of the high elevations and broad views in the ward. Among these were Forts Mahan, Dupont, and Chaplin, the construction and maintenance of which attracted people, black and white, seeking employment, and others fleeing enslavement. The forts are now part of the Fort Circle Park system and are recreational sites enjoyed by citizens of the District.



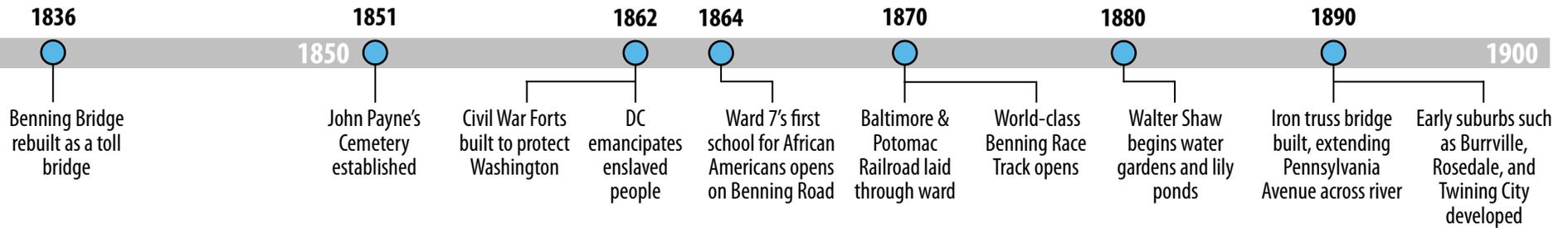
Payne Cemetery, Sanborn Insurance Map, 1927-1960

The Baltimore & Potomac railroad line and yards of the B&O railroad came to the ward in 1870 running along the western boundary of the ward. With it came the development of several industries stamping Ward 7 with its early working class, industrial character. In the flat lands along the river, slaughter houses, dairies, truck gardening and floral greenhouses predominated the commerce of the time. Later, another train and streetcar line traversed Washington County's Ward 7 section through Maryland and eventually to the Chesapeake Bay.



Benning Race Track
Library of Congress

American Civil War



Even with the influx of people as a result of and following the Civil War, the ward remained relatively unpopulated. At the same time, Ward 7 became home to a number of land intensive developments besides the forts.

The Benning Racetrack and Training Grounds in the flatlands of the northwest section of the ward occupied a couple hundred acres. Opened in the 1870s, it operated for several decades and was considered at one time to have the best mile track in the country. It attracted some of the nation's most renowned horses as well as patrons of all classes. It is purported that some of Deanwood's

earliest black families, experienced in the equine industry, had migrated to the area from North Carolina and Tennessee to work the Benning track.

Several other parks were established in this period, some of which continue today and attract many visitors. The Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, known fondly by local residents as the Lily Ponds, began in the 1880s from efforts of a Civil War veteran to make good use of the marshy lands that were part of his farm. Now federally-owned along with the Anacostia Park which snakes along the western edge of the ward, the Gardens is the only national park that focuses on naturally cultivated aquatic plants.

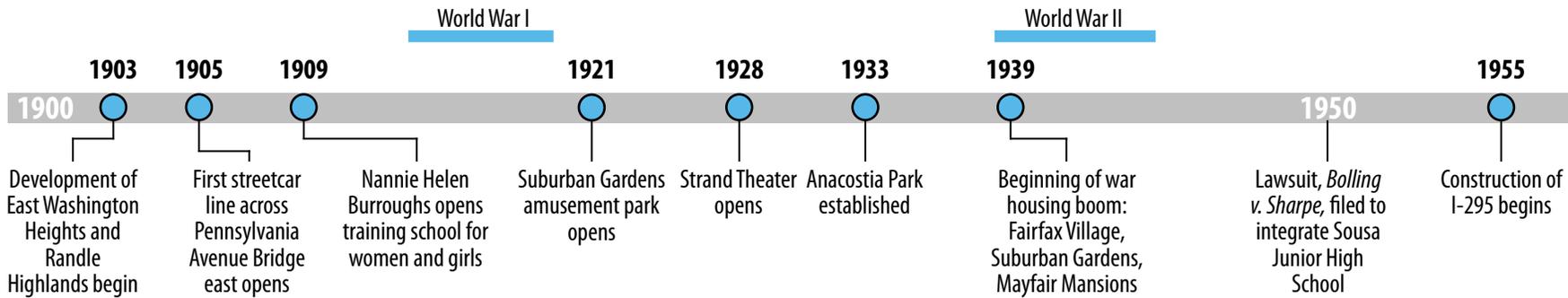


Shaw Gardens, later Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens, circa 1905
Eastland Gardens Flower Club

In the early part of the 20th century, Deanwood was home to Suburban Gardens, DC's only amusement park and one that served the city's African American community in an era when facilities such as Glen Echo were segregated. It was opened in 1921 by a black-owned real estate endeavor that included Howard D. Woodson, John Paynter, and movie theater owner, Sherman Dudley. The park later changed ownership and operated until 1940.

Another verdant jewel, the Watts Branch, the tributary running from the Anacostia River into Maryland, eventually became a federal and later, city park. It is second in size to DC's notable Rock Creek Park. A section has been renamed the Marvin Gaye Park.

Finally, the ward was home to several cemeteries serving African American and Jewish communities. These were located along Benning Road and Southern Avenue.



Early settlements of blacks and whites sprang up along Benning and near what is now Central Avenue. Though the remainder of the northeast section of the ward, with its rocky soil and hilly terrain, was considered undesirable, it provided an opportunity for black land ownership, thus spawning some of the earliest black suburbs and settlements, such as Burrville, Lincoln and Marshall Heights.

Development of streetcar suburbs in the southeast section of Ward 7, especially along Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues, began in the late nineteenth century attracting middle class whites. These included Kenilworth, Randle Heights, and, later, Hillcrest, resembling sister neighborhoods west of the river that also grew along the streetcar lines.

Accompanying these subdivisions were stately churches, later automobile-oriented shopping centers, and other standout commercial buildings. Multi-family housing was also developed for white renters during the war and post-war period, including complexes such as Naylor Gardens and Fairfax Village.

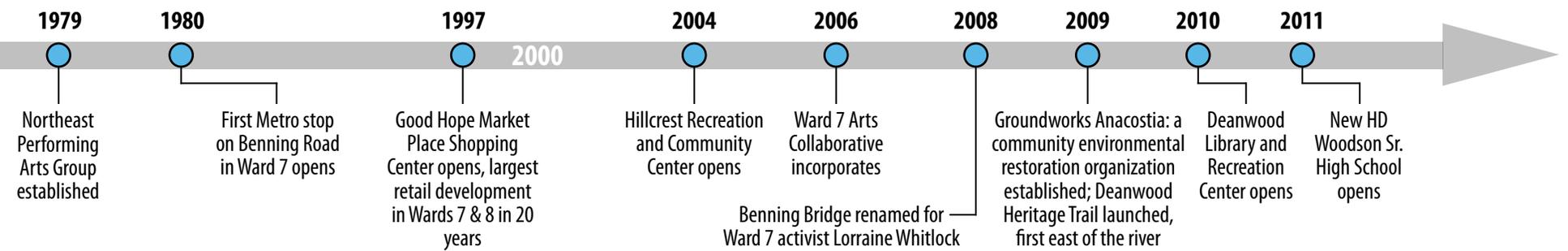
In other parts of the ward, efforts increased in the mid-twentieth century to provide decent housing for working- and middle-class blacks. Several African American architects designed such housing, including Lewis Giles, Sr., Alonzo Plater, Romulus Archer, and Roscoe Vaughn. Eastland Gardens and DePriest Village, later subsumed into Capitol View, were developed specifically for the aspiring black homebuyer.



Suburban Gardens, circa 1925
Scurlock Studio Records, Smithsonian National Museum of American History

Following the end of World War II, the population of Ward 7 increased, and the demographics began to change. In spite of significant community resistance, the city condemned whole sections of Marshall Heights, Northeast Boundary and Lincoln Heights, sites of African American homeownership (though mostly substandard), and erected segregated public housing.

Mayfair Mansions, built on the site of the old race track, was another post-war initiative, developed for middle-class black residents. At the time, Mayfair was the largest privately developed and owned African American apartment complex in the nation. Suburban Gardens Apartments were erected in Deanwood shortly thereafter on the site of the former amusement park.



After the desegregation of Washington’s public schools hastened by the Ward 7 school case that became part of *Brown v. Board of Education*, the complexion of Ward 7 changed rapidly. White flight in the southeastern sections of the ward resulted in the replacement of middle class whites with middle class blacks who still reside in the “Silver Coast” that includes neighborhoods like Hillcrest, Penn Branch and Benning Ridge.

On the other hand, over the last few decades, Ward 7 neighborhoods have lagged behind other parts of the city in economic investment, housing development, employment opportunities, public safety and health. Poverty and unemployment rates are high throughout much of the ward despite rises in median incomes. Between 1990 and 2010, while ward population declined slightly, the number of housing units increased as has the number of households. These trends, which mirror those of the District as a whole, are likely to continue.

Since 2000, many vacant buildings have been razed. The District government constructed an office building housing city services providing an anchor for the community at the intersections of Minnesota Avenue and Benning Road. Metro stops have opened; the Great Streets program has targeted byways of Ward 7 for improvement, including Nannie Helen Burroughs and Pennsylvania Avenues. An up-to-date shopping center straddling Wards 7 and Eight on Alabama Avenue, the largest retail development in the area in 20 years, has brought needed retail and other services to the neighborhood. Many more such commercial projects are planned for other communities throughout the ward. Several new mixed-use developments have been proposed for neighborhoods such as Skyland and Lincoln Heights.

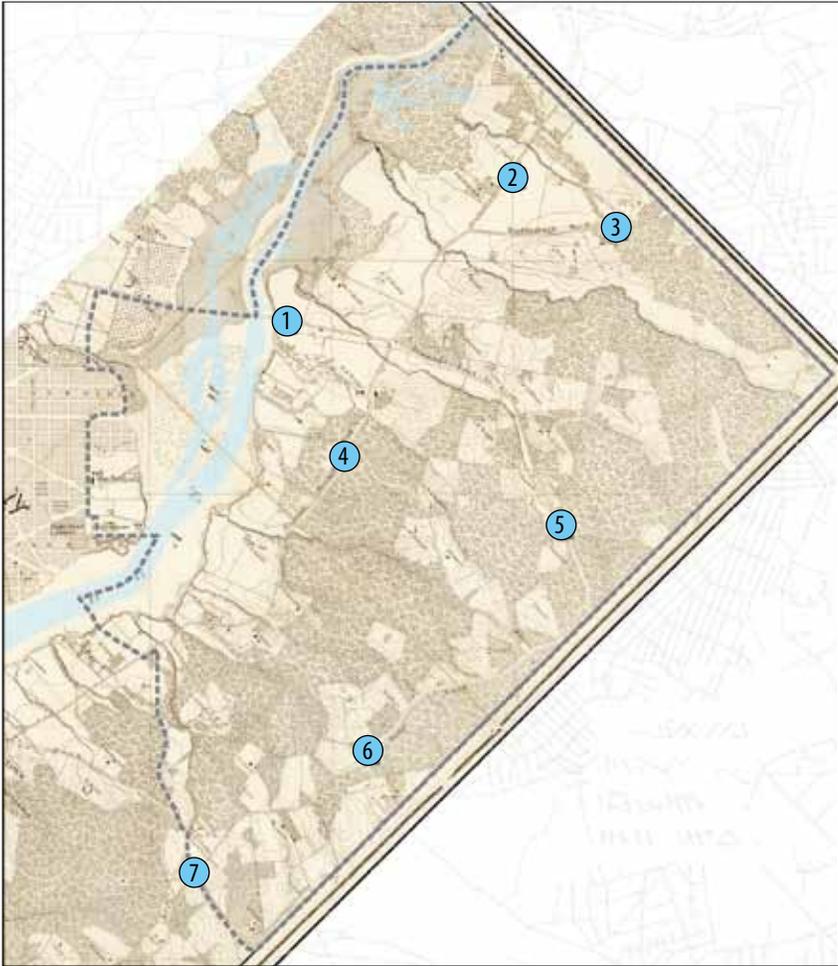


The new Francis Gregory Library, 3660 Alabama Avenue, SE, opened 2012, David Adjaye, architect

Other quality-of-life measures have been or will be put in place. Several schools are being renovated or rebuilt. Three new libraries designed by major architects with significant input from the affected residents opened recently, as have state-of-the-art recreation centers. In addition, Ward 7 is seeing growth as an arts community, hosting numerous colorful murals and other forms of public art, and long-standing arts organizations such as the Northeast Performing Arts Group. Finally, in holding to its legacy as the “green” ward, the area boasts several ecology and environmental projects, planned gardens and parks. With the increased awareness of the heritage of the ward triggered by the history work of the Deanwood community, aided by investment, the ward is positioned to preserve history as it continues to make history.

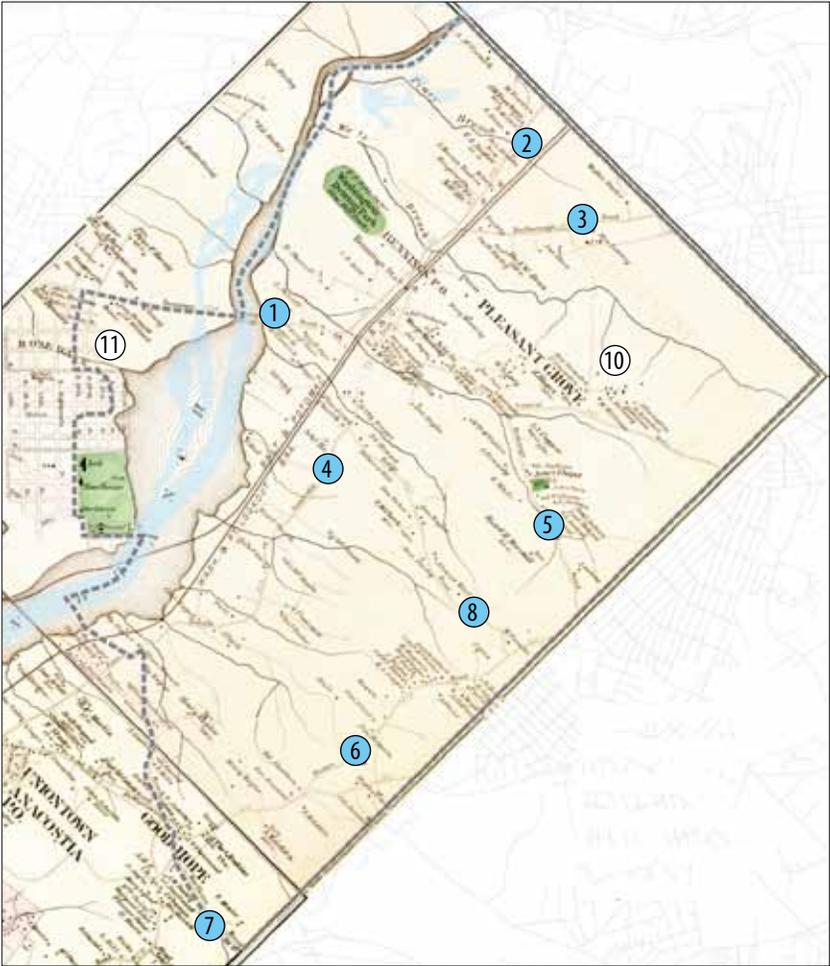
Ward 7 Development

1861



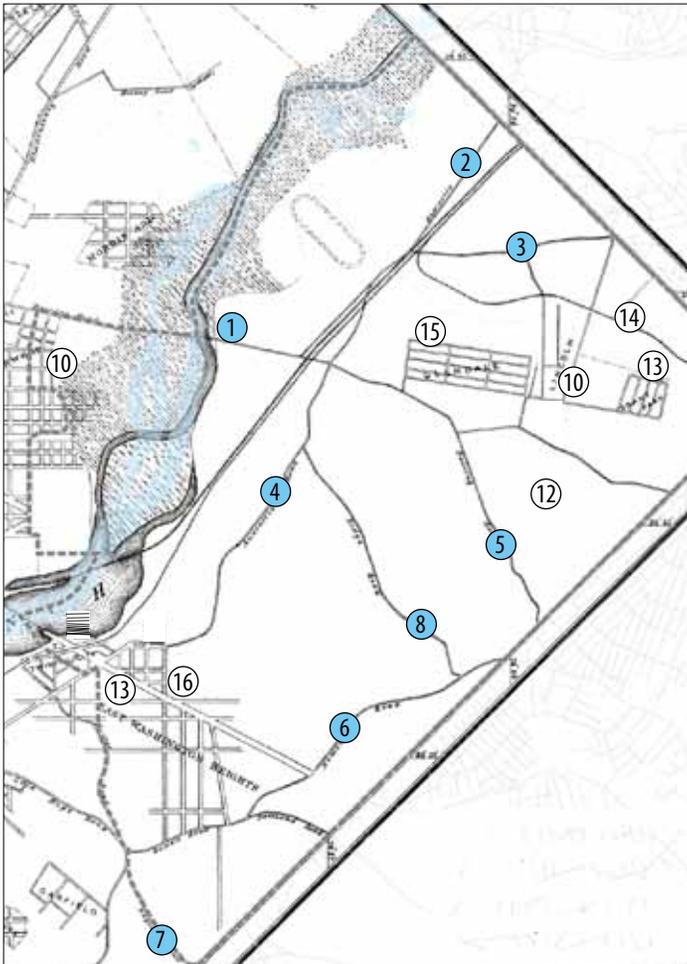
1861 A. Boschke map

1878



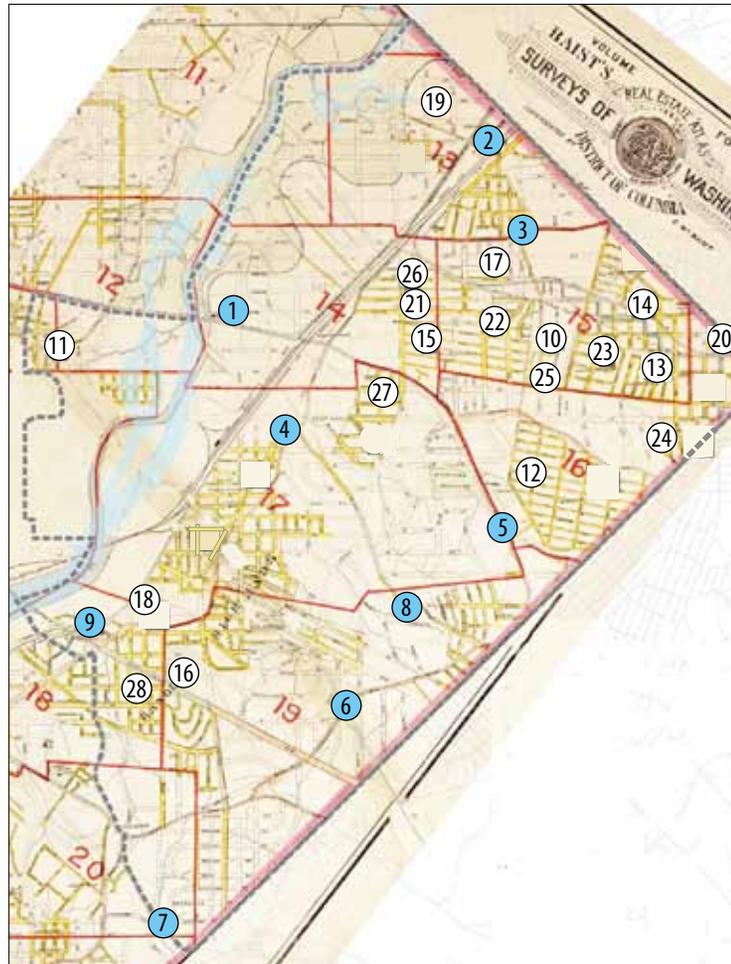
1878 G.M. Hopkins map

1892



1892 NOAA Map of Suburban Subdivisions
 Maps adapted by Brian Kraft

1921



1921 Baist Map

Map Key

- ① Benning Road NE
 - ② Kenilworth Avenue NE
 - ③ Sheriff Road NE
 - ④ Minnesota Avenue
 - ⑤ Benning Road SE
 - ⑥ Alabama Avenue SE
 - ⑦ Naylor Road SE
 - ⑧ Ridge Road SE
 - ⑨ Pennsylvania Avenue SE
-
- ⑩ Lincoln, 1875
 - ⑪ Rosedale and Isherwood, 1876
 - ⑫ Marshall Heights, 1886
 - ⑬ Grant Park, 1888
 - ⑭ Burrville, 1889
 - ⑮ Glendale, 1890
 - ⑯ East Washington Heights (Dupont Park), 1891
 - ⑰ Burley's Subdivision (Deanwood), 1894
 - ⑱ East Washington Park (Twining), 1894
 - ⑲ Kenilworth, 1895
 - ⑳ Fairmont Heights (Northeast Boundary), 1899
 - ㉑ Manning Heights, 1899
 - ㉒ Bloomsburg Park, 1900
 - ㉓ Deanwood Heights, 1900
 - ㉔ Central Heights, 1902
 - ㉕ Linwood Heights (Capitol View), 1905
 - ㉖ Hillbrook, 1906
 - ㉗ Benning Heights, 1908
 - ㉘ Randle Highlands, 1908

WARD 7 AT A GLANCE

Community Stakeholders

- Advisory Neighborhood Commissions 7B-E
- Center for Green Urbanism
- Deanwood Heights Main Street
- Northeast Performing Arts Group
- Groundwork Anacostia River
- Life Pieces to Master Pieces
- Marshall Heights Community and Housing Development Organization
- Neighborhood Flower/Gardening Clubs, such as Eastland Gardens and Hillcrest
- River East Emerging Leadership Council
- Sons and Daughters of Deanwood
- Ward 7 Arts Collaborative
- Ward 7 Business and Development Council
- Ward 7 Civic & Citizens Associations
- Ward 7 Councilmember
- Ward 7 Education Council
- Washington East Foundation



Boundary Stone - SE2, 4335 Southern Avenue, SE
boundarystones.org



Attractions

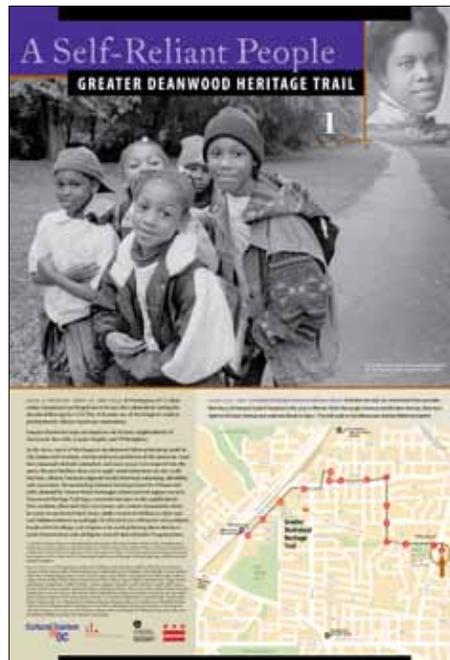
Anacostia Park
Boundary Stones
Boys and Girls Club
Civil War fort parks and sites: Fort Dupont Park, Fort Mahan Park, Fort Davis Park, Fort Meigs and Battery Rucker, Fort Chaplin
Deanwood Community Center
Deanwood Heritage Trail
Empowerhouse
Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens
Kenilworth Park
Kingman Island
Public Art
Public Libraries and Recreation Centers
Randle Mansion
River Terrace Park
Watts Branch/Marvin Gaye Park
Woodlawn Cemetery



Mural on Division Avenue



River Terrace Park



Deanwood Heritage Trail sign



Fort Dupont Summer Concert
www.nps.gov/fodu



Empowerhouse: 2011 Solar Decathlon model competitor, relocated to Deanwood as DC's 1st passive house

PRESERVATION FRAMEWORK

Lost Resources

A Sample of Demolished Buildings

Places and structures that have survived over time help tell the story of a community. They provide a setting and context for events, patterns, and mark the degree of change that has taken place.

When they remain, they provide a tangible connection to the history of a neighborhood. When they are gone, a beat in the rhythm of a neighborhood is missed and a sense of what was is forever lost to new generations.



Benning Service Station
Library of Congress



Kenilworth Presbyterian Church and WWI Memorial
Historical Society of Washington DC



CSX Switching Station



House on Douglas Street
Eastland Garden Flower Club



Joshua's Temple First Born Church / Zion Baptist Church

Quirky Cultural Resources

Cultural resources often represent or embody the consciousness of a community during a certain era or period of development. They are not always grand or traditional. Sometimes they are odd or quirky especially as they become rare survivors while their fellow structures of that period are lost or remade and the traces of the past become obliterated. But the unusual resources, old and new, tell their own stories. What do these structures say about the past, and even the present, in Ward 7?



Former Little Tavern Building, Pennsylvania Avenue, SE



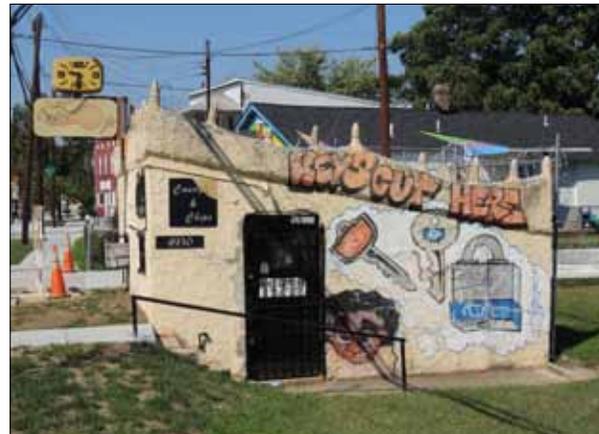
DC's Smallest House, Eads Street, NE



Carriage House, Naylor Road, Q Street, SE



Westbrooks / Chef's Table Restaurant, Benning Road, NE



Lou's Key Shop Building, Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue, NE



Art Totems, Kenilworth Terrace Avenue, NE

Preservation Challenges

Ward 7 is quite diverse in its neighborhoods and historical resources. Because it has been investment-poor for so long, its residents rightly call for quality retail and housing development. The implementation of these initiatives, on the other hand, has necessitated the razing of acknowledged and potentially eligible historic sites.

At the same time, many historic communities, such as Deanwood, have been plagued with incompatible infill construction and demolition by neglect. The result is that there is diminished contiguous historical fabric upon which to build, as an example, a representative historic district, which provides the ultimate protection of heritage sites.

An alternative strategy to creating historic districts to date has been the designation of individual historic places – places that have significance to Ward 7 and to the District. These new landmarks include First Baptist Church of Deanwood and the Strand Theater. There are other sites in the ward that also deserve the protection historic designation can bring.

Additionally, residents have become engaged in the DC Community Heritage Project, an initiative of DC Historic Preservation Office and the Humanities Council of Washington, DC, to explore and document the history of their neighborhoods. In fact, the identity of several potential landmarks has come from these community study projects initiated and carried out by residents.

Following the example of Deanwood residents who have developed several formal expressions of their neighborhood story, such as a brochure and a book, other Ward 7 communities are doing similar work. Some of these include Hillcrest, Capitol View, and Eastland Gardens, which recently published its own community history book. It is expected that a result of the work in these neighborhoods will be an increased awareness of the importance of local cultural resources and a desire for their protection.

Community Goals

Heritage preservation engagement has taken place most significantly in Deanwood with less formal interactions in Benning Ridge, River Terrace, and Capitol View. In the recent small area and Great Streets planning, the communities have insisted that historical resources be acknowledged and protected. Some groups in Hillcrest and Penn Branch have expressed interest in becoming historic districts, but have not taken any significant first steps beyond documenting their history. Another community, Chaplin Street, through its block club, has sponsored reunions and other events commemorating the African American families who integrated two blocks in the 1950s. The Eastland Gardens Flower Club has begun an architectural survey of its community to complement the community history it has already assembled.



Strand Theater Sign, 5129–5131 Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue, NE

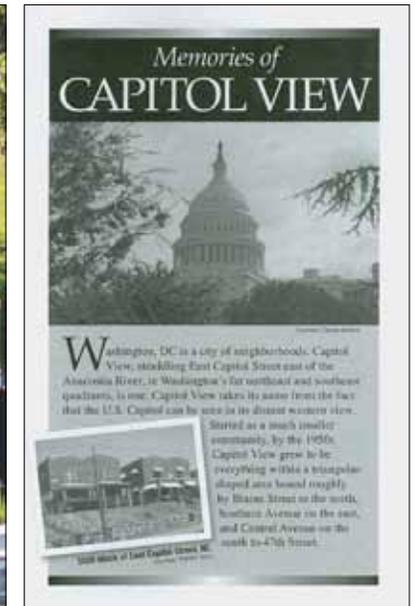
Preservation Strategies

In consideration of the many challenges, the following strategies are offered to further preservation education and advocacy:

- Continue research to accurately document significant historic sites.
- Support preservation efforts such as the development of Cultural Tourism's neighborhood heritage trail and Walking Town DC programs and other cultural initiatives.
- Ensure that preservation and community conservation are fully considered and integrated into neighborhood planning efforts.
- Recruit community groups to participate in the DC Community Heritage Project as a way to engage residents in an inquiry of neighborhood cultural resources.
- Engage and assist community-based explorations of heritage preservation and goals.
- Conduct informal inquiries into preservation goals/issues of stakeholders.
- Fund cultural resource surveys of discrete areas of the ward, such as Hillcrest, Eastland Gardens, Burrville, and Capitol View. (There was a 1987 survey of Deanwood.)
- Support the growing public arts program as a tool for heritage preservation.
- Nominate eligible sites for historic designation in consultation with affected owners and residents.



Gateway to National Training School for Women and Girls



Produced by the Capitol View Civic Association



Deanwood mural in progress

HISTORIC SITES

Historic Landmarks in Ward 7

Ward 7 has several designated historic landmarks and sites. A “designated” landmark means the property is listed on the DC Inventory of Historic Sites and on the National Register of Historic Places. The Historic Preservation Review Board is the body appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council to designate DC landmarks and historic districts, while the National Register is administered by the National Park Service and lends a federal level of protection to historic sites.

Boundary Stones (7)

Eastern Avenue between Anacostia Avenue and Southern to Naylor Roads



Boundary Stone East
Photo by Stephen Powers

Significance:

Seven of 40 stones located and installed in Ward 7 from 1791-1792 to mark the boundaries of the District based upon Benjamin Banneker’s astronomical calculations.

Civil War Defenses of Washington

Forts Baker, Chaplin, Dupont, Davis, Mahan, and Meigs



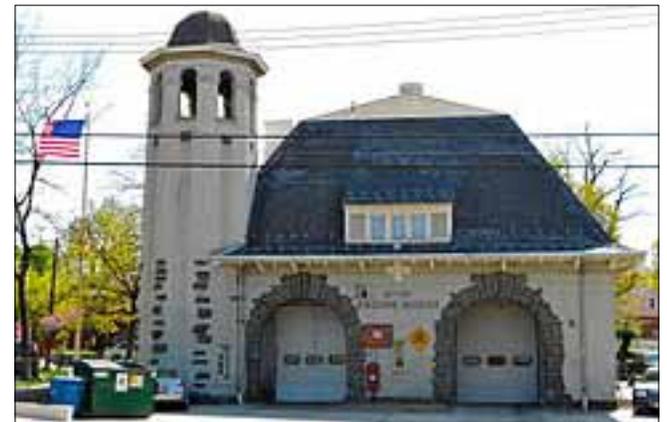
Fort Mahan
Library of Congress

Significance:

Part of the 1860s defense system of Washington also known as the Civil War Fort Sites and Fort Circle Park System.

Engine Company No. 19 - Randle Highland Firehouse

2813 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE



Significance:

From its construction in 1910, in an eclectic French Revival design, it served “suburban” areas of Washington.

Engine Company No. 27

4201 Minnesota Avenue, NE



Significance:

Designed by Leon Dessez in the “villa” style, this 1908 building became DC’s second African American Fire Company in 1945.

First Baptist Church of Deanwood

1008 45th Street, NE



Significance:

Once the largest African American church and the most socially active in far Northeast Washington, its older building now incorporated into this 1962 addition, was designed by Roscoe I. Vaughn and constructed in 1929.

John Philip Sousa Junior High School

3650 Ely Place SE



Significance:

Built in 1950, it became the subject of lawsuit, *Bolling v. Sharpe*, which was decided along with *Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas*, of striking down of the “separate but equal” practice in public schools.

Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens

1550 Anacostia Avenue, NE



Significance:

Now a part of the US National Park system, this is the only national park devoted to the cultivation of aquatic plants. The park also holds collections of fish, reptiles, and amphibians.

Mayfair Mansions Apartments

Kenilworth Avenue, Jay and Hayes Streets, NE



Significance:

Constructed 1942-1948, first privately-owned housing complex for African Americans, designed and developed by architect, Albert Cassell, in partnership with Elder L. S. Michaux, early African American radio evangelist.

National Training Center for Women and Girls, Trades Hall (Nannie Helen Burroughs School)

601 50th Street, NE



Significance:

Founded in 1909 by Nannie Helen Burroughs for African American women, the school was the first American institution to offer a broad range of courses and academic training within a single school. Only the Trades Hall (1928) is listed on the National Register.

Senator Theater (Entrance Pavilion)

3950 Minnesota Avenue, NE



Photo by Michelle Jones

Significance:

The Art Moderne entry of the former neighborhood theater was designed by prominent theater architect, John J. Zink, and constructed in 1942.

Strand Theater

5129-5130 Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue, NE



Significance:

First purpose-built theater developed east of the Anacostia River for African American patrons.

Woodlawn Cemetery

4611 Benning Road, SE



Library of Congress

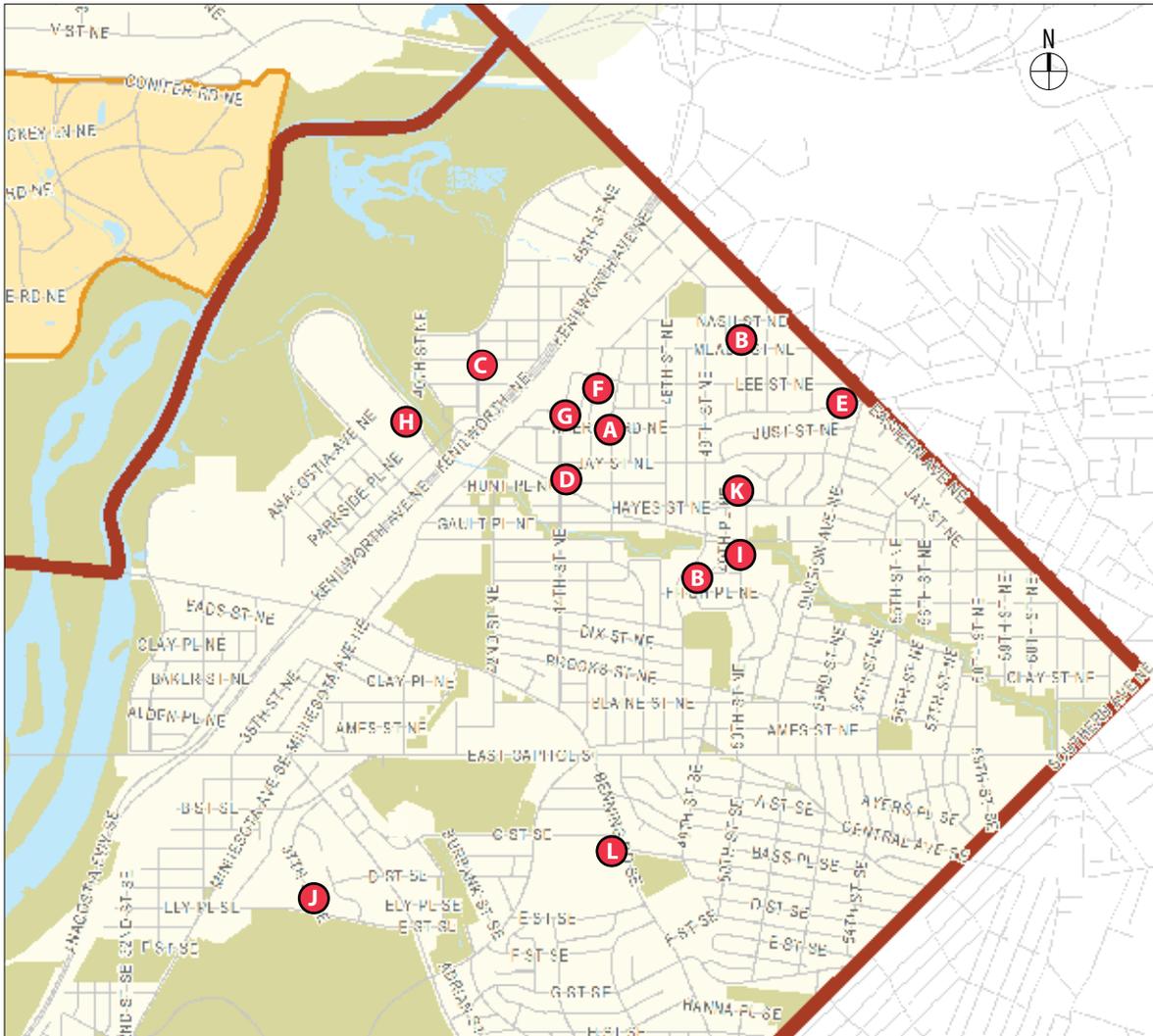
Significance:

Early burial place of many prominent African Americans.

African American Heritage Trail

Sites in Ward 7

An initiative funded by the DC Historic Preservation Office and developed and designed by Cultural Tourism DC, this heritage trail project introduces over two hundred African American historic and cultural sites in Washington. Several sites in Ward 7 are marked with signs.



Map Key

- A** Randolph and Jacob Dodd built houses
4621 Hunt Place NE
- B** Randolph Dodd-designed house
5020 Meade Street NE
- C** Eastland Gardens
4115 Lee Street NE
- D** Lewis Giles, Sr.'s Home and Office
4428 Hunt Place NE
- E** Sylvester R. "Sal" Hall Residence
952 Division Avenue NE
- F** IDEA Charter School - Deanwood School Site
1027 45th Street NE
- G** Joshua's Temple First Born Church
4318 Sheriff Road NE
- H** Mayfair Mansions / Albert Cassell
3819 Jay Street NE
- I** National Training School for
Women and Girls/Nannie Helen Burroughs
601 50th Street NE
- J** Sousa Junior High School
3650 Ely Place SE
- K** Suburban Gardens Site
50th and Hayes Streets NE
- L** Woodlawn Cemetery
4611 Benning Road SE
- M** Howard D. Woodson Residence
4918 Fitch Place NE

AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE TRAIL, WASHINGTON, DC

Eastland Gardens

*Between Kenilworth and Anacostia Avenues,
and Lee and Ord Streets, NE*

Water and land embrace one another here in Eastland Gardens, adjacent to Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. The neighborhood dates to 1928 when a group of developers called Eastland Gardens Inc. bought some 150 acres of the former Benning Race-track property and began to construct houses. Over 150 Eastland Gardens homes – many still owned by the original families in 2010 – were designed by prominent architects including Romulus C. Archer, Jr., Lewis W. Giles, Sr., John A. Lankford, Howard Mackey, Sr., James A. Plater, James L. Turner, and Roscoe I. Vaughn. Many early residents overcame their era's racial barriers, such as Owen Davis, who became DC's first black police captain in 1965.



Lorraine Houston built 4450 Nash St., NE, for her family in 1928. James L. Turner designed the house, which remained in the Houston family in 2010.
Courtesy of the Houston family.

Cultural Resources of DC
Funded by the DC Historic Preservation Office

Cultural and Heritage Resources

What follows is a listing of some of the places that are important to the heritage of the ward or represent important points of history. These sites have been identified from many sources, including historic resource surveys, publications, historic archives, planning documents, and community residents. Some have been identified as important places on the African American Heritage Trail (AAHT). These are marked with ✨.

Houses of Worship



Photo by Bernard Suber



Photo by Bernard Suber



Photo by Claude Brame



Photo by Bernard Suber

Beulah Baptist Church

5820 Dix Street, NE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality, Social Activism – One of Far North-east's oldest congregations, started in 1909; the new church building built in 1967.

Capitol View Baptist Church

5201 Ames Street, NE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality, Social Activism – Founded in 1925 at the encouragement of the community developer; the new church building designed by R. C. Vaughn, architect.

Church of the Incarnation

880 Eastern Avenue, NE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality, Social Activism – Formed in 1912, first African American Catholic congregation in NE Washington.

Contee AME Zion Church

903 Division Avenue, NE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality, Social History – Deanwood's oldest congregation, started in 1884, and site of its first school; 1963 building designed by Lewis Giles, Sr.



East Washington Heights Baptist Church

2220 Branch Avenue, SE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality, Architecture – Founded in 1895; architect for its third and current building is James Russell.

Jones Memorial AME Church [New Mount Calvary Baptist Church]

4270 Benning Road, SE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality, Architecture – The congregation was organized by the 1860s, and moved to this site in 1923; H. D. Woodson & R. C. Vaughn, architects.

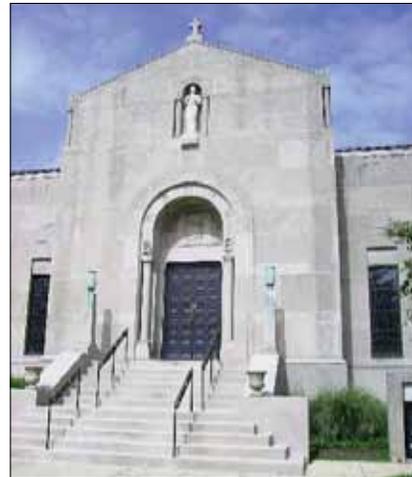
St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church

320 21st Street, NE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality, Education – Founded in 1946 to serve African American Catholics, this building opened in 1952 and was only the second Catholic congregation led by a black pastor.



Photo by Bernard Suber



St. Xavier Catholic Church & School

2800 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, 2700 O Street, SE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality, Social Activism – Founded in 1935; firm of Murphy & Olmsted, architects.

Sargent Memorial United Presbyterian Church

5109 Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue, NE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality, Social Activism – Congregation founded in 1908; site of M. L. King, Jr. visit; 1958 building by A. S. J. Atkinson, architect.

Tabernacle Baptist

719 Division Avenue, NE

Importance: Religion/Spirituality Architecture – One of Deanwood's earliest congregations (1911); Lewis Giles, Jr., architect.

Schools



Deanwood Elementary School (Carver Elementary School; Idea Charter School) *

1027 45th Street, NE

Importance: Architecture, Education – Deanwood’s first public school (1909); first DC school for blacks designed by Municipal Architect, Snowden Ashford.

Smothers Elementary School

4400 Brooks Street, NE

Importance: Education, Social Activism, Architecture – Second building of a school for African Americans established in 1864; 1923 building designed by Albert Harris.



National Training School for Women and Girls Campus *

601 50th Street, NE

Importance: Education, Social Activism – Established by church and club woman, Nannie Helen Burroughs in 1909; the campus was the site of the pioneering educational institution for women and girls and its chapel.

Library of Congress

Parks and Places of Recreation



National Park Service - NCPE

Watts Branch /Marvin Gaye Park

Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue, NE

Importance: Archaeology, Social History – Washington’s 2nd largest city-owned park; and allegedly frequented by notable pop singer, Marvin Gaye.

Payne’s Cemetery site

4724 Benning Road, SE

Importance: Archaeology, Social History – Founded in 1851, this African American-owned burial ground operated until 1966; Fletcher-Johnson School later constructed on the site.

Cemeteries



Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

Communities



Burrville

Division Avenue, Jay, 54th Streets,
and Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue, NE

Importance: Community Planning/Development, Social History – An early African American community, 1880s.

Chaplin Street, SE

1000-1100 Block

Importance: Community Planning/Development, Social History – Mid-century modern housing built for whites, became stable African American community, 1950s.



Photo by Erman T. Clay, Sr.

Depriest Village/Capitol View

49th, Blaine, 54th Streets & Central Avenue, SE

Importance: Architecture, Social Activism, Community Planning/Development – Developed in the late 1920s by entrepreneur, John Whitelaw Lewis, Industrial Bank founder, utilizing several African American architects and builders.

Eastland Gardens Community ✳

Ord, Kenilworth, Lee, 40th Streets & Anacostia Avenue, NE

Importance: Community Planning/Development, Architecture, Social Activism – Planned community utilizing African American architects and builders dating from the 1920s.



Fairfax Village

Alabama, Southern, Pennsylvania, Avenues SE

Importance: Community Planning/Development, Architecture – Apartments developed with auto-related shopping center 1940-41 for white occupancy by A.L. Goode ; William N. Denton, Jr., architect.



Hillcrest Community

Southern, Pennsylvania, Naylor Road, SE

Importance: Architecture, Community Planning/Development, Social History – Developed from the Randle subdivision in the 1920s; nicknamed the “Silver Coast”, became home to prominent African American residents.



Naylor Gardens

Naylor Road, Erie, 31st, & Gainesville Streets, SE, Naylor Road, SE

Importance: Architecture, Community Planning/Development; Social History – Built as WWII war housing, run by a non-profit association as cooperative housing for white veterans, a first in the nation.

Penn Branch Neighborhood

Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Branch Avenues, SE

Importance: Architecture, Community Planning/Development – Mid-twentieth century suburban development; home to prominent African Americans.



Suburban Gardens Apartments

Sheriff Road, 49th, 50th & Jay Streets, NE

Importance: Architecture, Community Planning/Development – First FHA-insured project for black occupancy developed by A.L. Goode, 1940-41; architect, Harry Warwick.

Other Selected Buildings and Apartment Complexes

Examples: 2811, 2812, 2820 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE;
3221 Massachusetts Avenue, SE

Importance: Architecture, Community Planning/Development

Houses



Deane House / New Bible Church

4421 Jay Street, NE

Importance: Architecture, Social Movements – 19th century family home of the landowners who created far Northeast subdivisions that included Deanwood and Lincoln Heights.

Mary B. Denman House

3703 Bangor, SE

Importance: Architecture, Social History, Archaeology – One of few remaining examples of Ward 7's agrarian past; built prior to 1861 by DC slaveholder Washington Young for his daughter.



Randolph Dodd House ✱

906 48th Street, NE

Importance: Architecture, Commerce/Business, Social History – Along with brother, an early prolific builder in African American communities of Ward 7; designed in 1928 by Lewis Giles, Sr.

Lewis Giles, Sr. Residence/Office

4428 Hunt Place, NE

Importance: Architecture, Commerce/Business – DC's most prolific African American architect; designed by Giles and built by his brother, Julian Giles in 1928.



Howard Mackey, Sr. Residence ✱

5100 Brooks Street, NE

Importance: Architecture, Education – Prominent architect and former dean of Howard University's architecture school; designed by Mackey and built by Randolph Dodd.



• • • **Randle Mansion / "Southeast White House"**

2909 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE

Importance: Architecture, Social History – Erected in 1910 by early Ward Seven and Eight developer, Arthur Randle; W. S. Plager, architect.

• • • **"Shotgun" Houses**

Example: 3215 Massachusetts Avenue, SE

Importance: Architecture, Community Development - One of several houses of similar design found throughout Ward 7; built in 1928.



• • • **Thomas Stokes House -Chess House**

4322 Sheriff Road, NE

Importance: Architecture – Companion house to former Zion Baptist Church, designed by W. Sidney Pittman, in 1907.



• • • **Howard Dilworth Woodson Residence ***

4918 Fitch Place, NE

Importance: Architecture, Social Movements – 1913 home designed and built by Woodson (1876-1962), an architect/engineer, and community activist.

Places of Commerce



Barnett's Crystal Room / Riverside Center

601 Division Avenue, NE

Importance: Commerce/Business, Entertainment/Performing Arts – Restaurant and club of 1960s-80s owned and operated by a former White House butler.

Highland Theater Building

2523 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE

Importance: Architecture, Community Planning/Development – Part of early auto-related retail development; John Eberson, architect, 1940.



Little Tavern Building

2537 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE

Importance: Commercial/Business, Architecture – Part of an early hamburger stand chain and representative of roadside architecture; 1948; one of few remaining in DC.

Morton's Department Store Building

2324 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE

Importance: Commerce/Business, Architecture, Social History – South-east branch of a department store that allowed African American patrons to try on clothes; designed in 1922 by Israel Diamond.



Shrimp Boat Restaurant

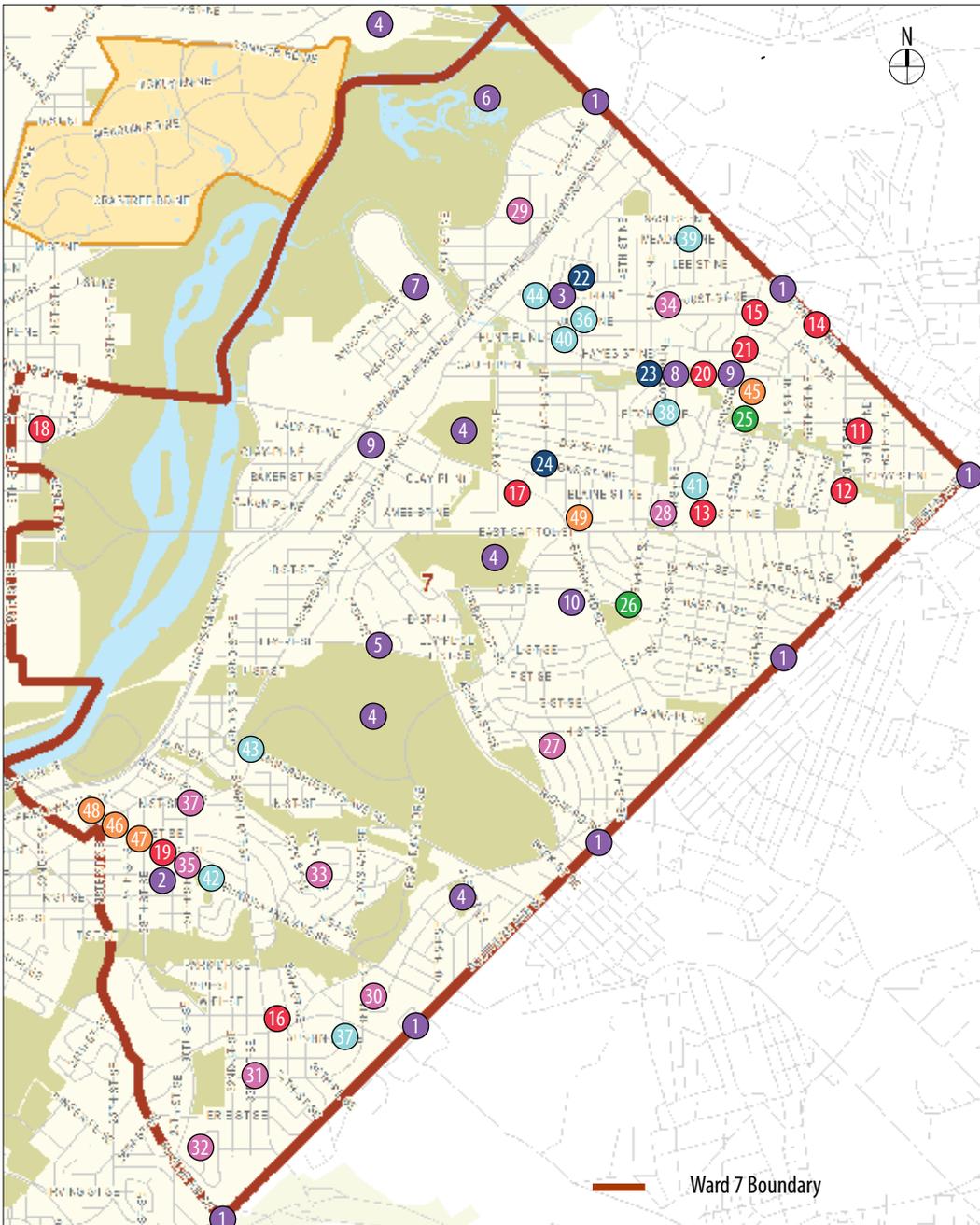
4510 East Capitol Street, NE

Importance: Social History, Archaeology – Unofficial landmark of Ward 7; opened in 1953 and was one of few integrated eating places in DC.

Greenway Shopping Center

3540 East Capitol Street, NE

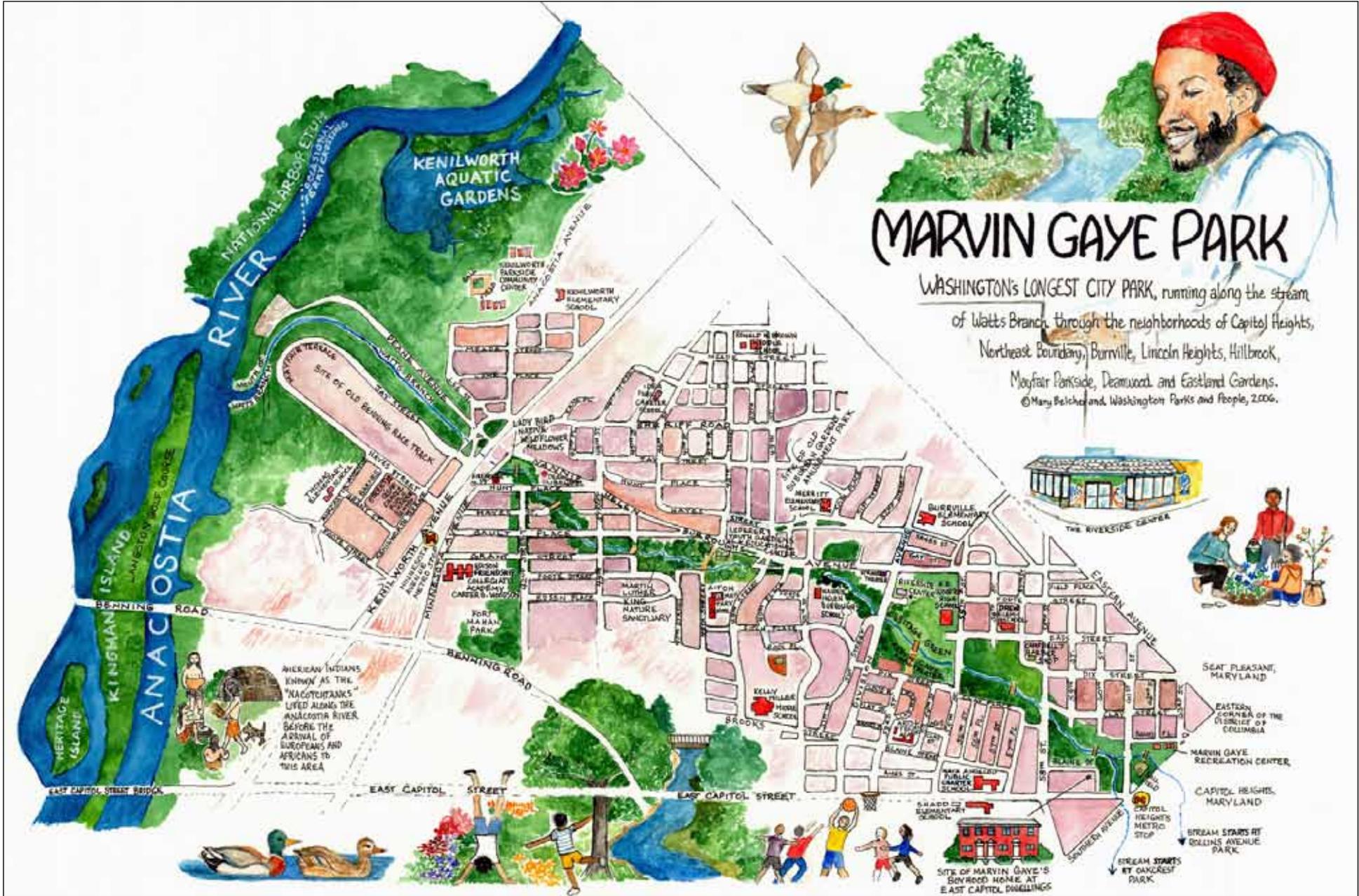
Importance: Commerce/Business, Recreation/Sports – Opened in 1942, housed shops and DC's last surviving duck pin bowling alley, closed 1985; Harry L. Edwards, architect, and Cafritz Construction, builder.



Map of Cultural and Heritage Resources

Map Key

- | | |
|--|---|
| Historic Landmarks: | Parks and Cemeteries: |
| 1 Boundary Stones | 25 Watts Branch / Marvin Gaye Park |
| 2 Engine Company No. 19
(Randle Highlands Firehouse) | 26 Payne's Cemetery site |
| 3 First Baptist Church of Deanwood | Communities: |
| 4 Fort Circle Parks - Civil War Fort Sites | 27 Chaplin Street SE |
| 5 John Philip Sousa Junior High School | 28 Depriest Village / Capitol View |
| 6 Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens
National Park | 29 Eastland Gardens Community |
| 7 Mayfair Mansions | 30 Fairfax Village |
| 8 National Training Center for Women
and Girls Trades Hall | 31 Hillcrest Community |
| 9 Senator Theater | 32 Naylor Gardens |
| 10 Strand Theater | 33 Penn Branch Neighborhood |
| 11 Woodlawn Cemetery | 34 Suburban Gardens Apartments |
| | 35 Other Selected Apartment Complexes |
| Places of Worship: | Houses: |
| 12 Beulah Baptist Church | 36 Deane House/New Bible Church |
| 13 Capitol View Baptist Church | 37 Mary B. Denman House |
| 14 Church of the Incarnation | 38 Howard Dilworth Woodson Residence |
| 15 Contee AME Zion Church | 39 Randolph Dodd House |
| 16 East Washington Heights Baptist Church | 40 Lewis Giles Residence/Office |
| 17 Jones Memorial AME Church
(New Mount Calvary Baptist Church) | 41 Howard Mackey Residence |
| 18 St. Benedict the Moor Church | 42 Randle Mansion
"Southeast White House" |
| 19 St. Xavier Catholic Church and School | 43 "Shotgun" House |
| 20 Sargent Memorial United Presbyterian
Church | 44 Thomas Stokes House - Chess House |
| 21 Tabernacle Baptist Church | Places of Commerce: |
| Schools: | 45 Barnett's Crystal Room
(Riverside Center) |
| 22 Deanwood Elementary School
(Carver Elementary; IDEA Charter) | 46 Highland Theater Building |
| 23 National Training Center for Women
and Girls Chapel & Campus | 47 Little Tavern Building |
| 24 Smothers Elementary School | 48 Morton's Department Store Building |
| | 49 Shrimp Boat Building |



Watts Branch/Marvin Gaye Park map

Mary Belcher, artist

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- "Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978" (DC Law 2-144, as amended), District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, Historic Preservation Regulations, Title 10A.
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- Benning Road Corridor Redevelopment Framework Plan (2008)
- Deanwood/Great Streets-Nannie Helen Burroughs Ave NE & Minnesota Ave NE Strategic Development Plan (2008)
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- Firehouses (1988; 1992)
- Northeast Archaeological Survey (1993)
- Public Schools (1989; 1998)

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Minnesota and Pennsylvania Avenues, SE, 1940s
Library of Congress



For questions and further assistance, please contact the Historic Preservation Office:

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