



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

August 10, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: Historic Preservation Commission
From: Kacy Rohn, Historic Preservation Specialist
Subject: Women's Suffrage Centennial Research & Commemorative Efforts

Background:

August 26, 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which prohibited states from denying women the right to vote on the basis of sex. This significant anniversary has spurred nationwide commemorative and research efforts as well as reflection on the legacy of the suffrage movement, which secured a major victory for white women but left women of color behind. The Historic Preservation Office has contributed to statewide and countywide commemorative efforts through original research and participation in the planning and development of virtual community events.

Overview:

Significant efforts related to women's suffrage include:

Research Efforts:

- *National Park Service:* NPS has [identified sites](#) around the country associated with the suffrage movement and developed extensive [interpretive tools](#) to share the movement's history, including platforms targeting students and children.
- *Maryland Historical Trust:* MHT has developed a women's [suffrage story map](#) of historic sites in Maryland associated with the movement, and utilized a NPS Underrepresented Communities Grant to make updates to existing Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) and National Register of Historic Places (NR) forms and to develop new MIHP forms and NR nominations for previously-undocumented sites.
- *Historic Preservation Office:* Historic Preservation staff researched local women's involvement in the suffrage movement, identified communities and sites where suffrage activism occurred, and summarized the county's suffrage milestones on our Historic Designation and Research page.

Events:

- *Montgomery County Commission for Women:* Historic Preservation staff have supported the efforts of the Montgomery County Commission for Women to develop a [virtual commemorative event](#) on August 19. Originally planned as an in-person celebration, the virtual event reflects months of collaboration between numerous stakeholders.
- *Maryland Commission for Women:* The Maryland Commission for Women will host a virtual [2020 Women's Centennial Summit](#) on August 26. I will serve as a panelist for a discussion of the history and legacy of the suffrage movement in Maryland.
- *Preserving Sites of Suffrage Activism:* As part of the Prince George's County Planning Department's 2020 Speaker Series, I led a discussion of Maryland's history of suffrage activism,

the omission of women from inventories of historic sites, and the challenge of commemorating a movement laden with racism. The [recorded session](#) is available online.

Next Steps:

Due to restrictions on research and prohibitions on large gatherings caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, 19th Amendment commemorative efforts will stretch into 2021. Ongoing projects include:

- *Forest Glen Historic Marker*: Staff are working with Montgomery Parks to pursue a possible women's suffrage historic marker at the Forest Glen Neighborhood Park, a site associated with two significant suffrage activists, Lavinia Hauke Engle and her daughter, Lavinia Margaret Engle.
- *Updates to Historic Sites and Districts*: Time permitting, staff will make updates to existing historic site and district forms where significant suffrage activism occurred and was omitted from original documentation of the resource's significance.
- *Ongoing Research*: This project represents one phase in an ongoing effort to identify and document sites associated with Montgomery County's history of social and political activism. Related research topics include civil rights and LGBTQ+ advocacy.

Attachment:

Select images related to state and county suffrage activism.

Attachment: Select Images Related to State and County Suffrage Activism – August 2020



Caroline Hallowell Miller, of Sandy Spring, who founded the Maryland Woman Suffrage Association c. 1889. Photo Credit: "The Late Mrs. Caroline Hallowell Miller," N.D. Photograph. Library of Congress.



Early suffrage meetings were held at the Sandy Spring Lyceum, within the Sandy Spring Historic District (Master Plan Historic District #28/11).



A Montgomery County branch of the Just Government League had formed by November 1912. Members of the Montgomery County branch joined the March 3, 1913 National Suffrage Procession in DC, seen here. Photo Credit: The Just Government League of Maryland Marching for Women's Suffrage, Washington, DC, March 3, 1913. Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2167-35.



Beginning in 1914, women of the Just Government League made several suffrage pilgrimages around Maryland in this covered wagon. In the summer of 1915, they visited Montgomery County and made stops in Spencerville, Brookeville, Barnesville, Poolesville, Darnestown and Garrett Park. Photo Credit: Maryland Suffrage News, Vol. IV, No. 9. May 29, 1915. Library of Congress: Chronicling America.



The Chevy Chase Equal Suffrage League formed June 22, 1913. One of their most active members was Minnie E. Brooke, also a National Woman's Party activist. Photo Credit: "Mrs. Minnie E. Brooke of Chevy Chase..." Harris & Ewing, Washington, D.C., 1916. Library of Congress.



Brooke's home in Chevy Chase, No Gain, is designated in the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation as site #35/69. Photo Credit: HP File Photo.



The Progressive Suffrage Club, organized by Black women in Baltimore, reportedly established several chapters in Montgomery County. Progressive Suffrage Club president Estelle Hall Young is shown third from the right. Black suffragists' activism is significantly less well-documented due to the movement's racial segregation. Photo Credit: "Seven Reasons Why the Civic League Flower Show Will Go Over Big Sept. 27," *The Baltimore Afro-American*, p. A10.