

Robinson & Associates, Inc.  
December 2019

## CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Town of Washington Grove

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CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

A. Purpose.....	2
B. Methodology .....	2
C. Introduction.....	3
D. Landscape Characteristics .....	4
a. Natural Systems and Features.....	4
b. Spatial Organization .....	7
c. Land Use .....	24
d. Cultural Traditions .....	28
e. Cluster Arrangement .....	32
f. Circulation .....	33
g. Topography .....	47
h. Vegetation .....	48
i. Buildings and Structures.....	51
j. Views and Vistas.....	56
k. Constructed Water Features .....	57
l. Small-Scale Features.....	58
m. Archaeological Sites .....	63
E. Bibliography.....	64

## **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Cultural Landscape Analysis is to describe the intangible aspects, physical attributes, and systems of the landscape that collectively contribute to the character of the Town of Washington Grove. It serves as a first step in identifying and evaluating the landscape characteristics that add to the historic associations, qualities, and values for which the Washington Grove Historic District is significant and lays the groundwork for incorporating the concepts and vocabulary of cultural landscapes into an updated National Register nomination. The landscape of Washington Grove – its spatial organization, topography, circulation networks, and other qualities – is an integral component of the historic district, and formally recognizing these features in the nomination will reflect current documentation standards.

## **B. METHODOLOGY**

The National Park Service has established a widely recognized classification system for reading a landscape and understanding the natural and cultural forces that shape its composition.<sup>1</sup> It is based on thirteen types of landscape characteristics: natural systems and features, spatial organization, land use, cultural traditions, cluster arrangement, circulation, topography, vegetation, buildings and structures, views and vistas, constructed water features, small-scale features, and archaeological sites.<sup>2</sup> This Cultural Landscape Analysis uses the NPS classification system to organize information on the Washington Grove landscape and to describe its principal components. While the NPS classification system is used to organize this analysis, one landscape characteristic is not covered – archaeology. Since an archaeological survey was outside the scope of this project, data on archaeological resources is limited. That said, the report does describe one documented archaeological site that is located within the forest buffer east of the Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park.

At the start of the project, the Robinson & Associates team carried out archival research using the town archives and other sources, which provided information on historic landscape conditions and changes over time. Robinson & Associates also conducted fieldwork to understand current conditions and to develop an understanding of the site's integrity. The level of documentation collected for each landscape characteristic was guided by the project requirements identified by Washington Grove and by the relative importance of each characteristic, given the primary uses and associations of the landscape. The area evaluated encompasses the current municipal boundaries of the town rather than the boundaries of the existing National Register documentation, which does not include the West Woods or property annexed since the nomination was prepared.

The classification of complex historic landscapes such as Washington Grove often results in overlapping analysis in which features, such as pedestrian paths, are used to describe more than one landscape characteristic. For example, a path network may be described in association with circulation, spatial

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<sup>1</sup> Cultural forces are the impacts human activity has on nature. These engagements may be aesthetic, political, economic, social, or the result of other processes.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1998), 53.

organization, and views and vistas. As such, there may be instances throughout this text where descriptions are repeated.

The development of the Washington Grove landscape can be divided into six phases: Rural Past (pre-1873), the Camp Meeting Period (1873-1901), the Chautauqua Period (1902-1936), the Early Municipal Period (1937-1945), the Post-World War II Period (1946-1969), and the Current Period (1970-present). Although it is beyond the scope of this analysis to describe and interpret each landscape characteristic across every phase of Washington Grove's development, these periods are referenced regularly throughout the text to help describe historic conditions and understand the chronology of changes.

In 2013, the National Park Service initiated the National Register Landmarks Initiative to examine current practices and existing guidance for nominating landscapes to the National Register of Historic Places and to promote the inclusion of landscape descriptions and evaluations in all nominations. The National Register recognizes five types of resources: buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts. While identifying a cultural landscape as a "site" ensures that it is counted as a contributing resource, the term is ambiguous and lacks sufficient information as to what components of the landscape are important and need to be preserved. One method for enumerating and describing significant features of a landscape or a system of features that are not individually countable according to National Register guidelines is to use the term "historic associated feature."<sup>3</sup> This approach, sometimes referred to as the "Northeast Region convention," is endorsed by the National Park Service and has been applied in the preparation of National Register documentation for prominent sites across the United States. Recent examples include the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site Historic District in Cornish, New Hampshire; the Salem Maritime National Historic Site in Salem, Massachusetts; and the Washington Monument and Grounds Historic District in Washington, D.C. A goal of this analysis is to develop a list of "historic associated features" for an updated Washington Grove Historic District National Register nomination.

### C. INTRODUCTION

Washington Grove was established in 1873 during the Religious Resort Period of camp meeting tradition when camp meetings expanded beyond religious services to become summer resort communities.<sup>4</sup> Its founders had great ambitions, purchasing a vast 267-acre parcel along the newly opened Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) Railroad where middle-class residents of Washington, D.C., could retreat with likeminded Christians to escape the heat and grime of the city. The Grove offered a diverse range of natural settings – sylvan paths, secluded nooks, verdure, and shade – that encouraged contemplation, renewal, relaxation, and recreation. Many key characteristics and features of the campground landscape have remained constant, even as residential development expanded, the use of the land evolved, and a municipal government was formed. Today, the physical form, materials, visual

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<sup>3</sup> National Park Service, "Acknowledging Landscapes: Presentations from the National Register Landscape Initiative," July 2017, available at <https://www.ncptt.nps.gov/blog/acknowledging-landscapes/>.

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Jo Lampl with Clare Lise Kelly, Montgomery County Planning Department, Historic Preservation Section, "Historic Context Report: A Harvest in the Open for Saving Souls: The Camp Meetings of Montgomery County," prepared for the Maryland Historical Trust, July 2004. For the purposes of their study, Lampl and Kelly define this period as 1861-1919.

associations, and other characteristics of the landscape of Washington Grove comprise an important cultural resource that enriches and enhances our understanding and appreciation of the town's historic significance. The landscape combines towering oaks, broad, pedestrian avenues, public parks, a recreational pond, and woodlands to create a sylvan suburban experience, which lends Washington Grove the moniker "A Town within a Forest."

#### **D. LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS**

##### **Natural Systems and Features**

*Natural systems and features are the natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of a landscape, including such factors as geomorphology, geology, hydrology, climate, and native vegetation.*

Montgomery County is part of the physiographic province of the Piedmont Plateau. This province is characterized by "a broadly undulating to rolling topography underlain by metamorphic rock and whose relief is increased locally by low knobs or ridges and valleys."<sup>5</sup> Washington Grove falls within the Hampstead Upland district of the Piedmont province where differential weathering of adjacent, contrasting lithologies produces distinctive ridges, hills, barrens, and valleys.<sup>6</sup> This geology dictates the topography of Washington Grove, which features two natural ridges that run roughly southwest-northeast across the terrain, as well as its hydrologic conditions. Ground water is conveyed in the Piedmont's underlying fractured-rock terrane. Wells in the province typically have a low yield that can be affected by drought and other climatic events, and surface streams are also subject to great seasonal variation. Maryland has a temperate climate marked by well-defined seasons, which makes favorable conditions for agricultural and human activities. Native forests of the Piedmont include oak, hickory, and pine trees, among other varieties.

Washington Grove was established on a 267-acre tract of farmland east of Gaithersburg in Montgomery County. The area's native vegetation, geology, hydrology, and climate were important factors in selecting the site. For the founders of Washington Grove, the site's wooded character provided continuity with camp meeting traditions. Historically, many early camp meetings were forest revivals set within a "sacred grove," where man, devoid of material possessions, could be one with God and nature. Being in nature provided a direct, immediate experience of God where conversion could be hastened. At night, these forest settings, lit by firelight, were both mysterious and awe-inspiring, creating a sense of otherworldliness. The landscape functioned as a setting for worship, becoming, in effect, a wilderness consecrated to God – a holy ground. Isolation was an important factor in selecting the site because it offered an environment free from disruptions, a place apart from worldly temptations. Functionally, the

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<sup>5</sup> James P. Reger and Emery T. Cleaves, Maryland Geological Survey, Maryland Department of National Resources, Physiographic Map of Maryland, 2008, available at [http://www.mgs.md.gov/geology/physiographic\\_map.html](http://www.mgs.md.gov/geology/physiographic_map.html).

<sup>6</sup> James P. Reger and Emery T. Cleaves, Maryland Geological Survey, Maryland Department of National Resources, "Explanatory Text for the Physiographic Map of Maryland (version MDPHYS2003.2)," 2008, available at [http://www.mgs.md.gov/geology/physiographic\\_map.html](http://www.mgs.md.gov/geology/physiographic_map.html).

heavily wooded areas of the property provided privacy, protection from the elements, lumber for building and fuel, and provisions for camping. Its meadows offered open clearings for carts, wagons, horse pens, and mercantile stands. Access to an abundant supply of clean water was another factor in the site selection. The residents of Washington Grove would rely on springs and wells for their domestic water supply well into the twentieth century. (See below for a detailed discussion of Washington Grove's springs. Additional text on wells can be found in the Small-Scale Features section.) Washington Grove was located at the confluence of three watersheds – Middle Great Seneca Creek, Upper Rock Creek, and Muddy Branch – and its high elevation relative to Washington, D.C., created a favorable localized climate. Local deposits of steatite (a metamorphic rock also known as soapstone) may have been quarried to construct foundations and other masonry features such as the fireplace at Whetstone Spring (no longer extant) and the fireplace in Woodward Park. The grounds offered cool summer weather and clean air, attractive qualities for city dwellers looking to escape the heat and miasma of the city. While the site was set apart from the city to distance campers from the distractions of everyday life, it was easily accessible by train to encourage attendance.

While the principal elements of Washington Grove's natural systems and features have remained constant, some changes have occurred since the first camp meeting in 1873. The natural ridges that characterized the terrain remain largely evident, despite grading carried out to level the roads and avenues. The natural topography has also been modified by the introduction of manmade channels, ditches, and swales, and new topographic contours were introduced when adjacent lands were annexed. Perhaps the most altered aspect of the site's natural systems and features is its native vegetation. Trees and underbrush have been removed to clear sites for tents, cottages, paths, roads, recreational amenities, and other uses of the land, and open meadows were parceled into residential lots. Trees were harvested for timber from the West Woods and the East Woods up until the mid-twentieth century. At times, hurricanes and strong winds have altered the native vegetation. On September 29, 1896, for example, a hurricane felled 500 trees within the Grove.<sup>7</sup> Other natural disasters have also had an impact.

Since Washington Grove's springs are an especially important component of the historic landscape, they are discussed in detail below.<sup>8</sup>

**Maple Spring** is located in the West Woods of Washington Grove. It comes up south of and historically was a feeder to Maple Lake. Historic photographs indicate that early improvements included the

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<sup>7</sup> President's Report, May 1897, Washington Grove Archives (hereafter shortened to WGA), Box D-1, File DA.0001.23.

<sup>8</sup> One early account of the Washington Grove camp meeting describes the grounds with three springs. See "The Washington Grove Camp Meeting, Description of the New Grounds and Arrangements for the Meeting," *Evening Star*, August 13, 1873. In addition to Whetstone Spring and Maple Spring, the article may be referring to the Mineral Springs that were north of Washington Grove along Laytonsville Road (now Washington Grove Lane) and closer to the Emory Grove Camp Meeting. Today, the Emory Grove Camp Meeting Site is preserved as part of Johnson's Local Park (Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission).

construction of a tiered, masonry spring box, although documentation does not clarify whether this feature was built by Washington Grove or if it was in place prior to the land being purchased by the camp meeting association. (Figure 1) Photographs also indicate that there was a rustic bench at the site of the spring. During the Camp Meeting Period, the clearing around the spring offered a quiet place to escape the bustling crowds of the campground. A newspaper article about the



*Figure 1: View of Maple Spring, no date. Note the masonry spring box and the rustic bench. (Washington Grove Archives)*

camp meeting of 1895 gives the following description of the West Woods, “Beyond the buildings rustic rambles lead to the mineral springs and many other beautiful shade spots, which lie outside the fence that surrounds the settlements. It is a model picnic ground, where every spot is shady, and a pump or spring lies at every turn....”<sup>9</sup> While the spring was important to the supply of water, wells were the principal source of drinking and domestic water for the campground. In addition to the spring’s natural and recreational functions, the Methodists who assembled at Washington Grove may have valued the feature for its symbolic associations. Natural waters were frequently thought to possess healing and life invigorating powers and were associated with grace and purity. Maple Spring continues to run in the late winter and early spring; however, it no longer feeds Maple Lake. As a result of adjacent development, a well and pumping system were installed to feed the lake in the early 1990s.<sup>10</sup> An archaeological survey may identify remnants of historic features associated with the spring, and this site should be considered archaeologically sensitive.

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<sup>9</sup> “Opened by Leaguers: They Hold a Camp-Meeting at Washington Grove,” *Washington Post*, August 21, 1895.

<sup>10</sup> Philip K. Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1937-1977: A History of the Town of Washington Grove, Maryland...the first forty years* (Washington Grove, MD: P. K. Edwards, 1999), 330-31.





Figure 2: View of an excursion to Whetstone Spring, no date. (Washington Grove Archives)

**Whetstone Spring** is one of two springs located in the West Woods of Washington Grove, the other being Maple Spring. While Whetstone Spring was an important source of water for Washington Grove, its location deep in the north end of the West Woods and far from the center of the campground made it an inconvenient source for daily use. Instead, as mentioned above, wells were the principal source of drinking and domestic water for the campground. Whetstone Spring was

historically important as a destination for nature walks, picnics, and other passive recreational activities. (Figure 2) In the late 1930s, inspired by the success of the stone fireplace erected in Woodward Park in 1935, Washington Grove hired a local mason to build a smaller version of the fireplace at Whetstone Spring.<sup>11</sup> It was located along the bank opposite the spring. Additional improvements were made in 1949 when the ground around the spring was cleared and benches were installed. The dugout area of the spring was once capped with a slab of granite. According to oral tradition, the stone was removed in the 1950s, although the reason is unknown.<sup>12</sup> Today, Whetstone Springs' waters are visible during the late winter and early spring from along one of the trails that passes through the woods. The site is considered archaeologically sensitive, as remnants of the fireplace or other features may remain.

### Spatial Organization

*Spatial organization is the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in a landscape, including the articulation of ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.*

The three-dimensional organization of the Washington Grove landscape is shaped by its natural features, by the buildings, structures, and circulation networks that characterize its various periods of development, and by the visual associations of its principal spaces and places. For the first camp meeting, the tents at Washington Grove were arranged in a grid pattern, with their entrances facing a rectangular assembly

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 115.

<sup>12</sup> Washington Grove Round Table Discussion, August 31, 2018, recording available in WGA.



area. (Figure 3) This arrangement has its origins in early nineteenth-century campgrounds. In his book, *A Short History of the Methodists in the United States of America*, published in 1810, historian Jesse Lee described a campground arranged around a clearing in the shape of an “oblong square.”<sup>13</sup> Historian Charles Johnson has shown that two other plans were widely used for early nineteenth-century frontier revivals – the open horseshoe and a circular plan.<sup>14</sup> An example of the former was depicted by architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe in his 1809 sketch of a camp meeting in Virginia.

By the second camp meeting in 1874, Washington Grove’s initial rectangular grid had been abandoned for an octagonal central gathering space with radiating avenues. A newspaper article dated July 6, 1874, describing an excursion to Washington Grove in advance of the ten-day camp meeting reads, “Numbers who are contemplating a sojourn in the grove...inspected the newly-arranged

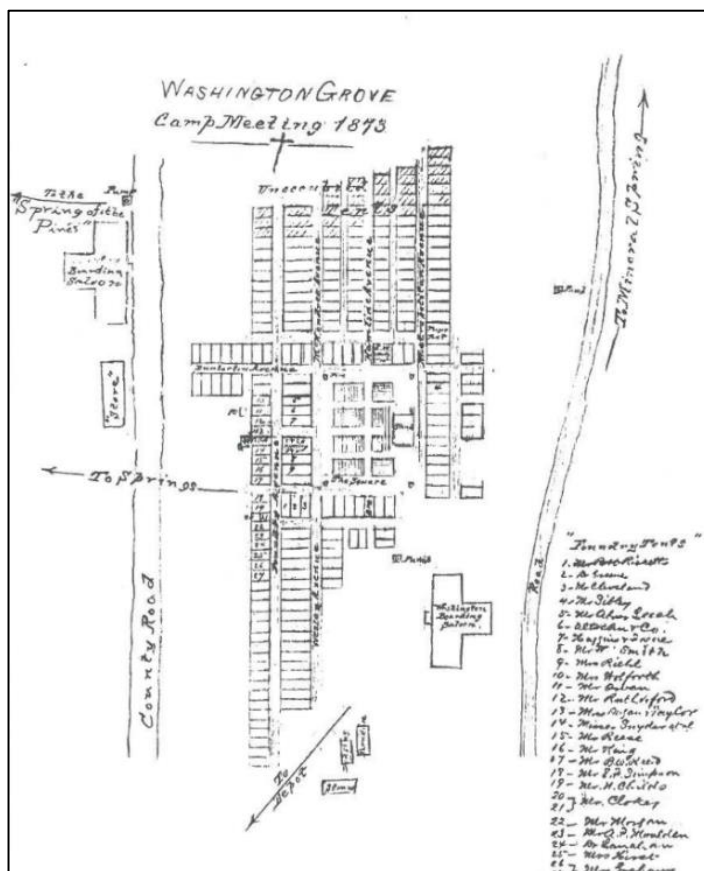


Figure 3: Sketch map by James L. Ewins of the first camp meeting in 1873. (Reproduced from Edwards, Washington Grove, 1873-1937, original copy in Washington Grove Archives, “Sketch Map by James L. Ewins, Camp Meeting in 1873” (1873), MA.000Z3.02.)

grounds, and endeavored to locate their proposed homes in the woods. The stakes show that the inner court has been changed in shape from a square to an octagon, with radiating avenues entering upon it from four opposite directions.”<sup>15</sup> Eventually the octagon evolved into a circle, and the camp meeting took on a wheel plan featuring a central gathering space surrounded by tent sites and radiating paths, also lined with tent lots. This arrangement was a derivative of the radial concentric plan most notably used at the Wesleyan Grove camp meeting on Martha’s Vineyard.<sup>16</sup> As historian Ellen Weiss has documented, the radial concentric plan at Wesleyan Grove is of particular interest because this plan type was little used in

<sup>13</sup> Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists in the United States of America* (Baltimore, MD: Magill and Clime, 1810), 360.

<sup>14</sup> Charles Johnson, *The Frontier Camp Meeting* (Dallas, TX: Southern Methodist University Press, 1955), 42.

<sup>15</sup> “Pic-nics and Excursions,” *Evening Star*, July 6, 1874.

<sup>16</sup> Weiss, *City in the Woods: The Life and Design of an American Camp Meeting on Martha’s Vineyard* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 32.

the United States. Its derivative, however, was featured at a number of campsites across the United States by the 1870s. In addition to Washington Grove, the wheel plan could be found at campgrounds in Pitman Grove, New Jersey; Lancaster, Ohio; and Plainville, Connecticut.<sup>17</sup> Washington Grove historian Philip K. Edwards postulates that the rectangular plan may have evolved into a wheel form due to the weather, writing, “There must have [been] much moving about of boundaries as tents were placed where they were practical instead of in neat rows.”<sup>18</sup> This implies that the rectangular plan did not even last through the duration of the first camp meeting. The site’s topography may have also influenced the spatial configuration of the grounds. The founders of Washington Grove placed the preacher’s stand and assembly area at a high point (roughly 522 feet or 159 meters above sea level), and, for decades, the principal pedestrian route into the grounds (Grove Avenue) followed along the crest of a ridgeline. Because the ridgeline curved slightly east around the assembly area, the wheel plan may have been a more natural fit for the shape of the land.

During the initial period of Washington Grove’s development, the spiritual and cultural focus of the landscape was the preacher’s stand and assembly area, which was later called the “Circle of the Tabernacle” or the “Sacred Circle.” The grounds that developed around this space came to be known as the Tent Department, or Tenting Department. The Tent Department was located on a high point within the Grove, and its ground plane was defined by the natural terrain and by the radiating avenues and interstitial alleys that characterized the area. Tall shade trees and manmade forms, including the preacher’s stand, which was replaced by a tabernacle in 1877, and the tents that surrounded it, defined the vertical plane. During the early years of the Camp Meeting Period, the canvas walls of individual tents may have been raised or pulled aside to open up interior spaces to nature and allow broader views out or, conversely, they may have been lowered to create more intimate, private spaces. A *Washington Post* article from 1879 describes the practice. “Down the long avenues,” it reads, “the cool breeze comes over the hills, filling the tents, which stand with the front canvas thrown wide open, with fresh, sweet air.”<sup>19</sup> The opening and closing of the tents likely affected the perceived spatial organization of the Tent Department throughout the day. (Figure 4) In addition, because the tents were a temporary element



*Figure 4: View of the Woodlawn Camp Meeting (no longer extant) that was located in Cecil County, Maryland. Each tent in this row has its front canvas pulled open, resulting in the integration of interior and exterior space. (Maryland State Archives)*

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Philip K. Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937: A History of the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association* (Washington Grove, MD: P. K. Edwards, 1988), 44.

<sup>19</sup> “A Christian Camp,” *Washington Post*, August 8, 1879.

of the landscape, the spatial organization of the site during the summer season was distinct from the rest of the year.

Beyond the Tent Department, the principal elements that defined the spatial organization of the Grove during the Camp Meeting Period included the physical path and visual corridor along Grove Avenue, which served as the primary pedestrian route from the railroad depot to the Tent Department, the perimeter roads that visually and physically defined the boundaries of the site, clusters of support structures (dining tents, mercantile stands and stores, the train depot, etc.), and the site's native vegetation. The locations and limits of wooded areas, open clearings, and meadows defined spaces within the landscape and guided how it was used, with the residential enclave set deep into the woods for greater seclusion and safety and support functions (the laundry reserve, horse pens, delivery areas, carpentry stands, etc.) placed at the edge of the grounds or near the depot.

As Washington Grove developed from a camp meeting site into a summer resort and finally into a year-round suburban community, its spatial organization transformed. Within the Tent Department, permanent structures replaced the temporary dwellings, and the vertical planes that contributed to the organization of the space became fixed – defined by the walls, rooflines, and porches of the cottages – and consistent across the seasons. The spatial organization of the Tent Department was radically changed in 1905, when the tabernacle was torn down and replaced by an open clearing defined by a circular path, trees, and other vegetation.

A second type of residential zone within the Grove was the Cottage Department. Its spatial organization was defined, in part, by its circulation system – a regular grid of avenues (for pedestrian use) and roads (for vehicular traffic) that contrasted greatly with the radial layout of the Tent Department. (Figures 5 and 6) This organization of space, however, occurred gradually, beginning with development along Grove Avenue, which was platted in 1883, and continuing as new roads and avenues within the Cottage Department were cleared and graded. A newspaper article from 1887 characterized the Cottage Department in relation to the Tent Department as “the suburbs of the sylvan city.”<sup>20</sup> Natural features also influenced the organization of the ground plane within the Cottage Department in that many of its topographically low areas, which typically had poor drainage, remained undeveloped. In fact, the creation of parks throughout the Camp Meeting Period and the Chautauqua Period had a significant impact on the spatial organization of the landscape, offering clearings that provided visual and physical respite within crowded residential areas (Wade Park), creating large swaths of open ground that offered broad, sweeping views across the landscape (Woodward Park), and establishing natural buffer areas that provided protection and privacy for the residential areas (Morgan Park). (See below for a detailed discussion of Washington Grove's parks.) Tall shade trees defined the vertical plane within the Cottage Department, as did manmade elements including fences and, of course, the cottages themselves. Lot sizes within the Cottage Department were larger than in the Tent Department, measuring 50 feet across by 150 feet deep, allowing for more sizeable dwellings.

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<sup>20</sup> “At Washington Grove: The City of Tents Looks Very Beautiful,” *Washington Post*, August 11, 1887.

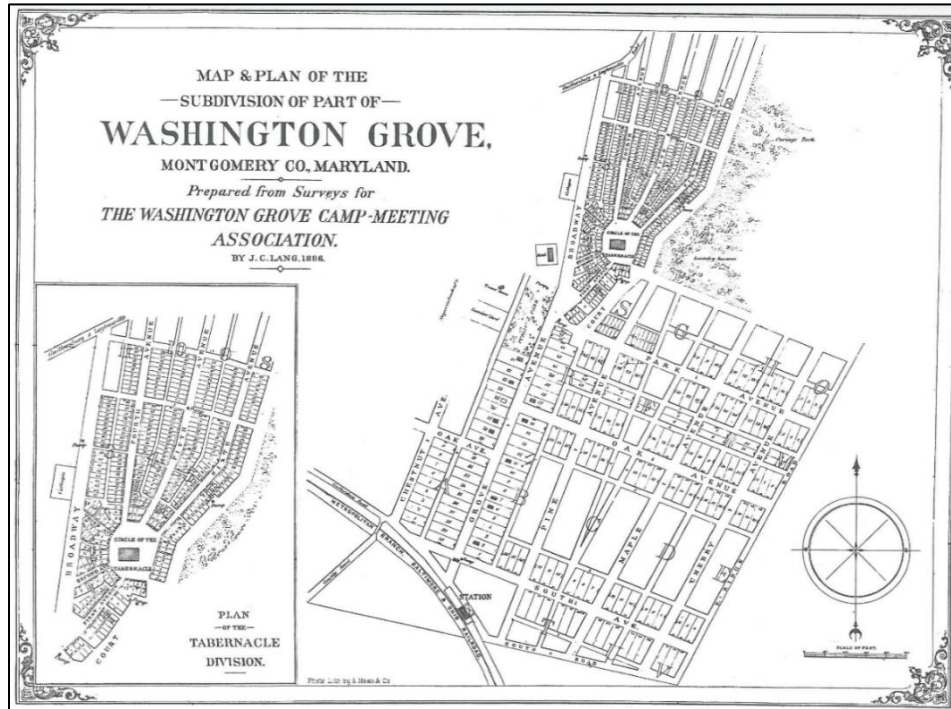


Figure 5: Map and plan of Washington Grove from surveys by J. C. Lang, 1886. (Reproduced from Edwards, Washington Grove, 1873-1937, original copy in Washington Grove Archives, "Plan of Subdivision Part of Washington Grove, Surveys by J. C. Lang, Tabernacle Division" (1886), MA.00Z3.04.)

The construction of the assembly hall (today McCathran Hall) in 1901 at the southern end of Howard Park represented a decentralization of community life in Washington Grove away from the historically sacred precinct of the tabernacle. The demolition of the tabernacle and the construction of an auditorium for Chautauqua in Woodward Park in 1905 underscored this reorganization. The construction of the auditorium also had the effect of encouraging development within the eastern half of the Grove. In many instances, cottages were relocated from the Tent Department to open lots within the Cottage Department, creating open pockets of space and relieving crowded conditions within the former and introducing new physical forms and visual associations within the landscape of the latter. While many of the Grove's smaller parks, such as Chapel Park and Knott Park, remained free of large-scale built features, other parks contained recreational amenities (tennis courts, a stone fireplace, etc.) and large structures (the assembly hall, the auditorium) that influenced how space was organized.

The spatial organization of the landscape since the incorporation of Washington Grove in 1937 has been influenced by infill development, changes to the circulation networks, the formal dedication of the East Woods and the West Woods as forest preserves, and the annexation of property along the edges of the town. Following national trends, Washington, D.C., suburbs in Maryland and Virginia grew exponentially after World War II. The deep, narrow lots that characterized the division of land in the Cottage Department were not well suited for the low horizontal forms of ranch houses and other popular residential styles of the postwar period. As a result, many building lots in the Grove were consolidated



Town of Washington Grove  
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

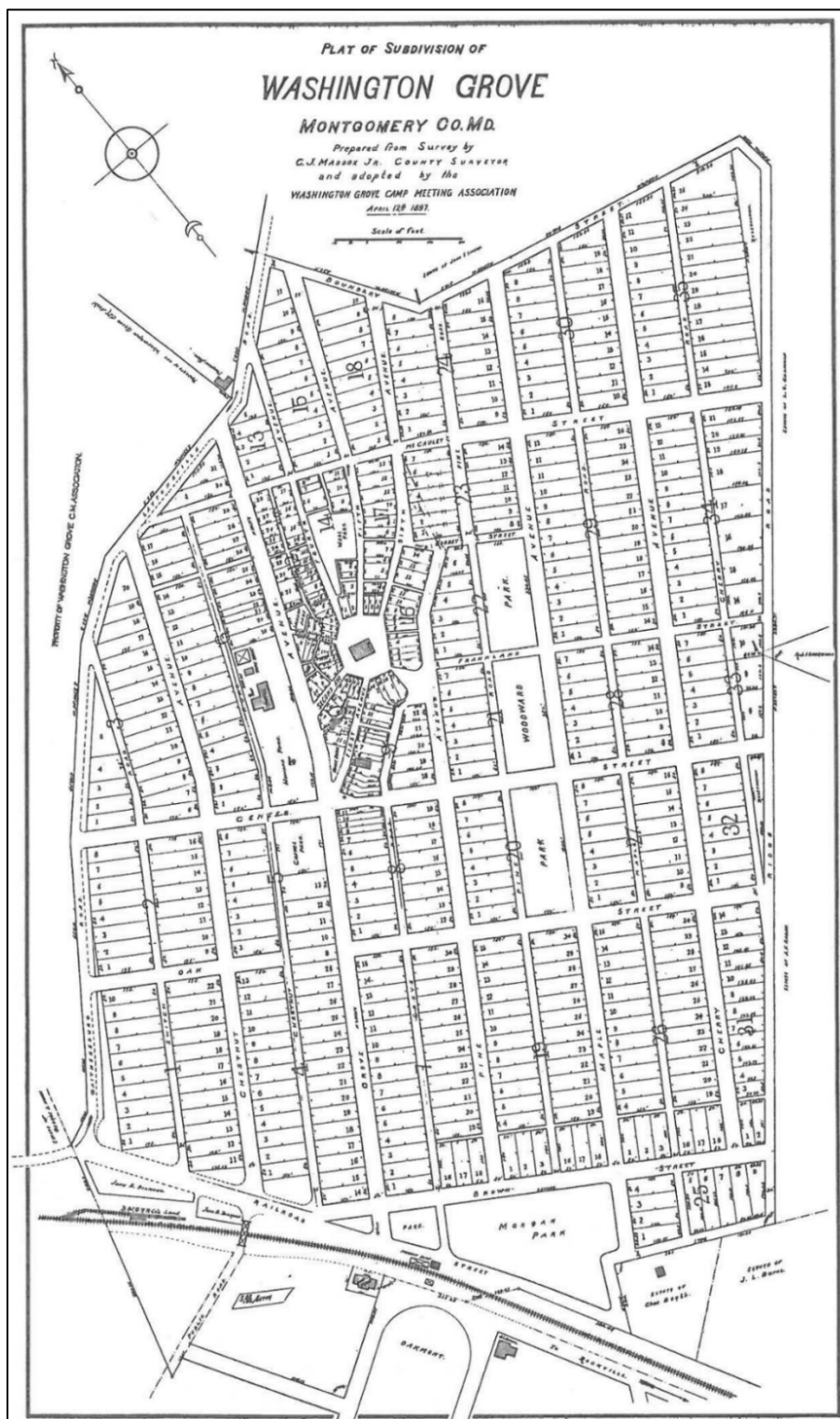


Figure 6: Plan of Washington Grove from surveys by C. J. Maddox, 1897. Note the contrast between the layout of the roads and lots in the Tent Department, which surrounded the "Circle of the Tabernacle," and the regularly platted grid of the Cottage Department. (Black and white copy reproduced from Edwards, Washington Grove, 1873-1937, original in Washington Grove Archives, "Plan of Subdivision with Tabernacle, Maddox Surveyor" (1897), MA.00Z3.08.)

Town of Washington Grove  
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

and subdivided into new configurations that could accommodate modern domestic forms as well as front driveways, carports, and other suburban amenities. In 1955, for example, Lots 6 and 7 of Block 3 were replatted to create two lots that fronted Center Street.<sup>21</sup> (Figure 7) The one-story, brick veneer, ranch houses built on the lots in 1958 were nearly mirror images of each other (11 and 13 Center Street).

Detailed information on the development of Washington Grove's twelve parks (described first, in alphabetical order) and two forest preserves is provided below. For the purposes of this study, the Circle is counted as a park due to its importance to the spatial organization of the landscape. Also, although it lies outside the corporate limits, a description of the Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park is provided due to its significance as an important component of the historic setting of the Grove.

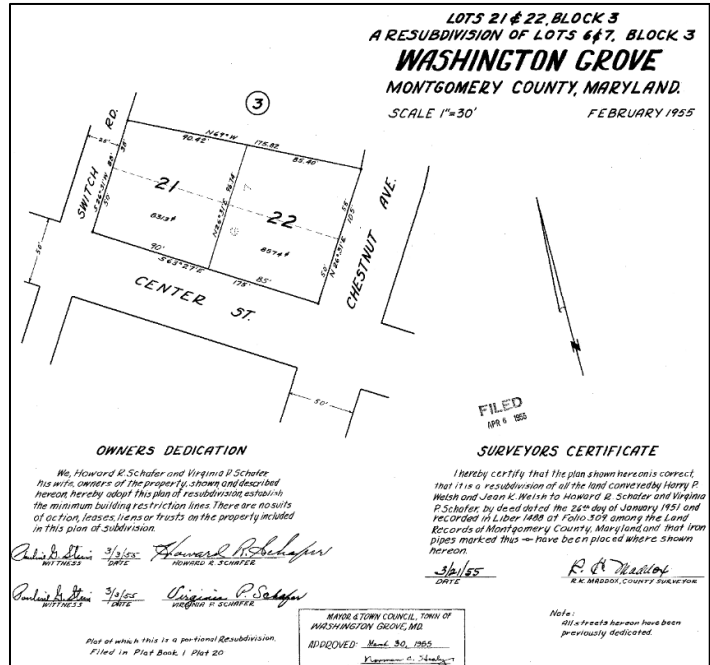


Figure 7: The deep, narrow lots that characterized the division of land in the Cottage Department were unsuitable for midcentury housing forms. In 1955, two lots along Chestnut Avenue were replatted to create parcels with frontage along Center Street that allowed for front driveways and carports. (Montgomery County, Circuit Court Land Records)

**Chapel Park** is located along the south side of Center Street between Grove Avenue and Chestnut Road. The map and plan of Washington Grove prepared in 1886 by surveyor J. C. Lang set aside a block of land at the western terminus of Park Avenue (later Center Street) as a public park. Initially, it was the setting of the hotel and a well. The Maddox plan, adopted by the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association in 1897, divided this park into two separate spaces: Chapel Park, which was located south of Center Street and measured 171 feet by 150 feet, and Howard Park along the north side of Center Street. Chapel Park was set aside for a chapel, but this use was never realized. Instead, in 1901, an assembly hall (today McCathran Hall) was built in Howard Park. For a period before World War II, Chapel Park was used for low impact recreation, including roque, croquet, and badminton.<sup>22</sup> Today, the park features mature oak trees on turf with some understory plantings, including a row of hydrangea shrubs along Grove Avenue. Small-scale features include a concrete and wood-slat bench. A pull-in parking area at the north end of the park along Center Street is paved with gravel.

<sup>21</sup> Montgomery County, Circuit Court Land Records, Plat No. 4031, February 1955.

<sup>22</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1937-1977*, 46.



## Town of Washington Grove CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS



Figure 8: Detail of the 1897 Maddox plan showing the Circle and the Tent Department. (Washington Grove Archives, "Plan of Subdivision with Tabernacle, Maddox Surveyor" (1897), MA.0023.08.)



Figure 9: The tabernacle was constructed in 1877 to replace an open assembly area at the heart of the Grove. (Washington Grove Archives)

**The Circle** is located in the center of what was historically designated as the Tent Department. (Figure 8) As the location of the preacher's stand, assembly area, and, later, the tabernacle, it was the spiritual and cultural focus of the landscape during the initial period of Washington Grove's development. A sketch map of the Grove created in 1873, the year of the first camp meeting, reveals that the Circle was originally a square clearing in the woods that featured a preacher's stand and rows of benches for assembly and worship. Narrow tent lots were arranged facing the "Square" and along several avenues that extended from it in a grid-like pattern. Perhaps during the first camp meeting or soon after, whether organically or by design, the arrangement of the tent lots around the tabernacle took on a looser, less linear composition so that the square clearing evolved into a circle. In 1877, the preacher's stand and assembly space were replaced with a permanent, open pavilion known as the tabernacle, and the clearing became known as the "Circle of the Tabernacle." According to one source, the tabernacle measured 48 by 70 feet, and the plaza around it was 216 feet from north to south and 179 feet from west to east.<sup>23</sup> (Figure 9) As early as 1880, the Grove installed pipe drains within the Circle to prevent puddling and flooding around the structure.<sup>24</sup> Periodic

<sup>23</sup> T. H. S. Boyd, *The History of Montgomery County, Maryland: From its Earliest Settlement in 1650 to 1879* (Baltimore, MD: W. K. Boyle & Son, 1879), 117.

<sup>24</sup> "At Washington Grove," *Washington Post*, July 3, 1880.

efforts to improve drainage followed. A newspaper account of the 1881 camp meeting notes that there were fifteen tents grouped around the Circle.<sup>25</sup> The 1897 Maddox plan shows the Circle as a clearing consisting of two distinct elements – a circular lawn containing the tabernacle and an irregularly shaped path that encircled the lawn and defined a setback between it and the surrounding tent lots. The tent lots surrounding the Circle ranged in width from 14 feet to 31 feet. When the tabernacle was torn down in 1905, the character of the Circle evolved once again. After clearing away debris, draining the space, and filling and leveling the ground, the association took steps to “beautify” what was then called the “Plaza.” This included planting grass seed and laying drainage pipes.<sup>26</sup> In 1913, the residents of the Circle, at their own expense, “had new walks laid out, parking made in front of the cottages and grass seed sown in the circle space.”<sup>27</sup> Improvements in 1964 included planting a red dogwood, four rhododendron, and sixty-four azaleas.<sup>28</sup> Today, the Circle is comprised of a turf lawn surrounded by a turf and gravel path. (Figure 10) The lawn is shaded with new and mature trees. It features four beds planted with flowers as well as azaleas, holly, and other shrubs. The beds create an intimate setting for two concrete and wood-slat benches and a commemorative plaque set on a concrete base. The perimeter of the Circle is planted with oak trees.



Figure 10: View of the Circle, looking south. (Robinson & Associates, 2018)

**Howard Park** is located along the north side of Center Street between Grove Avenue and Chestnut Road. As described above, the 1886 Lang plan set aside a block of land at the western terminus of Park Avenue (later Center Street) as a public park. The 1897 Maddox plan divided this park into Chapel Park, along the south side of Center Street, and Howard Park (also referred to historically as Hotel Park) to the north. On the 1897 plan, several parks, together with some streets, were given the names of deceased Washington Grove pioneers or active members of the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association who held positions of trust.<sup>29</sup> Howard Park was named after Dr. Flodoardo Howard, a founding trustee and the first

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<sup>25</sup> “The Camp Meeting Season,” *Evening Star*, August 11, 1881.

<sup>26</sup> Grounds Committee, June 1908, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.34.

<sup>27</sup> Photocopied pages from Washington Grove Association Board of Trustees Minutes, May 30, 1913, courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>28</sup> Information Bulletin, October 1964, WGA, Box H-2.

<sup>29</sup> President’s Report, May 1897, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.23.

president of the association.<sup>30</sup> During the Camp Meeting Period, Howard Park was the site of a hotel and two commercial buildings, labeled “store” and “market” on the Maddox plan. Late nineteenth-century improvements within the park included removing large stones, plowing and fertilizing the soil, planting grass, paving the walks around the hotel with gravel, and enclosing the grounds with a post and wire fence.<sup>31</sup> In 1901, the assembly hall (today McCathran Hall) was erected at the southern end of Howard Park. In 1927, the hotel was razed because it no longer generated revenue. In 1930, a miniature golf course was laid out on the former hotel site.<sup>32</sup> Finally, in 1940, a new assembly building for the Woman’s Club was built on the site. Today, Howard Park extends from Center Street on the south to Miller Drive on the north between Chestnut Road and Grove Avenue. It provides a common green for McCathran Hall and the Woman’s Club. Footpaths associated with the structures pass through the park, which otherwise features turf lawn, rhododendrons, oakleaf hydrangea, and other shrubs, and deciduous and evergreen trees, including holly, oak, pine, and tricolor beech. Behind the Woman’s Club is a stand of cherry trees. The park has an uneven topography that slopes down to the northwest. Small-scale features include four concrete and wood-slat benches and various types of signage.

**Jackson Park** is depicted on the 1897 Maddox plan as a small, irregularly shaped park east of Grove Avenue and northwest of the Circle between Third Avenue and Johnson Alley. Based on available records, it is believed the park was named in honor of Richard Plummer Jackson (1816-1891), an early stockholder at Washington Grove. Jackson was an attorney in Washington, D.C., and the author of a history of Georgetown.<sup>33</sup> Town records indicate that there was a well and pump in Jackson Park, although it does not appear on the Maddox plan.<sup>34</sup> A local effort by the Washington Conference of Methodists’ Ladies Guild to “beautify” the park in 1916 included plans to plant shrubbery and lay walks.<sup>35</sup> This was one of several park beautification projects led by the Ladies Guild since around 1905, when the group established a tradition of civic improvement projects in the Grove.<sup>36</sup> Part of Jackson Park was eliminated when Acorn Lane was established (circa 1939). The space identified today as Jackson Park differs from its historic counterpart. Today, Jackson Park is comprised of what historically has been the north end of Howard Park.

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<sup>30</sup> Dr. Howard (1814-1888) had a successful practice in Washington, D.C., and was one of the founders of the Georgetown Medical School (established in 1851), today the Georgetown University School of Medicine. See “Death of Dr. Flodoardo Howard,” *Washington Post*, January 18, 1888.

<sup>31</sup> The walks had a clay base covered in 2 to 3 inches of crushed rock, which was then rolled. See President’s Report, May 1896, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.22, and President’s Report, May 1898, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.24.

<sup>32</sup> Sylvia Tate Horan, *A History of the Woman’s Club of Washington Grove* (Washington Grove, MD: Woman’s Club of Washington Grove, 2001): 4.

<sup>33</sup> Research memo prepared by Patricia Patula, Town Archivist, February 1, 2019.

<sup>34</sup> Grounds Committee Report, May 1897, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.20.

<sup>35</sup> Grounds Committee Report, April 1916, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.60.

<sup>36</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 269.

It is located west of Grove Avenue and bound by Acorn Lane, Chestnut Road, and Miller Drive. Along the edge of Miller Drive is a small parking area, paved with gravel. Otherwise, the park features a turf lawn planted with evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs. Small-scale features include a wood bench, a small statue of a seated girl (both located near the intersection of Chestnut Road and Acorn Lane), and signage.

**Knott Park** is a small, triangular park bound by Grove Avenue on the west and First Avenue on the east. It may have been named after Ignatius Knott, an active member of the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association whose wife Mary was also one of the original stockholders.<sup>37</sup> The Knotts had a cottage on First Avenue that was known for its garden. A newspaper account from 1884 reads, “Perhaps the prettiest cottage in the grove is that of Mr. Ignatius Knott. It is surrounded with a miniature garden in which are tiny beds of flowers in unique design and several urns filled with flowering plants.”<sup>38</sup> As early as 1878, the park was the location a furniture warehouse operated by Washington B. Williams, a merchant from Washington, D.C.<sup>39</sup> This building was later repurposed as the Young People’s Hall. In 1902, it was moved out of Knott Park (to a location unknown) to be used as a stable and other purposes. In 1906, the Ladies Guild requested the privilege to beautify the park.<sup>40</sup> Today, Knott Park is planted with shade trees and shrubs, including a notable English yew. Its edges are defined by the gravel roadbeds of First Avenue and Grove Avenue. Undeveloped lots along its north end create the sense that the park is larger than it actually is.

**Maple Road Park**, also known as McCathran Park, is a neighborhood woodland park located on the east side of Maple Road between 104 Maple Road and 115 Maple Road.

**McCauley Park**, also known as Washington Grove Lane Park, is a small, triangular parcel that provides a verdant entrance to the Grove from Washington Grove Lane. Reverend James A. McCauley, after whom the park was named, was a part of the search committee that selected the site for Washington Grove.<sup>41</sup> McCauley Street passes through the park, which features shade trees, as well as smaller, flowering trees,

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<sup>37</sup> Research memo prepared by Patricia Patula, Town Archivist, February 1, 2019.

<sup>38</sup> “A City in the Woods: Religious Services at Washington Grove – The Guests of the Hotel,” *Washington Post*, August 15, 1884.

<sup>39</sup> Williams also reportedly provided postal services and operated a barber shop and lodging rooms in the building. See Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 87. Edwards refers to the merchant as “Wash” B. Williams; contemporary newspaper articles provide his full name of Washington B. Williams.

<sup>40</sup> Notes on the June 23, 1906, Washington Grove Association Board of Trustees Minutes, courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>41</sup> McCauley (1822-1896) was named a presiding elder of the Washington District of the Methodist Church in 1870. In 1872, we was appointed president of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. See Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections, “James Andrew McCauley (1822-1896),” available at <http://archives.dickinson.edu/people/james-andrew-mccauley-1822-1896>, accessed January 30, 2019.



including a magnolia. As the setting of the northern entrance to the Grove, there are several types of signage within the park. Along the western edge of the park is a concrete sidewalk.



*Figure 11: Morgan Park and the Grove Road entrance to Washington Grove. (Robinson & Associates, 2018)*

**Morgan Park** extends between Brown Street on the north, the municipal boundary line on the south, Hickory Road on the west, and Maple Avenue on the east. (Figure 11) With the exception of a few parcels between Pine and Maple avenues, which were platted for residential development, the majority of this area was set aside as open space in the 1886 Lang plan. Recognizing the significance of the space as the front door of the Grove, it was officially decreed a park in 1890.<sup>42</sup> The park was named after Major Thomas P. Morgan (d. 1896), the second president of the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association.<sup>43</sup> The

forested area provided a natural buffer between the noise and dust of the train depot and the tranquility of the camp meeting grounds. For many years, a perimeter fence surrounded Washington Grove to provide privacy and protection to participants in the camp meeting and to deter the use and distribution of alcohol. Part of the perimeter fence was located in the vicinity of Morgan Park. As Washington Grove became a year-round community, Morgan Park also served as a transitional space between the rail corridor and the Grove's residential areas. In the early twentieth century, Morgan Park was the focus of improvements by the Ladies Guild.<sup>44</sup> In the early 1980s, as part of a reforestation effort, the town planted more than 300 evergreen trees in the park. On July 4, 2008, a plaque (affixed to a boulder) commemorating the history of Washington Grove was dedicated in Morgan Park. Today, roughly one-third of the park is emerging woodland, densely planted with trees and shrubs. A drainage ditch passes through the park from the intersection of Pine Road and Brown Street to a culvert at Railroad Street. A strip of the park along the south side of Brown Street has been cleared of understory vegetation. The section of the park traversed by Grove Road has also been cleared of understory plantings and features shade and evergreen trees on turf, flowering plants and shrubs (including rhododendrons, azaleas, and hellebores), a concrete and wood-slat bench, and various types of signage.

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<sup>42</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 123.

<sup>43</sup> In addition to holding a leadership role at Washington Grove, Major Morgan served many years in public office in the District of Columbia. In 1873, Morgan was elected to the Board of Fire Commissioners, then, five years later, he was appointed Chief of Police. Between November 1879 and March 1883, he served as one of the three commissioners of the District of Columbia. See Metropolitan Police Department, "Thomas P. Morgan," accessed November 29, 2018, available at <https://mpdc.dc.gov/biography/thomas-p-morgan>.

<sup>44</sup> Notes on the September 3, 1915, Washington Grove Association Board of Trustees Minutes, courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

**Railroad Park** is a small park on the south side of Railroad Street across the street from the commercial corner. It is part of a small parcel annexed by the town in 2003 and commemorates the community's historic ties to the B&O Railroad. The park consists of a turf lawn informally planted with small trees and shrubs. Salvaged railroad ties are used as retaining walls.

**Wade Park** was platted in the 1897 Maddox plan as an irregularly shaped open space north of the Circle between Fourth Avenue on the west and Fifth Avenue on the east. Wade Park was named after John W. Wade, a founding layman member of the association and its treasurer for fourteen years beginning in 1884.<sup>45</sup> In 1915, Wade Park was the focus of improvements by the Ladies Guild.<sup>46</sup> A flagpole was installed and dedicated in the park in 1921.<sup>47</sup> Circa 1939, when Acorn Lane was established to accommodate automobile traffic and residential parking in the densely developed area north of the Circle, its route passed through Wade Park, roughly bisecting the space. Today, the park features shade and evergreen trees, turf, and hedges. Small-scale features include concrete and wood-slat benches, a flagpole, and signage. Within the park are small parking areas associated with Acorn Lane. They are paved with gravel and feature timber curbs.

Over the years, Wade Park has become associated with a popular, nineteenth-century gathering place called "Political Hill."<sup>48</sup> During the Camp Meeting Period, politicians attended camp meetings to make speeches and visit with constituents. A newspaper article titled "Religion and Politics, The Features of Sunday at Washington Grove Camp," describes how local politicians were on hand in force one Sunday during the August 1883 camp meeting. It reads, "The wave of local politics never tided higher, and 'Political hill' assumed early in the day an attitude of prominence never before known in its history. If there were various prominent points throughout the encampment where the politicians halted and held conference, this was the head center...."<sup>49</sup> Sources differ in their location of Political Hill. The first known reference to its location was written in 1927 and refers to an outcropping of rocks between Fifth and Sixth avenues. A later source gives its location as between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Wade Park.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Research memo prepared by Patricia Patula, Town Archivist, February 1, 2019.

<sup>46</sup> Notes on the September 3, 1915, Washington Grove Association Board of Trustees Minutes, courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>47</sup> President's Report, May 1921, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.44.03.

<sup>48</sup> The name "Candidate Hill" is also used in historical accounts. See "A Busy Time: How a Sunday at Washington Grove is Passed," *The Washington Critic*, August 17, 1885.

<sup>49</sup> "Religion and Politics, The Features of Sunday at Washington Grove Camp," *Washington Post*, August 20, 1883.

<sup>50</sup> Patricia Patula, Town Archivist, "'Rocks and Politicians,' The Story of Political Hill," accessed November 30, 2018, available at <https://washingtongrovermd.org/town-bulletins/town-bulletin-october-2013/>.



Town of Washington Grove  
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

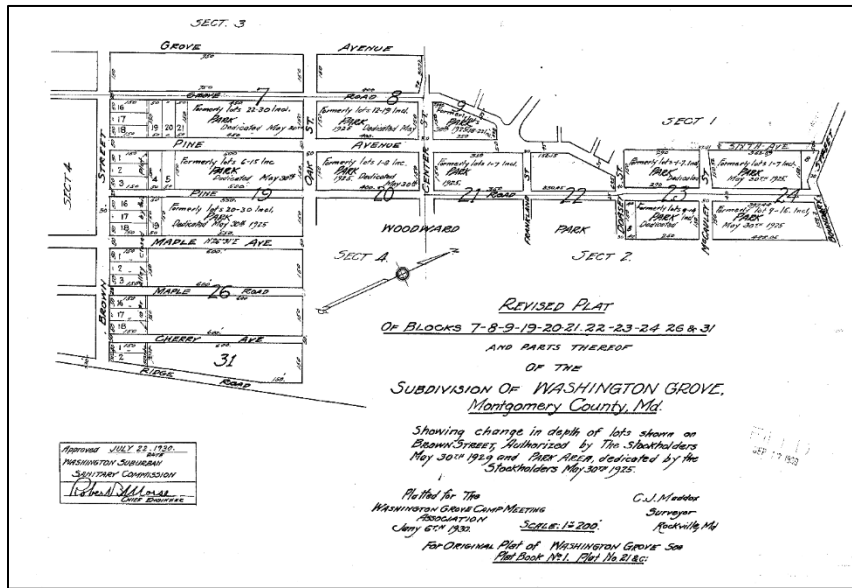


Figure 12: Plat map showing the blocks east of Grove Road that were rededicated as parkland in the early twentieth century. This was a low lying area of the landscape that was poorly drained and unsuitable for residential development. (Montgomery County, Circuit Court Land Records)

**Woodward Park** has its origins in the 1897 Maddox plan of Washington Grove, which set aside three blocks along the west side of Maple Avenue as a public park named in honor of William Ryland Woodward, one of Washington Grove's founding trustees and the vice president of the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association for its first fifteen years.<sup>51</sup> In 1905, the park was informally expanded west to Grove Road. That same year, the area bound by Oak Street on the north, Maple Avenue on the east, the building lots on Pine and Maple avenues on

the south, and Grove Road on the west were set apart for recreational purposes and dedicated as Athletic Park.<sup>52</sup> This land was poorly drained and consisted of mainly thicket and bog before it was adapted for recreational use.<sup>53</sup> A plat map dated January 6, 1930, records the lots south, west, and north of Woodward Park (including the area known as Athletic Park) that had been officially dedicated as "Park" by the camp meeting association on May 30, 1925. (Figure 12) This area, which extended from the private lots along Pine and Maple avenues on the south to Boundary Street on the north and roughly from Grove Road on the west to Maple Avenue on the east, matched the parcels surrounding Woodward Park that were shaded green for "Parks and Parking" in the 1897 Maddox plan.

Historically, Woodward Park has provided Grove residents and visitors an area for both passive and active recreation. Between 1905 and 1963, the auditorium stood in Woodward Park north of Oak Street and east of the tennis courts. It was used for Chautauqua as well as other activities. Landscape features associated with the auditorium included a fence and footpaths. Other structures within the park included a men's clubhouse (no longer extant), a girls' clubhouse (built in 1910), which was used by the Woman's Club before being destroyed by fire in 1939, and a large, stone fireplace, built by the Athletic Club in 1935. The

<sup>51</sup> Woodward (1819-1905) was a lawyer and the first president of the Washington Title Insurance Company. He was prominent in business and municipal affairs in the District of Columbia and was an advocate for the public school system. See "Aged Resident Dead, Unexpected Demise of William Ryland Woodward," *Evening Star*, August 8, 1905.

<sup>52</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 195.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, 120.

park's tennis courts and athletic fields were popular with residents and the public. For a period beginning in 1903 and continuing through at least 1916, track and field events were held in the park every summer.<sup>54</sup> They attracted athletes from Maryland as well as from neighboring states.<sup>55</sup> After drainage improvements were carried out along Center Street, a location along the south side of the street was selected as the site for a town maintenance building, which was built in 1955. Following the demolition of the auditorium in 1963, its site was redeveloped into an outdoor "recreation center" that featured playground equipment, including steel-pipe monkey bars and a jungle gym, and a multi-purpose, all-weather court.<sup>56</sup> In addition, a new all-weather tennis court was built north of the clay tennis courts. In 1965, a town nursery was established in the southeast section of the park. In 2007, it was redefined as an arboretum. To commemorate the Grove's centennial, celebrated in 1974, a group of volunteers built a gazebo in the park on a site northeast of the intersection of Grove Road and Center Street.<sup>57</sup> (Later, in 1980, this section of the park would be dedicated as Zoe Wadsworth Park.) Today, Woodward Park consists of two distinct areas. With the exception of the clearing around the gazebo in Zoe Wadsworth Park, the section of Woodward Park north of Center Street is heavily wooded and features trails that connect it with the East Woods forest preserve. South of Center Street, the park features baseball fields, a soccer field, tennis and



Figure 13: Woodward Park (Robinson & Associates, 2018)

basketball courts, horseshoe pits, playground equipment, picnic areas, and associated features, including backstops, chain-link fencing, and a shed. (Figure 13) Other small-scale landscape features include gravel paths and parking areas, signage, concrete and wood-slat benches, drainage ditches, a flagpole, and architectural and engineering artifacts. Tree species include Virginia pine, pin oak, blackjack oak, white oak, swamp oak, black gum, American beech, and sycamore, among others.

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<sup>54</sup> See "Sports at the Grove," *Washington Post*, September 8, 1903, and "Hold Athletic Meet of Numerous Events," *Washington Post*, September 5, 1916.

<sup>55</sup> Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A, *A Rural Survey in Maryland* (New York: n.p., 1912), 47.

<sup>56</sup> Sketch plan titled, "Washington Grove Recreation Center - Proposed," 1963, WGA, Box H-2.

<sup>57</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1937-1977*, 250-53.

**Zoe Wadsworth Park**, at the intersection of Grove Road and Center Street, is located within the boundaries Woodward Park. It was dedicated in 1980 and named after Zoe Wadsworth, a long-time Washington Grove resident who lived at 112 Grove Avenue. A notable feature of the park is the gazebo, which was built in 1974.



*Figure 14: View of the East Woods showing one of its natural surface trails. (Robinson & Associates, 2018)*

The **East Woods** are bound by Maple Avenue on the west, the northern edge of Washington Grove on the north, Ridge Road on the east, and the building lots on Center Street on the south. (Figure 14) The 1886 Lang plan set aside the undeveloped, northeastern, wooded section of the Grove as a “Laundry Reserve” and “Carriage Park.” The latter indicating one of the areas where camp meeting attendees who did not arrive by train could leave their coaches and wagons. Timber was harvested from the woods, and, during the early years of Washington Grove, it was the location of

the camp privies and trenches for burying waste, which were periodically treated with lime.<sup>58</sup> While the 1897 Maddox plan subdivided the area into residential lots, the area now known as the East Woods was untouched until the late 1940s-early 1950s, when several parcels along the north side of Center Street were developed. In response to a confluence of factors related to metropolitan expansion into Montgomery County, including highway development, rezoning, and encroaching high density residential development, Washington Grove residents emerged in the 1960s as forceful defenders of their natural resources. As early as 1962, residents, including Mayor Don McCathran, suggested formally dedicating the town’s West Woods as a wildlife preserve to protect it from future development, but no action was taken at the time.<sup>59</sup> By 1964, with the approval of the town’s first zoning map, both the East Woods and the West Woods were designated as forest preserves. The boundaries of the East Woods reserve extended from Maple Avenue on the west to Ridge Road on the east and from Boundary Street on the north to the back of the residential lots along Center Street on the south. Immediately west of the East Woods was the northern section of Woodward Park. Today, the East Woods is a wooded area characterized by thick understory growth, swales, and trails. Tree species include oak, hickory, mulberry, and wild cherry, among others.<sup>60</sup> The trails are primarily dirt, but some sections are surfaced with gravel. The woods are used for

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<sup>58</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 104.

<sup>59</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1937-1977*, 192.

<sup>60</sup> “The Forests of Washington Grove,” Town of Washington Grove website, available at <http://washingtongrovemd.org/the-forests-of-washington-grove/>.

passive recreation, such as dog walking and nature hikes, and function as a bird and wildlife sanctuary. Trail amenities include a pedestrian bridge and some timber edging. Drainage ditches pass through the East Woods to absorb the town's stormwater runoff. Originally platted for residential development, there are water mains and fire hydrants present in the woods. Small-scale features include signage and fencing.

The **West Woods** are located west of Washington Grove Lane. The original, 267-acre tract of land purchased by the organizers of the Washington Grove camp meeting included nearly 47 acres on the west side of Laytonsville Road (now Washington Grove Lane). As the location of two springs (Whetstone Spring and Maple Spring), this wooded area was a vital source of water and an essential part of the camp meeting grounds. Separated by a roadway from the Tent and Cottage departments, the woods were never platted for residential development. In fact, the West Woods were not included in the 1897 Maddox survey. Instead, the woods were harvested for timber, and camp meeting attendees and summer residents used the logging trails for picnics and excursions. In 1910, construction began on an ice pond fed by Maple Spring. Improvements were made to the picnic area near Whetstone Spring, when a stone fireplace, similar to the one built in Woodward Park, was constructed in the late 1930s. Trees were last harvested from the West Woods in 1946, and by the early 1950s, some residents advocated for subdividing or selling the land.<sup>61</sup> After it was found that the West Woods were not officially part of the town, the municipal limits were amended in 1953 to include the land. Improvements followed, including the construction of Maple Lake, a swimming pond, in 1954-55. As part of this work, a new access road was created from the trail that led to Whetstone Spring.<sup>62</sup> In March 1957, 500 seedling pines were planted against the woods around Maple Lake.<sup>63</sup> By 1964, with the approval of the town's first zoning map, the West Woods was designated a forest preserve. When a high-rise complex was proposed west of the West Woods in 1965, the town staunchly opposed the plans. Although the full scope of the proposal was not implemented, a new condominium development was constructed.<sup>64</sup> In 1985, the small brick sewage pumping station that once stood within the woods was demolished. Today, the West Woods are used for dog walking, bird watching, and nature hikes, as well as for swimming and fishing. The woods also function as a bird and wildlife sanctuary. Drainage channels convey the town's stormwater runoff into the woods. A gravel road and parking area provide access to Maple Lake, which is surrounded by a fence. With the exception of the pond area, the reserve is densely wooded with a thick understory that is cut through with dirt trails. Tree species include tulip poplars, oaks, and dogwood, among others.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1937-1977*, 221.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, 120.

<sup>63</sup> Grove Bulletin, April 1957, WGA, Box H-2.

<sup>64</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1937-1977*, 200.

<sup>65</sup> "The Forests of Washington Grove," Town of Washington Grove website, available at <http://washingtongrovermd.org/the-forests-of-washington-grove/>.





Figure 15: View of the Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park. (Robinson & Associates, 2018)

The **Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park** is located along the eastern edge of Ridge Road, outside the town limits. (Figure 15) While the town owns the land, the park is wholly maintained and operated by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC).<sup>66</sup> The park features a native meadow habitat with forested edges and natural surface trails. Built structures are limited to park signage and an informational kiosk. The park provides a buffer between the

town and surrounding development and preserves the rural, open vistas and spatial organization associated with the agricultural fields that historically formed the setting of the Grove. Within the forest buffer east of the park is the Washington Grove Steatite Quarry Site, an archaeological site listed on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (Site # 18MO6221). The site is comprised of five distinct areas of archaeological interest that represent evidence of Euro-American and possibly Native American use of the area as a quarrying site. The quarry may have also been used as a source of building materials for local farmers and early residents of Washington Grove.<sup>67</sup> Land adjoining the Washington Grove Steatite Quarry Site should be considered archaeologically sensitive.

### Land Use

*Land use describes the principal activities in a landscape that form, shape, and organize the landscape as a result of human interaction.*

Montgomery County has a rich agricultural past that has its roots in the farms and plantations built by Colonial settlers starting in the early eighteenth century. Tobacco, sold from the port of Georgetown (part of Montgomery County before the District of Columbia was formed in 1791), was eastern Maryland's main

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<sup>66</sup> The M-NCPPC holds a deed of dedication that requires the Commission to maintain and operate the land as an open space park, and the Town of Washington Grove owns the underlying in-fee property interest. See Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, "Washington Grove Conservation Park Operation and Use Plan," Staff Draft, October 2013, 4, and "Status of Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park and Cultural Resources, Part I – Washington Grove Steatite Quarry Site," report prepared for the Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission by Wendy Harris, draft dated December 16, 2013.

<sup>67</sup> "Status of Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park and Cultural Resources, Part I – Washington Grove Steatite Quarry Site," report prepared for the Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission by Wendy Harris, draft dated December 16, 2013.

cash crop, but it depleted the soil and was eventually replaced by grains. The county's numerous streams provided power for gristmills and sawmills. In addition to agriculture and milling, another industry was quarrying. There were few roads, and most were maintained by farmers before the county government took over. Washington Grove was established on a 267-acre tract of land that was part of a farm owned by Elizabeth Magruder Cooke (1804-1886), the widow of Nathan Cooke Sr. (1803-1869), who was once described as a "consistent member and worker of the Methodist Church South."<sup>68</sup> Nathan Cooke Sr., was a successful farmer, landowner, and investor. Relying in large part on slave labor, he grew crops and raised sheep and swine. When Maryland enacted emancipation in 1864, Cooke owned forty slaves.<sup>69</sup> The land purchased from Elizabeth Cooke by the founders of Washington Grove included two springs, wooded groves, and fields.

During the Camp Meeting Period, the site's use as a temporary campground and later as a seasonal residential community had a significant influence on the character of the landscape. Other human activities, including religious worship, active and passive recreation, and commerce, also had a bearing on the appearance and organization of the grounds. During the Camp Meeting period, the preacher's stand and surrounding assembly area (later replaced by the tabernacle) were located deep within the grove for privacy and safety and to create distance from the noise and distractions of the railroad depot. Tents and cottages were located immediately adjacent to the assembly area, and many residents added their own embellishments to the residential landscape, creating small yards and private gardens. While residential use was primarily limited to the summer season during this period, the landscape supported some year-round residents and a permanent groundskeeper.<sup>70</sup> Structures to support camp life – dining tents, market stalls, and others – were set apart from the residential areas. In 1897, the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association granted Gaithersburg businessman Thomas I. Fulks permission to operate a general store on his lots at the corner of Railroad Street and Laytonsville Road (now Washington Grove Lane). This use was approved despite the lots being platted for residential use in the Maddox plan of the same year. In 1920, an Odd Fellows Hall was built on Fulks' corner lot. It was a two-story, concrete block building designed by architect W. S. Ploger of Washington D.C.

Historically, the outlying areas of the grounds and the Grove's undeveloped lots supported various types of recreation. A newspaper account dated August 14, 1890, notes, "The amusements at the grove are base-ball, lawn tennis, croquet, quoits, bicycle riding, horseback riding, paying calls, and last, but not least, jolly straw rides about the surrounding country."<sup>71</sup> Between 1896 and 1904, before the house at 118

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<sup>68</sup> John Bowie Ferneyhough, ed., *Year Book of the American Clan Gregor Society* (Richmond, VA: Curtiss-Neal, Inc., 1928), 25.

<sup>69</sup> Archives of Maryland, Biographical Series, Nathan Cooke Sr. (MSA SC 5496-035312), available at <https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5400/sc5496/035300/035312/html/035312bio.html>.

<sup>70</sup> See "Camp-Meeting Arrangements," *Washington Post*, May 14, 1878, and "Opened by Leaguers, They Hold a Camp-meeting at Washington Grove," *Washington Post*, August 21, 1895. The 1895 article notes, "The worshippers are no longer transients, living for ten days in a tent and then departing, but they come when the heated days set in and remain through the summer, and many of them the year round."

<sup>71</sup> "Washington Grove Opens," *Washington Post*, August 14, 1890.



Grove Avenue was built, its lot was the site of a tennis court and baseball field. Agricultural practices also continued to shape the landscape during the Camp Meeting period. The 1897 Maddox survey recorded 205 acres of the Washington Grove site. Of this, 15 acres were classified into subdivided ground and 190 acres as farmland.<sup>72</sup> Agricultural lands also bordered the edges of the camp meeting ground, contributing to its rural setting.

During the Progressive Era, which lasted from roughly 1890 to 1920, several important undertakings related to the issue of sanitation had a significance impact on land use at Washington Grove. Widespread public belief that disease was caused by dirt, stagnant water, and “miasmas” in the air coupled with the threat of periodic summer outbreaks of cholera, diphtheria, and other diseases led the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association to take active measures to maintain a clean well water supply and to drain or dry out low, swampy areas and locations prone to recurring puddling and flooding. Concurrently, the association encouraged growth in undeveloped areas of the grounds, as cramped conditions within the Tent Department were equated with urban overcrowding, which raised concerns over the spread of disease and the increased risk of fire. In 1886, the president of the association warned stockholders, “Living as we do – many of us – in closely built avenues, one careless and uncleanly family might cause serious trouble for all.”<sup>73</sup> As a result of increased attention to these issues, the residents of Washington Grove began to reframe their relationship with the built environment. The preference for the shelter, shade, and enclosure of the forest setting was cast aside in favor of open spaces characterized by circulating fresh air and penetrating sunshine. Concerns over health and sanitation had the effect of encouraging residential development outside of and away from the historically sacred precinct of the Circle.

During the early twentieth century, some agricultural use of the landscape continued. In 1905, as part of his employment contract, the groundskeeper was provided with a dwelling house, an ice house, a stable barn, a piece of ground for a garden, a plowed field (west of the house), and a large meadow of about 12 acres (west of Chestnut Avenue) that could be used for harvesting grass or wood.<sup>74</sup> Agricultural use also included pastures within the Grove that were fenced off and rented out.<sup>75</sup> Although the specifics are unknown, residents reportedly farmed on unbuilt land. In 1914, the Grounds Committee reported, “A number of our streets were still being used during this past winter and spring for the purpose of growing private crops....”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> President’s Report, May 1897, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.23.

<sup>73</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 131.

<sup>74</sup> Grounds Committee, September 1905, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.28.

<sup>75</sup> President’s Report, May 1911, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.36.

<sup>76</sup> Grounds Committee, May 1914, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.48.



Figure 16: An auditorium (no longer extant) was built in Woodward Park in 1905 to accommodate Chautauqua activities. (Washington Grove Archives)

The introduction of Chautauqua, which had its first season in Washington Grove in 1902, influenced the development and use of the landscape in several notable ways. In 1905, an auditorium was built in Woodward Park to accommodate speakers, musicians, entertainers, and other programs on the summer circuit. (Figure 16) This addition to the grounds created new circulation features, shifted the community's

focus away from the camp meeting-era Circle, and provided additional impetus for relocating cottages from the Tent Department.

Recreational uses of the landscape expanded during the early twentieth century and became more organized. Between 1903 and continuing through at least 1916, Washington Grove hosted a regional track meet that took place in Woodward Park every summer.<sup>77</sup> Private tennis courts, laid out on empty building lots, proliferated. At one time, there were twenty or more active courts scattered across the grounds on unimproved lots.<sup>78</sup> By the late 1920s, commercial activities within the landscape began to taper off, especially with the closure and demolition of the hotel in 1927. Camp meetings ended in 1928.

Residential use of the landscape changed during the Depression, when many Washington Grove residents found it difficult to sustain a summer house and turned to their Grove cottages for rental income.<sup>79</sup> In addition, facing limited resources, it became more challenging for the Grove to maintain its public parks and roads, and individual homeowners had less income for repairs and improvements.

Washington Grove became a municipal corporation under state law in 1937. As a municipality, Washington Grove possessed the legislative and administrative power to write its own charter, make its own ordinances, and levy taxes for much needed infrastructure improvements and modernization projects. While the early municipal period saw a gradual decrease in the abandonment of properties and lots being listed for tax sale, deferred home maintenance that had started in the Depression continued to cause concern.<sup>80</sup> In an effort to increase municipal revenues and attract families to the community, the

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<sup>77</sup> Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, *A Rural Survey in Maryland*, 47.

<sup>78</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 177.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 346.

<sup>80</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1937-1977*, 37-38.

town began to sell off platted but unoccupied lots. As a result, Washington Grove experienced a boomlet of home improvements and new construction.

The general store and Odd Fellows Hall that stood on the lots facing the corner of Washington Grove Road and Railroad Street were the last victims of the Depression, when, in 1940, they were seized by the First National Bank of Gaithersburg.<sup>81</sup> The bank tried to market the properties as residential, but several factors made this difficult – the buildings across the street were commercial/industrial and included a large feed mill complex, the lots faced a busy intersection, and there was little buffer between the lots and the nearby railroad tracks. The bank soon appealed to the town for rezoning, and a measure was passed in 1941 approving the change and officially declaring Lots 1 and 2 in Block 1 a commercial zone. The measure authorized the construction of “any additional needed buildings” and gave license for “the manufacture and sale of non-alcoholic beverages, milk products, ice cream and allied products and for the sale of such products either at wholesale or retail....”<sup>82</sup>

After World War II through the current period, Washington Grove’s land use became less diversified. With the exception of private gardens, agricultural use of the land ceased, and religious services were moved to the Washington Grove United Methodist Church (built in 1955). The residential use of the landscape expanded during these periods as undeveloped lots were improved and developed and new land was annexed. Recreational use also flourished. In response to regional developmental pressures, the residents of Washington Grove became forceful advocates of protecting their natural resources. By 1964, with the approval of the town’s first zoning map, the East and West Woods were designated forest preserves. Currently, permitted land uses include residential, commercial, and forest and recreation.<sup>83</sup>

#### **Cultural Traditions<sup>84</sup>**

*Cultural traditions are the practices that influence the development of a landscape in terms of land use, patterns of land division, building forms, stylistic preferences, and the use of materials.*

The development of the Washington Grove landscape is rooted in the religious camp meeting and its traditions. The camp meeting originated as an open-air revival in a rural location where participants camped overnight because they were far from home.<sup>85</sup> The event typically lasted several days to a week and took place during the late summer. “After the mid-1860s, scores of Camp Meeting Associations, each composed of about a dozen to about twenty-five Methodist ministers and laymen, were incorporated in the East and in the Midwest for the purpose of establishing and developing permanent outdoor meeting

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 45.

<sup>82</sup> Minutes from Special Town Council Meeting, June 27, 1941, WGA, Box D-4, File DT.00D4.01.

<sup>83</sup> Washington Grove Planning Commission, “2009 Master Plan, Town of Washington Grove, Maryland,” 2009, 9.

<sup>84</sup> A portion of this section of the Cultural Landscape Analysis is adapted from text provided by Clare Lise Kelly, historian and former Washington Grove resident, dated April 2, 2019.

<sup>85</sup> Weiss, *City in the Woods*, 3.

grounds.”<sup>86</sup> These religious corporations divided their lands into lots, which were leased. Manuals and oral tradition guided the site selection and physical form of most camp meeting grounds. At Washington Grove, tents were arranged in a circle around preacher’s stand, which was set within a wooded grove, and pedestrian circulation initially consisted of a series of radiating avenues.



Figure 17: View of the “Circle of the Tabernacle” in 1898. Note the whitewashed tree trunks. (Washington Grove Archives)

Social customs and traditional gender roles were evident in the physical features of the landscape and guided its development. As one newspaper account reported, “...men and children are in the way and woman [sic] ‘holds the fort,’ so far as arranging the tents are concerned.”<sup>87</sup> Tent sites were embellished with “pretty mounds of rocks and moss and ferns in front,” and many cottages featured “a little garden in front large enough for a flower bed on either side of the walk....”<sup>88</sup> “Everywhere there [was] an evident

striving after beauty and comfort.”<sup>89</sup> As was customary at many religious campgrounds, the trees, tabernacle, and fire stands at Washington Grove were whitewashed.<sup>90</sup> (Figure 17) This tradition encouraged a “beautiful and cleanly appearance” and allegedly protected the trees from insects and fungus.<sup>91</sup> Lamplight and moonlight reflected off the painted trunks, helping with nighttime visibility. Porches were used for listening to the outdoor sermons and for socializing. As historian John R. Stilgoe has documented, “Much of the excitement of camp-meeting convocations derived from the pure pleasure of group activity. For families accustomed to week-long isolation and hard work, meetings offered a social release unlike that of raisings, bees, and funerals.”<sup>92</sup> While the promise of group socialization may not

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<sup>86</sup> Charles A. Parker, “The Camp Meeting on the Frontier and the Methodist Religious Resort in the East – Before 1900,” *Methodist History* (April 1980), 183.

<sup>87</sup> “The Camp Meeting Season,” *Evening Star*, August 11, 1881.

<sup>88</sup> “A Christian Camp,” *Washington Post*, August 8, 1879, and “An Ideal Camp Ground,” *Washington Post*, August 15, 1886.

<sup>89</sup> “A Christian Camp,” *Washington Post*, August 8, 1879.

<sup>90</sup> “The Camp Meeting Season,” *Evening Star*, August 11, 1881.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> John R. Stilgoe, *Common Landscape of America, 1580-1845* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 233.

have been the principal draw for city dwellers, this aspect of camp life may have attracted rural residents who attended the camp meeting from across Montgomery County.

The Washington Grove United Methodist Church was organized in 1910. The congregation originally met in McCathran Hall until a new church was built on Chestnut Avenue in 1955. Today, the church carries on the tradition of religious community gathering in Washington Grove. While a small proportion of town residents are currently members of the church, the congregation has continued to bring town residents, members and non-members, together. Church events are attended and supported by individuals and families who live in Washington Grove. Examples include the Christmas service with candle-lighting and hymn singing and the Easter sunrise service at the Ridge Road meadow.

The Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad opened to passengers and freight on May 25, 1873.<sup>93</sup> It stretched across Montgomery County from the northwest corner of Washington, D.C. to the mouth of the Monocacy River and offered a natural route for suburban expansion as the population of Washington, D.C. increased.<sup>94</sup> With a stop along its southern edge, Washington Grove benefited directly from the new train line. The B&O carried excursionists and residents as well as building materials and supplies to the camp meeting. The railroad was instrumental in the transition of Washington Grove from a religious summer resort into a permanent suburban community and independent municipality. The tradition of rail travel continues to define life in Washington Grove. Residents today commute to jobs in Washington, D.C., taking the train to Union Station.

While the style, massing, and form of Washington Grove's cottages were in part influenced by the canvas structures that initially made up the community, nineteenth- and twentieth-century trends in architecture and vernacular building and the tradition of wood construction had a strong influence on the physical appearance of the Grove. The Carpenter Gothic style, which was developed by builders as an American domestic interpretation of the Gothic Revival, was pervasive during the Camp Meeting and Chautauqua periods. Applied to the cottage form, the style typically featured steeply pitched roofs with high gables, scroll-sawn decoration, lintels, hoods, or other dressings over windows and doors, and some expression of domestic life, such as a simple porch or bay window. The style's emphasis on ornamentation complemented the varied shapes of foliage and bough, and its religious symbolism made it ideally suited for the camp meeting ground. Wood was the principal construction material for Carpenter Gothic cottages, and the railroad greatly facilitated its transportation from lumberyard to building site. The single-family homes built in Washington Grove during and after the Early Municipal Period embraced many of the residential building forms and architectural styles popular in suburban communities through the United States from the second quarter of the twentieth century until the current period. This includes modest Craftsman-style bungalows to ranch houses. These houses were most often frame structures with wood or brick cladding. Cultural traditions related to design and building practices also shaped the

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<sup>93</sup> AD Marble & Company, Maryland Historical Trust Determination of Eligibility Form, "Washington Grove Humpback Bridge (M: 21-220)," 2009.

<sup>94</sup> Andrea Price Stevens, "Suburban Summer Resorts, 1870-1910," *Montgomery County Story* 24, no. 4 (November 1981).

patterns of land division, the orientation of cottages on lots, and functional solutions, such as the locations of doors and garages.

Since its founding, Washington Grove has been a place defined by the presence of trees and a respect for nature. This has had a profound influence on the development and use of the landscape historically and today. By the end of the 1880s, the camp meeting association had formed a Grounds Committee that advocated for planting new trees and preserving existing specimens. In 1913, a Forestry Committee was founded to promote the responsible management of the community's woodlands. In the 1960s, the Forestry Committee was instrumental in having the East Woods and West Woods designated as forest preserves, and a town nursery was established in southeast section of Woodward Park. In 2007, the nursery was redefined as an arboretum. These initiatives and actions demonstrate the continued tradition of preserving and protecting the tree canopy that has long defined the culture of Washington Grove.

The use of Washington Grove's open spaces and forests for active and passive recreation is an important cultural tradition that has shaped the use and development, spatial organization, and preservation of the landscape. Historically, the outlying areas of the grounds and undeveloped residential lots supported various types of recreation. A newspaper account dated August 14, 1890, notes, "The amusements at the grove are base-ball, lawn tennis, croquet, quoits, bicycle riding, horseback riding, paying calls, and last, but not least, jolly straw rides about the surrounding country."<sup>95</sup> The forests were used by residents and visitors for nature walks, picnics, and other activities. By the early twentieth century, Washington Grove organized annual track and field events within Woodward Park that were highly popular with residents and the public alike. In 1910, Maple Lake was created, in part, for swimming. For a period before World War II, Chapel Park was used for low impact recreation, including roque, croquet, and badminton.<sup>96</sup> Following the demolition of the auditorium in 1963, its site in Woodward Park was redeveloped into a community recreation center that featured playground equipment and a multi-purpose, all-weather court. Today, the town's Recreation Committee organizes athletic events every Labor Day weekend that culminate in an awards ceremony, and Maple Lake continues to be a popular summer gathering place, offering recreational swimming and swimming lessons. The East and West Woods are maintained as forest preserves that offer opportunity for dog walking, nature hikes, bird watching, and recreational activities.

The tradition of community service and activism has had a profound impact on the landscape of Washington Grove. Community service has been a vital component of life in Washington Grove since its early days. The governance of the camp meeting association relied on the active participation of religious and lay leaders which evolved into a town meeting form of government wherein residents serve as elected officials and volunteers in the municipal government. During the postwar period, many residents became forceful opponents of unchecked development, rezoning, and highway construction and advocated for smarter growth and the protection of the natural resources. Washington Grove residents embraced the environmental and historic preservation movements that took shape in the 1960s, resulting in improved planning policies, including a new zoning map, the National Register designation of the Washington Grove Historic District, and the preservation of forests and parkland. The town government relies on committees whose success is dependent on the time, expertise, and dedication of its active citizenry.

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<sup>95</sup> "Washington Grove Opens," *Washington Post*, August 14, 1890.

<sup>96</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1937-1977*, 46.



Music, which is integral to the Methodist denomination, is an important cultural tradition associated with Washington Grove that shaped the location and character of the built environment. During the Camp Meeting Period, residents gathered at the Circle and celebrated with hymns, and musical events were a key feature of Chautauqua. A community band was organized in 1902, and the first public dance was held in 1920. Today, the town organizes an annual Music Weekend with evening concerts and a potluck breakfast with live music at the bandstand. Music and dance events are held in McCathran Hall regularly.

### **Cluster Arrangement**

*Cluster arrangement is the location and pattern of buildings and structures in a landscape and associated outdoor spaces.*

During the initial period of Washington Grove's development, the landscape was defined by a residential cluster that was centered on the Circle. The tents and, eventually, cottages that comprised this residential cluster were oriented toward the Circle or facing one of six radial avenues that intersected the central space like the spokes of a wheel. Generally, the size and shape of the building lots in this cluster were inconsistent, with the building lots surrounding the Circle ranging in width from 14 feet to 31 feet. Scattered among the tents and cottages were small parks and alleys. West of the Circle, along Broadway (now the north end of Grove Avenue) was a small group of commercial structures, including a store, a market stand, and a hotel (built around 1881). These buildings were clustered within a public park that was sometimes referred to as Hotel Park (encompassing what is today Howard Park and Chapel Park), setting them apart from the residential area. A newspaper article from 1893 notes, "At the junction of Grove avenue and Broadway stands the market-house. It is not a very pretentious one, to be sure, consisting of a shed about 20 by 40 feet, with an open space around it, but it is a lively spot on three mornings of the week. Every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday during the summer fifteen or twenty farmers visit the camp with wagonloads of vegetables, fruit, chickens, mutton, beef and general farm produce, which they display in the market."<sup>97</sup> Nearby stood the furniture warehouse operated by Washington B. Williams that was located in the small, triangular park known as Knott Park. Later, this building was repurposed as the Young People's Hall. At one point, Washington Grove supported four dining tents on the grounds, exclusive of the hotel, to feed the hundreds of excursionists who attended camp meetings. Other amenities included maintenance and storage buildings and stables.<sup>98</sup> Although the specific locations of these facilities are unknown, they were mostly likely located on the fringes of the residential cluster and/or near the railroad depot. The superintendent's cottage (also called the keeper's lodge) was located near the corner of Center Street and Chestnut Road, west of the commercial cluster in Hotel Park. This residence and its outbuildings, gardens, and associated meadows and fields comprised a distinct cluster notable for its year round occupancy and agricultural use.

As the summer population of Washington Grove grew and demand increased for building lots outside the Tent Department, clusters of houses were built along Grove Avenue, Brown Street, and several other lanes

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<sup>97</sup> "Another Camp Opens," *Washington Post*, August 16, 1893.

<sup>98</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 40-41.

within the Cottage Department. In contrast with the Tent Department, these cottages were arranged following the grid pattern defined by alternating rows of avenues and roads. Cottages were absent from the low-lying areas of the Grove that were poorly drained and therefore undesirable for residential development.

Changes in land use have affected the cluster arrangements that defined the landscape during the nineteenth century. By the early twentieth century, several blocks between Grove Road and Maple Avenue that had originally been platted for residential development had formally or informally been rededicated as athletic fields or public parkland. Adding to the area originally designated as Woodward Park, this created a large swath of open space through the center of Washington Grove. Within this open space were clubhouses and tennis courts, ball fields, and other recreational facilities that comprised a recreational cluster. Private tennis courts, laid out on empty building lots, were once scattered throughout Washington Grove. At one time there were twenty or more active courts located within Washington Grove.<sup>99</sup>

The highly trafficked corner at the junction of Railroad Street and Laytonsville Road (now Washington Grove Lane) attracted nonresidential construction as early as 1897 when the association granted Thomas I. Fulks permission to operate a store on the corner lots (Lots 1 and 2 in Block 1). In 1920, architect W. S. Ploger was awarded the contract to build a two-story hall on Lot 1 of Block 1 for Oak Grove Lodge No. 150 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.<sup>100</sup> In the 1940s, this area of the Grove would be officially declared a commercial zone. In contrast, by the 1920s, the commercial structures that once stood near the heart of the Grove (the hotel, market, and warehouse/Young People's Hall) had become obsolete and were taken down.

More recently, during the Current Period, new residential clusters have been introduced into the landscape as a result of annexations. Examples include Daylily Lane, the east end of Brown Street, and the Ridge Road extension.

### **Circulation**

*Circulation includes the spaces, features, and applied material finishes that constitute the systems of movement in a landscape.*

During the Camp Meeting Period, the Grove's circulation networks ranged in scale and complexity from logging trails to the railroad corridor. While little is known about the informal trails that traversed the site during this period, a sketch map of Washington Grove created in 1873, the year of the first camp meeting, provides information on the early pedestrian paths and wagon roads that characterized the landscape. As noted previously, the circulation system originally followed a grid pattern centered on the rectangular assembly area that formed the setting of the preacher's stand. It is likely that these were natural surface

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 177.

<sup>100</sup> Building and Construction News Section, "Maryland," *The American Contractor* 41 (American Contractor Publishing Company, 1920), 52.

paths – turf or dirt. Straw was used to keep down the dust.<sup>101</sup> A newspaper article from August 13, 1873, describes the arrangement, “The court or open space about which the canvas houses are ranged is square, instead of circular, the usual form, and the tents fronting on it being regarded as choice sites...The ground is laid off by avenues bearing the names of the Washington churches.”<sup>102</sup> Country roads that followed a roughly north-south route traversed the grounds to the east and west of the assembly area and its surrounding tents. Following the first camp meeting in 1873, the tent sites around the assembly area were set up in a circular form, rather than a rectangle. The surrounding circulation pattern changed as well, with radial avenues replacing the original grid, resulting in a wheel plan, a popular derivative of the radial concentric plan that was used at Wesleyan Grove. The avenues north of the Circle, including Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth avenues, extended for several blocks, while the avenues to the west (First, Second, and Third) were truncated by an existing road (Broadway, an extension of Grove Avenue). There were no radial avenues east of the Circle, again due to the existence of an existing road, in this case Grove. (The northern length of Grove Road followed the alignment of an old trail, which ran along a natural ridge in the terrain.<sup>103</sup>) The circulation system of the Cottage Department contrasted greatly with the radial layout of the Tent Department. It featured a regular grid of avenues (for pedestrian use) and roads (for vehicular traffic). This reinforced the sylvan character of the Grove and had a beneficial impact on the health, safety, and appearance of the circulation network. Following the precedent set in 1883, when the plat for Grove Avenue was recorded with the county, the 1897 Maddox plan laid out generous, 50-foot avenues. The alternating roads were 25 feet wide. Major cross streets (Center Street, Oak Street) were also 50 feet wide. The roads that shaped the perimeter of the residential area (Laytonsville Road, Railroad Street, and Ridge Road) connected the Grove with the surrounding region and were more heavily trafficked than the internal network. The routes of Laytonsville Road and Ridge Road were likely influenced by preexisting property lines and topographical features. Railroad Street, on the southern edge of the Grove, roughly followed the course of the railroad tracks.

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<sup>101</sup> “Worship in the Woods,” *Evening Star*, August 13, 1883.

<sup>102</sup> “The Washington Grove Camp Meeting, Description of the New Grounds and Arrangements for the Meeting,” *Evening Star*, August 13, 1873.

<sup>103</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 33.



Figure 18: Early view of Grove Avenue, no date. At one point, the avenue was curbed with timber. (Washington Grove Archives)

Throughout the Camp Meeting Period and the Chautauqua Period, small alleys were created within the Tent Department that snaked between properties and around parks, and new roads and avenues were cleared and graded within the Cottage Department as residential development spread across the landscape. In 1894, the Ground Committee reported, “During the past year two of our principal avenues have been improved. Chestnut Avenue has been graded from the bridge at the railroad to the house of the keeper of the grounds, and South Avenue [Brown Street] from the gate west of the bridge near the railroad to near our eastern

boundary line....”<sup>104</sup> Two years later, in 1896, at a time when only roughly 5 percent of Montgomery County’s roads were paved with stone, the association paved Grove Avenue, First Avenue, and the walks in Hotel Park (Howard Park).<sup>105</sup> This was accomplished using a surface of crushed stone (2 to 3 inches deep) rolled over a clay base.<sup>106</sup> Additional road and path improvements occurred as funds became available. Small-scale features associated with the road network during these periods included timber curbing, gutters, cross culverts, gates, and lampposts. (Figure 18)

By the 1920s, the condition of the Grove’s streets and alleys became a critical issue. Increased automobile ownership meant more traffic that required tougher road surfaces. In 1928, the Grove had all of its roads paved with a thick base of cinders (donated by the B&O) that was then packed and oiled, which acted as a binder.<sup>107</sup> This surface easily became rutted, however, and required frequent releveling. It seemed inevitable then that after the town was incorporated in 1937, one of the first major initiatives of the Mayor and Town Council was paved roads. This occurred in 1939, when the first of the Grove’s roads were paved.<sup>108</sup> Also during the Early Municipal Period, several changes to the street pattern were made in the Tent Department to allow for the passage of automobiles. Additional road improvements occurred

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<sup>104</sup> Grounds Committee Report, May 1894, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.010.

<sup>105</sup> In 1899, Montgomery County had 790 miles of unimproved dirt roads and 45 miles of stone roads. See *Maryland Geological Survey*, Vol. III (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1899), 241.

<sup>106</sup> President’s Report, May 1896, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.22.

<sup>107</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 352.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid*, 377.

immediately after World War II when Miller Drive (behind the Woman's Club) was put in and the northern end of Switch Road (now Hickory Road) was graded and paved with gravel, among other projects.<sup>109</sup> In the early 1950s, the town began the process of widening its 25-foot-wide vehicular roads to make them safer and allow for on-street parking. When public land was involved, the process was easy, but other roads, such as Chestnut, proved more difficult due to preexisting structures and fence lines. In the 1970s, several modifications and refinements were made to the circulation system to improve traffic and safety. More recently, a sidewalk was installed along the east side of Washington Grove Lane.

Individual descriptions of each road, avenue, and alley in Washington Grove are provided below in alphabetical order.

**Acorn Lane**, which connects Chestnut Road with McCauley Street, dates to circa 1939, when the pattern of roads around the Circle was modified to accommodate automobile traffic.<sup>110</sup> Today, Acorn Lane is a narrow, vehicular roadway that follows an east-west route between Chestnut Road and Fourth Avenue, at which point it turns north and passes through Wade Park before terminating at McCauley Street. It is an asphalt roadway without curbs. There are several small gravel parking areas along the length of the road that are associated with nearby houses or with Wade Park.

**Boundary Street** forms part of the northern boundary of Washington Grove. It dates to 1878, when the Grove purchased a 5-acre parcel along the east side of Laytonsville Road (today Washington Grove Lane) that was subdivided and platted in the 1897 Maddox plan into the west end of Boundary Street, the north ends of Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue, and parts of Blocks 15, 18, and 24.<sup>111</sup> The entire length of Boundary Street, as shown in the Maddox plan, was never fully "opened," meaning cleared of underbrush and trees in anticipation of development. Instead, the central and eastern lengths of the street were absorbed into Woodward Park and the East Woods. Today, Boundary Street extends from Washington Grove Lane to the northwest corner of the Woodward Park/East Woods where it intersects with a cul-de-sac (Silver Dollar Court), which is outside the town limits. It is an asphalt road with concrete curbs.

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<sup>109</sup> Town Council Meeting Minutes, 1946, WGA, Box D-4, File DT.00D4.06.

<sup>110</sup> Edwards states that Acorn Lane was opened up in 1939. Town Council meeting minutes, however, record a resolution passed in 1945 that designated Acorn Lane opened to vehicular traffic. See Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 379, and Town Council Meeting, June 11, 1945, WGA, Box D-4, File DT.00D4.05.

<sup>111</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 124.



**Brown Street**, at the southern end of Washington Grove, was originally called South Avenue. (Figure 19) In the 1886 Lang plan, South Avenue extended from Chestnut Road on the west to Ridge Road on the east. South Avenue, along with Grove, Chestnut, and Maple avenues, was one of the earliest streets in Washington Grove to be opened. The expense for clearing the avenues was covered by the wood and sawlogs cut from them.<sup>112</sup> In 1897, the street was renamed after Reverend Benjamin Peyton Brown (1830-1896), a pastor at several Methodist churches in Washington, D.C., including Foundry Methodist Church.<sup>113</sup> Reverend Brown was part of the search committee that selected the site for Washington Grove. The 1897 Maddox plan designated two parcels along the south side of Brown Street (between Chestnut Road and Maple Avenue) as parks – the larger of which was named Morgan Park. Lots with frontages along the north side of Brown Street measured 50 feet wide by 140 feet deep and backed up onto a 10-foot-wide alley. In 1929, the alley was closed, and the depth of the lots along the north side of Brown were extended by 10 feet.<sup>114</sup> (The lots along the south side of Brown Street all had different sizes due to the shape of the block.) Today, Brown Street extends from Railroad Street on the west and to an



*Figure 19: View of Brown Street, looking east, no date. Note the drainage ditch and plank crossing. (Washington Grove Archives)*



*Figure 20: Brown Street, looking east. Along the west side of the road are remnants of a stone retaining wall. A gate controls traffic from Railroad Street. (Robinson & Associates, 2018)*

outlot on the east. For about half of its length, Brown Street forms the northern boundary of Morgan Park, which continues to serve today as a wooded buffer between the railroad tracks and Washington Grove's residential streets. A metal gate at the western end of Brown controls automobile access from Railroad Street and Hickory Road, and near this junction along the north side of the street are the remains of a low, stone retaining wall. (Figure 20) Farther east, at the northwest corner of Brown Street and Grove Road,

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<sup>112</sup> Report, Committee on Grounds and Supplies, July 1890, courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>113</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 158.

<sup>114</sup> Montgomery County, Circuit Court Land Records, Plat No. 418, January 1930.

there is a remnant of a stone culvert. Between Railroad Street and Ridge Road, Brown Street is paved with asphalt, but lacks curbs and sidewalks.<sup>115</sup> In 1994, the town annexed 2.88 acres of land east of Ridge Road (formerly the site of a farmhouse and barn), which was laid out as an extension of Brown Street and subdivided for residential development. This section of the street features an asphalt roadbed with asphalt curbs. While most of Washington Grove is lit with streetlights that are affixed to electrical poles, the eastern end of Brown Street features “shepherd’s crook” streetlights.



*Figure 21: A gate along Center Street hangs on timbers salvaged from the Humpback Bridge. (Robinson & Associates, 2018)*

**Center Street** was recorded as Park Street in the 1886 Lang plan, which platted it from Grove Avenue on the west to Ridge Road on the east. The 1897 Maddox plan expanded Center Street to Laytonsville Road (now Washington Grove Lane) on the west. Today, the aptly named street follows a roughly east-west course through the center of town between Washington Grove Lane and Ridge Road. For most of its length, Center Street is a paved asphalt road. Only a short section of the street west of Chestnut Road has an asphalt curb. A small section of the west end of the street is not paved with

asphalt, as vehicular access from Center Street to Washington Grove Lane is prohibited. As Center Street passes through Woodward Park, it serves in part as a gravel access road to the town’s maintenance building (300 Center Street) and in part as gravel pedestrian path. Functional transitions along the street are marked with split rail fencing, such as at the east edge of Woodward Park, and a post-and-chain barrier, such as near Washington Grove Lane. A metal gate spans Center Street near the entrance to the maintenance area. The gate hangs on timbers salvaged from the 2009 rehabilitation of the Humpback Bridge. (Figure 21)

Initially platted on the 1886 Lang plan to run parallel to Ridge Road, the orientation of **Cherry Avenue** was revised in the 1897 Maddox plan to parallel the route of Grove Avenue. Development along the 50-foot-wide avenue was slow, and when residents began to build along Ridge Road in the 1920s and 1930s, part of Cherry Avenue became a service road for these houses. In 1959, the town’s Planning Commission recommended grading and “topping” the service road and designating the rest of the avenue as a pedestrian walkway.<sup>116</sup> Today, Cherry Avenue runs from Brown Street on the south to the East Woods on the north. While a short section of Cherry Avenue is paved with gravel to provide vehicular access to the

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<sup>115</sup> Although the President’s Report of 1907 states that stone walks were laid along Brown Street, there does not appear to be any evidence left of this feature. See President’s Report, May 1907, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.33.

<sup>116</sup> Grove Bulletin, August 1959, WGA, Box H-2.



back of several residential lots along Ridge Road, for most of its length Cherry Avenue is a turf pedestrian path. Along the paved section of the avenue are several wood curbs. The trees and other vegetation along the avenue are not cut back to a regular width, giving the route an informal character.

**Chestnut Avenue** was platted in the 1886 Lang plan as a single block running parallel to Grove Avenue on the west with nine lots along its east side that measured 120 feet deep. The street was not opened, however, until 1890. (Figure 22) The 1897 Maddox plan shifted Chestnut Avenue to the west to allow for deeper, 150-foot lots on the east side of the avenue and extended it north to



Figure 22: Early view of Chestnut Avenue, no date. (Washington Grove Archives)

Laytonsville Road. By 1903, the president of the association reported that, “The lots on Chestnut Avenue are mostly taken and that avenue [is] fast building up....”<sup>117</sup> By 1905, part of Chestnut Avenue was surfaced with crushed stone.<sup>118</sup> Construction on many Chestnut Avenue lots was hindered due to poor drainage, and, for a time, the land west of the northern end of Chestnut Avenue was left as a meadow, which the superintendent was permitted to use for cutting grass and wood.<sup>119</sup> Drainage conditions along the southern end of Chestnut Avenue improved in 1910, when the area was ditched to channel away surface water. The project succeeded in creating “a demand and sale of lots that heretofore have been flooded in every heavy storm.”<sup>120</sup> By March 1959, the undeveloped land between Chestnut Avenue and Washington Grove Lane had been partially cleared and surveyors were hired to determine boundary lines for building lots, which were developed beginning in the 1960s.<sup>121</sup> The north end of Chestnut Avenue, however, was never cleared of the mature trees that stand along its route. Today, Chestnut Avenue is a turf pedestrian path with an uneven topography. Its alignment parallels both Grove Avenue and Chestnut

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<sup>117</sup> President’s Report, May 1903, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.30.

<sup>118</sup> Grounds Committee, May 1905, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.27.

<sup>119</sup> Grounds Committee, September 1905, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.28.

<sup>120</sup> Grounds Committee, May 1910, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.38.

<sup>121</sup> Grove Bulletin, March 1959, WGA, Box H-2.

Road, which follow a straight course from Brown Street to just north of Center Street where they take a slight bend to the west. At the intersection of Oak Street and Chestnut Road stands a notable shortleaf pine tree, which has the distinction of being the largest specimen of its kind in the state. Other tree species along the well-shaded route include tulip poplar, maple, and oak. An asphalt lined drainage channel, which runs east-west and roughly aligns with Acorn Lane, crosses Chestnut Avenue.

As noted previously, Washington Grove's Cottage Department was laid out with a system of broad avenues and service roads in an effort to create separate routes for pedestrians and vehicles, including carts, carriages, and, later, automobiles. **Chestnut Road** was laid out in the 1897 Maddox plan as a 25-foot-wide lane between Chestnut Avenue on the west and Grove Avenue on the east. It extended the length of the Grove, from Laytonsville Road (now Washington Grove Lane) on the north to the intersection of Brown Street and Railroad Street on the south. Near the center of the Grove, the road passed two public parks – Chapel Park and Howard Park. For many years, it served as a key access route to the hotel, market, store, superintendent's cottage, warehouse/Young People's Hall, and, later, the assembly hall (McCathran Hall) and Woman's Club. During World War II, the town planted Victory Gardens within the lots west of Chestnut Road and north of Center Street.<sup>122</sup> Today, Chestnut Road is paved with asphalt. Above Center Street, the road abuts the Washington Grove United Methodist Church parking lot.

In 1987, the town annexed a 1-acre parcel of land along Washington Grove Lane known as "Stewart's Addition," which was laid out as **Daylily Lane** and subdivided into four residential lots. Today, Daylily Lane extends roughly 350 feet northwest from Washington Grove Lane along the eastern edge of the West Woods and terminates at a dead end. It is a narrow roadway, paved with asphalt. A single streetlamp lights the road.

In the 1897 Maddox plan of Washington Grove, **Dorsey Street** extended two blocks between Sixth Avenue and Maple Avenue. The street was likely named after the Dorsey family, whose cottage was located at the west end of the street, at what is now 409 Sixth Avenue. The residential lots at the east end of the street were never developed and eventually became part of Woodward Park. Today Dorsey Street is a vehicular road that extends the short length between Sixth Avenue and Grove Road.

**Fifth Avenue** is one of six radial roads laid out around the "Circle of the Tabernacle" and platted in the 1886 Lang plan of Washington Grove. (Figure 23) Before the construction of cottages in the Grove, the avenue was lined with a row of closely spaced canvas tents. A newspaper account of the August 1881 camp meeting notes that there were eight tents along Fifth Avenue.<sup>123</sup> In the 1897 Maddox plan, Fifth Avenue extended north from the Circle to Boundary Street;



Figure 23: View down Fifth Avenue.  
(Robinson & Associates, 2018)

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<sup>122</sup> Town Council Meeting Minutes, Special Council Meeting, March 27, 1943, WGA, Box D-4, DT.00D4.03.

<sup>123</sup> "The Camp Meeting Season," *Evening Star*, August 11, 1881.

however, development primarily occurred south of McCauley Street. Today, Fifth Avenue is a narrow pedestrian path paved with turf and gravel. It follows a slightly curved course between the Circle and McCauley – its route likely guided by the natural contours of the land – and is sheltered and shaded by mature trees.

**First Avenue** is one of six radial roads platted in the 1886 Lang plan around the “Circle of the Tabernacle.” By the late nineteenth century, First, Second, and Third avenues had become the principal thoroughfares to the Circle. By 1896, First Avenue was paved with crushed rock.<sup>124</sup> The 1897 Maddox plan records the irregular arrangement and size of the lots along First Avenue, identifies a small park (Knott Park) at its southern end, and depicts two alleys along its length. Today, First Avenue extends between Center Street on the south and the Circle on the north. It is a narrow pedestrian path paved with gravel. Residential development is limited to the lots along the east side of the avenue.

**Fourth Avenue** is one of six radial roads platted in the 1886 Lang plan around the “Circle of the Tabernacle.” A newspaper account of the August 1881 camp meeting notes that there were sixteen tents along Fourth Avenue.<sup>125</sup> In the 1897 Maddox plan, Fourth Avenue extended north from the Circle to Laytonsville Road (today Washington Grove Lane); however, like Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue to the east, most development occurred below McCauley Street. Today, Fourth Avenue follows a roughly linear course between the Circle and McCauley Street. It is a narrow pedestrian path paved with gravel. Along the east side of Fourth Avenue is a small park named Wade Park.

For decades, **Grove Avenue** was the principal pedestrian route into Washington Grove. (Figure 24) Its northern length aligned with an old country road to Laytonsville and was used by participants of the Emory Grove Camp Meeting, which predates Washington Grove.<sup>126</sup> Its southern length followed along the crest of a ridgeline that provided a relatively dry path for residents and excursionists entering the camp meeting grounds on foot from the railroad depot. An 1883 newspaper article describes Grove



Figure 24: Grove Avenue, looking south. (Robinson & Associates, 2018)

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<sup>124</sup> President’s Report, May 1896, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.22.

<sup>125</sup> “The Camp Meeting Season,” *Evening Star*, August 11, 1881.

<sup>126</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 32-33, 67,



Avenue as “...ever an inviting walk, because of its deep and cooling shade.”<sup>127</sup> Not long after Washington Grove was founded, residential development began along the avenue. In a plat map recorded with the county in 1883, the 1,000-foot-long avenue was divided into thirty-nine lots that measured 50 feet by 150 feet.<sup>128</sup> These generously sized and regularly spaced building lots contrasted greatly with the small, often irregular lots within the Tent Department. Grove Avenue’s development represented the earliest phase of growth within the Cottage Department. In the 1886 Lang plan, Grove Avenue extended from the railroad depot to Park Avenue (now Center Street) where it merged with Broadway. The plan depicted forty-one, 50-foot-wide lots and three smaller lots near the intersection with Park Avenue (now Center Street). In 1889, the association’s Grounds Committee reported that thoughtful consideration was given as to which trees would be removed to clear Grove Avenue and prepare it for grading and other improvements.<sup>129</sup> The committee voted to clear a 20-foot-wide corridor, but leaving certain large trees undisturbed.<sup>130</sup> In its report for fiscal year 1889-90, the Committee on Grounds and Supplies recommended that the avenue “should have earliest and liberal attention and be generously improved and held as a public promenade only...”<sup>131</sup> In 1890, timbers were used to curb the avenue. By 1896, Grove Avenue was paved with crushed rock.<sup>132</sup> In the 1897 Maddox plan, the avenue stretched 50 feet across and extended from the railroad depot to Laytonsville Road. The northern section of the avenue (formerly designated as Broadway) was graded and covered with fine stone in 1900.<sup>133</sup> Although the avenue was platted as 50 feet wide, records suggest that the paved section was limited to 30 feet. Key public buildings were located along Grove Avenue, including the market stalls, the hotel, and the assembly hall (McCathran Hall). Several public parks located along its length enhanced the sylvan character of the avenue. These included Chapel Park, Howard Park (the site of the hotel and the assembly hall), Knott Park, Jackson Park, and others. A sewer was constructed along the west side of Grove Avenue in 1905. Today, Grove Avenue is a turf and gravel pedestrian path lined with majestic oaks and other shade trees.

**Grove Road** was platted in the 1886 Lang plan of Washington Grove, but not identified by name. Eleven years later, the 1897 Maddox plan depicted it as a 25-foot-wide lane between Grove Avenue on the west and Pine Avenue on the east. It followed a linear route between Railroad and Center streets, but north of

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<sup>127</sup> “Washington Grove, A Delightful Resort – the Grounds and Cottages – Opening of the Camp,” *Washington Post*, August 5, 1883.

<sup>128</sup> Plat map recorded in Liber E.B.P, No. 28, Folio 58, copy available in Washington Grove Archives.

<sup>129</sup> Grounds Committee, August 1889, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.02.

<sup>130</sup> Notes on Report Regarding Improvement on Grove Avenue, August 9, 1889, Committee on Grounds, courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>131</sup> Report, Committee on Grounds and Supplies, Fiscal Year 1889-90, May 28, 1890, courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>132</sup> President’s Report, May 1896, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.22.

<sup>133</sup> President’s Report, May 1900, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.26.

Center Street, it had an irregular path shaped by the natural contour of the terrain surrounding the Circle. The northern length of Grove Road followed the alignment of an old trail that branched off from the country road to Laytonsville and led to Mineral Springs.<sup>134</sup> For many years, the train depot was located on Railroad Street at the foot of Grove Road. Today, Grove Road is paved with asphalt and extends between Railroad Street on the south and McCauley Street on the north. The road passes through Morgan Park and defines the western edge of Woodward Park. It serves as a principal entrance into Washington Grove from Railroad Street and offers sweeping views across Woodward Park.

**Hickory Road**, between Chestnut Avenue and Washington Grove Lane, was initially called Switch Road. It starts at Railroad Street on the south and terminates at a small park on the north. It is a vehicular road paved with asphalt. A short section of the south end of the road, which provides access to the back entrances of the commercial buildings along Washington Grove Lane, features concrete curbs.



*Figure 25: Johnson Alley (Robinson & Associates, 2018)*

The 1886 Lang plan depicts several unnamed alleys in the Tent Department, including one between Broadway (now Grove Avenue) and Fourth Avenue. This narrow alley, designated **Johnson Alley** on the Maddox plan, provided rear access to the lots in Block 12. In 1898, an effort was made to remove all obstructions from the lines of Johnson Alley to a uniform width of 10 feet.<sup>135</sup> Today, Johnson Alley is a narrow, 8-foot-wide alley that extends from Acorn Lane on the south and McCauley Street on the north. The alley provides vehicular access to the rear of properties along Grove Avenue and Fourth Avenue. Johnson Alley is paved with asphalt, and while there are no curbs along the roadway, there are several short sections of metal safety rails. (Figure 25)

**Maple Avenue** was platted in the 1886 Lang plan as one of four residential avenues east of Grove Avenue. The 1897 Maddox plan extended the avenue north to Boundary Street and dedicated three blocks along its west side as a public park known as Woodward Park.

Maple Avenue was not opened until 1905.<sup>136</sup> This was the same year that the auditorium was built in Woodward Park. Three years later, it was graded and rolled. Maple Avenue was adjacent to a low-lying area of the Grove that had poor drainage, which was why residential development along its length was relatively slow. Today, Maple Avenue is a turf and gravel pedestrian path lined with tall shade trees. For much of its length, Maple Avenue forms the eastern edge of Woodward Park, and, with one exception (108 Maple Avenue), development is limited to the east side of the avenue.

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<sup>134</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 33.

<sup>135</sup> Notes from ledger entitled "Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association Records, 1893-1904," courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>136</sup> Grounds Committee, May 1905, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.27.

**Maple Road** was platted in the 1886 Lang plan, but not identified by name. It was laid out in the 1897 Maddox plan as a 25-foot-wide lane between Maple Avenue on the west and Cherry Avenue on the east. Today, Maple Road is a narrow vehicular route paved with asphalt. It follows a linear course between Brown Street on the south and the East Woods on the north and is shaded by a mature tree canopy.

In the 1897 Maddox plan of Washington Grove, **McCauley Street**, formerly called North Street, extended from Chestnut Road on the west to Ridge Road on the east. Reverend James A. McCauley, after whom the street was renamed, was a part of the search committee that selected the site for Washington Grove.<sup>137</sup> Since the Maddox plan oriented most of the Grove's residential lots toward the avenues, McCauley Street was likely planned as a vehicular route and few early cottages were built facing the street. For a period, the grounds north of McCauley Street were used as pasturage.<sup>138</sup> No development occurred along the eastern half of McCauley Street, which became part of Woodward Park and the East Woods, and development along the western half of the street occurred mainly in the second half of the twentieth century. In fact, for many years, the lots north of McCauley Street were beyond the town's water and sewage system.<sup>139</sup> Today, McCauley Street extends from McCauley Park on the west to Grove Road. The street is paved with asphalt.

**Miller Drive** is located north of the Woman's Club. It is a circular drive that extends east from Chestnut Road. The road was put in immediately after World War II when the town was making a series of road and infrastructure improvements. Today, the drive is paved with asphalt and has a small section of asphalt curb. Along the length of the drive are several gravel parking areas used by the Woman's Club and nearby residences.

In the 1886 Lang plan of Washington Grove, **Oak Street** was named Oak Avenue. It had a discontinuous route with a short western section (between Grove Avenue and Chestnut Avenue) that was located south of its longer eastern section (between Grove Avenue to Ridge Road). While the location of the western section was corrected (shifted north) in the 1897 Maddox plan to create a single east-west route, for many years, reluctant property owners who held the title for Lot 25 on Grove Avenue (later designated as Lot 9) refused to turn over the parcel to the city, creating an interruption between Grove Avenue and Chestnut Road. Despite this, improvements along the western half of Oak Street occurred before the eastern half, which was not opened and cleared until about 1905, the same year the auditorium was built in Woodward Park.<sup>140</sup> Soon after, a boardwalk was laid along Oak Street that connected Grove Road with a stone pathway to the auditorium. Today, Oak Street features a variety of paving materials along its

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<sup>137</sup> Reverend James Andrew McCauley (1822-1896) was named a presiding elder of the Washington District of the Methodist Church in 1870. In 1872, we was appointed president of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. See Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections, "James Andrew McCauley (1822-1896)," available at <http://archives.dickinson.edu/people/james-andrew-mccauley-1822-1896>, accessed January 30, 2019.

<sup>138</sup> Notes on the July 28, 1911, Washington Grove Association Board of Trustees Minutes, courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>139</sup> Town Council Meeting Minutes, August 13, 1945, WGA, Box D-4, File DT.00D4.05.

<sup>140</sup> Grounds Committee File, May 1905, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.27.

length. It is paved with asphalt at its west end, but east of Chestnut Road it is surfaced with turf except for a small section within Woodward Park that is covered with gravel where it serves as an access road to a parking lot.

**Pine Avenue** was platted in the 1886 Lang plan as one of four residential avenues east of Grove Avenue. The 1897 Maddox plan extended the avenue two blocks north of Center Street where it reached an end at Dorsey Street. The route of Pine Avenue traveled over a low-lying area of the Grove that had poor drainage, and, except for several lots at the south end of the avenue, it was never developed for residential use. Instead, it was set aside as parkland when Woodward Park was expanded west to Grove Road and when the blocks east of Grove Road, west of Maple Avenue, south of Oak Street, and north of the building lots on Brown Street were set apart for recreational purposes and designated as Athletic Park (now part of Woodward Park). The buildable lots at the south end of Pine Avenue were not developed until after World War II. Today, Pine Avenue extends roughly 250 feet north of Brown Street before it terminates at the edge of Woodward Park.

**Pine Road** was laid out in the 1897 Maddox plan as a 25-foot-wide lane between Pine Avenue on the west and Maple Avenue on the east. The route of Pine Road traveled over a low-lying area of the Grove that had poor drainage, and it was eventually incorporated into Woodward Park. Today, Pine Road is a narrow vehicular lane paved with asphalt. It extends roughly 200 feet between Brown Street on the south and Woodward Park on the north.



*Figure 26: View, circa 1910, of the B&O Railroad tracks and the Humpback Bridge. (Washington Grove Archives)*

In the 1897 Maddox plan, **Railroad Street** roughly followed the alignment of the B&O Railroad tracks. The street provided access to the train depot and to roads south of the tracks via the Humpback Bridge. (Figure 26) It was an important offloading point for residents and visitors traveling to and from the Grove and a vital part of the local transportation network used by farmers and tradesman. Today, Railroad Street follows a slightly curved route and is bounded for most of its length by Morgan Park and the railroad tracks. Several light industrial buildings that are outside the town limits, as well as Railroad Park and the Washington Grove commercial corner, which are part of the town, are located along the

north end of Railroad Street. The southern length of Railroad Street turns sharply southwest where it crosses the railroad tracks before coming to an end at Oakmont Avenue. This crossing is known as Aitchison Crossing. Railroad Street is paved with asphalt and is level along most of its length with the notable exception of the approach to the Humpback Bridge, where it features a sharp rise and drop. There are two short lengths of concrete sidewalk along Railroad Street – one along the south side of the street adjacent to Railroad Park and a second along the north side of the street near Grove Road. The latter

provides access from Grove Road to a crosswalk that accesses the railroad station. Other features include a pull-in parking area along the railroad station and guardrails near the approach to Humpback Bridge.

Although **Ridge Road** was the easternmost road platted in the 1886 Lang plan, the Grove's landholdings initially included farmland to the east. In 1890, however, a 50-acre farm and a separate 16-acre parcel along the east side of Ridge Road were sold, and the street became the eastern boundary of the Grove. As such, the 1897 Maddox plan shows Ridge Road taking a linear route from just south of Brown Street to Boundary Street. For many years, the 30-foot-wide platted road was part of Montgomery County's rural transportation network, used by farmers to transport and trade goods. The land along the east side of Ridge remained agricultural well into the twentieth century. Remnants of agricultural fencing consisting of wood posts and barbed wire are still visible along Ridge Road. Cottages were built along the west side of the road starting in the second decade of the twentieth century. Between 1992 and 2000, roughly 16.5 acres of land along Ridge Road were annexed by the town and subdivided for residential development. Today, Ridge Road is bounded by residential development, the East Woods, and a conservation park. It has a dogleg-shaped route that follows a linear course between Railroad Street on the south and the East Woods on the north, turns southeast at the southeast corner of the East Woods, then turns east before terminating at a dead end. The road is paved with asphalt along its entire length, and there are several speedbumps. Near the East Woods, where Ridge Road takes a sharp turn to the southeast, there is a small section of asphalt curbing, as well as rubble to prevent road erosion.

**Second Avenue** is one of six radial roads platted in the 1886 Lang plan around the "Circle of the Tabernacle." A newspaper account of the August 1881 camp meeting notes that there were five tents along Second Avenue.<sup>141</sup> In the 1897 Maddox plan, Second Avenue is shown as a short block between Grove Avenue and the Circle that is parceled into five lots. The course of Second Avenue has not changed from its historic alignment, and it remains a narrow pedestrian path paved with gravel.

**Sixth Avenue** is one of six radial roads laid out around the "Circle of the Tabernacle" and platted in the 1886 Lang plan of Washington Grove as part of the Tent Department. Eight tents stood along Sixth Avenue for the 1881 camp meeting.<sup>142</sup> In the 1897 Maddox plan, Sixth Avenue is shown extending north from the Circle to Boundary Street. The size of the building lots along the avenue ranged from 27 feet wide and 100 feet long near the Circle to 50 feet by 150 feet north of McCauley Street. Today, Sixth Avenue follows a slightly curved course between the Circle and Grove Road, its route likely guided by the natural contours of the land. It is paved with gravel and turf. Signage along the route indicates its pedestrian only use.

**Third Avenue** is one of six radial roads laid out around the "Circle of the Tabernacle" and platted in the 1886 Lang plan of Washington Grove as part of the Tent Department. In the 1897 Maddox plan, Third Avenue is shown as a short block between Grove Avenue and the Circle. The course of Third Avenue has not changed from its historic alignment, and it remains a narrow pedestrian path.

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<sup>141</sup> "The Camp Meeting Season," *Evening Star*, August 11, 1881.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*



In the 1897 Maddox plan, **Washington Grove Lane**, formerly Laytonsville Road, extended from Railroad Street on the south to Boundary Street on the north. For many years, the lane was part of Montgomery County's rural transportation network, used by farmers to transport goods to the railroad depot from points north. The Grove's landholdings west of Washington Grove Lane were not platted for residential development, and commercial and residential building along the east side of the street did not generally occur until the early twentieth century. As such, for many years Washington Grove Lane remained a rural road that ran in a generally north-south direction through the Grove. Today, the section of Washington Grove Lane that passes through the town follows a slightly curved route that features several speedbumps. It has a 50-foot-wide right-of-way and is paved with asphalt. Along the east side of the street is a concrete sidewalk.

### Topography

*Topography is the three-dimensional configuration of a landscape surface characterized by features (such as slope and articulation) and orientation (such as elevation and solar aspect).*

Historically, the topography of Washington Grove has been a key factor in the spatial organization and use of the landscape and the layout of the circulation network. As noted earlier, the high elevation of the grounds relative to Washington, D.C., created a favorable localized climate that offered cooler summer weather and clean air. When the organizers of the camp meeting met in June 1873 to take initial stock subscriptions, they described the 267-acre tract as 500 feet above the city in elevation.<sup>143</sup> In fact, current mapping puts the high point of the town at roughly 533 feet (about 162.5 meters) above sea level.<sup>144</sup> (This point is located in Wade Park, just south of 416 Fifth Avenue.) The founders of the Grove placed the "Sacred Circle" at a high point (roughly 522 feet or 159 meters above sea level), and Grove Avenue, for decades the principal pedestrian route into the grounds, followed along the crest of a ridgeline. This provided a relatively dry route for those traveling on foot from the train depot. The ridgeline curved slightly east around the Circle, which influenced the route of Grove Road. The terrain sloped down from the ridge to the east and west, creating low areas that had poor drainage and issues with standing water. While the building lots west of Grove Road were eventually cleared and developed, much of the area to the east between Grove Road and Maple Avenue was not acceptable for building. Ultimately, this area was rededicated as athletic fields and park space. The aptly named Ridge Road followed along a second topographical rise that extended across the Grove landscape in a southwest-northeast direction. The lowest point within the Grove is located in the West Woods, which slopes down from east to west to an elevation of roughly 468 feet above sea level. Another topographic depression occurs at the base of Ridge Road extension.

While the principal elements of Washington Grove's topography remain intact, some grading was carried out to level the roads and avenues, and manmade channels, ditches, and swales have altered the natural terrain. New topographic contours were also introduced through annexation of adjacent lands.

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<sup>143</sup> "The New Camp-Meeting Ground," *Evening Star*, June 17, 1873.

<sup>144</sup> MD iMAP, Maryland Mapping and GIS Data Portal, Topography Viewer, available at <https://imap.maryland.gov/Pages/lidar.aspx>.

## Vegetation

*Vegetation includes deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers and herbaceous plants, and plant communities, whether indigenous or introduced in a landscape.*

The importance of plant material to the Washington Grove landscape relates to its spiritual associations, its perceived influence on health and wellness, and its practical and ornamental functions. The founders of the Washington Grove camp meeting believed that its picturesque, natural setting could have a moralizing influence on audiences. Its majestic groves, open meadows, and blossoming shrubs served to remind visitors of both their own mortality and God's grace. Like the advocates of the mid-nineteenth-century public park movement, the founders of Washington Grove believed that providing urban communities a place to enjoy fresh air, solitude, and access to nature could have a transformative impact on their behavior and public health. The functional aspect of vegetation was another important characteristic of the landscape. Trees provided shade, screening, privacy, fuel, and building material. Vegetation was also used to delineate boundaries.

During the Camp Meeting Period, a great deal of work was done throughout the year to prepare the grounds for summer visitors. Much of the work focused on opening roads and paths as well as clearing the grounds for tents, stalls, and other building sites. This often involved removing vegetation – cutting brush, clearing debris, and trimming and cutting down trees. Beyond such infrastructure improvements, plant materials were also modified to keep the grounds neat and orderly. This often meant removing trees and shrubs, but also included whitewashing the trunks of trees.

While it was important that the grounds be kept in a wholesome and presentable condition, records suggest that the association did little during this period to plant new trees or other ornamental shrubs and flowers. Vegetation was, however, used for ornamental purposes on special occasions. A newspaper account of the services that took place at the Grove on the centennial anniversary of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America describes the liberal use of ornamental swags and blooms to decorate the tabernacle in typical Victorian abundance. It reads, "The interior of the tabernacle, however, presented the finest appearance. About the pulpit were arranged potted plants and floral designs of almost every description. The rafters were wrapped with evergreen, and from them suspended hanging baskets and cages of singing birds, whose music chimed with the deep peals of the organ."<sup>145</sup> These embellishments were temporary, however, and the cultivation of ornamental gardens was primarily done by residents on an individual



Figure 27: Shortleaf pine tree on Chestnut Avenue. (Robinson & Associates, 2018)

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<sup>145</sup> "The Centennial Services at Washington Grove Yesterday," *Washington Post*, August 20, 1884.

basis. A newspaper account from 1884 provides the following account, “Perhaps the prettiest cottage in the grove is that of Mr. Ignatius Knott. It is surrounded with a miniature garden, in which are tiny beds of flowers in unique design and several urns filled with flowering plants.”<sup>146</sup> Two years later, an article describes “two-by-four gardens” in front of several cottages “large enough for a flower bed on either side of the walk....”<sup>147</sup> This began to change in the late 1880s, when it was reported that “in the way of improvements a number of new trees have been planted....”<sup>148</sup> Following the 1896 Maddox survey (adopted in 1897), the president of the association reported, “...we now have our parks and public grounds defined by survey, so that with a small expense, they can be beautified with flowering shrubbery and made attractive and pleasing to all.”<sup>149</sup> The parks, however, weren’t the only focus. In May 1896, the association’s recently formed Grounds Committee reported, “The field on the west side of the grounds has been sown in grain and grass seed and promises quite an improvement in appearance as well as in a dual value.”<sup>150</sup> That same year, the B&O Railroad relocated a section of rail siding to the south side of the tracks, and in 1897 the Grounds Committee suggested cooperating with the railroad to have grass and beds for trees and flowers planted within the cleared land.<sup>151</sup>

Since its creation, Washington Grove was a place defined by the presence of trees. While early records focus on clearing the woods of dead, decayed, or stunted trees, by the end of the 1880s, a Grounds Committee had been formed that advocated for planting new trees and preserving existing specimens. In 1889, faced with impending grading and improvements to Grove Avenue that would require removing a number of trees from the center of the avenue, the Grounds Committee advocated for preserving certain large trees that would be detrimental to nearby cottages if removed.<sup>152</sup> In this case, the protection of trees took precedence over establishing an entirely unobstructed route for the avenue. This decision established an important precedent for future decision-making related to the Grove’s trees and forests. In fact, by 1892, the protection of trees was codified in the association’s by-laws, which read “The trees on the grounds of the Association shall not be cut down or destroyed by any person except when it may be necessary for useful purposes and then only upon the authority of the Trustees.”<sup>153</sup> In her study on women’s contributions to the early twentieth-century conservation movement in the United States,

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<sup>146</sup> “A City in the Woods: Religious Services at Washington Grove – The Guests of the Hotel,” *Washington Post*, August 15, 1884.

<sup>147</sup> “An Ideal Camp Ground,” *Washington Post*, August 15, 1886.

<sup>148</sup> “At Washington Grove,” *Washington Post*, July 5, 1889.

<sup>149</sup> President’s Report, May 1896, WGA Box D-1, File DA.0001.22.

<sup>150</sup> Grounds Committee, May 1896, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.15.

<sup>151</sup> Grounds Committee, May 1897, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.20.

<sup>152</sup> Grounds Committee, August 1889, WGA, Box H-4, DA.00H4.02.

<sup>153</sup> “Timeline: West Woods, Springs, Maple Lake,” courtesy Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

historian Carolyn Merchant writes, “Propelled by a growing consciousness of the panacea of bucolic scenery and wilderness, coupled with the need for reform of the squalor of the cities, women burst vividly into the public arena in the early twentieth century as a force in the progressive conservation crusade.”<sup>154</sup> In Washington Grove, this mantle was carried by Amelia Elmore Huntley. Huntley was the first woman to serve on the board of trustees of the association. As a member of the Forestry Committee, created in 1913, she was instrumental in bringing Maryland’s State Forester, Fred W. Besley, to the Grove to evaluate its woodlands and give recommendations for cutting, reforestation, and other custodial practices. Progressive era conservationists like Besley advocated for the efficient management of natural resources. As a result, the Grove adopted a more scientific approach to maintaining its forested landscapes during the Chautauqua period.<sup>155</sup>

The early twentieth century saw Grove residents shift their focus from the spiritual attributes of the environment to its aesthetic qualities. Women took a particularly active role in civic improvements. As noted previously, the Washington Conference of the Methodists’ Ladies Guild established a strong tradition of park beautification projects. Although there are few specifics in archival documents about what varieties of plants were used as part of these improvement projects, records seem to indicate that they were modest in character – sowing grass seed to create lawns, digging flower beds, and planting shrubs. In May 1913, however, the president of the association reported that 200 fruit and shade trees had been planted over the course of the year. In 1920, the Grounds Committee reported that a “landscape gardener” by the name of Mr. Murphy had visited the Grove and submitted an estimate for furnishing and planting evergreens and shrubs. These would be planted following a design by Grove resident Nettie Craig, a member of the Ladies Guild.<sup>156</sup>

While many Grove residents maintained gardens and vegetable patches, during World War II, the Grove made available a large amount of undeveloped land for Victory Gardens. At a special town meeting in March 1943, a committee was appointed to “locate proper garden plots for Victory Gardens and to assign plots of 50 x 100 feet to those desiring garden plots within that area selected, preferable west of Chestnut Road and North of Center Street.”<sup>157</sup> With the purpose of increasing food production during the war, these gardens were temporary in nature. After the war, this area of the Grove would be rededicated for residential development.

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<sup>154</sup> Carolyn Merchant, “Women of the Progressive Conservation Movement: 1900-1916,” *Environmental Review* 8, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 58.

<sup>155</sup> Wendy Harris, News Dispatches from Other Centuries, “Portrait of a Founding Mother: Amelia Elmore Huntley, Part Three,” 2017, available at [http://washingtongrovermd.org/town-history/featured-from-the-town-archives\\_0217](http://washingtongrovermd.org/town-history/featured-from-the-town-archives_0217), and Wendy Harris, News Dispatches from Other Centuries, “Our Wood and Walkways: Are They Historic? (Part Two),” 2017, available at <https://washingtongrovermd.org/town-bulletins/town-bulletin-may-2017>.

<sup>156</sup> Grounds Committee, September 1920, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.73.

<sup>157</sup> Town Council Meeting Minutes, Special Council Meeting, March 27, 1943, WGA, Box D-4, File DT.00D4.03.

The modern environmental movement took shape in the early 1960s, and the protection of natural resources was prioritized in the policies of President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. Regionally, many parks and roadways in the greater Washington area benefited from Lady Bird Johnson's "Beautification Program," an effort to create a more beautiful capital city by eliminating billboards from roadsides and placing benches and planting flowers and trees in parks. At Washington Grove, the decade witnessed a groundswell of interest in the town's natural resources and landscape. The town organized beautification projects to plant trees and flowering shrubs in public spaces such as Woodward Park and the Circle.<sup>158</sup> It was also during this period that the East Woods and West Woods were designated as forest preserves and the town nursery (later redefined as an arboretum) was created in Woodward Park. (Figure 28)



Figure 28: Town nursery (now an arboretum) in Woodward Park.  
(Robinson & Associates, 2018)

### **Buildings and Structures**

*Buildings are elements constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activities in a landscape. Structures are elements constructed for functional purposes other than sheltering human activity.*

The official opening of the Washington Grove Camp Meeting took place on August 13, 1873. On a plateau of high ground within a clearing in the woods was the preacher's stand. Arranged within the Tent Department were an assortment of canvas tents on wood platforms. Open air tents sheltered "boarding saloons" that provided meals to excursionists. Market stands sold straw, furniture, perishables, and other goods.

The Metropolitan Branch of the B&O played a central role in the founding and development of Washington Grove. It carried excursionists and residents as well as camp supplies and building materials. In fact, the B&O offered discounted freight rates for lumber destined for sites on along the Metropolitan Branch.<sup>159</sup> In September 1873, one month after the official opening of the camp meeting, the *Evening Star* newspaper reported that "the railroad had erected a station house at the grounds and made a contract with the association to carry passengers to camp-meetings, pic-nics and excursions to the place at half fare."<sup>160</sup> (While nineteenth-century newspaper articles refer to this building as both a station house and

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<sup>158</sup> Information Bulletin dated November 1963 and Information Bulletin dated October 1964, WGA, Box H-2.

<sup>159</sup> Clare Lise Cavicchi, *Places from the Past: The Tradition of Gardez Bien in Montgomery County, Maryland* (Silver Spring, MD: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 2001), 39.

<sup>160</sup> "The Washington Camp-meeting Association," *Evening Star*, September 17, 1873.



as a depot, for the purpose of this report, the term depot is used to describe the original building, which was a modest structure with open sides and a gable roof. The term station is used to refer to the enclosed structure built across from the depot in 1906.) In the 1870s, the B&O Railroad built a timber, pony truss bridge about 600 feet northwest of the Washington Grove station. Called the Humpback Bridge after its distinctive shape, the structure greatly facilitated local travel, trade, and communication by providing a safe above-grade crossing at a blind curve in the tracks.<sup>161</sup>

By the summer of 1878, the Grove had witnessed the construction of its first permanent cottages. A newspaper account reported that they were painted white, “so as not to mar the beauty of the contrast made under the thick green foliage of the forest trees and the clear white of the tents.”<sup>162</sup> The same article noted that the houses were “handsomely arranged with Venetian doors, and divided into rooms to suit the convenience of their families, and ornamented according to the taste of the inmates....” Surrounding the cottages that summer were about 190 tents.

Washington Grove’s earliest cottages were one-story, frame buildings built in the Carpenter Gothic style following the tradition established by Methodist camp meeting sites such as Wesleyan Grove (1835) in Massachusetts; Bayside (1848) in Maine; Round Lake (1869) in New York; and Ocean Grove (1869) in New Jersey. They typically featured steeply pitched, front-gable roofs, wide front porches, and generous window and door openings. Although simple in form and massing, these cottages frequently featured elaborately bracketed pendants, fanciful scroll-sawn ornament, and turned or chamfered porch posts. Gable windows provided ventilation and natural light. Local builders of this period used triple-beaded, tongue-and-groove lumber for interior paneling, exterior siding, and porch ceilings, and some of the cottages at Washington Grove featured this distinctive type of lumber.<sup>163</sup> Although many of the Carpenter Gothic cottages at Washington Grove were likely built simultaneously and within close proximity to one another, a description written in 1879 noted their individuality. It reads, “They are all diversified in their architecture as in their internal appointments. Yet there is an air of harmony about them, standing amid the white tents, that is pleasant to the eye.”<sup>164</sup> In contrast to the cottages, the storage buildings and other

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<sup>161</sup> In 2009, the Humpback Bridge (M: 21-220) was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A due to its significance in the areas of transportation and community planning. See AD Marble & Company, Maryland Historical Trust Determination of Eligibility Form, “Washington Grove Humpback Bridge (M: 21-220),” 2009, and Town of Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission, 2014 Montgomery County Historic Preservation Awards Nomination Form, “Washington Grove Hump Back Bridge,” 2014. As one of only two bridges built by the B&O over the Metropolitan Branch, the Humpback Bridge is also significant as a scarce historic resource. The other bridge is the 1918 Talbot Avenue bridge (M: 36-33), a steel girder bridge near Silver Spring. The Talbot Avenue bridge is in the way of construction of a light rail project and is slated for demolition in 2020 or 2021.

<sup>162</sup> “God’s First Temple,” *Washington Post*, August 3, 1878.

<sup>163</sup> Lise Cavicchi, *Places from the Past*, 39. The cottage at 127 Grove Avenue, for example, features triple-beaded, tongue and groove exterior siding.

<sup>164</sup> “A Christian Camp,” *Washington Post*, August 8, 1879. This same article noted that the cottages were painted green and white rather than all white as reported the previous year.

structures constructed by the association were likely very utilitarian in character. This included the market house, a shed measuring about 20 feet by 40 feet that stood along Grove Avenue west of the Tent Department.<sup>165</sup>

In 1877, the association constructed the tabernacle, an open shelter that covered the preacher's stand and surrounding benches. (See Figure 9.) It had a high, hipped roof supported on heavy timber rafters, posts, and beams. The roof was clad with wood shakes. With its open form, branch-like bracing elements, and natural materials, the tabernacle blended in with the natural scene, rather than interfering with the "architecture" of the trees. In 1884, a wooden floor was added to the structure. Later, a belfry was constructed along the peak of the roof. Around the tabernacle stood several fire stands.

In about 1881, the association built a hotel within Howard Park (also called Hotel Park), just west of the Tent Department. (Figure 29) Its design and construction were supervised by one of the Grove's founding trustees, Richard H. Willet, who operated large lumber yards in Washington, D.C., and Maryland.<sup>166</sup> With twenty-three rooms, the hotel offered an alternative for excursionists who did not wish to stay overnight in a rented tent. Starting in 1886, a seasonal post office operated out of the hotel; year-round postal



Figure 29: View of the hotel (no longer extant) in Howard Park, no date. (Washington Grove Archives)

service began in 1890.<sup>167</sup> The hotel was a two-story, frame structure with a front-gable roof and double-hung sash windows. A deep porch wrapped around the front façade, offering a shaded place for guests to rest. Similar to many cottages, the front façade featured double doors flanked by windows. In 1884, a dining room annex was added to the hotel. The association also constructed a preacher's cottage around this time. (Later, in 1911, this residence would be relocated to Woodward Park and repurposed as a

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<sup>165</sup> "Another Camp Opens," *Washington Post*, August 16, 1893.

<sup>166</sup> "The Camp Meeting Season," *Washington Post*, May 7, 1881, and Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 160.

<sup>167</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 168-69. In 1894, the Washington Grove post office moved into a section of the general store (now Hershey's) located along the south side of the railroad tracks in Oakmont, where it remained for over eighty years until 1978.

clubhouse for the athletic association.) In 1894, the building known as “Williams’ Warehouse” was converted into assembly building by creating large openings along its sides and building a platform at one end.<sup>168</sup> It was used as a temporary chapel during inclement weather and later was dedicated as the Young People’s Hall.<sup>169</sup>



*Figure 30: Image (no date) of the superintendent’s cottage (no longer extant), which was located along Center Street between Chestnut Road and Chestnut Avenue. (Washington Grove)*

The superintendent’s cottage was located near the corner of Center Street and Chestnut Road on the site of the current parsonage (101 Center Street). It was a one-and-a-half-story, frame, Carpenter Gothic-style house with a side-gable roof and several one-story rear extensions. (Figure 30) The exterior walls were clad with board-and-batten siding and pierced with one-over-one, double-hung sash, wood windows. The front entrance was sheltered by a narrow, shed-roof projection. Behind the superintendent’s cottage stood several outbuildings, including a two-story barn.

By the early twentieth century, Washington Grove had become an established summer resort community. As families began to extend their stays past the summer months, demand increased for a venue that would provide greater comfort in poor weather than the open tabernacle. To provide such a space, an assembly hall (today known as McCathran Hall) was constructed at the south end of Howard Park. Designed by architect A. L. Harris of Washington, D.C., and completed in 1901, the assembly hall was comprised of an octagonal hall that measured 20 feet to a side and an attached meeting room that measured 20 feet square.<sup>170</sup> The windows were generously proportioned to bring ample light to the interior, and at the peak of the octagonal roof was a louvered cupola. In addition to church services, the building was used for Sunday school and Chautauqua activities. In 1902, the “Young People’s Hall” had become obsolete and was moved out of Knott Park (to a location unknown) to be used as a stable and other purposes. The same year, several “small and unsightly buildings” in the vicinity of the superintendent’s cottage were demolished.<sup>171</sup> Finally, in 1905, the tabernacle was razed. These changes, as well as the demolition of the hotel in 1927, had a lasting impact on the character of the grounds west of the Tent Department.

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<sup>168</sup> “News of Outlying Towns,” *Washington Post*, July 9, 1893.

<sup>169</sup> Grounds Committee Report, May 1894, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.010.

<sup>170</sup> “Families in Summer Quarters,” *Evening Star*, June 18, 1901.

<sup>171</sup> President’s Report, May 1902, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.29.

In his annual report of May 1901, the president of the association noted, “For the first time, a course of lectures was instituted on these grounds last season and were given in connection with music on Friday evenings, during July and August, and were both entertaining and instructive and very pleasing to both the old and young.”<sup>172</sup> As Washington Grove historian Philip K. Edwards has written, the Grove’s acceptance of Chautauqua was “immediate and enthusiastic.”<sup>173</sup> To provide accommodation for meetings, lectures, and concerts, the association built an auditorium in Woodward Park in 1905. The builder was Hezekiah Day. It was a large, one-story building with a rectangular plan under a gable-on-hip roof. Large ground-floor openings, clerestory windows, and dormers provided ventilation and natural light, although the building was equipped with gas chandeliers. Other improvements from this period included the construction of a station house in 1906, which stood across the tracks from the old depot, and, in 1908, the construction of an ice house with the capacity for 300 tons. The latter was located near the superintendent’s cottage.

Late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century residential construction in the Cottage Department populated the Grove with larger homes set on generous lots. While the Carpenter Gothic cottages remained popular, other styles were introduced into the landscape that diversified the building stock. Vernacular forms were common, as were Craftsman-style bungalows and Colonial Revival-style houses. Many of the homes built during the Chautauqua Period were constructed as year round residences. Older cottages were frequently winterized and/or updated with wraparound porches that typically featured classical columns (rather than chamfered or turned posts). While residential buildings comprised the majority of buildings and structures from this period, a store was built at the corner of Washington Grove Lane and Railroad Street in 1897. Later, in 1920, the Odd Fellows Hall was built next door.

During the Early Municipal Period through the midcentury, most new construction was residential. The Minimal Traditional style, which developed as a response to the Great Depression and World War II, and the ranch form were popular. (Figure 31) Nonresidential buildings from this



*Figure 31: The ranch house at 13 Center Street is typical of Washington Grove’s midcentury housing stock. (Robinson & Associates, 2018)*

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<sup>172</sup> President’s Report, May 1901, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.26.

<sup>173</sup> This is reflected in the fact that, in 1906, the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association officially changed its name to the Washington Grove Association and camp meetings took a secondary role to Chautauqua activities. See Wendy Harris, *New Dispatches from Other Centuries*, “Our Woods and Walkways: Are They Historic? (Part One),” 2017, available at [http://washingtongrovermd.org/town-history/featured-from-the-town-archives\\_0617](http://washingtongrovermd.org/town-history/featured-from-the-town-archives_0617).



period included the Woman's Club (built in 1940), the town maintenance building (1955), and the Washington Grove United Methodist Church (1955). The notable A-frame design of the church was the work of Bethesda-based architect John S. Samperton (1923-2014).<sup>174</sup>

In 1945, the Humpback Bridge crossing the B&O Railroad tracks had become dilapidated. In response to complaints from Washington Grove residents, the railroad replaced the nineteenth-century structure with a new bridge in the same location. The new bridge was a three span, timber bridge with a humpback shape. In 1986, CSX Transportation Inc. took over ownership and authority of the B&O line, and two years later carried out a major rehabilitation that replaced the timber beams with steel I-beams. Additional changes occurred in 2001, when the bridge was re-decked and the railings were replaced, and in 2009, when the timber bents supporting the bridge superstructure were replaced in kind. The most recent rehabilitation occurred in 2014. At that time, the bridge superstructure was disconnected from the approaches and substructure and demolished. The cap timbers of the bents were replaced with new cap timbers to raise the height of the bridge and support five new curved, steel I-beams. New wood decking and laminated guardrails were also installed.<sup>175</sup>

### **Views and Vistas**

*Views and vistas are the prospect created by a range of vision in a landscape, conferred by the composition of other landscape characteristics and associated features.*

A view refers to the expansive or panoramic prospect of a broad range of vision, which may be naturally occurring or deliberately contrived, and a vista is the controlled prospect of a discrete, linear range of vision that is deliberately contrived. Historically, internal views and vistas were significant characteristics of the Grove landscape that helped shape how people experienced the camp meeting. Views along the radial avenues within the Tent Department toward the preacher's stand were central to the spatial organization of the grounds, as were the reciprocal views from the preacher's stand out toward the seated audience and beyond. Views from individual tent doors and porches encompassing neighboring tents, the surrounding trees, and other elements of camp meeting grounds contributed to the Grove's sense of community and spiritual assembly. The linear route of Grove Avenue from the train depot to the Tent Department created a focused vista in both directions, and natural features (the tree canopy) heightened the vista by limiting the range of vision. The long view north along the B&O Railroad tracks from the depot and, later, the station, encompassing the Humpback Bridge and the view south from the depot and station were important to the experience of arriving at or departing from the Grove. Views along the boundary roads, including Washington Grove Lane, Railroad Street, and Ridge Road, were important for the same reason.

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<sup>174</sup> Clare Lise Kelly, *Montgomery Modern: Modern Architecture in Montgomery County, Maryland, 1930-1979* (Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 2015), 112.

<sup>175</sup> Information on the Humpback Bridge comes from AD Marble & Company, Maryland Historical Trust Determination of Eligibility Form, "Washington Grove Humpback Bridge (M: 21-220)," 2009, and Town of Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission, 2014 Montgomery County Historic Preservation Awards Nomination Form, "Washington Grove Hump Back Bridge," 2014.



As Washington Grove developed, new views were created. Buildings and structures, such as the tabernacle, the hotel, the assembly hall, and the auditorium, and public amenities such as the parks became visual landmarks within the landscape. Views and vistas between these landmarks and along roads and avenues looking toward them enhanced the experience of the space. Within wooded areas, periodic views through the trees of Maple Lake and the springs (in the case of the West Woods) and of nearby cottages (in the case of the East Woods) were important. The broad, sweeping views within and across Woodward Park are another important aspect of the Grove's setting. External views to adjacent buildings, structures, and landscapes also helped define the physical environment of the Grove. These included broad, sweeping views across the open fields of adjacent agricultural landscapes and views encompassing features associated with the B&O Railroad, including the railroad station, the Humpback Bridge, and the grain silos and agricultural/commercial buildings near the intersection of Washington Grove Lane and Railroad Street.

### **Constructed Water Features**

*Constructed water features are the built features and elements that use water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions in a landscape.*

The most prominent constructed water feature within Washington Grove is Maple Lake.<sup>176</sup> The lake, which is fed by a modern well, is located within the West Woods. It offers both passive and active recreational opportunities in the form of picnics, birding, fishing, and swimming. The history of Maple Lake begins in 1910, when the Washington Grove Association (successor to the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association) initiated a project to create an "artificial lake" by clearing and dredging the area around Maple Spring. It was used for recreation in the summer and to harvest ice in the winter.<sup>177</sup> Since water sports were discouraged by the Methodists, the recreational function of the lake never flourished during this period, and its use as an ice pond was short lived. As a result, the lake fell into disuse for a number of years until the summer of 1927, when it was "revitalized for the purposes of boating, its bottom cleaned and its spillways repaired."<sup>178</sup> Due to a combination of factors, the lake basin was not maintained during most of the 1930s and 1940s. By 1953, however, the town had chartered a Lake Committee to guide the restoration and revitalization of the site. The redesigned lake, inaugurated in 1955, measured roughly 330 feet long by 160 feet wide with a depth that varied from 30 inches to 8 feet deep.<sup>179</sup> It featured an island and a dock, and a new access road was created to the lake. Later improvements included a bridge to the island (1962) and a perimeter fence (1973). During the winter months, the lake was used for ice skating.

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<sup>176</sup> Although the Grove's historic well system can be counted as a Constructed Water Feature, the wells and pumps are described in the Small-Scale Features section of this report.

<sup>177</sup> Grounds Committee, May 1910, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.38.

<sup>178</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 325-26.

<sup>179</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1937-1977*, 119.

In the early 1990s, as a result of adjacent development that altered the watershed, a well and pumping system were installed to feed the lake.<sup>180</sup> It is periodically drained and dredged, most recently in 2000.<sup>181</sup>

### Small-Scale Features

*Small-scale features are the elements providing detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in a landscape.*

A wide range of small-scale features have characterized the Washington Grove landscape since its founding. During the Camp Meeting Period, because timber was both free and readily available, many small-scale features were constructed of wood. Lumber was sawn and sectioned for curbing, boardwalks, fencing, drainage ditches and culverts, well platforms and coverings, benches, and lampposts.



*Figure 32: Small-scale features such as the wood trellis seen in this image added visual interest and diversity to the residential landscape.*

While many of these features were permanent (while they lasted), removable property, such as the lamps, were stored during the off-season. Other small-scale features included well pumps, terracotta drainage pipes, and other components of the Grove's early well water and sewage systems, as well as hitching posts, pens, gates, garden trellises, and other functional and aesthetic elements. (Figure 32) Today, a wide range of small-scale features characterize the landscape. Those associated with public utilities (street lighting, sewers, fire hydrants) encompass several generations of systems.

### Fences

Historically, fences were used to mark boundaries and land use divisions, to provide privacy and protection to participants in the camp meeting, and to deter the use and distribution of alcohol. By 1875, a post and rail fence was built around the camp meeting grounds.<sup>182</sup> This was replaced the following year with a more substantial stockade fence built of chestnut boards.<sup>183</sup> A newspaper account from 1883 reads, "The encampment and summer grounds occupy an area of eight acres, which is substantially enclosed."<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid, 330-31.

<sup>181</sup> Washington Grove Planning Commission, "2009 Master Plan, Town of Washington Grove, Maryland," 2009, 44.

<sup>182</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 75.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid, 79.

<sup>184</sup> "Washington Grove," *Washington Post*, August 5, 1883.

Early fencing is depicted in a sketch of the grounds dated 1886.<sup>185</sup> By 1892, a “handsome and substantial fence” had been erected around the entire site, replacing the first generation of fencing that had fallen into disrepair. In his annual report for that year, the president of the association noted that the new fence added to the “beauty and privacy” of the grounds.<sup>186</sup> In 1894, it was reported that the association had “complete control of all the entrances” to the grounds.<sup>187</sup> In the 1890s, at a time when segregation had become the official policy of the nation, the gates of Washington Grove were closed during the dates of the Emory Grove camp meetings, reportedly based on a burglary of several cottages by an Emory Grove resident.<sup>188</sup>

Improvements to the perimeter fence were a priority in the early twentieth century at a time when the association, with the support of the Ladies Guild, accomplished many civic improvement and park beautification projects. In 1904, a section of the perimeter fence along Railroad Street was replaced with a privet hedge. A few years later, the entire property was fenced with “good, strong wire fencing, replacing the unsightly boards which were patched with pickets, old backs of benches, and rotten boards, and posts so nearly gone that every wind that blew took its share of fence down....”<sup>189</sup> Later, in 1914, the association had the boundary fence surveyed and re-established along the correct property line where it was found deficient.<sup>190</sup>

In addition to the perimeter fences, picket, split rail wood, and wire fencing was used around public parks and buildings, to demarcate pastures owned by the association, and by homeowners to delineate property lots. (Figure 33) By 1896, both Knott Park and the Howard Park were surrounded by a post and wire fence. A wire fence was put up around the auditorium in 1908. More recently, in 1973, a fence was erected around Maple Lake. Historically, some cottage lots were fenced, although fences between or in front of cottages within the Tent Department were less common than fences within the Cottage Department, where lot sizes were generally larger. Although there is no longer a perimeter fence around Washington Grove



*Figure 33: Note the fencing visible in this image of 122 Grove Avenue. (Washington Grove Archives)*

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<sup>185</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 89.

<sup>186</sup> President’s Report, May 1892, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.19.

<sup>187</sup> President’s Report, May 1894, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.21.

<sup>188</sup> Clare Lise Kelly, memo titled “Washington Grove Boundary Fence,” dated January 29, 2019.

<sup>189</sup> Grounds Committee, May 1910, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.38.

<sup>190</sup> President’s Report, May 1914, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.39.

today, residential and municipal fencing comes in a variety of styles and materials, including decorative iron, wood picket, split rail, and chain link, among others. Along the western edge of the Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park, which used to be farmland, are remnants of agricultural fencing consisting of wood posts and barbed wire.

### *Wells and Pumps*

Although the site selected by the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association possessed natural springs that were said to sparkle with “life-invigorating properties,” one of the first improvements to the landscape was to dig several wells and install pumps to draw the water.<sup>191</sup> The wells provided an accessible source of water for drinking and other daily needs. A newspaper account from 1881 reported, “The pumps have been repaired and one or two new wells dug, guaranteeing plenty of the best water ever drawn from the



*Figure 34: A well pump is visible in the left foreground of this image.  
(Washington Grove Archives)*

ground.”<sup>192</sup> The 1886 Lang plan identified the location of at least seven wells within or near the Tent Department. As residential developed expanded to other parts of the Grove, additional wells were added. (Figure 34) By the late nineteenth century, the list included the Allen (also known as Broadway) well, the Jackson Park well, the depot well, the Hotel Park well, the well in the superintendent’s yard, the Dorsey well, the Wide well, the Platt well, the Benson well, and the Sixth Avenue well. In 1897, a water tank on a raised stand was erected in the hotel yard. Water from the hotel well was pumped into the tank and routed to a boiler in the kitchen, providing guests with hot water.<sup>193</sup> In the off-season, the pumps were removed from the wells and well covers were put in place. Washington Grove’s wells were frequently inspected and the water tested to ensure a clean supply. Over time, repairs were required, such as relining the wells with terra cotta pipe, partially filling the wells to prevent excess standing water, or redrilling.<sup>194</sup> The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission brought a modern water and sewer system to

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<sup>191</sup> “Washington Grove, A Delightful Resort – the Grounds and Cottages – Opening of the Camp,” *Washington Post*, August 5, 1883.

<sup>192</sup> “The Camp Meeting Season,” *Evening Star*, August 11, 1881.

<sup>193</sup> President’s Report, May 1897, WGA, Box D-1, File DA.0001.23.

<sup>194</sup> Grounds Committee, July 1890, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.06, and Grounds Committee, August 1897, WGA, Box H-4, File DA.00H4.19.

Washington Grove in 1927, although many residents were slow to install indoor plumbing and connections.<sup>195</sup> By 1938, however, all of the wells were filled, and most of the pumps were pulled.<sup>196</sup>

Today, there is still evidence of Washington Grove's well water system, which supplied water to residents for over fifty years. Examples include the well pumps in the yard of 127 Maple Avenue and under the carport of the house at 201 Grove Avenue. Near the back of the house at 117 Grove Avenue stands a frame well house with a hipped roof, exposed rafters, and wood siding. There is also a well house located at 12 the Circle, at the eastern end of the lot, near the Circle.

#### *Drainage and Sewer System*

Progressive Era reforms shaped Washington Grove's landscape in several ways, and one of the most aggressively pursued undertakings was the issue of sanitation. Widespread public belief that disease was caused by dirt, stagnant water, and "miasmas" in the air coupled with the threat of periodic summer outbreaks of cholera, dysentery, and other diseases led the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association to take active measures to maintain a clean well water supply, drain the grounds, and dry out low, swampy areas and locations prone to recurring puddling and flooding. By 1880, the Grove had installed an 18-inch drain pipe within the Circle to eliminate standing water around the tabernacle.<sup>197</sup> In 1885, the association created a Committee on Grounds and Supplies, whose most pressing matter was perceived to be "the proper sanitation of the place."<sup>198</sup> Subsequent work included digging ditches to channel surface water, filling sunken lots and poorly drained sections of the parks, and laying terra cotta sewer pipes to facilitate drainage. Clearing the drains and culverts was the responsibility of the superintendent of the grounds, and residents were encouraged to properly dispose of their waste water. The association hired a scavenger service to remove "night soil," and camp privies were located in the East Woods where the waste was treated with lime. The hotel's sewerage was deposited in a cesspool in the West Woods.<sup>199</sup>

In 1905, a sewer was constructed by private means along the west side of Grove Avenue, and in 1912, the association installed a sewer under Grove Road with assistance from a sanitary engineer. Although additional improvements were recommended by the engineer, Washington Grove did not have a modern water and sewer system until 1927. The design and construction of the sewer system, which would serve Gaithersburg as well as Washington Grove, was the responsibility of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. Water and sewer lines were run under the avenues, the old sewers were disconnected, and a much-needed fire hydrant system was installed. It was largest engineering project at Washington Grove

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<sup>195</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 319.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid*, 377.

<sup>197</sup> "At Washington Grove," *Washington Post*, July 3, 1880.

<sup>198</sup> "Timeline: Sanitation, Health, Disease, Clean Water, Safety, Alcohol, Fire," prepared by Wendy Harris, Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission.

<sup>199</sup> Edwards, *Washington Grove, 1873-1937*, 316.

to date. Despite the convenience of the modern system, some residents were slow to install indoor plumbing and connections.<sup>200</sup> The Grove discontinued its scavenger service around 1930.

Today, elements of Grove's early drainage and sewer system can still be found throughout the landscape. These include a 20-foot-long, 7-inch-diameter, terra cotta drainage pipe under Maple Avenue; a 46-foot-long, 13-inch-diameter, terra cotta pipe under Brown Street at Grove Road; a 23-foot-long, 10-inch-diameter, terra cotta pipe under Grove Road near Dorsey Street, and a 5-foot-long, 12-inch-diameter, terra cotta pipe at McCauley Street and Chestnut Road.<sup>201</sup> The open ditches in Woodward Park and Morgan Park and associated culverts represent nineteenth-century efforts to drain the low-lying areas of the grounds. A stone culvert at the northwest corner of Brown Street and Grove Road a stone retaining wall on Grove Road at the edge of the East Woods also appear to be remnants of the early drainage system.

### *Streetlights*

With the introduction of an electric street lighting system around 1914, iron light poles were installed throughout the grounds. Although none of Washington Grove's first generation of electric streetlights remain, a later generation of streetlights comprised of wood poles and spherical lights are evident throughout the landscape. There are fifteen in total – three stand along McCauley Street, four in the Tent Department, and eight at intersections throughout the Cottage Department.<sup>202</sup>

### *Fire Hydrants*

Washington Grove's historic fire hydrants date to 1927 and represent a culmination of efforts since the founding of the camp meeting to manage the risk of fire. Two historic fire hydrants remain along the extension of Maple Avenue into the East Woods and are a reminder of the era when the forest was platted for residential development.<sup>203</sup> The hydrants feature a pinwheel design on the hose connection cap and a higher dome than later models.

### *Signage*

After 1937, street signs and other traffic signs were posted along the roads and avenues. Historic photographs indicate that the early street signs, which had a brown field and block letters stenciled in white paint, were mounted on wood posts (painted white) with a pyramidal top. This model was replicated with few changes until 1986, when the design was slightly modified. That year Town Maintenance Supervisor Jim Fletcher created a new design that featured brown signs with routed letters (painted white) and a hand-painted picture of a native plant or animals, such as the spotted

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid, 319.

<sup>201</sup> Jim Fletcher, Maintenance Supervisor, "Town of Washington Grove, Inventory of Stormwater Storage and Conveyance Facilities," October 31, 2000.

<sup>202</sup> Gail Littlefield, memo titled "Washington Grove Streetlights," dated February 2019.

<sup>203</sup> Gail Littlefield, memo titled "Fire Hydrants in the Woods?," February 2019.



turtle.<sup>204</sup> Today, as the street signs deteriorate, they are restored or replaced in kind by community volunteers. The natural materials and rustic character of the signs complement the town's vernacular architecture. Other signage associated with the circulation network includes modern street signs with reflective paint and standard metal traffic and parking signs.

### **Archaeological Sites**

*Archaeological sites contain surface and subsurface remnants related to historic or prehistoric land use.*

While an archaeological survey of the Town of Washington Grove was outside the scope of this project, documentation of an archaeological site within the Piedmont Woods Local Park, a Montgomery County-owned property along the eastern edge of the Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park, suggests the potential for archaeological resources on town property. As previously mentioned, the Washington Grove Steatite Quarry, which is listed on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (Site # 18MO6221), is comprised of five distinct areas of archaeological interest that represent evidence of Euro-American and possibly Native American use of the area as a quarrying site. Native Americans utilized soapstone/steatite to fashion vessels during the period prior to the development of ceramics and later as a temper for ceramics and for tools and ornaments. The quarry may have also been used as a source of building materials for local farmers and early residents of Washington Grove.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Gail Littlefield, memo titled "Washington Grove's system of wood street signs," dated February 2019.

<sup>205</sup> "Status of Washington Grove Meadow Conservation Park and Cultural Resources, Part I – Washington Grove Steatite Quarry Site," report prepared for the Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission by Wendy Harris, draft dated December 16, 2013.

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