



# WARD 8 HERITAGE GUIDE



## A Discussion of Ward Eight Cultural and Heritage Resources



District of Columbia  
Office of Planning



Ward Eight Heritage Guide

Text by Patsy M. Fletcher, DC Historic Preservation Office

Design by Kim Elliott, DC Historic Preservation Office

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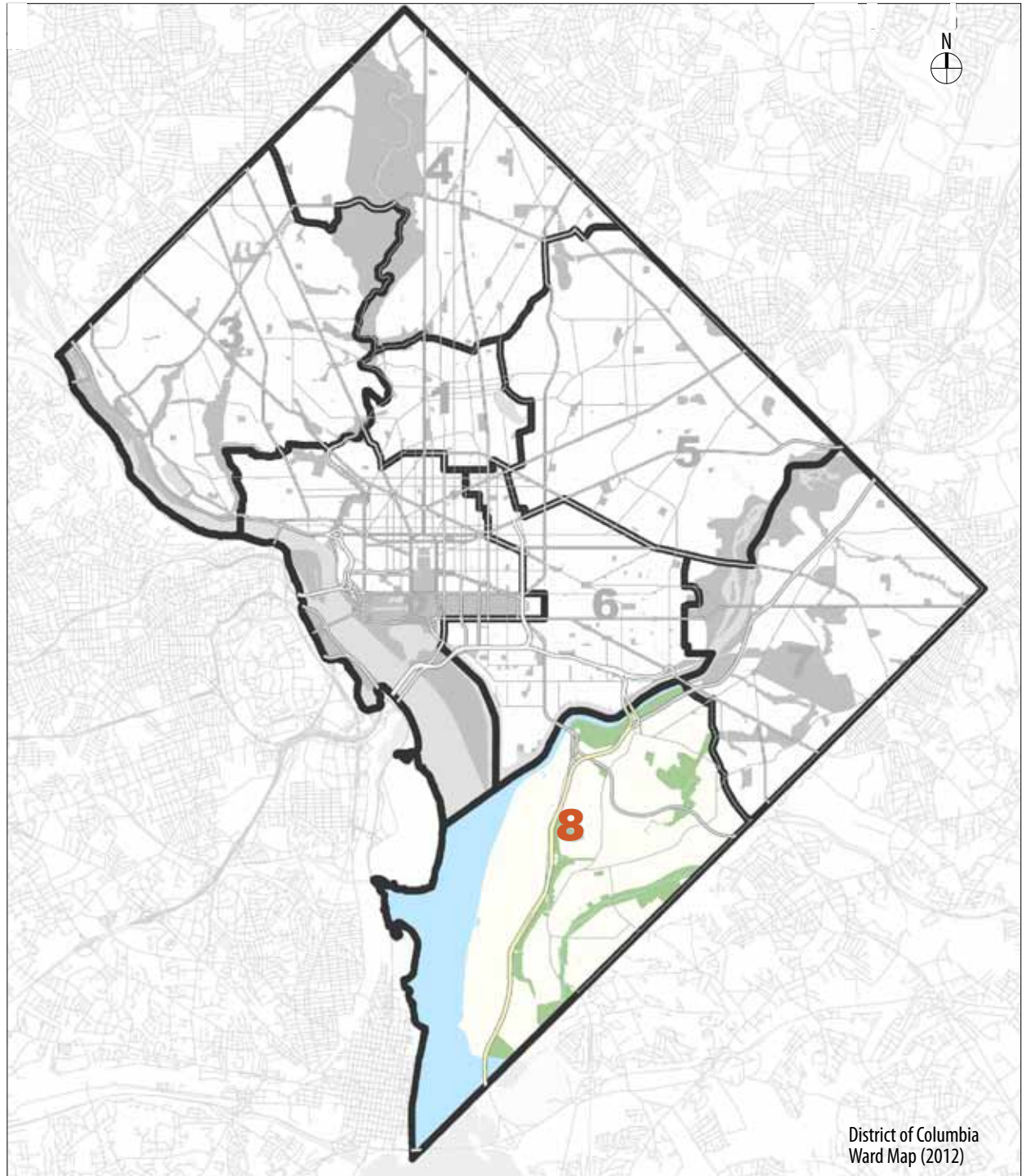
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Workers at Giesboro Cavalry Depot, 1865  
Library of Congress

# WARD 8



Ward Eight has many descriptors, some more affectionate than others: “a shadow across the river”, “a patchwork of neighborhoods”, and “the village that shaped us.” Although the ward is generally referred to as “Southeast” or “Anacostia”, it is not a monolithic community. In fact, comprised of many communities, the ward is an area with a rich, largely unacknowledged, history.

This heritage guide identifies historic or culturally important places in Ward Eight and provides a framework for developing strategies to promote and protect the historic resources as necessary. A goal of this commemoration of Ward Eight’s heritage is the enhancement of economic development, community sustainability, and quality of life measures.

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.

One such resource for many residents in Ward Eight is the Big Chair on Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue. The Big Chair, recently rebuilt, was first erected in 1959 as a publicity gimmick for a local furniture company. Although the object would not necessarily qualify for formal historic designation in the same way as another Ward Eight icon, the Frederick Douglass house, the Big Chair is nevertheless a visual landmark and significant historically to most Ward Eight residents. Its loss would be deeply felt.

There are a number of other cultural resources in Ward Eight, many of which are not widely acknowledged. Left unrecognized, they become vulnerable to devaluation and even loss as the ward seeks investment, development and/or a new identity. The DC Historic Preservation Office, along with community partners, hopes to promote stewardship of the ward’s heritage by assisting

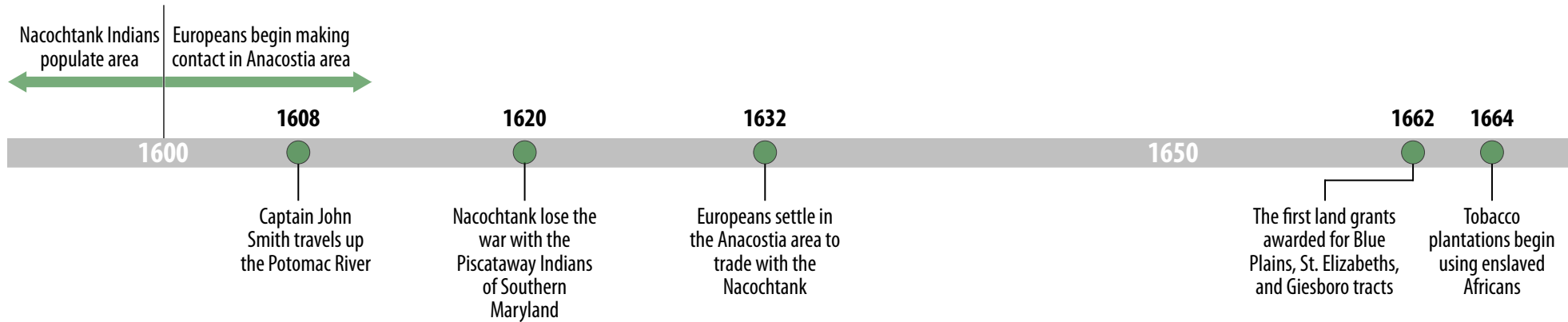
residents in identifying important cultural icons and places, and by facilitating initiatives to promote, preserve, and reuse the ward’s significant historic resources.

This guide presents a brief history of Ward Eight, providing a foundation for understanding the ward’s heritage. It is followed by some broad strategies and suggested actions for achieving shared community goals including recognizing, protecting, and promoting use of historic resources. The intent is to address the needs, desires, and challenges of the wide range of preservation interests that exist in Ward Eight.



Curtis Brothers Furniture Big Chair, dedicated 1959

# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE



Ward Eight occupies the southern corner of the District of Columbia between the Potomac and Anacostia (formerly the Eastern Branch) Rivers and Prince George's County, Maryland. Characterized by contrasts and often competing interests and resources, the ward boasts million-dollar views and a surfeit of low-income and public housing.

Ward Eight covers more than 4,000 acres and has the smallest percentage of taxable land in the District. Federal and District government holdings include parklands, St. Elizabeths Hospital, Bolling Air Force Base, Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the former DC Village, leaving just 962 acres that are subject to taxation. Yet, the ward has more vacant land than the other quadrants of the city.

Although the ward is the District's youngest as an urban and civic division, its tradition as a place of human settlement dates back some 2,000 years. The area was initially populated by the Nacochtank Indians who found the natural and diverse topographic resources suitable to a lifestyle of relative ease. They established trading posts, and hunting and fishing camps along the Potomac and Anacostia shorelines. Europeans began settling the area in the 1600s, eventually displacing the native Nacochtank tribe and their settlements. The only traces of the original people live on through the name given to the river and through the artifacts they left behind.

The new settlers formalized their claims to the land of Ward Eight beginning in the 1660s. Many held large tracts for investment. Eventually, plantations for



A scenic view from Ward Eight across the Anacostia River to Washington, 1833  
*Library of Congress*

tobacco cultivation and smaller farms for fruits and vegetables were established. Enslaved Africans and their descendants provided much of the labor for these enterprises, though by the early 1800s, there were a number of free families of color who were residents, workers, and land owners.

Nacochtank have lost their lands to warfare, disease, and European land ownership

1696

Prince Georges County created, including Ward 8 area

1700

1735

Addison Family builds Upper Giesboro plantation manor

1750

When the national capital was established in the region in 1790, it was speculated that the city would grow in the direction of this southeastern quadrant of Washington because of its location at the juncture of the Potomac and the Eastern Branch Rivers. This prospective growth did not happen for many decades. Instead the ward was dotted with small settlements well into the 1870s, especially along the roads to and from Maryland, such as Hamilton (Alabama Avenue), and to the Alexandria ferry at the river's edge. Some of the early settlements were Good Hope, the Ridge, and Giesboro.

The establishment of institutional uses in the area began with the building of the Government Hospital for the Insane (later named St. Elizabeths Hospital) in 1853. The site was selected because of the panoramic views and bucolic setting that were considered soothing and healing to the hospital's patients.

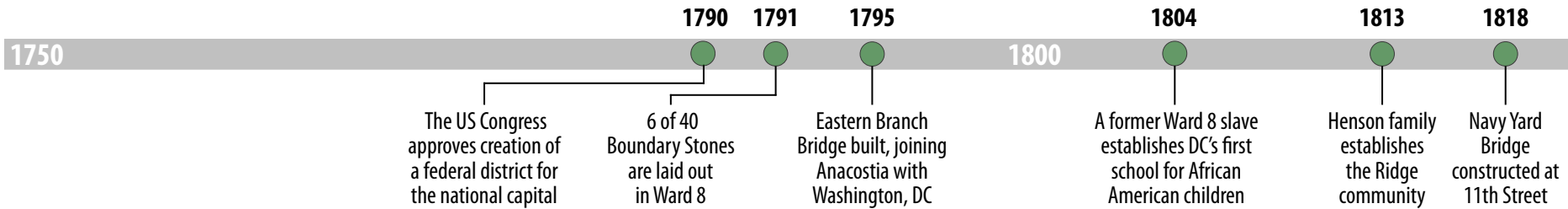
A private attempt at increasing settlement in Ward Eight was the 1850s development of a planned community for white government and other middle-class workers desiring suburban living. This subdivision was called Uniontown, located at the foot of the Navy Yard Bridge (11th Street). However, it was several more years before this effort met with success. That community is now Historic Anacostia, a historic district.



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

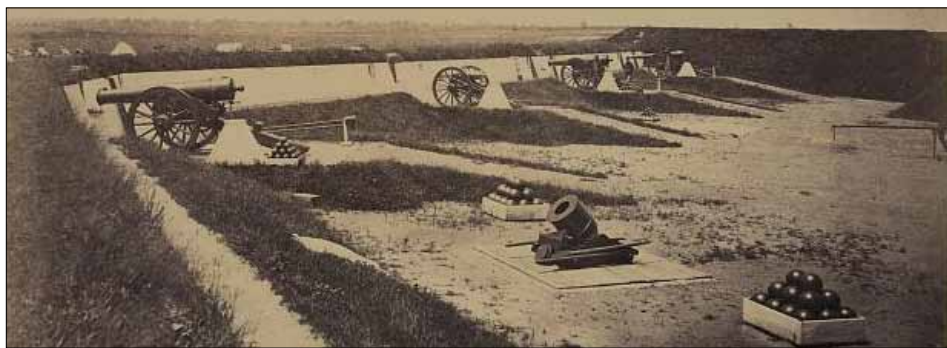
American Revolutionary War

War of 1812



After the start of the Civil War, Ward Eight with its high vistas and lengthy river front became part of the federal government's war defenses to protect the nation's capital. Several fortifications, such as Forts Carroll and Greble, were erected at strategic points along the ward's share of the District boundary. Ward Eight was also home to the largest cavalry depot in the country, at Giesboro, now part of Bolling Air Force Base.

These Union forts and batteries attracted people fleeing enslavement in Maryland, Virginia, and beyond, especially after 1862 when the District emancipated enslaved people within its boundaries. This led to the next and more successful settlement effort – the post-Civil War establishment of a village for newly freed people on farmland purchased from the Barry family. The Freedmen's Bureau was responsible for the nation's first planned community for African Americans with the establishment of Barry Farm (later called Hillside)



Fort Carroll, 1865  
Library of Congress



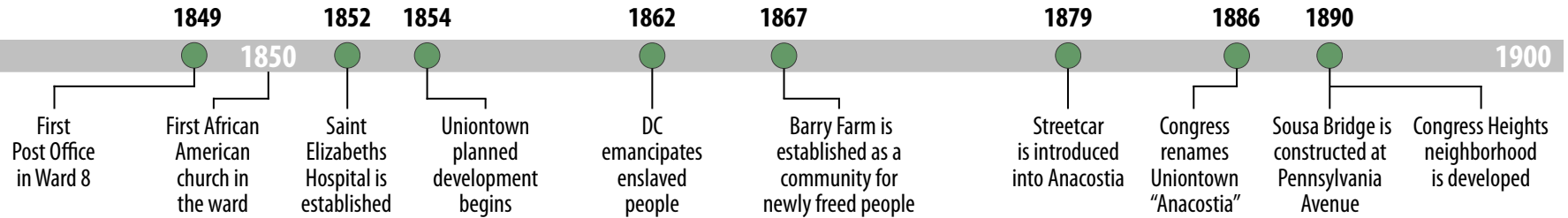
Streetcar transportation between two sides of the river in 1890s

located on the Anacostia River at the northern border of St. Elizabeths. Streets were laid out and named for prominent white abolitionists, and one-acre lots were platted. The lots and building materials were offered for sale to African Americans for two or three hundred dollars payable in installments.

After the Civil War, various industrial uses began to locate along the river shorelines on landfill created by efforts to make the river more navigable and to eliminate marshlands thought to harbor disease. Most of these were later displaced by additional military and other governmental concerns that began to consume much of the available land. Some of the post-Civil War government facilities included the technologically advanced Bellevue Magazine, which lent its name to a later Ward Eight neighborhood; the Anacostia Naval



American Civil War



Air Station and Naval Research Laboratory; Camp Simms, a National Guard camp; and Washington's almshouse and a potter's field. Supporting enterprises sprang up employing many of the local residents. The largest of these was the Firth Stirling Steel Company, later known as Washington Steel and Ordnance Company.

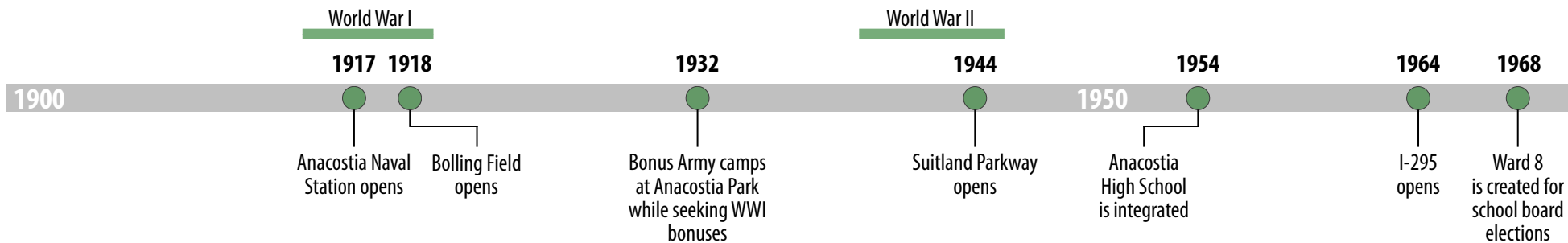
Until the 1940s, residential development in the ward remained sparse, and clustered along major roads. An example is Congress Heights developed in the 1880s as a streetcar suburb at the end of the line along Nichols (Martin Luther King, Jr.) Avenue at its juncture with Hamilton Road (Alabama Avenue) and Portland (Malcolm X) Avenue.



Hitchcock Hall, (1908) served as the theater at St. Elizabeths Hospital



Dance group, Frederick Douglass Public Housing, 1942  
Library of Congress



An Anacostia High School integrated classroom, 1956  
Library of Congress

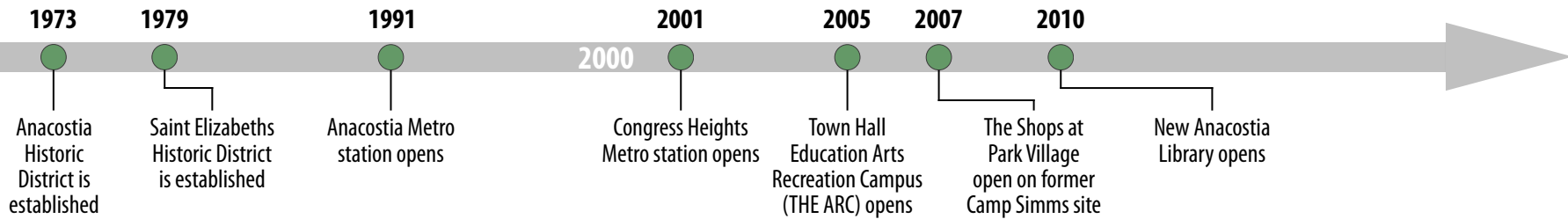
In 1940, the ward's population totaled only a small percentage of the city's total. More than one third of these were residents of St. Elizabeths, which had become the federal government's largest psychiatric treatment facility.

With the onset of World War II and the rapid expansion of federal agencies and employment, residential development boomed in Ward Eight. A new bridge across the Anacostia River enhanced the development of new neighborhoods and economic opportunity in the ward. With these came attendant churches, schools, other social and cultural institutions, as well as businesses, and places of leisure.

The 1950s in Ward Eight also saw changes in demographics. With legal rulings that prohibited racial discrimination, white residents began to leave sections of the ward. Urban renewal activity in other parts of the city, combined with the systematic construction of moderate-cost housing east of the Anacostia River led thousands of low- to middle-income black households to relocate to the ward in search of affordable housing.



Construction of Interstate 295, 1972  
Library of Congress

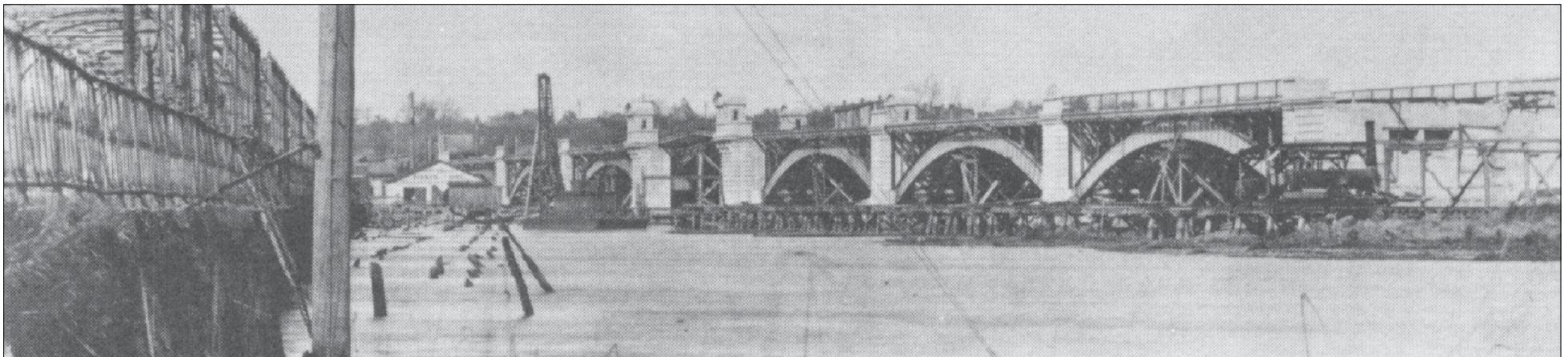


Tension between the races in the ward almost came to a head several times during this period but never resulted in the kind of disturbances that other parts of Washington saw. At the same time, issues grew along class lines as the number of apartment buildings and multi-family dwellings assigned to renters began to outnumber single family, detached housing and home ownership.

The ward became the location of many government funded and subsidized housing developments. Some communities within the ward such as the previously cohesive nineteenth century Hillside were divided and isolated by the construction of the Suitland Parkway and Interstate 295. As a result, Ward

Eight became known as a lower-income, black community characterized by mid-twentieth century buildings and government facilities. This depiction ignores the ward's surviving historic character.

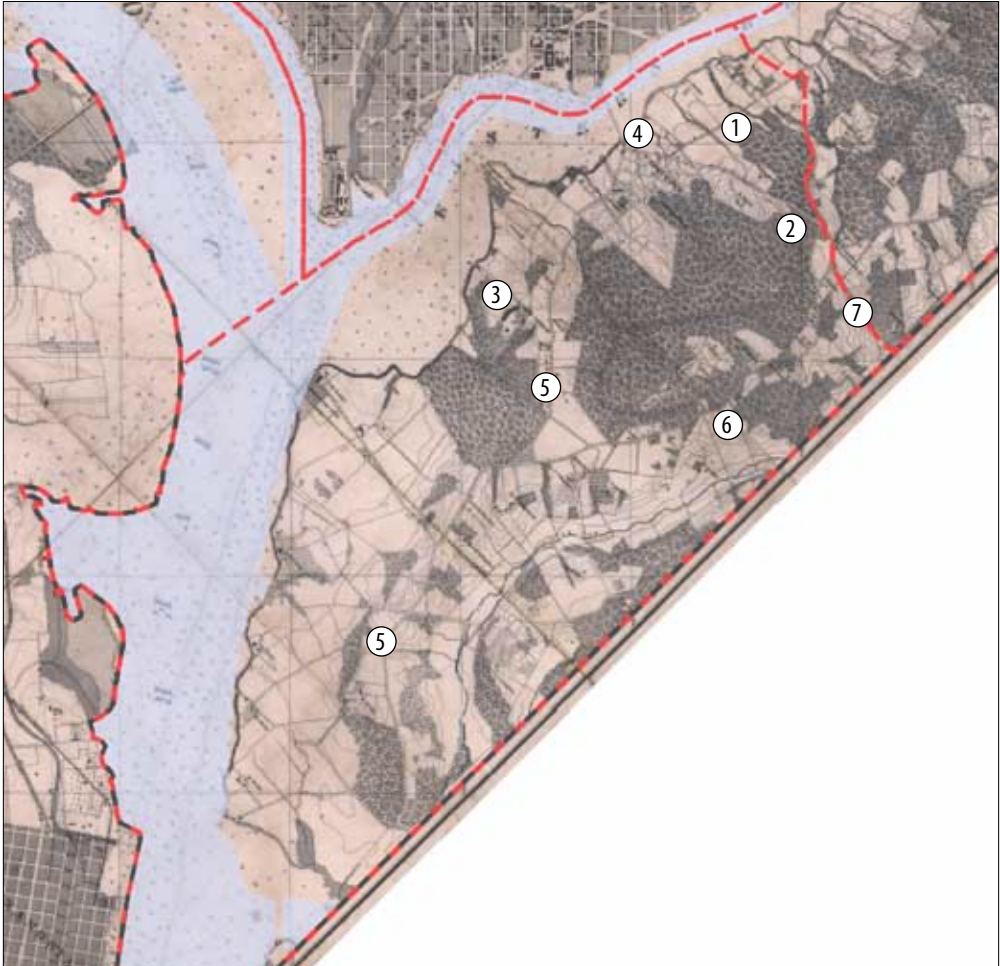
Today, Ward Eight is enjoying a rediscovery of its rich and varied history, and its contribution to Washington in the midst of the development occurring in the ward. More importantly, residents are recognizing the need for the protection of its resources.



New 11th Street Bridge replacing old, 1908  
Library of Congress

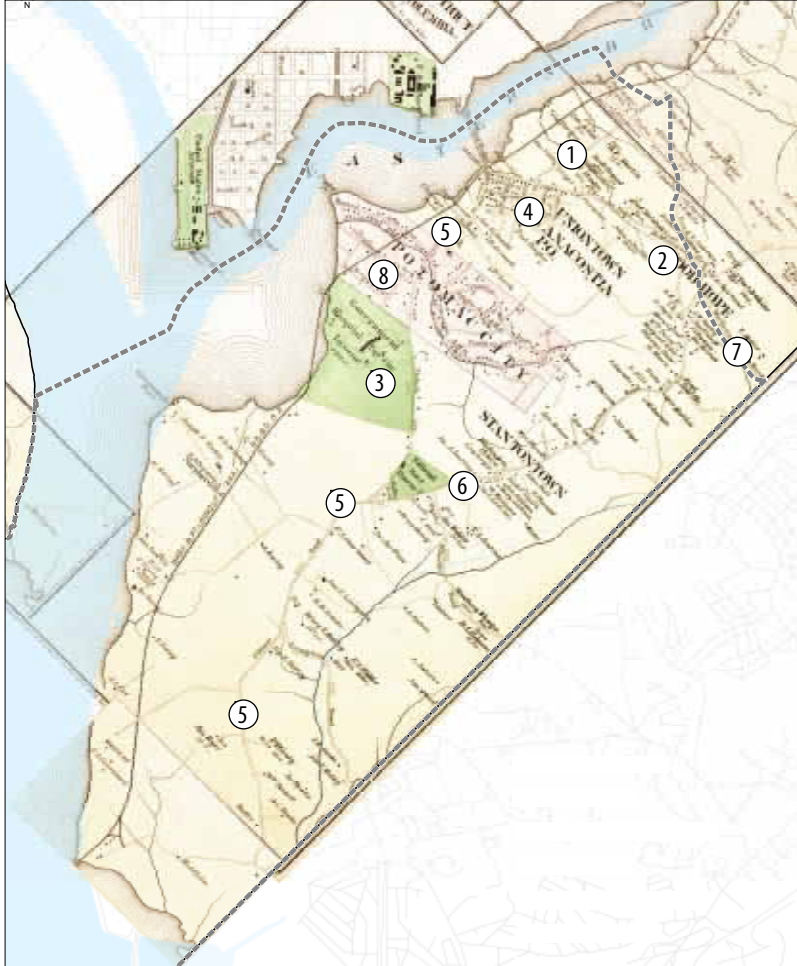
# Ward Eight Development

1861



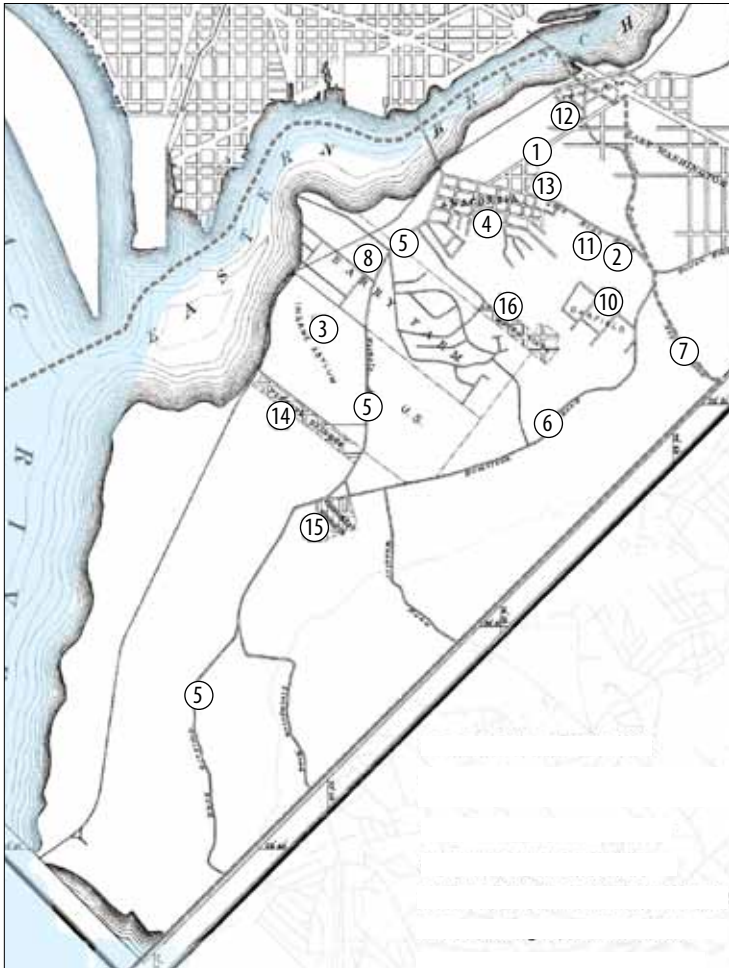
1861 A. Boschke map

1878



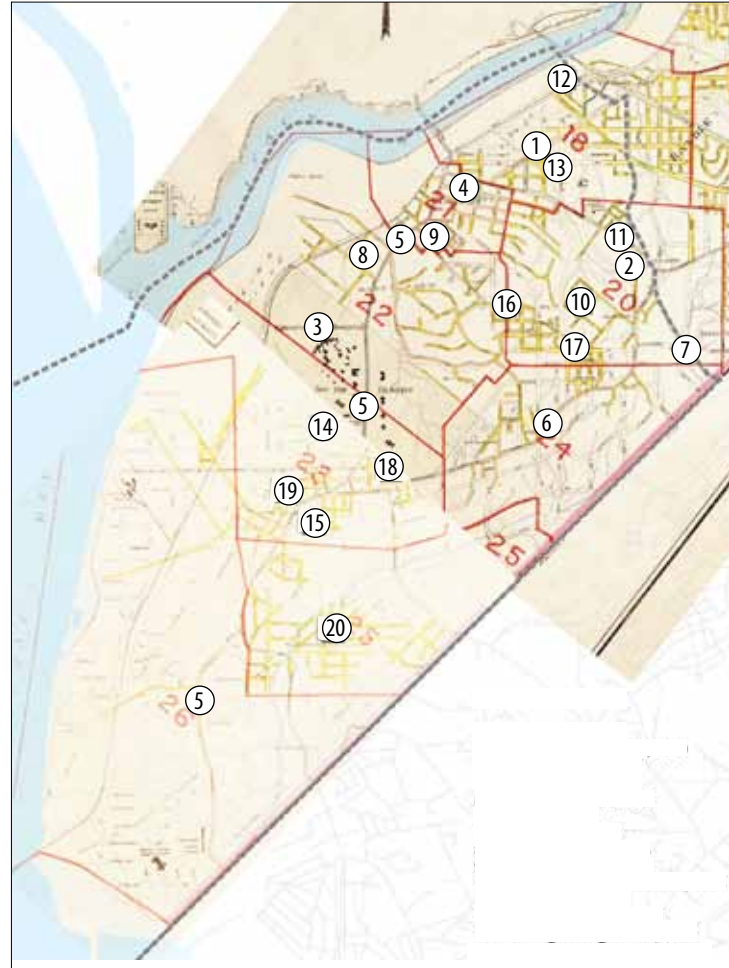
1878 G.M. Hopkins map

1892



1892 Suburban Subdivisions

1921



1921 Baist Map

**Map Key**

- ① Minnesota Avenue SE (Eastern Branch or Anacostia Road)
- ② Good Hope Village, 1833
- ③ Saint Elizabeths Hospital, established 1853
- ④ Uniontown (Old Anacostia), 1854
- ⑤ Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE (Nichols Avenue)
- ⑥ Alabama Avenue SE
- ⑦ Naylor Road
- ⑧ Barry Farm, 1867
- ⑨ Griswold's, 1881
- ⑩ Garfield, 1882
- ⑪ Good Hope Park, 1887
- ⑫ Twining City, 1888
- ⑬ Addition to Anacostia, 1890
- ⑭ Pencote Heights, 1890
- ⑮ Congress Heights, 1890
- ⑯ Buena Vista, 1891
- ⑰ Garfield Heights, 1894
- ⑱ Congress Heights Addition, 1894
- ⑲ Randle Park, 1902
- ⑳ Washington Highlands, 1904

Maps adapted by Brian Kraft

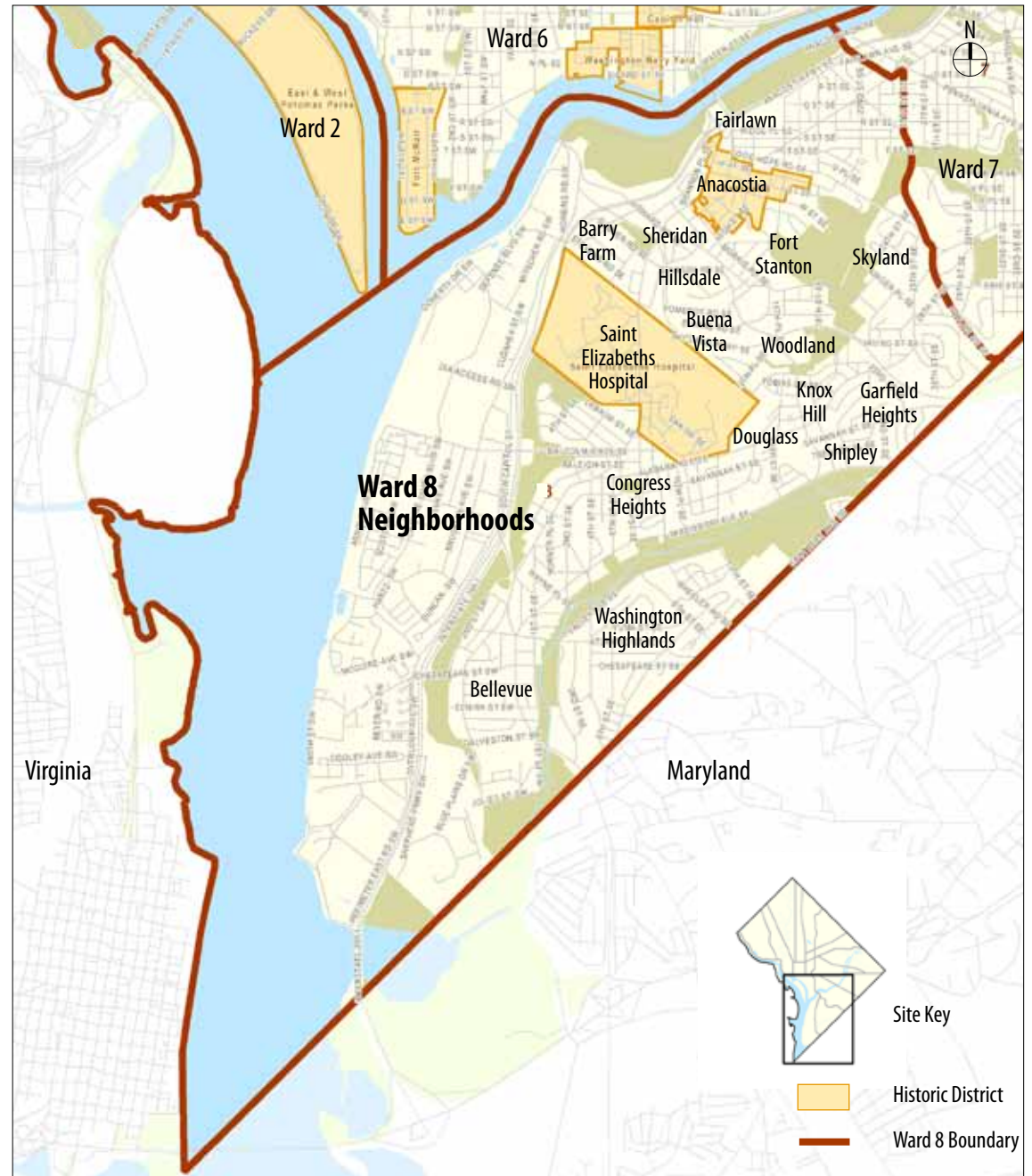
# WARD EIGHT AT A GLANCE

## Community Stakeholders

- Anacostia Coordinating Committee
- Anacostia Economic Development Council
- Advisory Neighborhood Commissions 8A-E
- Congress Heights Community Association
- Frederick Douglass Garden Club
- Frederick Douglass National Historic Site
- Historic Anacostia Block Association
- Oxon Run Community Association
- River East Emerging Leadership Council
- Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum
- Ward Eight Business Council
- Ward Eight Civic Associations
- Ward Eight Councilmember
- Ward Eight History / Heritage Council
- Ward Eight Ministerial Alliance



Boundary Stone - SE3, 3908 Southern Avenue, SE  
[boundarystones.org](http://boundarystones.org)



## Attractions

African American Heritage Trail (AAHT)

Anacostia Park, Anacostia River

The Big Chair

Civil War forts sites:

Baker, Carroll, Greble, Ricketts, Snyder, Stanton and Wagner

District Boundary Stones

The Frederick Douglass National Historic Site

Historic Anacostia Heritage Trail

Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling (JBAB)

Oxon Run Park

The Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum

Southwest Tennis and Learning Center

Town Hall Education Arts Recreation Campus (THE ARC)

Views from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church

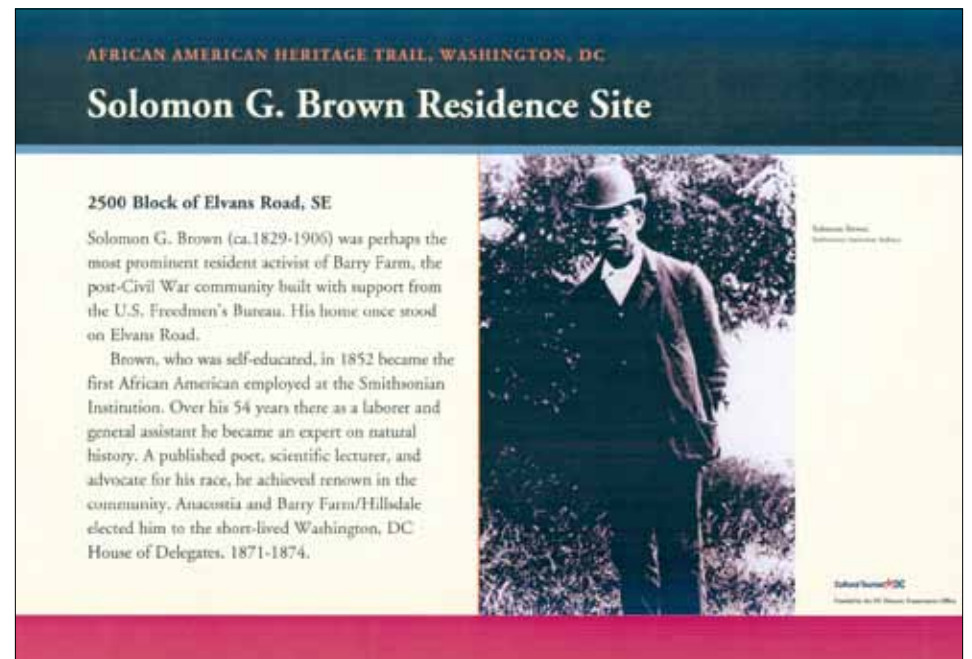


The Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum



The Big Chair, Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and V Street, 1959, rebuilt in 2006

Photo by Lois Raimundo, *The Washington Post*



Panel from The African American Heritage Trail

# 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.



German Orphans' Home  
*Historical Society of Washington*



Home on Howard Road  
*Library of Congress*



CSX Railway Signal Building, Anacostia Park,  
demolished, 2008



Nichols Avenue (Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue) and Howard Road SE, in 1949  
*Wymer Collection, Historical Society of Washington*



The Atlantic Theater, Atlantic Avenue SW near South Capitol, demolished 2008



## Preservation Challenges

### Protecting City Views

The most commonly agreed upon preservation challenge in Ward Eight is the protection of the views and vistas of the city, the monumental core, the Potomac River and Virginia from vantage points in Ward Eight. Development plans for parts of the ward threaten the heretofore unobstructed views enjoyed by residents. St. Elizabeths which enjoys the best views will be closed to the public except on special occasions due to the pending relocation of Department of Homeland Security headquarters, including the US Coast Guard and major security measures.

Other developments include the pending construction of a giant water tower, also at St. Elizabeths. Several apartment /retail complexes are proposed for various areas such as along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, just outside the historic district, that will obstruct the views normally enjoyed by residents of the lower section of Hillside. Similarly, there is tremendous concern that views from Our Lady of Perpetual Help, a traditional fireworks-watching site and tourist vista will be obscured by new development.

Conversely, residents were particularly proud of the approaching views of Ward Eight from the western side of the Anacostia River. Until recently, the hillside greeted river crossers with a relatively uninterrupted lush and verdant expanse. Prospective projects for the historic Elvans Road, below Our Lady, St. Elizabeths, and other sites could alter forever the views for which Ward Eight is known.



On the Anacostia



View from Our Lady of Perpetual Help across to downtown DC



South Capitol Street Bridge  
Photograph by Brendan Reals

## Other Preservation Concerns

Beyond viewsheds, there are few preservation issues that enjoy wide interest or consensus in the community.

- Smaller groups are advocating for expansion of the Anacostia Historic District and designation of Congress Heights as a historic district.
- Preservation of Congress Heights School and the former Metropolitan Police Department 11th Precinct has wide support.
- Some congregants of historic churches would like to see the protection historic landmark status would bring; however, they face opposition from within.
- Some residents see the planned streetcar and, particularly, the overhead lines for Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue as detrimental to the character of the Anacostia Historic District, while others see streetcars as a revival of the past.
- On the other hand, the reconstruction of the 11th Street Bridge was welcome by many residents as it would reduce obtrusive commuter traffic in the affected neighborhoods.
- Alarm has been raised about plans to demolish the Barry Farm Recreation Center and amphitheater, and to change historic street names in the Barry Farm housing development.

## Development Needs

Balancing preservation goals with development plans presents Ward Eight residents with a familiar dilemma, grown more acute because of the history of neglect of the ward.

Ward Eight residents are anxious for quality retail and housing. They want to enjoy amenities found in other parts of the city. Retail development along Alabama Avenue in Hillcrest and in Douglass/ShIPLEY Terrace appears to be tremendously successful.

Housing development in various sections of the ward has also been seen as positive in spite of the fact that some of it to date has obscured views. The new housing provides decent, though not quite affordable, places to live and in some instances has replaced blighted multi-family complexes that have plagued the ward since the 1950s.



A site ready for development, 1901-1907 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE



Church of the Assumption, 3409 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

### **Attitudes Toward Preservation**

No discussion of the challenges of preservation in Ward Eight would be complete without acknowledging the wariness or skepticism from many quarters in the ward toward historic preservation. With the influx of new residents and looming development plans, this dissonance seems to have become more acute despite the fact that many residents, both recent and long term, would say that they value the culture and history of their communities and those resources. Misinformation, fear of change, mistrust, and past experiences often taint communication efforts among the various stakeholders. Discussions, for instance, around the St. Elizabeths redevelopment plans and the proposed streetcar line have revealed divisions in preservation priorities. However, the key is to continue to identify common paths toward a shared vision of historical and cultural heritage preservation and to build partnerships to achieve that goal.

Some initiatives such as the Historic Homeowner's Grant program, have garnered positive preservation gains. Through this program, funding is provided to qualified property owners in Historic Anacostia to make historically compatible repairs and modifications to their buildings.

Other small initiatives, such as the discussions around specific community history presented through the Ward Eight History/Heritage Council, and the fostering of neighborhood historians through the DC Community Heritage Project, have promoted participation in preservation efforts toward popular goals. Advocacy for the protection of Ward Eight's heritage is an outcome that will ultimately serve the residents and the city alike.

## Preservation Strategies

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

- Conduct informal inquiries into the preservation goals/issues of stakeholders.
- Continue research to accurately document significant historic sites.
- Help support preservation efforts such as the development of Cultural Tourism's heritage trail for Anacostia and cultural initiatives sponsored by the Anacostia Community Museum.
- Recruit community groups to participate in the DC Community Heritage Project and engage residents in researching and identifying neighborhood cultural resources.
- Provide outreach and assistance to community-based explorations of preservation issues and goals.
- Fund cultural resource surveys of discrete areas of the ward. (There was a 1987 survey of Congress Heights and a 1978 survey of old Anacostia.)
- Develop a progressive landmarking program for eligible sites supported by owners and residents.
- Ensure that preservation and community conservation are fully considered and integrated into neighborhood planning efforts.



Ward Eight Summit meeting, 2011



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace Walk



Save Anacostia Park at Poplar Point sign



Tour of Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue

### Historic Homeowner Grant Program

In 2008, the Historic Preservation Office began implementing a grant program to help qualified homeowners in 12 historic districts pay for certified rehabilitation work on their historic homes. Owners in the Anacostia Historic District were the first recipients of this preservation initiative.

1317 U Street SE,  
1977



Before Rehabilitation



After Rehabilitation



# HISTORIC SITES

## Historic Landmarks in Ward Eight

Ward Eight has seven designated historic landmarks and districts. 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 mayoral-appointed commission that designates 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.

### Anacostia Historic District

Roughly bounded by Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, Good Hope Road, U Street SE, 16th Street SE and Maple View Place SE



#### Significance:

One of the city’s first suburbs, incorporated in 1854 as Uniontown; initially for working class whites; Frederick Douglass purchased a home here in 1877.

### Boundary Stones (6)

Southern Avenue, SE from Naylor Road to Oxon Cove



Boundary Stone SE 5  
*Boundarystones.org*

#### Significance:

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

### Congress Heights Firehouse (Chemical Engine No. 5 Engine Company No. 25)

3203 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, SE



#### Significance:

Constructed in 1902, it was the city’s largest, most innovative, and most expensive firehouse; the Italianate revival style resembles buildings on nearby St. Elizabeths campus.

### Civil War Fort Sites

Greble, Carroll, Snyder, Stanton, Ricketts, Wagner, Baker



Fort Stanton  
*Library of Congress*

#### Significance:

Part of the 1860s defense system of Washington now called the Civil War Fort Sites and Fort Circle Park System.

### **Frederick Douglass National Historic Site Cedar Hill**

14th & W Street SE



**Significance:**

Built in 1855-59 by John Van Hook, a partner in the company that developed Uniontown, now Historic Anacostia, it was final home (1877-1895) to Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave who became a renowned abolitionist, statesman, civil rights activist.

### **St. Elizabeths Hospital Historic District**

2700 & 2701 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE



**Significance:**

US Government's first mental health hospital, 1853; served as a Civil War hospital; became pioneer and model for humane mental health treatment.

### **Suitland Parkway**

From Anacostia River, DC to Pennsylvania Avenue, Prince George's County, MD



*Photo by Alex Nitzman*

**Significance:**

Built in 1943-44 as a defense highway linking DC with Andrews Airforce Base, it embodied a new type of road designed for high speed but with contours and plantings for camouflage. It is used as a presidential and diplomatic processional route.

# African American Heritage Trail

## Sites in Ward Eight

A project 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 Eight are marked with signs.



## Map Key

- A** Saint Teresa of Avila Catholic Church  
1244 V Street SE
- B** Frederick Douglass National Historic Site-Cedar Hill  
1411 W Street SE
- C** Barry Farm (Anacostia Metro Station)  
1101 Howard Road SE
- D** Old Birney School - Thurgood Marshall Academy  
2427 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
- E** John A. Moss Site  
2541 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
- F** Campbell AME Church  
2541 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
- G** Macedonia Baptist Church  
2625 Stanton Road SE
- H** Anacostia Community Museum  
1901 Fort Place SE
- I** Solomon Brown Residence Site  
2500 Elvans Road SE
- J** Saint Elizabeths Hospital  
1100 Alabama Avenue SE
- K** Congress Heights School  
3100 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
- Historic District



AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE TRAIL, WASHINGTON, DC

## Congress Heights School

### 3100 Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue, SE

The eight-room, brick Congress Heights Elementary School opened in 1897 to serve the new, whites-only Congress Heights development. The iconic tower and clock were added in 1913. After public schools desegregated in 1954, Congress Heights became primarily African American. The city closed the deteriorated school in 1970, but neighborhood activists, determined to save it from demolition, found new uses for the building. Thus it continued to serve the community, over time housing Ward 8 offices, a Head Start program, and DC Habitat for Humanity, and offering outdoor space to a neighborhood festival and a farmers market. A charter school moved into the renovated building in 2011.



Congress Heights School, sixth grade class, 1969.  
Collection of Florine Batchelor

Cultural Tourism  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 ✳. Individual sites that are protected as contributing structures within the Anacostia Historic District, but that have not been individually recognized as historic landmarks, are marked with ✳.

### Houses of Worship



#### Allen Chapel AME

2498 Alabama Avenue SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements - Site of Ward Eight's oldest African American congregation (1850); founded officially in 1860 in a community known as the Ridge

#### Bethlehem Baptist Church

2458 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements - Prominent in Barry Farm/Hillsdale; active in 1960 civil rights and political rights

#### Campbell AME Church ✳

2562 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements, Architecture - Prominent in Barry Farm/Hillsdale community activism; architect Albert Cassell (1917)

#### Church of the Assumption

3409 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements, Architecture - Only Catholic church in Far SE; architect Donald S. Johnson, 1932

#### Church of the Holy Communion / Bishop John T. Walker School for Boys

3640 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements, Architecture - architect Milton L. Grigg, 1952





**Garden Memorial Presbyterian Church**

1718 Minnesota Avenue SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements – First church to be organized in Fairlawn and has occupied same site since 1892; architect Arthur A. Weidner, 1952

**Guiding Light Church (Old Matthews Memorial Church)**

2627 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements - the first home of Matthews Memorial Baptist Church; architect J.L. Turner, 1932



**Macedonia Baptist Church \***

2625 Stanton Road SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements – First African-American congregation (1867) in Barry Farm freedmen's community; current location architect R. C. Archer, Jr., 1947

**Matthew Memorial Baptist Church**

2616 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements - Second building of historic and socially active congregation; architect McKissack & McKissack, 1960

**St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church \*\***

13th & V Streets SE

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Social Movements, Architecture - first Catholic church east of river; architect E. Francis Baldwin, 1878



**Washington Highlands Synagogue / Righteous Branch Commandment Church**

2nd & Xenia Streets SW

**Importance:** Religion/Spirituality, Archaeology – Remnant of formerly Jewish neighborhood in Bellevue community; architect Earl Von Reichenbach, 1944

## Schools



### Anacostia High School

1601 16th Street SE

**Importance:** Education, Social Movements – Only public high school east of Anacostia River built for white students; students organized against desegregation; Municipal Architect Nathan C. Wyatt, 1935

### Birney Elementary School

2501 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Education, Architecture – Second home for school for African American students; Municipal Architect Merrel A. Coe, 1950

### Birney School / Nichols Avenue School / Thurgood Marshall Academy \*

Howard Road & Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Education, Architecture – Replaced Hillsdale School, first school for Barry Farm community; architect Clarence Harding, 1901



### Congress Heights School \*

3100 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Education, Architecture – Role in founding of community; Inspector of Buildings, Snowden Ashford, 1897, redesigned 1913

### Garfield Elementary School

2435 Alabama Avenue SE

**Importance:** Education, Architecture – Public school for African Americans (1910) and first DC public school designed by early African American architect W. Sidney Pittman, 1909

### Ketcham Elementary School

1919 15th Street SE

**Importance:** Education, Architecture – Originally designed as a model for city schools; Municipal Architect Snowden Ashford, 1908

### Kramer Junior High School

1700 Q Street SE

**Importance:** Education, Social Movements – First public junior high school built east of river; Municipal Architect Nathan C. Wyatt, 1943

## Parks and Places of Recreation



### Anacostia Park

Section from Howard Road SE to Pennsylvania Avenue SE  
**Importance:** Social Movements, Military/Maritime, Environment/Horticultural, Archaeology – Site of Bonus Army camp, 1940s-1950s civil rights activities; home of nurseries and botanical gardens



### Barry Farm Recreation Center

1230 Stevens Road SE  
**Importance:** Recreation/Sports, Social Movements – Site of early recreational activity for African Americans in segregated Ward Eight including Eureka and Green Willow Parks; first city playground for African Americans; debut of GoGo music



### Carver Theater

2405 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE  
**Importance:** Entertainment/Performing Arts, Social Movements, Education – Site of only African American theater in Ward Eight and first site of Anacostia Community Museum, first of its theme in US

### 100 Block of Xenia Street

1st & Xenia Streets SE  
**Importance:** Entertainment/Performing Arts – Alleged birthplace of GoGo music

### Oxon Run Park

Along Mississippi Avenue and South Capitol Street SE  
**Importance:** Recreation/Sports, Environment, Archaeology - Rough boundary of the Southeast section of the District, site of recreational activities for residents

## Places of Commerce



### **Anderson Tire Manufacturing Company / Carroll Laundry**

1701 14th Street SE

**Importance:** Commerce/Business – Smokestack for former tire plant (1918) that became a laundry is landmark of ward; example of modular factory construction

### **The Big Chair**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue at V Street SE

**Importance:** Commerce/Business – Unofficial landmark of the ward first built for Curtis Brothers Furniture, 1958

### **Liff's Market Building**

600 Alabama Avenue SE

**Importance:** Commerce/Business – Since 1912, site of Congress Heights' longest running business; operating as Liff's since 1914

### **Loeffler's Hotel/"The Myrtle"**

3109 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Commerce/Business – Area's first hotel (1915); later, converted to the neighborhood's first apartments

### **Schmid House (Columbian Iron Works)**

1409 22nd Street SE

**Importance:** Architecture, Commerce/Business – Factory owner's house located adjacent to company; owner-architect Emil Schmid, 1917

## Government Buildings



### DC Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water)

1801 Minnesota Avenue SE

**Importance:** Architecture – Example of industrial architecture; Municipal Architect Nathan C. Wyeth, 1945



### Eleventh Precinct Building

2301 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE

**Importance:** Architecture, Social Movements – First police precinct east of river; first African American police captain appointed in 1968.



### Poplar Point Pump Station

2390 So. Capitol Street SE

**Importance:** Architecture, Archaeology – Example of industrial architecture and built at Anacostia River's edge in 1915

## Communities



### Anacostia Historic District Expansion

**Importance:** Architecture, Social Movements, Community Planning/Development - To include historic structures from the same period

### Elvans Road ✱

2500 Block of Elvans Road SE

**Importance:** Social Movements, Community Planning/Development – Site of once vibrant Reconstruction-era African American community; some of the earliest extant buildings of Barry Farm/Hillsdale



### Farmhouses / Rural Dwellings

**Importance:** Architecture, Agriculture, Community Planning/Development - A few remaining structures related to the agricultural past of the ward

### Selected Apartment Complexes

**Importance:** Architecture, Community Planning/Development - Demonstrate architectural and social planning to house dense population

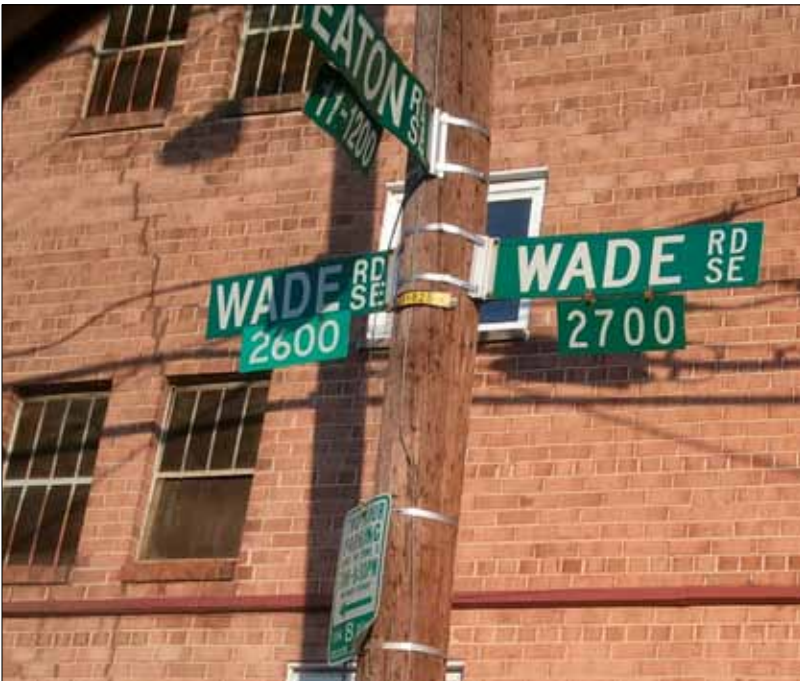


## Other Resources



### Call Boxes

**Importance:** Government, Science/Technology – Several surviving stands originally used for direct line calling for fire and police emergencies before advent of two-way radios, walkie-talkies, and personal telephones, 1860s–1970s



### Barry Farm Dwellings Public Housing Street Names

Eaton, Howard, Stevens, Sumner, Wade Roads SE

**Importance:** Community Planning/Development, Social Movements – Streets named for abolitionists and legislators active in the emancipation movement.



## Map of Cultural and Heritage Resources

### Map Key

#### Historic Landmarks:

- 1 Anacostia Historic District
- 2 Boundary Stones
- 3 Congress Heights Firehouse
- 4 Civil War Fort Sites
- 5 Frederick Douglass National Historic Site
- 6 St. Elizabeths Hospital Historic District
- 7 Suitland Parkway

#### Churches:

- 8 Allen Chapel AME Church
- 9 Bethlehem Baptist Church
- 10 Campbell AME Church
- 11 Church of the Assumption
- 12 Church of the Holy Communion
- 13 Garden Memorial Presbyterian Church
- 14 Guiding Light Church (Old Matthews Memorial Church)
- 15 Macedonia Baptist Church
- 16 Matthews Memorial Baptist Church
- 17 St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church
- 18 Washington Highlands Synagogue  
Righteous Branch Commandment Church

#### Schools:

- 19 Anacostia High School
- 20 Birney Elementary School (New)
- 21 Birney School (Old) / Nichols Avenue School / Thurgood Marshall Academy
- 22 Congress Heights School
- 23 Garfield Elementary School
- 24 Ketcham Junior High School
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- 26 100 Block of Xenia Street
- 27 Anacostia Park
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- 30 Oxon Run

#### Places of Commerce:

- 31 Anderson Tire Manufacturing Company/ Carroll Laundry
- 32 The Big Chair
- 33 Liff's Market Building
- 34 Loeffler's Hotel / The Myrtle
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- 43 Barry Farm Dwellings Street Names
- 44 Call Boxes



1312 U Street SE, Anacostia Historic District



Depiction of Proposed Development of the Anacostia River: Planning initiatives for the Anacostia waterfront over the past decade have focused on improving the river's water quality and restoring its natural habitat, while also improving its shoreline parks and making it a centerpiece for new and revitalized communities. As the area is redeveloped, we must ensure that consideration is given to Ward Eight's important historic, cultural and natural resources.

### Preservation and Planning Documents

"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.

DC Historic Preservation Office, "District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites". 2004, updated January 2009.

DC Historic Preservation Office, "District of Columbia Map of Historic Sites". 2005.

DC Historic Preservation Office, "Preserving Communities and Character: DC Historic Preservation Plan 2008-2012". 2009.

DC Office of Planning, "Growing an Inclusive City: The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital", 2008.

### Neighborhood Preservation and Planning

Anacostia Transit Area Strategic Investment Plan

Barry Farm/Park Chester / Wade Road Redevelopment Plan

Bellevue Small Area Plan

East of the River Project

Pennsylvania Avenue SE Great Streets Project

### Historic Resource Surveys

DC HPO Historic Resource Surveys:

Anacostia (1996; conditions assessment)

Congress Heights (1987-88, including archaeological resources)

Firehouses (1988; 1992)

Northeast Archaeological Survey (1993)

Public Schools (1989; 1998)

Saint Elizabeths Hospital West Campus (1993; including archaeological resources)

### Ward Eight and DC History

Dianne Dale, *The Village That Shaped Us: A Look at Washington DC's Anacostia Community* (Lanham, Maryland: Dale Publishing, 2011).

Sandra Fitzpatrick & Maria R. Goodwin, *The Guide to Black Washington*, Revised Edition. (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1999).

Louise Daniel Hutchinson, *The Anacostia Story: 1608-1930 (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1977).*

Gail Lowe, ed., *East of the River: Continuity and Change* (Washington, Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, 2010).

Marya McQuirter, *African-American Heritage Trail, Washington, DC.* (Washington, DC: Cultural Tourism DC, 2003).

John Clagett Proctor, ed., *Washington Past and Present: A History* (New York, 1930).



2000 Block of Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE, 1918  
*Library of Congress*



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

Historic Preservation Office (HPO)  
1100 4th Street SW, Washington, DC 20024  
phone: 202.442.8800  
email: [historic.preservation@dc.gov](mailto:historic.preservation@dc.gov)  
website: [www.preservation.dc.gov](http://www.preservation.dc.gov)

District of Columbia  
Office of Planning

