

Historic Takoma

NEWSLETTER

Historic Takoma, Inc. Celebrates 25 Years of Service to the Community 1979-2004

New HTI Officers and Directors Elected for 2004

On Sunday December 7, 2003, despite cold temperatures and ice and snow, a good crowd turned out at the Davis-Warner Inn for Historic Takoma's holiday party and annual meeting. In the midst of enjoying a delicious holiday luncheon buffet, HTI's membership paused for a short business meeting. Out-going President Lorraine J. Pearsall spoke about the accomplishments of HTI in 2003, as well as during her seven-year tenure as President. She also presented gifts of apprecia-



Sabrina Baron presents Lorraine Pearsall a certificate recognizing her service to HTI.

tion to out-going directors Alan Abrams, Lorretta Neumann (in absentia), and Laura DiCurcio, as well as out-going Secretary Kathy Brooks-Denny (in absentia). Annual elections resulted in the installation of a new President of the Board of Directors, Dr. Sabrina Alcorn Baron. Sabrina holds a Ph.D. in history and has taught at the University of Maryland and American University. Previously she was a volunteer and then chair of HTI's

(continued on page eight)

Act Now to Save Maryland's Heritage Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program!

Maryland's Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program is slated to sunset on June 1, 2004 unless legislation is passed to continue it. Following the recommendation of a Task Force chaired by Comptroller William Donald Schaefer, Governor Ehrlich has filed legislation (SB190 & HB289) that extends Maryland's most effective tool for historic preservation and community revitalization. These bills would accomplish the following:

- * Extends the sunset date for the program to January 1, 2010.
- * Creates an annual tax credit cap of \$30 million for commercial projects.
- * Continues the per-project tax credit cap of \$3 million for commercial projects.

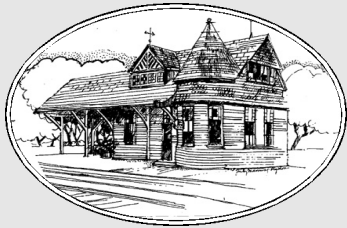
* Creates a per-project tax credit cap of \$50 thousand for owner-occupied residential projects.

Unfortunately, competing legislation (SB246 & HB 679) has been filed by Senator Ulysses Currie and Delegate Sheila Hixson that would transform the existing program from a tax credit to grant program. The amount of funding for the program is undefined in the bill and is required to be submitted in the Governor's budget and passed by the General Assembly on an annual basis. Converting the Heritage Tax Credit to a grant program would further undermine its predictability, add bureaucratic layers, and eliminate the market driven nature of a tax credit.

Please contact members of the Senate Budget & Taxation and House Ways & Means Committees ESPECIALLY DISTRICT 20 DELEGATE SHEILA HIXSON listed on page 9 to ask them to support SB190 & HB289 and continuation of the Heritage Tax Credit Program. Ask them to oppose ruining such a successful program by attempting to convert it to a grant program. If you can, cite specific projects in their districts that have resulted from the tax credit or that are threatened by its elimination.

The complete list of delegates and their contact information is on page 9.

HISTORIC TAKOMA NEWSLETTER



Historic Takoma, Inc.
PO Box 5781
Takoma, Park, MD 20913
(301) 270-2831
www.historictakoma.org

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Brian Finlay, *Treasurer*

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Historic Takoma Newsletter is a publication of Historic Takoma, Inc., and is published quarterly.

Letters to the editor are encouraged. Volunteers are welcome. Please contact HTI if you want to become more involved in the preservation of your community.

HTI is a membership-based non-profit organization founded in 1979 to promote historic preservation, citizen involvement, and community development in the Takoma community.

Membership is open to the public. Contributions are tax deductible.

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AROUND TAKOMA

Montgomery County HPC Dealing with Record Number of Violations

In the past several months, there have been an unusually large number of violations of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. In fact, the inspector who investigates historic preservation violations is currently working on 20 cases of individuals who did work without a required Historic Area Work Permit [HAWP] or individuals who received a HAWP, but did not follow it.

One of the primary responsibilities of owning property in a Montgomery County historic district or owning an individually-designated historic site is that owners must obtain a Historic Area Work Permit before undertaking demolition, new construction, or any kind of exterior alteration to the property. This includes building decks, sheds and fences, as well as erecting signs. It also includes making changes to doors, windows, porches, siding materials, and roofing materials. Historic Area Work Permits must be approved by the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission before work is started.

HAWPs are not required for ordinary maintenance projects, such as painting, gutter repair, or repair of exterior features—meaning retention of original materials.

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Flashing CVS Sign Violates Historic Aesthetic

In December 2003, the CVS store located at the intersection of Cedar, Willow, and Eastern Avenues in the heart of Old Takoma, installed a large outdoor electronic sign that featured animated messages in red neon lights. This sign was erected without any input from the surrounding neighborhoods, or the community as a whole, and elicited an enormous amount of concern from citizens after it appeared.

While technically not within the boundaries of a designated historic district, the sign stands directly between two surrounding historic districts, from which it detracts significantly. It may also be in violation of DC ordinances relating to signs and billboards. On February 4, DC Ward 4 Council Member Adrian Fenty called a meeting with Takoma



*An over-sized flashing red animated sign installed at CVS clashes with the historic nature of Takoma.
Photo credit Julie Wiatt, Takoma Voice.*

Park Council Member for Ward 1, Joy Austin-Lane, the CVS store manager, the regional pharmacy director, the regional sales director and members of the community, including a representative from HTI. HTI has joined with other community leaders in calling for CVS to remove not only the electronic sign, but also the large

(continued on page nine)

HTI Supports OTBA Main Street Applications

The Board of Historic Takoma, Inc. has voted to serve as a community organization in support of the Old Town Business Association's applications for funding and technical assistance from Main Street programs in both Maryland and DC. The application to the Maryland program will be completed first, followed by an application to the DC program. OTBA is working to revitalize the business district of the Takoma community in the Carroll Avenue/Cedar Street corridor, stretching from the Junction to Old Town Takoma to Fourth Street, NW. HTI has been a member of OTBA since 2003.

HTI Sponsors *Bungalow Nation* Book Signing, Sunday, April 18, 2004

On Sunday, April 18, from 2-4 p.m. author Diane Maddex will be signing copies of her new book entitled *Bungalow Nation* at 236 Park Avenue. This address is one of several Takoma Park bungalows featured in the book, which is lavishly illustrated with color photographs of bungalows around the country. Copies of the book will be available for purchase at the event and light refreshments will be provided. The book explores the various styles and architects of the bungalow era in the early twentieth century. Maddex has authored a number of award-winning books and was formerly the director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Press. She is currently the president of Archetype Press. Her collaborator, Alexander Vertikoff, is an award-winning photographer and a regular contributor to *American Bungalow* magazine. *Bungalow Nation* is published in hardback by Harry N. Abrams, 2003. Come out and enjoy one of Takoma's beautiful bungalows and this beautiful publication about them.

Historic Cemetery Inventory

HTI and Peerless Rockville have been awarded a joint grant to initiate a project to inventory historic cemeteries in Montgomery County. The first phase will involve educational workshops and volunteers throughout the county filling out forms about historic cemeteries in the various communities. Anyone interested in volunteering for this project or who has information about historic cemeteries in the county should contact Suzanne Copping at (301) 270-2831.

WAH Ignores Community Concerns

Members of county government, city government, concerned residents, and civic leaders have been in talks with Ken Bauer, president, and the Washington Adventist Hospital administration to consider alternate, off-campus building sites for a proposed Medical Office Building and multilevel parking garage. Other sites proposed include the Montgomery County Enterprise Zones in the Long Branch neighborhood (Flower and Piney Branch) and along the New Hampshire Avenue corridor.

But on Thursday, March 11, Ken Bauer announced that WAH is filing for the zoning variance required for the original plans for the hugely expanded facilities to be built on the Carroll Avenue site, in the midst of a residential community.

Contact WAH to let them know how you feel about this proposed expansion along Carroll Avenue. Ken Bauer has no contact information on their website, but contact Robert Jepson, executive director of public strategy and communications, at (301) 315-3042.

Historic Takoma Walking Tour Sunday, March 28, 1 p.m.

B.F. Gilbert bought land on both sides of the District line for his "suburb." Come explore the residential and commercial origins -- and changes to -- the first railroad suburb. \$5 for members of Historic Takoma, \$10 for non-members. Meet at the Takoma Metro Station. Tour repeats, the 4th Sunday of each month through October.

Annual House & Garden Tour Set for Sunday, May 2, 2004

Mark your calendars for Historic Takoma's annual House and Garden tour, set for the first Sunday in May, 12-5 p.m. The tour this year will feature houses and gardens in the section of Takoma first acquired by B. F. Gilbert, located in both the Maryland and DC neighborhoods. Watch for further information on ticket sales and details about the tour.

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Takoma a Part of "America on the Move"

Takoma Park is featured in a new Smithsonian Museum of American History exhibit that opened in November 2003 called "America on the Move." The exhibit uses multimedia technology, immersive environments and other theatrical techniques to highlight the role of ships, trains, trucks and automobiles in moving people and products from place to place. Also considered is how these techniques and the ability to move shaped the growth and development of our nation.

The exhibit features vehicles in historical vignettes, one of which is "Washington DC: A Streetcar City." Takoma Park is featured in a subdivision of this section, "Washington, D. C. 1900—Growth of the Capital's Suburbs." Historic Takoma's Archives provided two items for this section: a picture of the Bliss House, an 1890s Italianate house located on Maple Avenue and a newspaper comic of a woman in tears standing at the intersection of Carroll and Cedar streets distressed that she will be living so far out in the countryside that none of her friends will be able to find her. The website for the exhibition can be found at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove>.



Dr. Bliss House, Takoma Park. One of the HTI photos used in the exhibit.



Train passing through North Takoma. This photo was not used in the Smithsonian exhibit.

Goodman Houses Headed for National Register

As part of a nation-wide survey to gain recognition for the work of mid-twentieth century modernist architect Charles Goodman, three houses on Takoma Avenue in North Takoma are part of a list of properties recently submitted to the Maryland Historical Trust as part of the process of attaining a place on the National Register of Historic Sites. Goodman, who died in 1992, was a product of the industrial Midwest, but spent much of his career as an architect working out of DC. He designed 'glass boxes,' with clean lines, lots of open interior space, and often using pre-fab materials such as aluminum or concrete panels. Because Goodman was based in DC, a significant number of houses designed by him are located in the greater DC area, including Silver Spring, Alexandria, Southwest DC, and another house in the Takoma vicinity on Tilden Street, NW. A retrospective of his work is planned at the National Building Museum in 2006. Watch for celebration of this Takoma Park National Register nomination sometime in the spring.

Maintenance of Old Town Gazebo

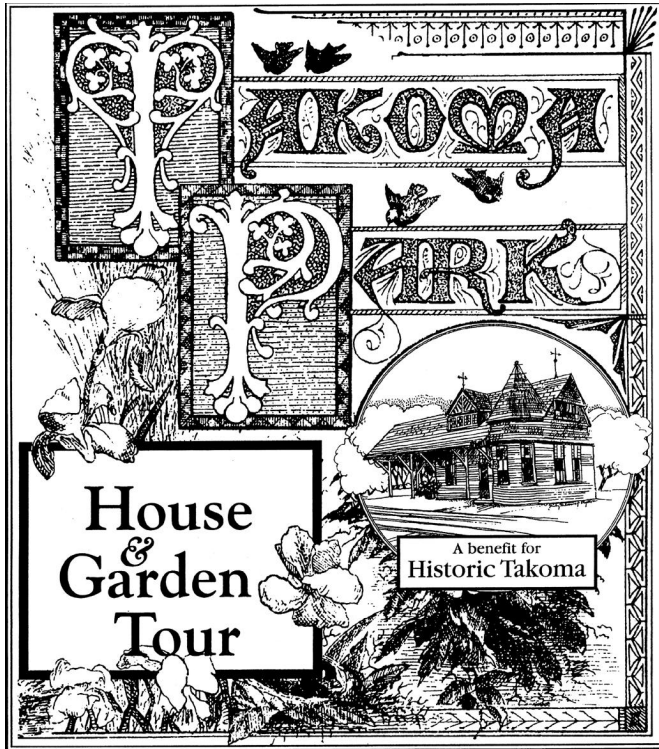
On January 19, 2004, Montgomery County Planning Board Chair Derick Berlage attended the Takoma Park City Council meeting to hear citizen comments on the Maryland-National Capital Region Parks and Planning Commission's decision to institute a carry-in/carry-out policy for trash collection in Sligo Creek Park. Some attention was also devoted to the severe neglect of the Old Town Gazebo which MNCRPPC is also responsible for maintaining. The Gazebo, at the heart of Takoma Park's business and historic districts, has been shamefully neglected. HTI has written to Chairman Berlage requesting that improvements be made to the Gazebo, but as of this writing, has received no reply from him or his agency.

Outreach to Neighborhood Associations

In 2003, HTI began a program of outreach to local neighborhood associations. HTI Directors visit regular meetings of associations to provide preservation education outreach as well as information about HTI activities and memberships and preservation issues within the community at large. Our most recent meeting was with the WACO Citizens' Association. Anyone interested in having HTI visit their association should call Lorraine Pearsall at (301) 270-2431.

Annual House & Garden Tour

Sunday, May 2, 2004



—Courtesy of Artist Newman Sudduth, Evening Star
 "I—I won't live way out in the country, we'll never have any neighbors and nobody'll ever be able to find us ...!"
 Cartoon used in the Smithsonian exhibit "America on the Move."

Did You Know . . . ?

From The Archives . . . Recollections of the 1893 Fire

From M. Mooers account of
 Takoma Park history
 January 28, 1914

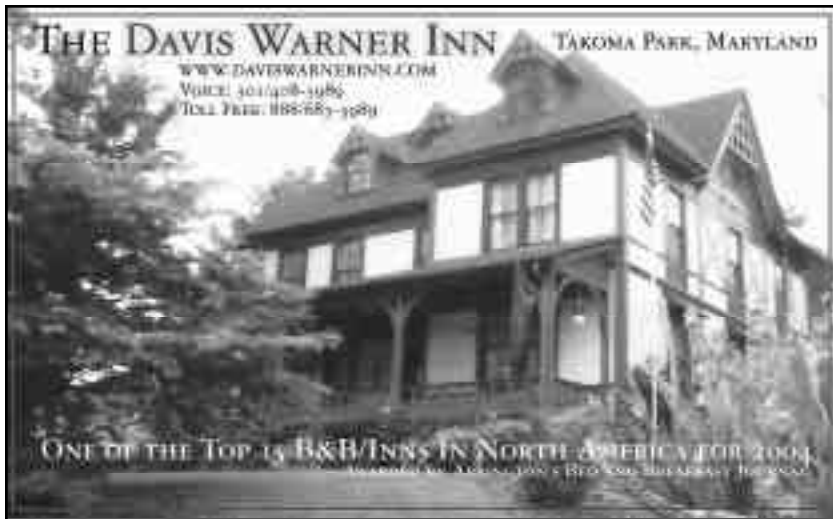
I recall the big fire, which occurred Dec. 29, 1893. The alarm was sounded about 5 o'clock in the morning and Birch's store which stood opposite the B&O Depot, Robb's store on the present site of the Columbia Brick and Coal plant, Fra-zee's tin shop, the Watkins Hotel were destroyed. The whole town turned out and after saving what goods could be gotten out, looked on for there was nothing else to do. There were no firefighting facilities and but for a light fall of snow which covered the roofs and the leaves on the ground, the loss would have been much greater.




The Watkins Hotel burned in the 1893 fire.

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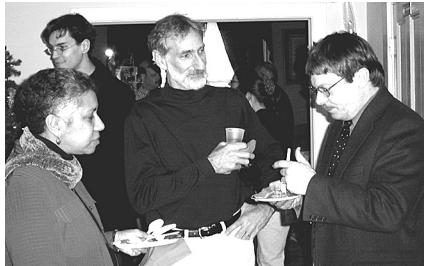


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New HTI Officers & Directors Elected

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Archives Committee. At the conclusion of the elections, Dr. Baron presented a certificate of appreciation and gift to Lorraine. HTI has also purchased a brick for the new Takoma Park Community Center in honor of Lorraine's service as HTI President.



Out-going HTI Treasurer Alan Abrams with holiday cheer and HTI members.

Also elected as officers were Caroline Alderson Secretary, Brian Finlay Treasurer, and Lorraine Pearsall Vice President for Preservation. Caroline was born in Takoma Park and has a distinguished background in historic preservation. She works in the preservation program of the General Services Administration and lives in a Victorian double-house on Maple Avenue, which she has lovingly and accurately restored. This election is a return to the Board for Caroline. Brian Finlay, his wife and two children are new Takoma Park residents, having just moved to North Takoma in October 2003. Brian directs a non-profit lobbying effort on Capitol Hill working on global terrorism and nuclear threat reduction efforts. Lorraine Pearsall will continue as an officer on the Board, carrying on work in preservation advocacy as Vice President for Preservation.

Three new Directors were also elected to the Board. Karen Fishman is returning to the Board as Chair of the Archives

Committee. She has served previously as President and Vice President of HTI and has also been a dedicated member of the Archives Committee. A long-time resident of Takoma Park and a professional archivist, she is currently a reference librarian/archivist with the Recorded Sound Section of the Library of Congress. Susan Schreiber joins the Board to work with grants, development, and education outreach. She brings to the Board a strong background as a historic preservation professional. Susan has lived in Takoma Park for some time and is dedicated to preserving the unique qualities of this community. John Current, a displaced New Englander, has found comfort in Takoma Park. He lives across the street from the Thomas-Siegler Carriage House and Gardens and has a strong interest in ensuring its preservation and viability into the future. John joins the Board as Chair of the Carriage House Committee.

These new Officers and Directors join Mark Freedman as Communications Director; Diana Kohn as Oral History Chair; Kathy Brooks-Denny as House & Garden Tour Chair; Bonnie Moss as DC Preservation Committee Chair; Suzanne Copping as Chair of the Education Committee; and Dorothy L. Barnes as Historian. HTI is delighted and extremely fortunate to have this talented and dedicated group of Directors. Welcome!



Former Chair of the Carriage House Committee, Laura Di Curcio received a gift of appreciation from outgoing President Lorraine Pearsall.



Events Chair Robert Patenaude and newly-elected Secretary Caroline Alderson.



Lorraine Pearsall presents the Art Mc Murdy Restoration Award to Alison Baker, restorer of the Boat House on Cedar Avenue.



Caroline Alderson and new Chair of the Archives Committee Karen Fishman reminisce about earlier service on the Board.

Members of the Senate Budget & Taxation and House Ways & Means Committees

(continued from page one)

Support SB190 & HB289 and continuation of the Heritage Tax Credit Program. Oppose ruining such a successful program by attempting to convert it to a grant. If you can, cite specific projects in their districts that have resulted from the tax credit or that are threatened by its elimination.

DELEGATE SHEILA ELLIS HIXSON
Democrat, District 20, Montgomery County
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1-800-492-7122, ext. 3469 (toll free)
e-mail: Sheila_hixson@house.state.md.us
fax: (410) 841-3777, (301) 858-3777

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Flashing CVS Sign Violates Historic Aesthetic

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freestanding sign supporting it. The sign should be replaced with something more appropriate to the historic atmosphere of Old Town. The City Council of Takoma Park has passed a resolution supporting this action and HTI has sent a letter making the same request to CVS officials at their headquarters in Rhode Island. Provided below is a list of CVS officials and their phone numbers. Please contact them to ask for removal of the sign.

Tony Murray
Local Store Manager
Tel: (202) 722-7592

Regional CVS officials:
7859-AHeritage Drive
Annandale, VA 22003
Fax: (703) 642-8254

Sue Reardon
Regional Manager
Tel: (703) 941-2130

William Fadel
Pharmacy Supervisor
Tel: (703) 642-1741

Matthias Arling
District Sales Manager
Tel: (703) 642-5246

National CVS officials:
CVS Corporate Headquarters
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Foreword by W. F. Harman

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Montgomery County HPC Dealing with Record Number of Violations

(continued from page two)

Another recent issue that the Commission has been grappling with is a proliferation of projects that propose extensive removal and replacement of historic building materials, such as all the horizontal wood siding on a building. In fact, some projects propose actually dismantling a historic building and rebuilding a replica of it.

Preservationists believe that an important part of what makes a building “historic” is the materials that comprise it – the original wood windows, the original wood horizontal clapboard siding, the original standing seam metal roof, etc.

So, what exactly is historic preservation?

Taken inversely, “historic preservation” is the preservation of historic resources. These words are not randomly chosen; in fact, they have very specific definitions. To preserve is the first step one can take to protect a historic resource. It is defined by the Secretary of the Interior in the Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. According to the document: PRESERVATION is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance

and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

Rehabilitation, on the other hand, is defined as “...making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.” Finally, reconstruction is defined as “...depicting, by new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving...building... for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time.”

The preservation of historic resources, therefore, requires that a property owner sustain, protect, and stabilize resources by maintaining and repairing historic materials. Without historic materials, the buildings are threatened with a loss of integrity (due to absence of design, materials, and workmanship).

The trend toward wholesale removal of historic materials is counter to the idea of “historic preservation.” To remove historic materials and replace them with

new materials—even in-kind (identical) materials—is a step of last resort, and one taken only when materials are so far deteriorated that their maintenance and repair is impossible. Again, quoting from the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Preservation: “Preservation strives to retain existing materials and features while employing as little new material as possible. Consequently, guidance for repairing a historic material ...begins with the least degree of intervention possible.”

To assure that proposed projects are consistent with the historic preservation principles discussed above and with the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the HPC staff is glad to consult with anyone considering a proposal for new construction, demolition, and exterior alterations to a designated historic property. You are encouraged to discuss proposals for major work with the staff in advance of filing a Historic Area Work Permit. For information or to make an appointment, call (301) 563-3400.

This story is adapted and reprinted by permission from *The Preservationist* (Fall 2003), the newsletter of the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission. It applies to the Takoma Park, MD Historic District. The Historic District in Takoma Park, DC is governed by a different preservation ordinance.

*Look for the 2002
HTI Annual Report
on our website at
www.historictakoma.org.*

*Save The Date!
Annual House &
Garden Tour,
Sunday, May 2, 2004*

Calendar of HTI Events

www.historictakoma.org

Historic Takoma Walking Tour
Sunday, March 28, 1 p.m.
Sunday, April 24, 1 p.m.
Sunday, May 22, 1 p.m.

Bungalow Nation signing
Sunday, April 18, 2-4 p.m.

Historic Takoma's annual
House and Garden tour
Sunday, May 1st, 12-5 p.m.

HTI celebrates 25 years of
service to the community
in 2004.

Join Historic Takoma Today!

Help Preserve Our Community's Heritage

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Household |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Business | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Sponsor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Benefactor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 B. F. Gilbert Club (lifetime) |
- (Contributions are tax deductible.)

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-Mail _____

**Mail to: Historic Takoma, Inc.,
PO Box 5781 Takoma Park, MD 20913**

Visit us at www.historictakoma.org.

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PO Box 5781
Takoma Park, MD 20913

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Goodman Houses—National Register
"America on the Move" Exhibit
Old Town Gazebo Maintenance
Historic Cemetery Inventory
Outreach to Neighborhood
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