



## HISTORIC MOUNT PLEASANT JOURNAL

### LIVING IN AN HISTORIC DISTRICT: POP-UPS? IN MT. PLEASANT?

January 2024

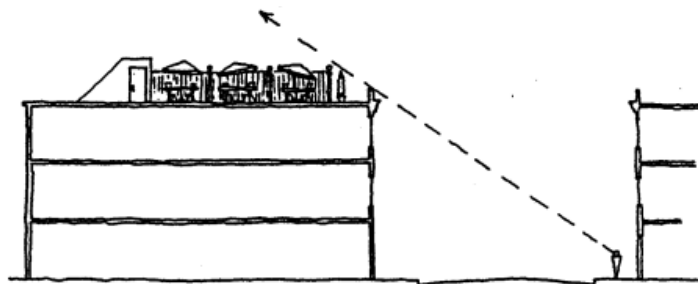
Our Historic Mount Pleasant (HMP) Newsletter strives to inform community members by illuminating [historic district permit requirements](#), technical issues and solutions, and other aspects of the historic district, including its history.

By Jonathan Herz

#### There are pop-ups, and there are pop-ups

The [pop-ups we usually see in non-historic districts](#) seldom succeed in complementing their neighbors or even fitting in with the architectural character of their neighborhood. Legal restrictions in those areas are zoning-based and design, a matter of taste. Pop-ups - also known as rooftop additions - are seldom literally seen in historic districts because, when they are permitted, they must follow the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (HPO) [guidelines for roof additions](#) which require that they not be visible from the street or public vantage points, or alter important character-defining features of the building or streetscape, and are compatible with their historic context.

Successful additions reflect an understanding of context. That's why a project that works in the center of a block will not be approved at the end of the same block. While less stringent, there are also requirements for compatibility of the addition as viewed from the rear of the house, with consideration of projections and setbacks.



Required Sight Line Diagram

Other issues include the proposed materials or form of the addition, which should keep the additional mass light. Roof additions typically require a substantial setback, depending on the height of the building and its adjacent structures, topography of the area, street width, and the relationship of the building to its surroundings. This is particularly important in Mount Pleasant, where the uniformity of residential row houses is a character-defining feature.

The burden of proof is on the applicant to illustrate to the HPO the full impact and visibility of the addition, as well as to demonstrate how the addition is compatible with the character of the historic property to which it is being added. The likelihood of success is increased with the assistance of an architectural designer with historic district experience.

## Why Do Houses Keep Popping Up?

In residential areas, if you can't enlarge your house forward (for historic district reasons), or back up to ten feet beyond the rear of your neighbor's house (for allowable lot coverage (Floor Area Ratio) reasons), the simplest remaining way to go is up (height-limit permitting).

New houses have been [getting bigger and bigger](#) over the years (In 2023, new homes averaged [2,469 SF](#) (988 SF/person)), and households have gotten significantly smaller. But today, homeowners want more and larger closets and bathrooms, larger kitchens, and home offices, and family, breakfast, laundry and media rooms. And, people have also [changed the way they live](#), like an 87.4% increase over the past two decades of young adults living in a parent's home, and a tripling of the number of [people working from home](#) since 2019.

## MT. PLEASANT HISTORY

### Not Typical of the Period

Houses in Mount Pleasant were not typical houses of the period when they were built. They were much larger. In 1910, the average new, single-family house was [945 square feet](#) (SF) (210 SF/person), while most of Mount Pleasant's rowhouses - almost all of which were built from the 1890's through late 1940's - were two to four times that size. And while the vast majority of American houses had no indoor bathrooms - even the new ones - all of Mount Pleasant's new houses had at least one full bath, and many had three. With few exceptions, they all featured both gas (into the 1910's) and electric lighting.

The [Mount Pleasant Historic District National Register nomination](#) describes the neighborhood's "unique and harmonious sense of place" resulting from "the use of a common vocabulary, regard for scale and proportion, and sensitivity to the hilly terrain [and] the work of many different architects and builders from many different periods of time..." This nomination and an earlier one for the mansions on the North side of Park Road NW describe Mount Pleasant houses as being for "Washingtonians who worked in the city and wanted the amenities of living in a convenient, suburban community."

Developers aimed at distinct economic classes in the neighborhood with smaller rowhouses serving middle-class workers, larger rowhouses serving an upper a middle-class working population, and large detached houses serving the prosperous merchant class, with a large range in prices reflecting those differences. Before 1915, while houses priced under \$2,300 were available in other neighborhoods, Mount Pleasant offerings included "One of those [attractive two-story houses near 16th street](#). Mount Pleasant, for \$4,500;" "[the most beautiful artistic home in Ingleside](#) (Mt. Pleasant)" for \$14,000 at 3208 18<sup>th</sup> St. NW; and a "[handsome residence at 1835 Park road](#)" for \$20,000 bought by "a prominent Washingtonian" with "a large stable."



Below are the full newspaper pages:

1. [The Evening Star June 24, 1911](#), advertisement for the attractive two-story house near 16<sup>th</sup> St. NW.
2. [The Evening Star November 11, 1911](#), advertisement for 3208 18<sup>th</sup> Street NW.
3. [The Washington Times April 17, 1909](#), article about 1835 Park Road NW.





**STONE & FAIRFAX, 1342 N. Y. Ave.**

See Page 1, Part 2, of today's Star for continued list of desirable properties. We believe upon investigation that you will find them the best on the market today.

\$3,500—A neat, two-story bay-window brick dwelling on Columbia Heights, south of Columbia road, not far from 13th st. Present owner took it for a debt. A chance to make \$1,000 or \$1,500 profit.

\$4,500—New houses in Mount Pleasant, west of 16th st. Colonial porches; hot-water heat; tile bath; beautiful decorations; lots 20 by 125; 13-foot alley; built to sell for \$5,750.

\$2,500—New houses north of the city. 2 stories; 6 rooms; tile bath; hot-water heat; lot 23 by 125.

\$2,500—Semi-detached, 2 stories; cellar; attic; hot-water heat; lot 30 by 125. A beautiful home.

\$2,500—Northwest on a lettered street, near 7th and M sts. to room; large brick stable; lot 44 by 65 feet.

\$4,000—Brick, dwelling and brick stable. Hot-water heat; lot 45 by 65; convenient to the business section of the northwest.

\$5,000—An attractive corner in Bloomingdale. 2 stories; 4 rooms on each floor; well southern exposure.

\$3,500—U. S. st. between 17th and 18th sts. 3 stories; hot-water heat; first-class condition. A bargain for a home or investment.

\$2,000—3 stories; 10 rooms; 2 bathrooms; 4 rooms deep on first floor; on a lettered street northwest.

\$3,000—M. st. northwest, near 9th st. 7 rooms and bath; lot 20 by 100 feet; renting for \$27.50. An out-of-town owner wishes to make a quick sale.

\$4,000—A substantial 2-story, bay-window dwelling on 1 st. near 21st st. 4 stories; 4 rooms on each floor; lot 20 by 125. On 22d street.

\$4,000—S. st. between North Capitol and 1st sts.; a very cozy home; 6 rooms and bath; furnace heat; perfect condition; beautiful location.

\$3,000—Seaton st. 2 stories and cellar; 7 rooms and bath; lot 20 by 125. A modern home; lot 19 by 75.

\$4,000—8 rooms, four on a block; west of 9th st.; lot 18 ft. by 95 ft.; two stairways. A decided bargain.

**NORTHEAST AND SOUTHEAST.**

\$2,500—6-room brick, on 5th n.e.; lot 20x100; alley; out-of-town owner; must sell.

\$3,100—8th st. near A. n.e.; 8 rooms and bath.

\$3,300—8th st. n.e.; 7 rooms; hot-water heat; 19x115; alley.

\$3,500—11th st. s.e.; 8 rooms; lot 18x130; alley.

\$4,500—12th st. near Lincoln Park; 7 rooms and bath; lot 17x107 ft.

\$4,000—A cozy 6-room brick, with cellar, furnace; lettered st. between 6th and 7th.

\$3,500—2d st. near D; 2 stories; cellar; 7 rooms and bath.

\$4,500—Near 3d and Maryland ave. Two stories; 7 rooms; lot 20 by 113 ft. to a wide alley. A very reasonable price for a property so nicely situated.

\$4,200—B. st. n.e. near 4th st.; 6 rooms and bath; lot 19x100; first-class condition. A cozy home.

\$4,750—A beautiful new house on C. st. n.e.; 2 stories and cellar; up-to-date bathroom; hot-water heat; attractive decorations; must be inspected to be appreciated.

\$3,800 each—New houses near 9th and B sts.; 2 stories; cellar, furnace heat; hardwood finish; beautiful decorations; complete in every detail.

\$4,500—One of those attractive three-story 9-room houses with cellar, on C. st. n.e. between 6th and 7th sts. Formerly held at \$5,000. An out-of-town owner is anxious to make a quick sale and has reduced the price. An opportunity for a bargain.

\$5,000—Convenient to the Capitol and Union station; 2 stories and cellar; 8 rooms and bath; hot-water heat; lot 18x100. House in perfect condition. Expensive cabinet mantels, etc.

\$4,200—An 8-room house on F. st. n.e.; 2 stories and cellar; 4 rooms deep on each floor; furnace heat.

\$3,800—A brick dwelling and two-story brick stable. Lot 25x145. On a lettered street in the northeast section. It would cost more to erect the building, to say nothing of a valuable lot.

\$2,500—New houses on a lettered street northeast; colonial designs; 6 rooms, bath, cellar; covered porch. Built to sell for \$3,500.

\$4,000—On 4th st. n.e. near B. Splendid home; 2 stories and cellar; furnace heat. Lot 18x100 to a wide alley.

\$4,500—A very attractive three-story brick dwelling on 5th st. n.e. beautifully decorated. Modern bathroom.

\$4,300—A most desirable residence on 16th st. n.e.; three stories and cellar; furnace heat; 9 rooms, modern bathroom. Lot 18x90 feet to a wide alley.

\$3,700—A corner residence on 7th st. n.e., containing 8 rooms and bath. First-class condition.

\$4,200—An 8-room brick building on 8th st. n.e. Two stories and cellar; 4 rooms deep on each floor. Furnace heat. Lot 115 feet deep to an 8-ft. alley. Offered so low to settle a partnership.

\$3,500—A comparatively new house on 9th st. n.e.; 7 rooms, bath, furnace heat. Coal and gas ranges. Lot 18x114 ft.

\$4,000—A very desirable corner residence on Massachusetts ave. n.e. surrounded by expensive homes. An extremely low price for such an attractive home so well located.

\$5,000—On an avenue very near Lincoln Park. One of the most desirable new homes in that choice resident section; 2 stories; cellar under the entire house; 8 rooms; hot-water heat; lot 18x102 feet. There are few houses so well constructed.

\$4,300—Near the Capitol and Library. A cozy home. Hot-water heat; beautiful tiled bathroom; porcelain tub; one of the most attractive new homes in this much-sought-after location.

\$5,000—A corner residence. Convenient to the Capitol, southeast; 8 rooms; three bay windows. A house carefully built for the owner's occupancy. Suitable for a physician.

\$3,800—Near 3d and B sts. 2 stories and cellar; 4 rooms deep on two floors; good lot. First-class repairs.

\$3,500—On 5th st. n.e. near 7th st.; 7 rooms, bath; lot 18x126 ft.

\$4,500—Near 6th and E. Capitol sts. s.e.; two stories, 8 rooms; lot 20x100 feet to a 30-ft. alley.

\$2,800—One of the best bargains on Capitol Hill, near 5th and B sts.; 2 stories and cellar. First floor: Parlor, back parlor, dining room and kitchen. 2d floor: 4 bedrooms and bath; hot-water heat.

\$3,500—Near 2d and B sts. s.e.; 2 stories and cellar; 6 rooms and bath. A very convenient location. Thoroughly well constructed.

\$4,000—Near 2d and C sts. s.e. A cozy brick dwelling, comparatively new; 7 rooms and bath; furnace heat; front of brownstone and brick.

\$3,800—4th st. s.e. A desirable 6-room residence; 2 stories and cellar; modern bath; hot-water heat; lot 105 ft. deep.

\$4,000—On 5th st. s.e.; 2 stories and cellar; furnace heat; lot 10 ft. deep; house has all modern improvements.

\$3,000—6th st. s.e.; 6 rooms; lot 18x112 to a 30-ft. alley. A choice location.

**STONE & FAIRFAX,**  
1342 New York Ave.

## CHANGES OF FASHION IN BUILDING MODES

**Basement Kitchens and Dining Rooms Now Figured as Antiquated.**

Basement dining rooms were a feature of a large proportion of the houses of the city not so many years ago, but they are not found in the newer houses, and so doubtless many of the younger generation never heard of a house with such an arrangement. All of which is only another way of saying that fashion changes in houses just as they do in clothes.

It was customary that first-class flats of two or three houses, because the cost of construction was confined to providing only the actual space needed for living purposes. The first or main floor of these older dwellings was apt to make out an extravagance in the use of space, except in the instance where the room back of the parlor was occupied as a study. When that was done, then every room entered into the daily life of the family. There were no superfluous rooms.

But for the needs of large families such a house was extended to three or four stories. For smaller families, two stories answered the purpose. The lot was apt to be narrow and the house correspondingly so, for in that period building lots were in proportion much smaller than they are now. The result of this was that the basement dining room began to give way to an anteroom, and that largely accounts for the change in the building mode.

**Some Signs of Evolution.**

In the typical house of the newer period a back building was provided, and in it was placed the dining room. The kitchen remained in the basement, but this proved to be an awkward arrangement for most housekeepers, who preferred to be within close range of the important part of the house. Presently the back building was extended farther back, and then a place was made for the kitchen next to the dining room.

It is this process of evolution that has resulted in the satisfactory arrangement now in the case of narrow lots, where it was found there was not room enough for the kitchen and dining room beside each other. The kitchen of the living room or parlor, save windows and doors opening into the rear yard.

The same principle is carried out in the larger houses by increasing the width of the lot, and building the house over the whole depth. The interior of houses built in this manner are making a name for themselves as the older style and get more simple.

## ROW OF NEW HOUSES ON TWENTIETH STREET

**Builders Plan Enterprise in Thoroughfare Facing Rock Creek Valley.**

A row of nine houses is to be built on the east side of 20th street between Rock Creek road and Belmont road, near the corner of C. Palmer and George N. Palmer. The undertaking continues the building activity which has been noticeable on that street east from Calvert street, which is its terminus. In the block north of Belmont street an apartment house is in progress. In the west block will be located the new Pumping-Power house, and this building enterprise will connect that portion of 20th street with the section to the south through what was formerly Washington Heights along the line of Columbia road. At the present time this section of 20th street borders the valley of Rock Creek, and residents of the neighborhood are striving to secure legislation by Congress to authorize the purchase by the government of all of the triangular tract between the Calvert street and Belmont Avenue bridges on that the whole area may be included in an extension of Rock Creek Park, with 20th street as its permanent eastern boundary.

**IN CHILHAM CASTLE HEIGHTS.**

**Rapid Progress Reported in Marketing Property in New Subdivision.**

Reports come from Chilham Castle Heights that steady progress is being made in the sale of lots in that subdivision.

J. A. Widmer has purchased three lots on Longfellow street. Sophia Hunt has purchased two lots on Oregon avenue. Albert McCaskey has purchased two lots on Longfellow street.

Mr. Widmer expects to build a house on his new lots, starting work in the very near future. Mrs. C. D. Dean is also planning to erect two new homes on the same water department will be building water mains for the subdivision in the next week or two.

**Blaine Property Transferred.**

A deed has been placed on record by which the heirs of James G. Blaine transferred to John B. Henderson the ground at the southwest corner of 19th and Fuller streets, near one block south of Columbia road and nearly opposite the residence of Mr. Henry MacVay.

## MANY SALES REPORTED OF RESIDENCE PROPERTY

**Realty Firm Finds Buyers for Houses in All Parts of City.**

Among the recent sales made by Moore & Hill, Inc., were the following:

For Harry A. Kim, to Joseph H. Johnson, 203 4th street northwest.

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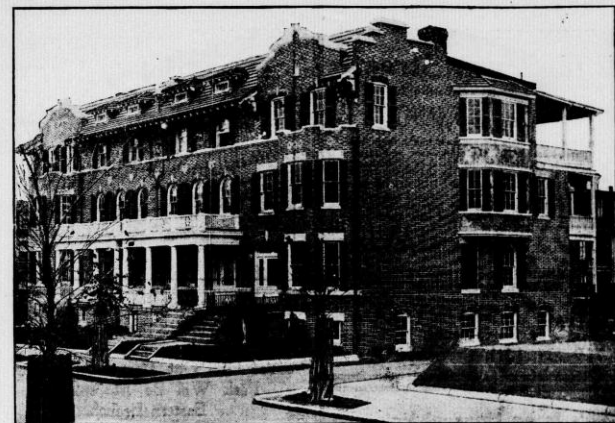
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## OPEN FOR INSPECTION DAILY.



**3206 18th Street**

The most beautiful and artistic home for sale in Ingleside and in the best location. 11 rooms, 3 baths and garage.

**Price, \$14,000.**

**Kennedy & Davis Co.,** Owners and Builders,  
1334 H Street N.W.

## WANT TO MAKE A GOOD DEAL

On a home—a real good home in a choice, select location? Here's your chance to buy right, in the right place, from the right builder. THREE SETS OF HOUSES TO SELECT FROM—

**Nos. 1106-08-10 Fourmont Street.  
Nos. 1114-16-18 Park Road.  
No. 1112 Girard Street.**

THE MOST DESIRABLE STREETS OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS.

**\$5,850 EACH. VERY EASY TERMS.**

Each house has six good sized rooms and RECEPTION HALL. Finished in hardwood throughout. Oak floors. Porches. Bay window. Cellar. Hot-water heat. Electric and gas light. Tiled bath. Large kitchen and pantry. Steel-barn construction; strong, sturdy, durable materials throughout.

EACH LOT 18 1/2 FEET DEEP.

Call Tomorrow.  
**Belt, O'Brien & Co., Inc.,**  
1309 G Street N.W.

## Some People Are Always Too Late

TO TAKE advantage of a good home offering. In the last week we have sold five houses in this row of seven new homes, and yet they have not been entirely completed.

ONLY 2 LEFT.  
**537 and 541 Kenyon St. N.W.**

The location is a No. ONE and prices are going up.  
**Only \$3,650.  
\$300 Cash; \$15 Per Month.**

Selection has such an opportunity been offered. Picture brick fronts, a pretty room, trimmed in hardwood throughout. The bath, pantry, cellar, with laundry trays, etc. One up-to-date heating plant, lot 20x100 feet.

OPEN DAILY AND SUNDAY.  
TO INSPECT: Take 5th st. cars, get off at Kenyon st., walk two blocks east.

**WILLETT & REINECKE CO.,**  
1309 H St. N.W.

John M. Tinsley, seventy-one years old, Hog cholera, which has been prevalent since at Roanoke, Va. He was a Unionist, and was a member of the National Union of Laborers.

## Stop and Look

At these houses. See what a fine house you can buy for only \$4,975.

**1423-1427 33d St. N.W.**  
Georgetown.

**Open Day and Night.**  
THE EARLIEST KIND OF TERMS.

Six rooms, tiled bath and RECEPTION HALL. This completely finished in wall worth nothing separating the parlor from the dining room. Cement cellar. Hot-water heat. Electric and gas light. Laundry tub. Servant's toilet. Large pantry. Front entry entrance. Gas logs. Oak finish throughout. Oak floors. Kitchen superior and decorations. Large front entrance—the dining room mantel being practically a full-size fireplace, having four drawers, closet, mirror and shelves.

BEYOND TO PUBLIC ALLEY.  
MAMMOTH STAIR TREES IN EACH YARD.  
THE PROPOSITION WE OFFER YOU HERE IS SUCH THAT ANY ONE PAYING AS MUCH AS \$49,975 CAN BUY ONE OF THESE HOUSES.

Investigate.

REMEMBER, THE HOUSES ARE OPEN AT NIGHT. WE INVITE YOU TO CALL.

**Belt, O'Brien & Co., Inc., 1309 G N.W.**

## HARRY V. BOUIC & CO.,

1427 H. Southern Bldg.,  
WILL SELL

**"A Breuninger Home"**

in Woodley for \$7,500.

\$500 cash, balance \$25 a month.

This is an opportunity you should not miss.

## SCENES OF EXTENSIVE BUILDING OPERATIONS.



TWO ROWS OF NEW HOUSES JUST COMPLETED ON RHODE ISLAND AVENUE NORTHEAST.

## APARTMENT HOUSE FINDS READY BUYER

The recent completion of the two big apartment houses, the Chesterfield and Winston, located on Mt. Pleasant street, just south of Lament street, constitutes one of the major improvements in the city.

building operations of the year in the northwest section. The sale of the Chesterfield to W. T. Fitzgerald a few days ago emphasizes the fact that there is a big market for improved property of a high value in this section.

States Warren was the builder of both of these apartments and is at the present time the owner of the Winston. The two structures are exactly alike, containing sixteen apartments each and being four stories high. They are fifty feet wide and have a considerable depth. Brick is used entirely in their construction.

## Miss These

**W Homes**  
2 Adams Street N. W.  
(1/2 mile North of W St. N. W.)

**\$4,250 & \$4,500**  
Features of these houses—

Large Colonial porches, lots 21 feet front, 6 and 8 rooms and bath, hot-water heat, steel con-

struction, every room a front room, lots 80 feet deep, side and rear alley.  
\* Room for stable or garage.

\* We invite your inspection of these beautiful houses. An opportunity to own an attractive home at a low figure. One look

Always open.

Street Northwest

## Square

Houses in the City

## 1 Families

AND WILL BE READY FOR  
Y MAY FIRST

All outside rooms, and  
cellars,

SEEKER, also to the INVESTOR  
00 and \$3750

nt \$300 and \$500  
Month on Principal.  
**S OF OCCUPANTS**

**CO., Inc. (Exclusive)**

Street N. W.  
Main 676y.

## BASE HOMES



I find at Chevy Chase.

de up of just such attractive  
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is where you can build such a  
ad.  
out and see for yourself.  
just south of the Circle and Plats.

**& CO., Incorporated.**

et Northwest