

Is historic designation right for Burleith?

Agenda

June 16th, 2016

7-8:30pm

- 7:00-7:10 Burleith history quiz - Carol Baume, BCA board member
- 7:10-7:15 Welcome - Eric Langenbacher, President of the BCA
- 7:15-7:20 Role of Historic Designation committee – Lenore Rubino, Past president of the BCA
- 7:20- 7:25 Overview & why now – Lenore Rubino
- 7:25-7:40 Historic designation – Kim Williams, architectural historian, DC’s Office of Historic Preservation
- What is historic designation
 - Overview of historic designation process
 - How does the community decide
- 7:40-7:50 Economic benefits – Rebecca Miller, Executive Director of the DC Preservation League
- 7:50-8:00 Disadvantages – Walter Hillabrant & Sheila Hegy
- 8:00-8:30 Q & A

Sponsored by the Burleith Citizens Association
Hosted by S&R Foundation Studios

Hey, what do you know about Burleith?

Have some fun and take a crack at this!
The pictures in the room give some clues.
PRIZES for winners!!!

1. In what year was the oldest house in Burleith built? **1803***
2. On what street is the oldest house located? **35th**
3. Where does the name *Burleith* come from? **a**
 - a. a town in Scotland
 - b. a tract of land north and west of Georgetown
 - c. the name of a house of early landowners

True or False

4. A home for former slaves was located in Burleith. **True**
5. Harriet Tubman spent time in Burleith. **True**
6. A cloistered order of nuns lived in a convent in Burleith. **True**
7. A home for incorrigible girls was located in Burleith. **True**
8. The Burleith housing development by Shannon & Luchs was the first of its kind in the country. **True**
9. The architect for Burleith became famous after designing the neighborhood. **False**
(was already famous)
10. Each block of Shannon & Luchs homes is laid out symmetrically, with distinctive house designs at the center and corners of each row. **True**
11. George Washington slept here. **False**

**Answers were provided during the meeting.*

Thanks to Carlton Fletcher at carlton@gloverparkhistory.com | <http://gloverparkhistory.com>

Is historic designation right for Burleith?

What — DC historic district designation protects neighborhoods of historic, cultural, and aesthetic significance. The designation is made by the DC Historic Preservation Review Board if a district meets one or more of these criteria *and* the community supports the designation. More than 30 residential and commercial neighborhood districts have already obtained historic status. Burleith, built primarily in the 1920s–1940s with a distinctive row house style and look, may be a candidate for historic designation.

Through community outreach, the Burleith Citizens Association (BCA) is informing the community about the benefits and drawbacks of historic designation. Historic designation preserves the streetscape by requiring any changes to a house's front exterior to be compatible with the original architecture. Historic designation does not affect interior renovations or in most cases rear expansions. (Georgetown is unique in being under a separate Federal designation that requires additional oversight. DC's other historic districts are not subject to the same procedures.)

Why — Burleith is nearly 50% rental housing, with an increasing number of houses being sold to developers who want to build up and out for resale, without necessarily taking into consideration the architectural character of the neighborhood or the effect on neighbors. These expansions affect some residents more than others. People have different opinions about this trend and whether managed growth is desirable.



How — The BCA formed a committee of Burleith residents to explore the pros and cons of historic designation and to gauge the community's wishes. The committee is organizing numerous opportunities for education, dialogue, and input. (The BCA board has not yet voted on historic designation but is following the process closely.) If ultimately the community is in favor of pursuing historic designation, an application will be submitted to the DC Historic Preservation Office. If the office determines that the application meets the criteria, Burleith homeowners will have 60 days to comment. There will also be a final hearing where opinions can be expressed before the Historic Preservation Review Board makes its decision.

How can you get involved and learn more about historic designation?

- Stop by the Historic Designation table at the Burleith summer picnic on June 18.
- Attend the third community meeting in September (date TBD).
- Get updates and more information at www.burleith.org and the *Burleith Bell*.
- Join the Burleith listserv (search "BCA Yahoo Groups" to sign up).
- Email hd@burleith.org with your questions, comments, and concerns.
- Make a tax-deductible donation to cover outreach and historical research expenses at www.burleith.org/historic-designation.
- Become a member of the Burleith Citizens Association at www.burleith.org/join-the-bca.

Take a walk through Burleith...

...as a way to take note of the possible variations of development. Here is a list of houses that are examples of third floors additions that can be seen from the street side and third floor additions that cannot be seen from the street. The houses picked are not for aesthetic reasons but for the concept of third floor additions that can be seen or not seen from the street.

Third floor developments seen from the street side:

- 3530 Whitehaven Pkwy
- 3713 S St
- 3612 S St
- 3628 S St

Third floor developments not seen from the street side:

- 3821 S St
- 3715 T St
- 3712 R St
- 3541 S St

As you walk thru and note the development think about the future. What if the streetscape changes significantly with more and more development? How do you feel about that – good, not so good or indifferent? Let us know at hd@burleith.org

<http://www.burleith.org/historic-designation>

Some noteworthy historic neighborhoods

Anacostia

Capitol Hill

Cleveland Park

Dupont Circle

Foggy Bottom

Fourteenth Street & Logan Circle

Foxhall Village

Georgetown

Kalorama Triangle

LeDroit Park

Massachusetts Avenue

Mount Pleasant

Mount Vernon Square

Shaw

Sheridan Kalorama

Sixteen Street

Strivers Section

Takoma Park

U Street

Washington Heights

Woodley Park

Pros, Cons, and Misconceptions about Historic Designation

Some of the PROS

- Protects the investments of owners and residents by limiting insensitive or poorly planned development
- Often increases residential property values (per many studies)
- Preserves neighborhood history and aesthetics
- Provides the community with tangible links to the past, a sense of identity, and stability
- Increases participation in neighborhood associations and improvement projects, thus helping protect shared spaces from decline

Some of the CONS

- Some individual choice is curtailed
- A rise in property values may result in increased property taxes
- Repairs and renovations that follow historic designation guidelines could be more expensive
- Alterations require a review by the Historic Preservation Review Board (though 95% of reviews are conducted and approved the same day that already-required permits are requested).

And some of the MISCONCEPTIONS

- *The permit/ review process will become onerous, like Georgetown. There will be a lot of restrictions on what I can do with my house.* NOT TRUE
Georgetown's historic designation was established by Congress in 1950 via the Old Georgetown Act. All alterations are reviewed by the Old Georgetown Board, which has more restrictive guidelines than the Historic Preservation Review Board. Burleith would not have this level of oversight. Nevertheless, any exterior alterations will be reviewed for compatibility to the historic character of a historic district.
- *Solar panels are prohibited. It will be difficult or expensive to make my house energy-efficient.* NOT TRUE
Solar panels can be mounted on the roof and back of the house; however, large panels cannot be mounted on the house front. Historically sensitive products to improve energy efficiency have become available. There are now many resources available for greening older houses.
- *It costs more to replace windows with historically acceptable ones.* NOT NECESSARILY
New DC Green Energy Codes require certain energy efficient windows, so the cheapest windows are no longer acceptable even in houses that are not in historic districts. Good quality windows are more energy efficient and last longer.
- *Zoning already protects the neighborhood.* TO A CERTAIN EXTENT
The vast majority of Burleith properties occupy much less than the allowable maximum. This means that anyone can put up third floors and make large additions to any part of their house, without regard to impact on neighbors or aesthetic fit. Houses can even be demolished if the owner decides to do so.

SHANNON & LUCHS FINISHES LENGTHY BURLEITH BUILDING

Completion of Row of Sixteen
Houses Absorbs the Last
Available Ground.

TRACT WAS PURCHASED
BY FIRM IN MARCH, 1923

Original Plan Was to Erect a
Community of 500 First-
Class Homes.

With the recent completion of sixteen homes on the north side of Reservoir road by Shannon & Luchs, Inc., the firm announces yesterday that this operation absorbs the last of available ground in Burleigh, and completes the building in this tract.

The original undeveloped tract of ground comprising Burleigh was bought by Shannon & Luchs, Inc., from Col. Frederick L. and Regina S. Mulder, in March, 1923, and contains ten city squares. Shannon & Luchs' original plan was to erect a community of 500 homes here, which would reflect individuality and character of design and which would be equipped with ultra-modern appointments and conveniences heretofore found only in high-priced homes.

These homes were to be produced to make home ownership among cultured people in moderate circumstances, thus sponsoring and aiding civic spirit. Turning into consideration the ideal and the aim of this community, W. Waverly Taylor, Jr., architect and vice president of Shannon & Luchs, Inc., collaborated with Arthur D. Keaton, advisory architect, in the study of a plan for architectural development of Burleigh, and which was finally adopted.

Ground Utility Considered.

The utility of ground was considered and a row house development was decided upon, each row of houses was treated as a separate and individual factor and each house as a unit of an architecturally perfect design. Colonial architecture was the chosen design for the development of the Burleigh community. The houses in the row consist of six rooms, daylight basement and tiled bath, each of which is moderately equipped. In the new Reservoir road project, however, eight of the homes have finished attics with partitioned and equipped lavatories on the third floor.

Adjacent educational facilities made this location particularly desirable as a residence for people who had children of the school age.

Appreciating the need for an athletic field for the Western High School, Shannon & Luchs, Inc., sold in the year 1927 a tract of ground which was originally a part of the Burleigh community, to the District government for this purpose. This tract was comprised of approximately three acres and is bounded on the south by Reservoir road, on the east by Thirty-eighth street, on the west by Thirty-ninth street, and on the north by B street.

NDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1927.

Influence of Burleigh Felt Throughout Nation

Community Started in 1923 by Shannon & Luchs, Who
Control All Building in Area, Has Grown Now
to Include 300 Homes.

**Choice Value in the
16 "Burleigh" Area**

Burleigh has long been recognized as the outstanding "moderate priced" residential section of the city—and we feel this is the best buy in this area.

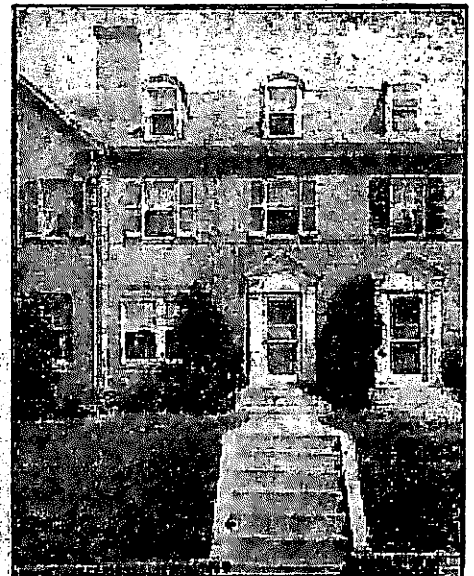
3704 S ST. N.W.
Post \$6,950
Sun.

English type, semi-detached brick of six rooms and bath, with hot-water heat and hardwood floors. Newly decorated.

Close to Western High, Gordon Junior High, Grade School, Georgetown University, Stores and Transportation.

SHANNON & LUCHS
REALTORS
1545 H ST. N.W. BA. 2345

Shannon & Luchs Co. Home Sale



Small text caption below the house image, likely describing the sale details.

NEW ROW OF HOMES ON RESERVOIR ROAD, BURLEIGH



Row of homes on Reservoir Road, Burleigh, recently completed by Shannon & Luchs, which absorbs the last of the available ground in this community and completes the firm's operations in this tract.

SHANNON & LUCHS

FINISHES LENGTHY BURLEITH BUILDING

Per Article
Completion of Row of Sixteen
Houses Absorbs the Last
Available Ground.

TRACT WAS PURCHASED
BY FIRM IN MARCH, 1923

Original Plan Was to Erect a
Community of 500 First-
Class Homes.

With the recent completion of sixteen homes on the north side of Reservoir road by Shannon & Luchs, Inc., the firm announced yesterday that this operation absorbs the last of available ground in Burleigh, and completes the building in this tract.

The original undeveloped tract of ground comprising Burleigh was bought by Shannon & Luchs, Inc., from Col. Frederick L. and Regina S. Huldeboe, in March, 1923, and contains ten city squares. Shannon & Luchs' original plan was to erect a community of 500 homes here, which would reflect individuality and character of design and which would be equipped with ultra-modern appointments and conveniences heretofore found only in high-priced homes.

These homes were to be produced to make home ownership among cultured people in moderate circumstances, thus sponsoring and aiding civic spirit. Taking into consideration the ideal and the aim of this community, W. Waverly Taylor, Jr., architect and vice president of Shannon & Luchs, Inc., collaborated with Arthur B. Heaton, advisory architect, in the study of a plan for architectural development of Burleigh, and which was finally adopted.

Ground Carefully Considered.

The utility of ground was considered and a row house development was decided upon. Each row of houses was treated as a separate and individual factor and each home as a unit of an architecturally perfect design. Colonial architecture was the chosen design for the development of the Burleigh community. The houses in the main consist of six rooms, daylight basement and tiled bath, each of which is modernly equipped. In the case of Reservoir road project, however, eight of the homes have finished attics with partitioned and equipped lavatories on the third floor.

Adjacent educational facilities make this location particularly desirable as a residence for people who had children of the school age.

Aggregating the need for an athletic field for the Western High School, Shannon & Luchs, Inc., sold in the year 1927 a tract of ground which was originally a part of the Burleigh community, to the District government for this purpose. This tract was comprised of approximately three acres and is bounded on the south by Reservoir road, on the east by Thirty-eighth street, on the west by Thirty-ninth street, and on the north by B street.

NDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1927.

Influence of Burleigh Felt Throughout Nation

Community Started in 1923 by Shannon & Luchs, Who
Control All Building in Area, Has Grown Now
to Include 300 Homes.

Conceiving the idea of building a community of row houses architectural-ly different from anything up to that time in the National Capital, Shannon & Luchs in May, 1923, finished the first group of homes in the community known as Burleigh. Instant success greeted the first effort of the firm, and, highly encouraged, they went steadily ahead until today Burleigh is a community of more than 300 homes of distinctive design, known not only as one of the outstanding developments in the National Capital, but one whose influence is being felt throughout the country as well.

Adjacent to historic old Georgetown, whose traditions and prestige go back beyond the earliest days of Washington, Burleigh is bounded on the south by Western High School, Georgetown University, and the Convent of the Visitation. The western border of Burleigh is the eastern border of the magnificent estate of the Archbold family, one of the show places of the city. To the north are the tracts recently purchased by the United States for the purpose of forming a connecting link between the Glover-Archbold Parkway and the Rock Creek Park system. The purchase of this land is not a plan for the future dependent upon action of Congress for its consummation, but the ground is actually owned by the government at the present time. Thirty-fifth street forms the eastern boundary of the development.

Desiring to get away from the "box-stall" effect of the old-fashioned home of moderate price, at the outset, Arthur B. Heaton, local architect, was called in to develop and complete plans, embodying the ideas and standards the firm had in mind. The first restriction laid down was that the homes must in all respects be equal to larger homes built by the firm in its other developments. There was to be hot-water heat instead of substitutions, real floors instead of make-shifts, and real plaster, and other items of construction usually found in homes selling at a larger figure. The most important requirement was architectural designing.

Briefly summed up, environment, architectural attractiveness, soundness of construction and careful planning have been the important factors in making Burleigh one of the most successful developments in Washington today.

This was done, with the result that a distinctive style of home was produced which caused more favorable comment than any other character of home of which the firm had heard. Instead of cramming too many homes into a given space, which was found to be a practice, Shannon & Luchs sacrificed lots to avoid this, and in addition set the houses back from the street to give them a setting equal to their architecture.

All the building in the community is controlled by the realty firm, and ground has been set aside for stores. The next step in the development was the introduction into the deeds of the homes and in the purchase contracts helpful restrictions that maintain value and protect the buyers of the homes.

Aggregating nearly nine city blocks, the ground purchase alone for the community is said to be the largest for the building of moderate priced homes.

Athletic facilities such as tennis courts and a commons for children to play on have been installed by the developers, and recently the Burleigh Citizens Association was formed. To aid the residents of the community, the firm was instrumental in getting established the Burleigh bus line of the Washington Railway & Electric Co., which line has been successful since its inauguration and recently has been extended.

The ground purchase alone for the community is said to be the largest for the building of moderate priced homes.

Athletic facilities such as tennis courts and a commons for children to play on have been installed by the developers, and recently the Burleigh Citizens Association was formed. To aid the residents of the community, the firm was instrumental in getting established the Burleigh bus line of the Washington Railway & Electric Co., which line has been successful since its inauguration and recently has been extended.