

MAYWOOD: DEVELOPMENT OF A SUBURB, BIRTH OF A NEIGHBORHOOD

By

Barbara Warnick Silberman and Gail H. Baker*

At the turn of this century, economic and political forces, as well as technological advances, combined to herald the beginnings of the suburbanization of America. As this country struggled to transform itself from an agrarian society to an industrial one, its cities were plagued with hordes of immigrants and rural dwellers seeking industrialized jobs in urban areas. This was a time of unprecedented growth for American cities. With this growth, however, came problems. Competition for housing and employment produced overcrowding and disease as well as labor strikes and ethnic conflicts. On the other hand, scientific advances resulting from the new Industrial Age, made possible great changes in the daily life of the average American. The harnessing of electricity promised an end to drudgery. Improvements in transportation began to allow most Americans to leave the cities and commute rather than walk to work.

As a result of these forces, the American dream of homeownership for everyone came into being. This dream was probably best symbolized by the image most Americans still have of homeownership: i.e., a vine-covered cottage with a picket fence. The translation of this dream into practical realities had many components. After the excesses of the Victorian era, with more women entering the work force, new houses had to be easier to maintain, accessible to public transportation, and affordable. In response to breakthroughs in medicine and hygiene, houses had to be set on lots with open space and trees; porches were added in order to allow for lots of fresh air. Most importantly, however, new houses had to meet the emotional needs of Americans struggling to adapt to the new Industrialism, but longing for the rural environment of an earlier age.¹

In response to this dream, suburbs began to spring up around many eastern cities. Often suburban development was based on the building of rail lines to outlying areas.² These lines established commuter service and enabled workers to live outside crowded and expensive cities. Once transportation was available, housing was built all along these routes. Developers would buy chunks of rural land, plat or survey it and then sell it, either to individual home buyers or to building contractors. If individuals bought the land, they would usually pay it off first and then build a house; if contractors bought it, they would buy land and build on a few lots at a time.³ A similar pattern is found in the development of other early Arlington County neighborhoods.^{4,5}

It is within this context that one can begin to examine the development

of the neighborhood known as Maywood. This section of the County was subdivided beginning in 1909;⁶ by 1923 most of the houses classified as post-Victorian architecture were built and occupied.⁷ Of the 170 houses in this category, twenty-seven percent were built by 1915, fifty-three percent by 1920, and ninety-three percent by 1925.⁸ Development occurred following a period of great turmoil in the County and was part of a larger real estate boom ongoing in many parts of Arlington.⁹ It was begun, as in other areas experiencing similar booms, as a response to the forces noted above. Its particular local thrust related to the growth of government in Washington, and the coming of the railroad to this section of the County. As C. B. Rose, Jr. notes in her book, *Arlington County, Virginia: A History*, prior to this time, convenient transportation, and therefore communication, between present day Arlington, Alexandria, and Washington was virtually nonexistent. Early in the century, bridges and roads had been repaired, giving impetus to the building of the railroad.¹⁰

The details of railroad development in Arlington have been described elsewhere.¹¹ It is the opening of the Great Falls and Old Dominion line in 1906¹² that is relevant here. Although this line was originally operated as a resort line, carrying passengers out to Great Falls on weekend excursions, its builders, as well as local developers, quickly saw its potential as a commuter service.¹³ Within a few years, a number of stations had been established along Maywood's borders. These included Cherrydale on the northeast corner of Military Road and Lee Highway; Dominion Heights, at Lee Highway and Monroe Street; and Harrison, near the Hoffman-Boston/Woodlawn School.¹⁴ In 1912, a second rail line opened, and with it, Thrifton Junction, on the site of the present-day Lyon Village Shopping Center.¹⁵ By the time Thrifton Station was opened, the development of Maywood was well under way.

Present-day Maywood is an area bounded by Lorcom Lane to the north, Lee Highway to the south, North Oakland Street to the west, and I-66 to the east.¹⁶ Maywood today includes parts of other subdivisions: Oak Grove (North Lincoln Street, from Lee Highway to the rear property line of houses on Twenty-first Avenue); Floyd's Addition to Cherrydale (North Oakland Street); and Lorcom Grove (the 2300 block of North Monroe Street).¹⁷ Although commercial development along Lee Highway has encroached upon Maywood's boundaries, they remain essentially unchanged since the neighborhood was originally laid out. The initial platting and subdivision of Maywood occurred during the years 1909-1913¹⁸ The neighborhood was platted in five sections: Maywood, First Addition to Maywood, and Second, Third, and Fourth Additions to Maywood.¹⁹

Plat maps and deeds clearly demonstrate that Maywood was the first name given to this neighborhood.²⁰ Local lore has it that the name Maywood was

chosen in reference to the abundant growth of the May apple in the area.²¹ Stories differ, however, and some folks believe that Hugh Thrift, Maywood's primary developer, named the area for his wife, Mary, whose nickname may have been May.²² Over the years, other names were given to various sections of the area. Parts of the Third Addition, in the area adjacent to Old Dominion Drive, were often referred to as Thrifton, or Thrifton Village,²³ so named in all likelihood for the train stop at Thrifton Junction. Many people, over the years, have considered Maywood to be part of its larger counterpart, Cherrydale. Various advertisements of the period identify Maywood residents as living in Cherrydale;²⁴ the residential directories cite Cherrydale as Maywood's post office.²⁵ Perhaps its proximity to such neighborhood establishments as the Cherrydale Safeway, Cherrydale Hardware, and the Cherrydale Volunteer Fire Department, as well as its similarities of architecture, have contributed to the confusion of the casual observer.

Maywood was developed on land that was part of the land grant given to Thomas Goin(g) by Lord Fairfax in 1708.²⁶ In 1792 General John Mason inherited this land from his father,²⁷ George Mason of Gunston Hall, who had inherited it from his father in 1735.²⁸ Eventually this parcel of land, which included 1,822 acres, came to be known as the Mason tract.²⁹ In 1836, after Mason declared bankruptcy, the land was surveyed by Lewis Carberry and divided into sixty-nine parcels.³⁰

Parts of Lots 15 and 16 of the Mason tract are the site of Maywood today. Figure 1 depicts a reproduction of a 1900 map³¹ showing the location of these lots in relation to the neighboring geography.

Tracing ownership of Lots 15 and 16 from the time of Mason's bankruptcy (1833) to the platting and dedication of Maywood (1909) was an arduous task. To date, research is not complete. We do know, however, that William Jewell purchased part of Lot 16 in 1848.³² In 1869, his heirs sold some of their holdings at public auction to John Patten, Sr.³³ In 1878, John Patten, Sr., died intestate, leaving this land to his wife, Jane and son, John, Jr.³⁴ Beginning in 1909, John Patten, Jr., and his wife, Jeanne, subdivided their acreage and sold it in sections to the Conservative Realty Company.³⁵ This land became the sections of Maywood known as Maywood and the Second and Fourth Additions.

In 1870 Henry (Harry) F. Smith purchased another part of Lot 16.³⁶ The Lorcom Grove subdivision³⁷ and the so-called Digges property at 2300 North Lincoln Street were built on this piece of land.³⁸ As noted earlier, parts of this subdivision, as well as the Digges house, are now part of Maywood.

Another section of Lot 16 (approximately six acres) was owned by William and Jane Fall in 1867.³⁹ In that year they sold this land to John Downing.⁴⁰ In February 1872, Mr. Downing sold it to James and Catharine Sheridan.⁴¹ In

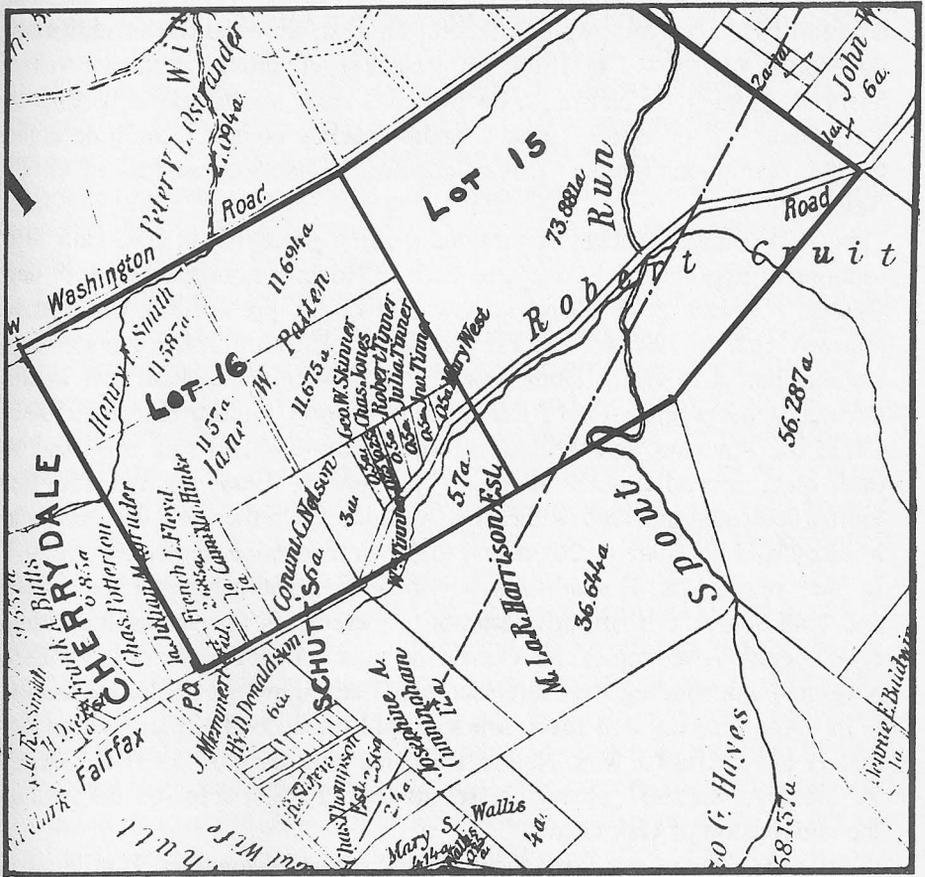


Figure 1. This section of the 1900 Howell and Taylor Map of Alexandria County, Virginia, shows land ownership in the area that later became Maywood. The boundaries of Lots 15 and 16 of the Mason tract have been superimposed; New Washington Road (now Lorcom Lane) formed the northern boundary and Georgetown-Fairfax Road (now Lee Highway) the southern boundary. Maywood was built on portions of these two lots. The land owned by Jane Patten became Maywood (11.675 acres), the Second Addition and the Fourth Addition. Part of Robert Cruit’s land (in Lot 15) became the Third Addition. The First Addition was formed from part of the six-acre portion of Conant C. Nelson’s land, and the three-acre portion of his property became the subdivision of Oak Grove. The subdivision of Lorcom Grove was built on Henry Smith’s land.

September 1872 the Sheridans sold it to Elizabeth C. Nelson.⁴² Sometime between 1872 and 1895, when Mrs. Nelson died, she acquired an additional three acres of Lot 16. In 1895, Mrs. Nelson left those nine acres to her husband, Conant C. Nelson, who owned a store and blacksmith shop in Cherrydale.^{43, 44} In March 1903, Crandal Mackey bought these nine acres (in two contiguous parcels) from Katharina M. Nelson, an heir of C. C. Nelson.⁴⁵

In 1904 Crandal Mackey subdivided the first parcel of six acres and sold sections of approximately one acre each to Roberta Louise Potterton⁴⁶ and George Potterton.⁴⁷ This land is now part of the present-day Cherrydale Safeway site. In 1907 Mr. Mackey sold the remaining 3.427 acres of this six-acre parcel to Grace Donaldson.⁴⁸ It is this parcel of land that would eventually become the First Addition to Maywood. During the years 1907-1911, the Mackeys and the Donaldsons subdivided and sold this land to each other several times.⁴⁹ However, on June 4, 1909, the two families jointly dedicated this land as the First Addition.⁵⁰ On the same day, Crandal Mackey sold his share (1.261 acres) to the Conservative Realty Company.⁵¹ In later years, Mrs. Donaldson subdivided the 2.166 acres that she owned and sold some of it off in quarter-acre increments to various individual developers.⁵² A section of this Donaldson tract is now the site of the United Virginia Bank building at the intersection of Lee Highway and Monroe Street.

In 1906, Crandal and Mary Mackey sold the second parcel of approximately three acres (of Mrs. Nelson's original nine acres of Lot 16) to Henry A. Pressey.⁵³ In 1907, Henry Pressey dedicated 2.834 acres of this land as the subdivision of Oak Grove.⁵⁴

In 1847, Robert Cruit(t) purchased Lot 15 of the Mason tract.⁵⁵ On January 20, 1912, the Conservative Realty Company purchased part of this lot, the easternmost section of Maywood, from Evanina F. Mackall, the granddaughter of Robert Cruit(t).⁵⁶ It became the Third Addition to Maywood. According to deed records, a total of about seventy-three acres of land in Maywood was purchased and developed during the years 1909 to 1912. The average purchase price per acre was about \$542.⁵⁷

The Conservative Realty Company, which had purchased large portions of Lots 15 and 16 for development, was typical of others operating in the area at that time.⁵⁸ Possibly for tax purposes, it was organized as a corporation under the laws of the State of South Dakota on April 21, 1909.⁵⁹ The corporation was headed by John Harsha, President, and Hugh A. Thrift, Secretary.⁶⁰ Mr. Thrift's wife, Mary, was Mr. Harsha's daughter.⁶¹

Hugh Thrift had offices in Washington at the Union Trust Building, 1405 New York Avenue, N.W.⁶² Telephone directories of the time list a variety of real estate companies at this address, though no specific listing for the Conservative Realty Company is shown.⁶³ Mr. and Mrs. Thrift resided with

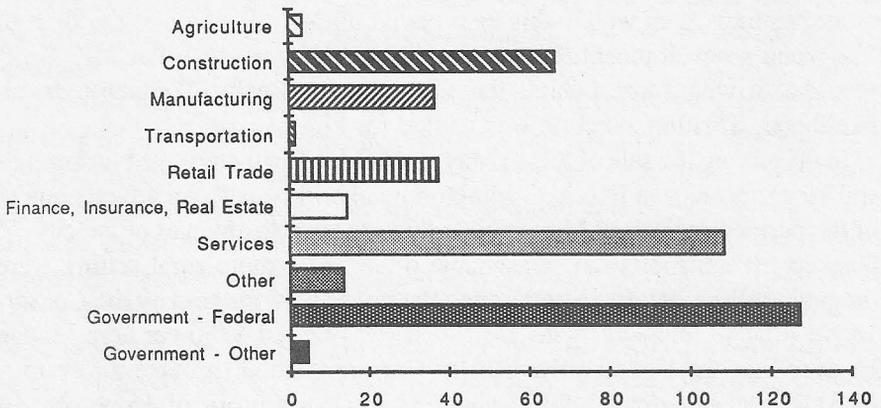
Mr. and Mrs. Harsha at 1602 Seventeenth Street, N.W.,⁶⁴ in a house that is now the Blue Nile Ethiopian Restaurant. Mr. Thrift is still remembered by some early Maywood residents;⁶⁵ he continued to own land in the neighborhood for many years.⁶⁶ Perhaps his interest in Maywood was not entirely speculative. In any event, given his involvement in a number of other real estate ventures,⁶⁷ as well as his age relative to Mr. Harsha's at the time of Maywood's development,⁶⁸ it seems reasonable to assume that Mr. Thrift was the driving force behind the Conservative Realty Company. In all likelihood, Thrifton Junction was named for him.

In promoting the sale of lots in Maywood, Mr. Thrift employed techniques similar to those used in other Arlington neighborhoods.⁶⁹ An advertisement of the period proclaimed Maywood as "one car fare to any part of the city."⁷⁰ Convenient transportation, reasonable price and a more rural setting were the main selling points. In comparing the prices paid for land by the Conservative Realty Company, with the advertised price of \$750 per acre,⁷¹ it can be seen that the Conservative Realty Company stood to make an average of \$118 per acre, for a total of about \$7,821, or a profit of 16 percent (if all the land were sold at its advertised price).

To whom did these ads appeal? Early residents of Maywood generally seem to have been people of simple means, employed in a variety of occupations.⁷² Often groups of people with similar occupations would live together in the same house.⁷³ A large number were government clerks; many were involved in the building trades. According to residential directories of the time, typical occupations were grocer, bookkeeper, carpenter and salesman.⁷⁴ In addition to these jobs, there was a smaller number of professionals, including doctors, lawyers and teachers.⁷⁵ In fact, one of the first women admitted to the George Washington University Medical School grew up in Maywood. Upon her marriage at age forty, Dr. Blanche Tabor moved to a second house in Maywood and later had five children.⁷⁶ Table 1 is a bar graph of distribution of occupations for residents of Maywood for the years 1912 to 1929.⁷⁷

From its earliest beginnings, Maywood was a diversified neighborhood. Although property deeds beginning in 1909 and even as late as 1979 contained a provision excluding "persons of African descent",⁷⁸ there was at least one black family living in this neighborhood as early as 1912.⁷⁹ One resident recalls how this family's children played with all the others in the neighborhood. According to him, there were few social distinctions.⁸⁰ In addition to people of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, there was a surprisingly large number of unmarried adults.⁸¹ In fact, in reviewing title records, one is struck by how many unmarried women owned homes here.⁸² Maywood seems to have been a place where people with a wide range of backgrounds and talents were accepted.

Table 1
 Distribution by Occupation Category for
 Residents of Maywood
 1912 - 1929



Early residential directories and current records of ownership reveal another surprising phenomenon. As of mid-1987, there were seven homes still owned by their original owner families.⁸³ At least two of these families came to Maywood as newlyweds,⁸⁴ and lived here for all of their married lives. Now their homes are owned and lived in by their children. In some cases, the exteriors of these homes are virtually untouched; in a few the interiors are living examples of popular domestic styles throughout three-quarters of the twentieth century. Many homes have been owned by the same families for more than forty years; others have only recently been sold for the first time.⁸⁵ These owners often are still alive and living in Arlington County. Most of these people have been delighted, when asked, to add their stories to the picture of life in early Maywood. Given the transiency of most Washington area neighborhoods, the wealth of information still available to the historian seems remarkable.

In piecing together this portrait of early suburban life, other patterns emerge. It is clear from title records of the period that many people moved here from other eastern states.⁸⁶ This may have been due to the growth of government that occurred during World War I. Often extended families moved into the neighborhood, living in several houses on the same street.⁸⁷ Family members would move around from house to house over a period of a few years,⁸⁸ as people married, had children, or died, and living arrangements changed accordingly. Directory listings also indicate that many homes included boarders.⁸⁹ Perhaps owners needed extra money to realize mortgage payments. Title records show that during the Depression there were a number

of repossessions in the neighborhood.⁹⁰

Because money was scarce for many residents, there were a number of ways in which houses were built. Stories have been told of families banding together in one house, purchasing neighboring lots and building homes in a piece-meal fashion for brothers, sisters, sons and daughters.⁹¹ In order to obtain supplies, people would buy up building materials in lots and distribute them throughout the neighborhood. Another method of obtaining supplies was to salvage materials, particularly from institutions and public places.⁹² When it was actually time to build and maintain these homes, it was often a neighborhood affair. Certain residents were considered to be the neighborhood's plumber, electrician, handyman.⁹³ Many of the same home improvements can be seen in houses throughout the neighborhoods.

Limited resources may also explain the popularity of "Sears" houses in this neighborhood. Given that Maywooders were often skilled in the building trades, it is not surprising that a number of lot owners opted to purchase mail-order houses from Sears, Roebuck & Company. A typical Maywood homeowner of this period was exactly the sort of customer Sears had in mind to attract. There are five documented Sears houses in Maywood.⁹⁴ There may be as many as three more.⁹⁵ It seems reasonable to speculate that other Maywood homes were patterned in large part after original Sears homes. This was often the case with pattern houses in other areas of the country. Comparison of Maywood interiors with Sears catalogues of the time suggest that many house "parts," like fireplaces, mantels, shelving, etc., may have been individually purchased from Sears.⁹⁶ In addition to houses from Sears, there are probably houses from other mail-order companies, as well.⁹⁷ The house at 2161 North Lincoln Street is similar to an Aladdin house of the same period.⁹⁸

In addition to various "do-it-yourself" building schemes, there were a few contractors who built homes in Maywood. These houses were built by builders who were working in other Arlington neighborhoods as well. John Smithdeal was probably the first and most prolific builder; title records show him building in Maywood as early as 1910.⁹⁹ He resided here from about 1912 to 1918.¹⁰⁰ He built a large and lovely home for himself at 2100 North Irving Street in 1916.¹⁰¹ He is known to be responsible for a number of homes built in the section called Maywood and the First Addition to Maywood.¹⁰² Mr. Smithdeal advertised his houses for sale in an Arlington brochure in 1915.¹⁰³ J. Arthur Connor built homes in Maywood, as well as in Cherrydale (just north of Old Lee Highway between North Stafford and North Taylor Streets).¹⁰⁴ He owned a home in Maywood at 3213 Twenty-third Street North, from 1913 to 1932.¹⁰⁵ Lachlan MacPherson lived in Maywood for a number of years at 3210 Twenty-third Street North.¹⁰⁶ He built houses along North Jackson Street.¹⁰⁷ He also built a group of homes in Cherrydale

known as MacPherson's Addition to Cherrydale, along Military Road and North Quebec Street just north of Lee Highway.¹⁰⁸

Early Maywood houses were built in conformity with other common vernacular styles of architecture of the post-Victorian period.¹⁰⁹ These styles were "new" at the time of construction and were predicated on the needs described earlier. Most houses were frame with tin roofs, porches, and various kinds of ornamentation. Many had "car barns."¹¹⁰ Although these houses are prized today for their decorative elements, they were considered to be "plainer" than the "gingerbread" houses of the Victorian age. Remaining examples of post-Victorian houses include bungalows, homesteads, American foursquares, and various Revival styles.¹¹¹

Although it is not possible to establish firm dates of construction for most of the early houses in Maywood, title records and maps of the period do reveal some clues. In 1907 there were no buildings in Maywood.¹¹² Building began very soon after the initial platting in 1909;¹¹³ houses were built in all sections of Maywood simultaneously.¹¹⁴ Based on these same records, it is safe to say that in general, many of the houses in the first section, called simply "Maywood," and in the First and Second Additions were probably built a few years earlier than some of the houses in the later Additions. Residential directories of the period indicate that most of the older homes were built and occupied by 1925. If there is an "oldest house" in Maywood, it is most likely the "Digges house," so named because the Digges family lived there for forty-five years, and were the most recent long-term occupants of the house.¹¹⁵ This house was never part of any platted subdivision. It is the only post-Victorian brick house in the neighborhood, and has some unique architectural features, including rounded pediments and keystones on the second-floor windows. Unlike many of the other houses in Maywood, there are no other houses like it.¹¹⁶ In fact, it closely resembles the Clayton Donaldson house at 201 North Nelson Street in Cherrydale.¹¹⁷ Both houses were built about 1910.

Given the information contained in the residential directories, as well as existing data regarding Arlington's suburban development, it is safe to assume that these homes were built primarily as permanent residences. However, many past and present Maywood residents believe that these houses were built as summer cottages for wealthy Washingtonians, who came to the top of the hill for the cooler breezes.¹¹⁸ This particular theory seems to have evolved from a combination of fact and fiction. In the early nineteenth century John Mason had a country house on Analostan, or Mason's Island (now Theodore Roosevelt Island);¹¹⁹ later in the same century William Jewell of Georgetown built a summer residence on the other side of Lorcom Lane near Spout Run.¹²⁰ The proximity of Vacation Lane has also been cited as lending credence to the "summer cottage theory." This street, however, was

named for Vacation Lodge, a YWCA summer retreat which stood on the site of the Hoffman-Boston/Woodlawn School,¹²¹ rather than for its specific relationship to Maywood. A few houses were, in fact, built as summer residences; the residential directories list a house on Twenty-third Street near Old Dominion Drive (*Yates, Richard H. — summer residence*) as such.¹²² In looking at Maywood architecture, it is certainly easy today to imagine many of the homes as summer places. (Many were tiny cottages with lots of windows and sleeping porches; quite a few were built without indoor plumbing or electricity.) Most of these features, however, were standard fare for modest houses of this period. Clearly, the area as a whole was thought of as a “getaway” spot for many years. But the hypothesis that the entire neighborhood was built as a summer community for wealthy people (or anyone else) is hard to support, given the existing data.

Life in Early Maywood

What was it like to live in early Maywood? One can speculate that in its very beginnings, Maywood may have been a rather unsettled place. Houses were under construction everywhere. There were many male boarders moving from house to house, drawn, no doubt, by the promise of work. Arlington itself was only recently redeemed from its reputation of lawlessness.¹²³ By the mid-1920s, however, it seems to have become a fairly stable neighborhood. Early residents speak of typical family activities and neighborhood events. A 1916 newspaper article, for example, describes the Fourth of July Carnival held in Maywood as featuring a tennis tournament, croquet, a tug of war, various races, political speeches and music by the Clarendon band.¹²⁴ Children fished and went swimming in Spout Run; parents held Christmas parties; everyone knew everyone else.

Given the economic resources of its citizens, Maywood was surprisingly self-sufficient. Very early in its existence there were two grocery stores¹²⁵ in addition to Shreve’s (formerly Nelson’s), the larger general store known to have existed near Cherrydale Station. There was also a firehouse and a kindergarten.¹²⁶ All of these buildings are still in existence, though today they are used as private homes.

And yet, in keeping with the American dream, Maywood still retained its rural character. Up until at least World War II, several residents kept chickens, sheep, and goats in their yards. There was no sewer system, no sidewalks, no paved roads. In its early years, Maywood houses had no house numbers. According to the residential directories, residents lived in such places as *Mason nr c Summit* (or Mason Street near the corner of Summit).¹²⁷ Today this address would read 3213 Twenty-third Street North. Around 1920 houses were given numbers.¹²⁸ In 1935, of course, street names

were changed to conform with today's County system of street names and addresses.¹²⁹

Although life in Maywood was not easy by today's standards there must have been some satisfactions. In all likelihood it was possible, then, to stand at the top of the hill and look out to Georgetown and the city beyond. Children could roam the woods and fields; families could count on relatives and neighbors for support in times of trouble.

At what point did Maywood become a neighborhood, different from other Arlington communities? How has it managed to maintain its identity and its existence without being swallowed up by such intrusions as Lee Highway or I-66? To answer these questions in depth must be the focus of further research and study. But in the existing information, it is possible to speculate on the origins of the sense of neighborhood that exists today.

Although these origins are difficult to pinpoint, it may be assumed that certain essential features of Maywood itself contribute to this feeling. Its physical attributes are noteworthy, creating a visual sense of separateness from its neighbors. As is often the case with history, its geographic location, set on a hill, bounded by major thoroughfares, surrounded on two sides by commercial property, is of paramount importance in maintaining its identity. Limited economic resources have allowed its architecture, trees and shrubs to remain substantially intact. Within Maywood's borders there is a rich variety of architectural scenery; to look around is to see many permutations of windows, doors, railings, shingles and eaves, all worked out within a framework of simple twentieth-century American architecture. It is this wealth of detail that creates a feeling of living in a place unchanged by time. There is space in Maywood. Although very recent zoning variances have allowed for the subdivision of a few undersized lots, by and large lot size has remained stable. Sidewalks and storm drains are a recent phenomenon,¹³⁰ although on most streets sidewalks exist only on one side, contributing to the feeling of living in an earlier age. All of these factors contribute to the rural character associated with Maywood. Current residents often comment on "living in the country," only five minutes from the White House.¹³¹

Apart from its physical resources, the development of Maywood's identity must be credited to its people. For it is the residents of Maywood who have, over time, forged the sense of community that makes this place a neighborhood. One can speculate that some of the same values bind generations of Maywooders to each other. It would seem that Maywood has always been a place where there was room for everybody. All kinds of people live in Maywood. There are still families who move from house to house, as family situations change; these families do not want to leave. Single women still own homes there. Maywood is still racially, ethnically and economically mixed. There is a continuation of the do-it-yourself ethic (with lots of help

from your neighbors). On any given weekend, neighbors are offering assistance to other neighbors in the art of maintaining and restoring "old houses." This cooperative spirit extends to other endeavors as well. For many years Maywood had a food cooperative; in response to its present baby boom, it has had a babysitting cooperative since 1981. Some of the simple pleasures enjoyed by earlier residents are enjoyed today through similar neighborhood events. Every year Maywooders gather for Christmas caroling, Fourth of July picnics, and Oktoberfest; parents exchange gossip every afternoon at the Mini-Park playground.

In addition to these routine activities, neighborhood identity has been strengthened by a number of more painful events. Residents worked hard to develop a cohesive Neighborhood Conservation Plan.¹³² Maywood was one of the first neighborhoods to do so. They fought long and hard battles to preserve its borders from I-66 and the advancement of commercial development.¹³³ Current debate focuses on the issue of the further subdivision of house lots, and concurrent increases in density.

Maywood has a special place in the history of Arlington as a surviving, intact example of early suburban development. Of course, it has grown and changed over its nearly eight decades, but newcomers today will find the same attractions that drew earlier residents: a pleasant hilltop setting, a convenient location, architectural integrity, and above all a sense of community. It is interesting to note that, in the late 1970s, the popularity of this neighborhood skyrocketed, perhaps in response to the "Back to Earth" movement of the time. This movement was very similar to the Arts and Crafts movement of the early 1900s.¹³⁴ Both philosophies espoused a return to simpler living, a reflection of the yearning of many Americans for a more rural lifestyle. In any event, buyers then and now were clearly seeking an alternative to city life. The village-like ambiance of Maywood offered this alternative.

The American dream of homeowning, for which these early suburbs were created, lives on in the cottages of Maywood. Despite economic pressures, including attempts to raze the neighborhood for I-66,¹³⁵ it has managed to survive and remain a place where people who value many of the same things share the bonds of everyday life. What else, after all is a neighborhood?

Notes and References

*The authors met as neighbors and share an enthusiasm for old houses and social history. Gail H. Baker, a resident of Maywood, is a ninth-generation Arlingtonian. Barbara Warnick Silberman, former resident of Maywood, now resides in Philadelphia.

¹Grateful acknowledgement is made to the National Trust for Historic Preservation for material contained in "Getting to Know Your Early Twentieth-Century Neighborhood,"

- Conserve Neighborhoods* (Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, July-August 1982), No. 25, pp. 231-233, 238-241.
- ²The author(BWS) has lived in suburbs of both Boston and Philadelphia. Many were built along rails lines developed at the turn of the century. In suburbs of these cities, rail lines are still in operation; current owners of early twentieth-century homes continue to commute in this fashion.
- ³*Conserve Neighborhoods*, pp. 239-240.
- ⁴Dorothea E. Abbott, "The Roots of Clarendon," *The Arlington Historical Magazine*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (1986) pp. 50-52.
- ⁵Until 1920, Arlington County was part of Alexandria County. C. B. Rose, Jr., *Arlington County, Virginia: A History* (Arlington: Arlington Historical Society, 1976) p. 3.
- ⁶Gordon & Conard, Surveyors, *Maywood, Arlington County* (Arlington: Arlington County Surveys Division) Deed Book 120, p. 548, and Deed Book 130, p. 327.
- ⁷Justus C. Nelson, *Nelson's Suburban Directory of Maryland and Virginia Towns Adjacent to the District of Columbia* (Washington, DC: The Author, 1923) pp. 423-430.
- ⁸*Nelson's Suburban Directory*(1912-1913) pp. 213-217, and (1916) pp. 311-317, and (1917) pp. 295-301, and (1918) pp. 307-313; R. L. Polk & Co., *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory of Maryland and Virginia Towns Adjacent to the District of Columbia* (Washington, DC: The Author, 1927-28) pp. 655-658, and *Directory* (1930-31), pp. 437-439.
- ⁹*Arlington County, Virginia*, pp. 156-158.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.* pp. 140-141.
- ¹¹Donn M. Brechenser, *Railroads of Northern Virginia* (Greenfield, Massachusetts: The Author, 1971) pp. 1-3; and Ames W. Williams, *The Washington and Old Dominion Railroad* (Alexandria, Virginia: Meridian Sun Press, 1984).
- ¹²Williams, *Ibid.* pp. 44-45.
- ¹³*Ibid.*
- ¹⁴Kathryn Holt, *Cherries, Characters, and Characteristics: A History of Cherrydale* (Arlington: Sterling Press, 1986) p. 49.
- ¹⁵*The Washington and Old Dominion Railroad*, pp. 71-72.
- ¹⁶Department of Real Estate Assessment, *Real Property Identification Maps* (Arlington: August 1981), 43 (1-3, 5, 6), 33 (14-15).
- ¹⁷Lewis L. Amsterdam, *Property Atlas of Arlington County, Virginia* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Franklin Survey Company, 1935) Plate 4.
- ¹⁸*Maywood, Arlington County*; and H. A. Crocker, Surveyor, *Third Addition to Maywood* (Arlington: Arlington County Surveys Division), Deed Book 132, p. 235; and Henry Crocker, Surveyor, *Fourth Addition to Maywood* (Arlington: Arlington County Surveys Division, November 1912), Deed Book 136, p. 199; and *First Addition to Maywood, Grace Donaldson Property* (Arlington: Surveys Division), Deed Book 120, p. 416; and Gordow (sic) & Conard, Surveyors, *Second Addition to Maywood* (Arlington: Arlington County Surveys Division), Deed Book 123, p. 489.
- ¹⁹*Ibid.*
- ²⁰*Ibid.*
- ²¹Upon moving into the neighborhood, the author (BWS) was told this story by several neighbors.
- ²²Census records indicate that Mrs. Thrift's name was Mary. Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 — Population*, District of Columbia, Washington City, (Washington: Department of Commerce and Labor, April 18, 1910). However, newspaper accounts of the Thrifts give Mrs. Thrift's

name as Margaret. Could Margaret have been his second wife? "Hugh A. Thrift, Builder, Active in YMCA, Church," *The Washington Star*, Washington, DC, March 13, 1962, and "Hugh A. Thrift, Builder, YMCA Leader is Dead," *The Washington Post*, Washington, DC, March 12, 1962, p. B3.

²³As an example, a political advertisement of the period proclaims William T. Hammer, candidate for County Treasurer, to be from Thrifton, Virginia. *Souvenir Program, Northern Virginia Exposition* (Clarendon, Sept. 6-11, 1915), p. 2. Mr. Hammer resided at 2701 Twenty-third Road North, in a house that has been demolished. *Nelson's Suburban Directory* (1917), p. 297.

²⁴For example, Mr. Samuel W. Fox, electrician, lived at Cedar and Forrest Streets, Cherrydale, Virginia, as advertised in the Washington-Lee High School yearbook. (Present-day address would be 2901 Twenty-second Street North.) *Cherries, Characters, and Characteristics*, p. 107.

²⁵*Nelson's Suburban Directory* (1912-1913), p. 213; and *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory* (1927-28), p. 655.

²⁶Donald A. Wise, compiler, *Land Ownership Map: 1669-1796* (Arlington County, Virginia: 1976); and Donald A. Wise, compiler, *Map of Colonial Patents, Grants and Treasury Warrants in Arlington County, Virginia* (Arlington County, Virginia: 1975).

²⁷Bruce Gregory McCoy, "The Lower Spout Run Valley and Palisades: A Case for Archeological Study and Site Preservation," *The Arlington Historical Magazine*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (1986) p. 21.

²⁸Helen Hill Miller, *George Mason, Gentleman Revolutionary* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975) pp. 22, 25.

²⁹"The Roots of Clarendon," p. 49.

³⁰Lewis Carberry, *Survey of Mason Land*. (Washington, DC: 1835-1836).

³¹Howell & Taylor, *Map of Alexandria County, Virginia, for the Virginia Title Company* (Alexandria, Virginia, 1900).

³²"The Lower Spout Run Valley and Palisades," p. 23.

³³*Arlington County Deed Books*, Deed Book 132, pp. 51-52.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵*Arlington County Deed Books*: Maywood, Deed Book 120, p. 548; First Addition, Deed Book 120, p. 416; Second Addition, Deed Book 123, p. 489; Third Addition, Deed Book 132, p. 235; Fourth Addition, Deed Book 136, p. 199; Digges property, Deed Book 125, pp. 195-196.

³⁶*Ibid.* Liber A, No. 4, folio No. 434.

³⁷*Property Atlas of Arlington County, Virginia; and Survey of Mason Land*.

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹*Arlington County Deed Books*, Deed Book X3-Z3, pp. 226-228.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*

⁴¹*Ibid.* Deed Book A-4, p. 573.

⁴²*Ibid.* Deed Book B-4, pp. 38-39.

⁴³*Arlington County Will Books*, Will Book 10, p. 306.

⁴⁴C. B. Rose, Jr., "The Map of Arlington in 1878 — Places and People," *The Arlington Historical Magazine*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1962) pp.20-21; and *Cherries, Characters, and Characteristics*, pp. 35, 38.

⁴⁵*Arlington County Deed Books*, Deed Book 107, p. 355.

⁴⁶*Ibid.* Deed Book 111, pp. 104-105.

⁴⁷*Ibid.* Deed Book 111, p. 388-389.

⁴⁸The land Mackey sold does not quite equal six acres; some land was set aside for sidewalks

- and the railroad right-of-way. Ibid. Deed Book 115, pp. 184-185.
- ⁴⁹Ibid. Deed Book 118, pp. 582-583; Deed Book 130; pp. 277-278.
- ⁵⁰Ibid. Deed Book 120, pp. 416-417.
- ⁵¹Ibid. p. 418.
- ⁵²Ibid. Deed Book 123, p. 437; and Deed Book 125, p. 474; and Deed Book 128, pp. 498-499.
- ⁵³Ibid. Deed Book 115, p. 156.
- ⁵⁴See Note 48 and Ibid. Deed Book 117, pp. 173-174.
- ⁵⁵Ibid. Deed Book D3-K3, pp. 398-399.
- ⁵⁶Ibid. Deed Book 131, pp. 558-560; and Eleanor Lee Templeman, *Arlington Heritage: Viginettes of a Virginia County* (Arlington: The Author, 1959), p. 102.
- ⁵⁷See Note 35.
- ⁵⁸"The Roots of Clarendon," p. 50-51.
- ⁵⁹*Articles of Incorporation, State of South Dakota, for Conservative Realty Company* (Pierre, South Dakota: Office of the Secretary of State, April 21, 1909) and Office of the Secretary of South Dakota, Corporate Section, conversation with Gail H. Baker (Pierre, South Dakota, May 13, 1986). During this conversation, June 1, 1909, was given as the date of incorporation. However, business was transacted in May 1909 as noted in the text.
- ⁶⁰In addition, there was a third person listed as a member of the Company, a Philip Lawrence. Mr. Lawrence's offices in Huron, South Dakota, were listed as the place where "the principal business of this Corporation shall be transacted...." The Articles further state that "a business office may be established and located at the City of Washington, District of Columbia, where all meetings of the Stockholders and Directors shall be held and general business transacted and carried on therefrom." Perhaps a "local" resident was required for incorporation. Ibid.
- ⁶¹*Thirteenth Census of the United States.*
- ⁶²Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Company, Compiler, *Telephone Directory* (Washington, DC: 1907, 1909, 1910, 1912, 1922.)
- ⁶³Ibid.
- ⁶⁴*Thirteenth Census of the United States.*
- ⁶⁵Bob McAtee, *Presentation of Maywood History at January Meeting of the Maywood Community Association* (Maywood, January 26, 1984).
- ⁶⁶For example, Hugh A. and Mary H. Thrift owned the property at 2309 North Lincoln Street until 1936. Deed Book 397, p. 182.
- ⁶⁷*Telephone Directory*; and "Hugh A. Thrift, Builder, Active in YMCA, Church;" and "Hugh A. Thrift, builder, YMCA Leader is Dead."
- ⁶⁸At the time of Maywood's development, Mr. Harsha was sixty-eight years old and Mr. Thrift was thirty-seven. *Thirteenth Census of the United States.*
- ⁶⁹G. G. Boteler, et al, *A Brief History of Alexandria County, Virginia* (Alexandria, Virginia: County Board of Supervisors, 1907), p. 42.
- ⁷⁰William G. Collins, editor, *Clarendon, Alexandria County, Virginia Directory* (William G. Collins, Publisher, 1915), p. 13.
- ⁷¹Ibid.
- ⁷²*Nelson's Suburban Directory* (1912-1913), pp. 213-214, (1916) pp. 311-317, (1917) pp. 295-301, (1918) pp. 307-313, (1923) pp. 423-430; and *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory* (1927-28), pp. 655-658, (1930-31), pp. 437-439.
- ⁷³Ibid.
- ⁷⁴Ibid.
- ⁷⁵Ibid.
- ⁷⁶Gail H. Baker and Barbara W. Silberman, *House History of Maywood* (October 1985),

for property at 3415 Twenty-first Avenue North.

⁷⁷In order to formulate these categories, we utilized information from the Department of Labor, as noted.

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, DC: The Author, January 1987), Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 120-135.

Nelson's Suburban Directory; and *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory*.

⁷⁸Title searches, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

⁷⁹Presentation of Maywood History.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹*Nelson's Suburban Directory*; and *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory*.

⁸²Of the twenty-three properties searched, five were owned by single women during the period 1910-1930. Title records, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

⁸³These include the properties at: 3500 Twenty-first Avenue, North; 3200 Twenty-second Street, North; 3211 Twenty-second Street, North; 3504 Twenty-second Street, North; 3308 Twenty-third Street, North; 2200 North Kenmore Street; and 2124 North Monroe Street. *House History of Maywood*; and *Nelson's Suburban Directory*; and *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory*.

⁸⁴Miss Frances Hurley lives in the house at 3500 Twenty-first Avenue, North, which her parents, Lillie and Edgar Hurley, came to as newlyweds in 1912. Mr. Hurley had had the house built. Miss Hurley told to the author (GHB) the story of her mother's welcome to the neighborhood as a bride; all the neighbors turned out to greet the newlyweds by banging with spoons on pots and pans.

⁸⁵Nineteen homes fall into these categories. *House History of Maywood*; and *Nelson's Suburban Directory*; and *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory*; and title searches, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

⁸⁶*Nelson's Suburban Directory*; and *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory*; and title searches, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

⁸⁷For example, the Cullen brothers, John, George, and Harry, lived at 3322 Twenty-third Street, North, 2801 Twenty-third Street, North, and Twenty-third Street near Monroe, respectively. John moved in in 1916, as did Harry. George arrived in 1918.

Ibid.

⁸⁸For example, there were Muses, known to be related, living at 2911 and 3631 Twenty-second Street, North (now 3650 Vacation Lane), and 2911 and 2917 Twenty-third Street, North. Members of this family lived in Maywood from 1912 to 1980.

Greer Gilka, owner 2911 Twenty-third Street, North. Interview with Barbara Warnick Silberman, June 1986.

Ibid.

⁸⁹For example, of the forty-one houses on Twenty-first Avenue, North, at least eight had one or more boarders. *Nelson's* and *Polk's*, Ibid.

⁹⁰Of the twenty-three properties searched, seven were repossessed. Title searches, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

⁹¹Gilka interview.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³*Presentation of Maywood History*.

⁹⁴These include the properties at: 3421 Twenty-first Avenue, North; 3309 Twenty-second Street, North; 3304 Twenty-third Street, North; 2209 North Lincoln Street, and 2114 North Oakland Street. In at least three of these cases, the owners are in possession of the original house plans from Sears. In the others, the exteriors exactly match the style descriptions in the *Houses by Mail* book noted below.

House History of Maywood, and Kate Cole Stevenson and H. Ward Jandl, *Houses By Mail* (Washington, DC: The Preservation Press, 1986), pp. 102, 160, 164, 215, and 307.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Joseph J. Schroeder, Jr. (editor), *1908 Sears Roebuck Catalogue: A Treasured Replica from the Archives of History* (Northfield, Illinois: DBI Books, Inc., 1971) pp. 591-610.

⁹⁷Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT press, 1986), pp. 41-59.

⁹⁸Ibid. p. 84.

⁹⁹Title searches, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

¹⁰⁰*Nelson's Suburban Directory* (1912-13), p. 214, (1916) p. 316, (1917) p. 300, and (1918) p. 312.

¹⁰¹*House History of Maywood*, 2100 North Irving Street.

¹⁰²Title searches, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

¹⁰³*Souvenir Program*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴*Cherries, Characters, and Characteristics*, Base Map 1947; and *Property Atlas of Arlington County, Virginia*.

¹⁰⁵Title search, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

¹⁰⁶*House History of Maywood*, 3210 Twenty-third Street, North.

¹⁰⁷Title searches, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

¹⁰⁸*Cherries, Characters, and Characteristics*, Base Map 1947.

¹⁰⁹Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940, An Illustrated Glossary* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., Inc., 1985); and Clem Labine and Patricia Poore, "The Comfortable House," *The Old-House Journal*, (Brooklyn, New York: The Old House Journal Corporation, January 1982), Vol. X, No. 1, pp. 1-8; and

"Post-Victorian Houses," *The Old-House Journal*, (Brooklyn, New York: The Old House Journal Corporation, January-February 1986), Vol. XIV, No. 1, pp. 24-27.

¹¹⁰J. Randall Cotton, "The Great American Garage, Part 1," *The Old-House Journal* (Brooklyn, New York: The Old House Journal Corporation, September 1986,) Vol. XIV, No. 7, pp. 328-335.

¹¹¹*American Vernacular Design*; and

Renee Kahn, "The American Foursquare," *The Old-House Journal* (Brooklyn, New York: The Old House Journal Corporation, February 1982), Vol. X, No. 2, pp. 29-32; and Renee Kahn, "The Dutch Colonial Revival Style," *The Old-House Journal* (Brooklyn, New York: The Old House Journal Corporation, May 1982), Vol. X, No. 5, pp. 99-102; and Patricia Poore, "The Homestead House," *The Old-House Journal* (Brooklyn, New York: The Old House Journal Corporation, September/October 1987), Vol. XV, No. 5, pp. 30-34; Gustav Stickley, *Craftsman Homes* (New York, New York: Dover Publishing Inc., 1979 — originally published 1909).

¹¹²Gregor Noetzel, *Map of Alexandria County, Virginia, Formerly Part of the District of Columbia, 1907*, and *The Cartography of Northern Virginia, Reproductions from 1608-1915*, Richard W. Stephenson, editor (Fairfax County, Virginia: History and Archaeology Section, Office of Comprehensive Planning, 1981) Plate 108.

¹¹³The house at 3401 Twenty-first Avenue, North, was sold and occupied in November 1909. Title search, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

¹¹⁴Title searches, *Arlington County Deed Books*.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Alice Welsh, Photos of Houses of Maywood, Spring 1986.

¹¹⁷*Cherries, Characters, and Characteristics*, p. 177.

¹¹⁸The story is often repeated to newcomers by many Maywood residents, as it was to the authors.

¹¹⁹“The Lower Spout Run Valley and Palisades,” p. 21.

¹²⁰Ibid. p. 23.

¹²¹*Arlington Heritage*, p. 110.

¹²²*Nelson's Suburban Directory* (1916), p. 317.

¹²³*Arlington County, Virginia*, pp. 150-156.

¹²⁴“Maywood-Woodmont Hold Big Celebration,” *The Monitor of Alexandria County*, Rosslyn, Virginia, July 7, 1916, p. 1.

¹²⁵These stores existed at 3629 Twenty-first Avenue, North, and 2206 North Kenmore Street. *House History of Maywood*; and *Nelson's Suburban Directory*; and *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory*.

¹²⁶The firehouse was at 3215 Twenty-second Street, North. Interview with Lois Tucker Seyfried, conducted by Gail H. Baker, November 1986. The house at 3405 Twenty-first Avenue, North, was used as a kindergarten. *Presentation of Maywood History*.

¹²⁷*Nelson's Suburban Directory*; and *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory*.

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹*Arlington County, Virginia*, pp. 202-203.

¹³⁰Most of these were installed in the late 1960's and early 1970's, according to long-time residents.

¹³¹Most realtors today advertise homes in Maywood this way. Another favorite teaser is “one stoplight to DC.” *The Washington Post*, Real Estate Section, Washington, DC, February 16, 1986.

¹³²Arlington County Board, *Neighborhood Conservation Plan: Maywood* (Arlington: Arlington County, March 20, 1965).

¹³³Arlington County Board, *Amendments to the Maywood Neighborhood Conservation Plan* (Arlington: Arlington County Planning Commission, 1979-80).

¹³⁴*Craftsman Homes*, pp. 194-205.

¹³⁵Various residents claim that preliminary drawings for I-66 included such plans. In any event, at least fifteen of the one hundred seventy homes classified as post-Victorian were demolished for I-66. According to long-time residents, some homes in the Third Addition were moved in 1963-64 to make way for I-66 (e.g. 3400 Twenty-first Avenue, North, 2325 North Edgewood Street, and 2329 North Edgewood Street).