

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

Accomplishments for FY25 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

Regulatory and Review Authority

- Conducted 5 Certificate of Approval reviews. All 5 were approved.
- Conducted 3 Evaluation of Significance reviews for the purpose of demolition. None were recommended for historic designation.
- Conducted 1 Map Amendment Application Review for 4 Courthouse Square for local historic designation. Ultimately, it was designated by the Mayor and Council.
- Received 10 Montgomery County Tax Credit applications for processing.

Public Education and Outreach Activities

- Sent tax credit reminders and applications to all historic property owners.
- Updated and installed new historic signage for Carver Junior College.
- Updated text for Frieda's Cottage historic signage.
- Held a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for new historic signage on African American Civil War soldier, Zed Thompson, in partnership with Civil War Trails, Inc.
- Proclaimed May 2025 as Historic Preservation Month in Rockville.
- Conducted a Historic Preservation Month event called "Sustainability in Historic Preservation."
- Updated the narrative for the African American History walking tour on the City of Rockville website.

HDC Member Trainings

- Staff and the City attorney conducted an internal training for HDC members focusing on legal ramifications of Commission decisions.
- Attended the joint Montgomery County and State of Maryland Tax Credit workshop.
- National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) Webinar "*Creating and Updating Historic Preservation Guidelines.*"
- NAPC 2-part Webinar "*Managing Window Replacement: Lessons from Local Preservation Programs.*"
- "*NAPC Virtual Summer Short Course.*"

HDC and Staff Joint Projects

- Actively participated in the *Historic Preservation Work Plan 2023-2033* working groups including:
 - Assessed and made recommendations local incentive programs;
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- Assessed and made recommendations for a local easement/protective covenant program; and
- Assessed and made recommendations for below grade resources.

HDC Administration/Staff Actions

- Administratively approved 5 Certificate of Approval applications.
- Completed Certified Local Government (CLG) FY24 Annual Report.
- Transitioned Certificate of Approval and Evaluation of Significance applications to the MyGovernmentOnline (MGO) platform.
- Developed standard operating procedures for reviewing applications in MyGovernmentOnline (MGO).
- Reviewed and completed signoffs on projects in Project Plan/MGO.
- Prepared HDC meeting agendas, reports, and minutes.
- Updated the Historic Preservation webpages to ensure accurate and up to date information.
- Reviewed Natural Resources Inventories / Forest Stand Delineations (NRI/FSD) for historic preservation impacts.
- Consulted and made recommendations to the Development Review Committee.
- Developed revisions to the historic preservation sections of the Zoning Ordinance as a part of the broader Zoning Ordinance Rewrite project.
- Applied for two grants from the Maryland Historical Trust.
- Reinstated historic bronze marker program for locally designated properties. Ordered five new plaques to be affixed to recently designated sites.
- Conducted ground penetrating radar and archaeology testing at the Avery Road Colored Cemetery in an attempt to delineate the bounds of the cemetery.

HDC Staff Activities / Professional Development

- Moderated and presented for Maryland Historical Trust panel, *“Documenting Underrepresented Communities: Presentations from Practitioners and a Round Table Discussion.”*
- Moderated and presented for a joint Montgomery County and State of Maryland Tax Credit Open House.
- Served on the Board of Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions (MAHDC).
- Attended Maryland Historical Trust Preservation Planner Roundtable.
- Attended the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) Webinar *“Monuments & Justice.”*
- Attended 2-day Webinar *“NAPC Virtual Summer Short Course.”*
- Attended NAPC Webinar *“Historic Resource Surveys: Unlocking the Foundations of Preservation.”*
- Attended NAPC 2-part Webinar *“Managing Window Replacement: Lessons from Local Preservation Programs.”*
- Attended NAPC Webinar *“Navigating ADU Development in Historic Districts.”*
- Attended NAPC Webinar *“Creating and Updating Historic Design Guidelines.”*

Objectives for FY26 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)

Regulatory and Review Authority

- Review and make decisions Certificate of Approval applications within the 45-day time period established by state law.
- Review Evaluation of Significance applications within the 210-day period established by state law.
- Conduct Courtesy Reviews in a timely fashion to provide potential applicants with feedback on their project(s).
- Review and recommend Montgomery County Tax Credit applications.
- Finalize the update of the Historic Preservation sections of the Zoning Ordinance.

Public Education and Outreach Activities

- Sponsor a Preservation Month Event, targeting May 2026.
- Continue historic plaque program for homeowners, providing designated properties with a bronze plaque to display on the exterior of their property. Order additional plaques as needed for historic properties that are missing their marker.
- Complete installation of updated Frieda's Cottage Sign.

HDC Member Activities

- Attend National Trust for Historic Preservation webinars and trainings, as needed and appropriate.
- Attend and/or present at the Maryland Association of Historic Districts (MAHDC) 2026 Symposium.
- Attend Maryland Association of Historic Districts (MAHDC) trainings, as needed and appropriate.

HDC Administration/Staff Actions

- Continue to implement the Action Steps identified in the *Historic Preservation Work Plan* for FY 2026 which includes:
 - Updating codification of existing zoning code for preservation regulations.
 - Approve a zoning text amendment to update local designation and associated designation criteria.
 - Approve a zoning text amendment addressing administrative-level COA process.
 - Approve a zoning text amendment addressing delisting of locally designated properties.
 - Approve a zoning text amendment regarding parties of interest and owner consent.
 - Approve a zoning text amendment to strengthen existing property maintenance code for historic building or develop new ordinance section for demolition by neglect.
 - Examine ways to expand public outreach in relation to municipal historic preservation.
- Review and provide comment for Section 106 Program referrals, as needed.
- Continue assessment of the Avery Road Colored Cemetery and Benjamin Smith Homestead sites through various non-destructive means to confirm the existence of any below grade resources.



- Continue to identify funding opportunities to supplement the needs of the Historic Preservation Division.
- Complete update of internal inventory of historic designations.
- Develop standard operating procedures for documenting HDC related processes.