

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Historic Preservation Program supports the Historic Preservation Commission and Planning Board by providing for the identification, evaluation, designation, and regulation of the County's significant architectural and cultural heritage. These resources are essential elements of community identity and highlight the unique character of the neighborhoods, landscapes, and cultural communities in the county. In Montgomery County, there are four relevant categories of historic preservation at the local and federal levels: Master Plan for Historic Preservation, Locational Atlas & Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County, the Burial Sites Inventory, and the National Register of Historic Places. In Montgomery, historic sites and districts may be listed on a single or multiple registers.

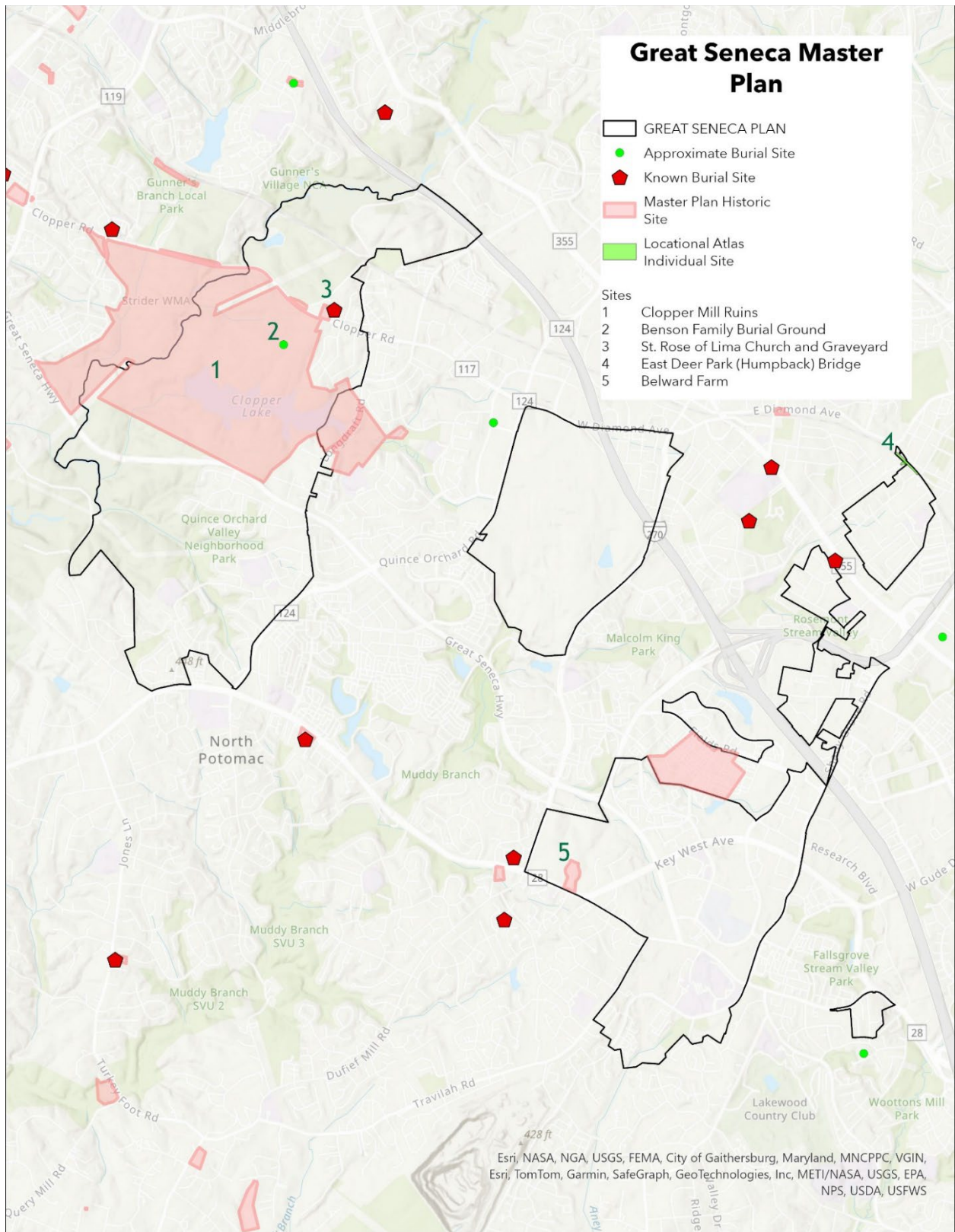
The Montgomery County Planning Board established the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County in 1976 to identify resources that are potentially historically significant. Resources listed on the atlas are protected from demolition or substantial alteration under §24A of the County Code. This designation is meant to be temporary until analysis for listing in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation can be completed.

The Montgomery County Council adopted the Master Plan for Historic Preservation in 1979. The plan includes all officially designated historic sites and districts. These sites or districts have met at least one criterion for historical, cultural, or architectural significance, and merit protection under §24A, Historic Resources Preservation, of the County Code. The environmental setting (historic district boundary) for each site, as defined in §24A-2 of the County Code, is the entire parcel on which the resource is located as of the date it is designated unless otherwise specified in the subject amendment. Exterior alterations to a Master Plan Historic Site or District must receive a Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP) from the Historic Preservation Commission in accordance with § 24A-6.

Montgomery County's Burial Sites Inventory recognizes the significance of cemetery and burial sites to the community. In 2017, the County Council passed two laws to help preserve and protect these unique and fragile resources. §33A-17 requires the Planning Board to maintain an inventory of human burial sites in the county. §18-31 requires these sites to be preserved and protected during the preliminary plan of subdivision review and approval process. A burial site is defined in the ordinances as the "physical location where human remains were buried in the earth or entombed in mausoleum or columbarium. A burial site includes a cemetery but does not include the sprinkling of ashes from cremated remains." The Burial Site Inventory is the list of burial sites officially adopted by the Planning Board.

The National Register of Historic Places—maintained by the National Park Service—is the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. National Register properties have significance to the history of their community, state, or the nation. The honorific listing in the National Register places no restrictions on what a non-governmental owner may do with their property, up to and including demolition, unless the project receives federal assistance.

The earliest criteria for historic designation (at federal, state, and local levels) were developed for high-styled architecture and/or association with a traditional historic narrative. There are unknown and untold stories of underrepresented communities that were often not captured in initial survey efforts. As part of Montgomery Planning’s Equity Agenda in Planning initiative, the Historic Preservation Program will continue to identify gaps in our historical knowledge, broaden the historic context of each community, and recommend treatments for sites associated with underrepresented communities.



HISTORIC SITES

The Great Seneca Plan boundary includes two Master Plan Historic Sites (Belward Farm, M: 20-21) and St. Rose of Lima, M: 20-28) designated in the Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan (1985) and one Master Plan Historic Site (Clopper Mill Ruins, M: 19-21) designated in the Germantown Master Plan (1989).

The Planning Board listed Humpback Bridge in the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in 2005. The plan boundary includes two sites on the Burial Sites Inventory, the St. Rose of Lima Church graveyard (MIHP 20-28, ID: 141) and the William Benson Family Cemetery (ID: 201). The National Institute of Standards & Technology research campus (MIHP 20-47) was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2021. A barn (Casey Barn, M: 21-183) and a private residence (C.G. Statler House, M: 21-7) near Gaithersburg were surveyed and found eligible for the National Register of Historic Places by the Maryland Historic Trust.

Gaithersburg and Washington Grove are independent municipalities with their own preservation programs and locally designated resources that are not subject to §24-A of the County Code.

THEMES IN THE GREAT SENECA PLAN

Based on sites and communities identified to date, the main historical narratives for this area center around agriculture and rural industry, the history of Christianity and church communities in the County, the transition from an agrarian landscape to a suburban landscape, and transportation infrastructure that led to federal and private scientific and technological research facilities.

Designated Sites Within the Study Boundary

Historic Name	Date of Construction	Location	Status	Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) Number
Clopper Mill Ruins	c1795; 1834	Clopper Rd at Waring Station Rd	Master Plan for Historic Preservation	M: 19-21
St. Rose of Lima Church	1883	11715 Clopper Rd	Master Plan for Historic Preservation	M: 20-28
Belward Farm	1891	9951 Key West Ave (10425 Darnestown Road)	Master Plan for Historic Preservation	M: 20-21
Humpback Bridge	1945	East Deer Park Drive at CSX Tracks	Locational Atlas	M: 21-220
William Benson Family Cemetery	Unknown	Seneca Creek State Park	Burial Site Inventory	N/A
St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church Cemetery	1837-2004	11701 Clopper Rd	Burial Site Inventory	M: 20-28

SITES DESIGNATED IN THE MASTER PLAN FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

[Clopper Mill Ruins \(c.1795; 1834\), M: 19-21, Clopper Road at Waring Station Road, Seneca Creek State Park](#)

The Clopper Mill Ruins are remnants of the extensive property of Francis Cassatt Clopper, a business owner and railroad speculator in Montgomery County in the 1800s. Clopper's mansion, known as Woodlands, was located near what is now the visitors center at Seneca Creek State Park. Much of the surrounding area is named after Clopper, as he donated land both for a nearby railroad station, named in his honor, and for St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church (see below).



The Clopper Mill Ruins are significant as one of the few remaining distinguishable mills in the County, representing an industry once essential to economic development. The popularity of the mill led to a road network connecting it with farms and markets in the region. Nicholas Sibert built the original mill on this site in the 1770s. About 1795, Zachariah MacCubbin rebuilt the mill, constructing a two-level stone structure. Clopper renovated and expanded the mill in 1834, adding a third story of bricks made at a manufactory on this estate. The mill structure itself and the operations of the mill may be a result of enslaved labor. Records show that Zachariah MacCubbin enslaved at least 10 people, and Francis Clopper (and later his children) enslaved at least 16 people, some of whom may have lived or worked in the mill and/or in the brick quarry. Further research is needed to identify the names of these people and explore their lives and accomplishments.

Business at the mill declined after the steam-powered Bowman Brothers Mill opened in 1888 in Germantown. Clopper's Mill was heavily damaged by fire in 1947. The ruins consist of stone and brick walls with no roof. Local fieldstone on the basement and first floor levels has corner quoins and heavy stone lintels. The historic site is extensive and includes landscape features beyond the physical ruins.

The Burial Sites Inventory indicates the William Benson Family Cemetery (ID: 201) may be within the park, but no evidence of any burials remains.

The Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan (2010) recommended stabilization of the mill ruins and historical interpretation of this site, such as a plaque or historic marker. As of 2023 this recommendation has not been fulfilled.

[St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church \(c.1883\), M: 20-28, 11715 Clopper Road, Clopper](#)

St. Rose of Lima is a fine example of a rural Carpenter Gothic chapel and is one of the earliest Catholic congregations in the Midcounty region. The wood-frame church has a steeply-pitched front-gable roof. Architectural embellishments include a pointed arch door and windows. The front entry features

a bracketed hood with a king-post truss. Directly above, a rose window lights the interior. On the rear of the building, gabled wings flank a polygonal hipped roof apse.

Francis Clopper established this as the first Catholic Church in the Gaithersburg area in 1838. Though Protestant, Clopper married Ann Jane Bryant, who was Catholic, and wanted to raise their children in the Catholic faith. When the Cloppers moved to the area in 1812, the closest Catholic churches were in Rockville and Barnesville. They donated land from their estate Woodlands on Clopper Road, and a church was built in 1838 and dedicated by Bishop Eccleston in 1846. Following extensive remodeling in 1880, the church was re-dedicated, but was destroyed by fire three years later. Plans for the present church were immediately designed. The cornerstone for the new St. Rose's Church was laid on July 4, 1883. The Church has an associated graveyard with earliest burials dating to circa 1837. The graveyard includes congregants, the Clopper family, and at least twenty enslaved workers from the Clopper estate.

[Belward Farm \(c.1891\), M: 20-21, 9951 Key West Avenue \(10425 Darnestown Road\), North Potomac](#)

Ignatius Beall Ward established the Belward Farm in the mid-1800s. Ward operated the Hunting Hill Post Office and Store, a general store located at his farm, offering groceries and supplies, mail delivery, wheelwrighting, and blacksmithing.

The Belward Farm complex includes a gambrel roof dairy barn, milk house and large frame cow barn. The large, picturesque Belward House (c1891) is a significant example of late 19th century Victorian farmstead architecture with Queen Anne- style shingled gables, polygonal bay windows, and turned porch posts. In the second half of the 20th century, Ward's granddaughter, Elizabeth Beall Banks, continued the family tradition, residing here and farming the land until her death in 2002.

Belward Campus has a long-standing preliminary plan as well as two approved site plans. When the Belward Farm was designated a Master Plan Historic Site, the setting was 108 acres. A Preliminary Plan was approved in 1996 subject to a



condition specifying an environmental setting of 6.98 acres. This Plan retains many of the recommendations from the 2010 Plan and supports implementation of the approved site plans. These plans envision development that will include medical and life sciences uses with amenities such as adaptive reuse of the historic Belward Farm buildings, preservation of open space and mature trees surrounding the farmstead, construction of a street grid, and the creation of Privately Owned Public Space (POPS) and the Mission Hills preserve. This Plan recommends supporting the Corridor Connector alignment that includes dedicated bus lanes through the property to Muddy Branch Road. Recommendations for this site include:

- Preserve views of the Belward farmstead, to the extent practicable, from Darnestown Road and residential neighborhoods to the south and west, consistent with other Master Plan objectives for this site.
- Require adaptive reuse of the historic Belward Farm buildings (that will remain) for recreational, educational, social, institutional or cultural uses that complement the community and new development.
- Step new buildings down to 60 to 80 feet depending on whether they are adjacent to the Belward Farm, to be decided at site plan review.
- Preserve open space and mature trees surrounding the farmstead. Retain an environmental setting large enough to convey the agricultural character of the historic resource, approximately seven acres.
- Support the creation of a new POPS (aka Muddy Branch “park”) on Belward Campus along Muddy Branch Road to provide recreational amenities for workers and nearby residents.
- Ensure that open space contains contemplative and active spaces, such as athletic fields or pickleball courts.
- Implement a bicycle parking station directly adjacent to a future Great Seneca Transit Network Gray Route stop along the planned Corridor Connector on Belward Campus Drive. Coordinate with Montgomery County Department of Transportation to align the bicycle parking station with the location of the Great Seneca Transit Network stop. Consider locating the bicycle parking station in the right-of-way in the median of Belward Campus Drive or within future development on the Belward Campus site directly adjacent to the transit stop.

SITES LISTED IN THE LOCATIONAL ATLAS & INDEX OF HISTORIC SITES

Humpback/Deer Park Bridge (1945), M: 21-220, East Deer Park Drive at CSX Tracks, MCDOT

In 2005, the Planning Board added the Humpback Bridge to the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites.



The Humpback Bridge spans the railroad tracks near the Washington Grove station site. Located adjacent to the City of Gaithersburg and the Town of Washington Grove, the bridge represents the origin and development of Washington Grove, Oakmont and Gaithersburg. The Humpback Bridge is a local landmark that is a unique established and familiar visual feature. The form and profile of the bridge are reflective of bridge construction from 1945, the year that the structure was erected. A timber bridge has

been in place at this location since the 1880s. The bridge, which is maintained by MCDOT, was rehabilitated in 1988 and 2000. MCDOT conducted a comprehensive structural test to examine the condition of the East Deer Park Drive Bridge over CSX Railroad and published their findings in November 2008. The study determined that timber supports were deteriorated and required replacement. MCDOT, working in cooperation with Planning Department staff, developed a rehabilitation program that provides for the replacement of existing timber bents with similar wooden bents in a compatible structural arrangement. The in-kind replacement was found not to be a substantial alteration of a historic site under Chapter 24A-10 of the County code. The project was completed in 2014.

RESOURCES LISTED IN THE BURIAL SITES INVENTORY

St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, ID: 141, M: 20-28, 1837-2004, 11701 Clopper Road

Church graveyard associated with St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church. 443 known burials, with the earliest marker dating from 1837. The burials include the catholic congregants, the Clopper family, and at least twenty burials for people enslaved on the Clopper estate and their children.



William Benson Family Cemetery, ID: 201, date unknown, Seneca Creek State Park

Approximate location of a burial believed to be of William Benson, a Revolutionary War soldier.

SITES LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

National Institute of Standards & Technology Historic District (1960s), M: 20-47, 100 Bureau Drive, Gaithersburg, Government/Research Facility

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is a federal research campus constructed in the early 1960s. NIST is the only federal agency charged with establishing national measurement standards and keeping them uniform, compatible, and reliable. The 579-acre National Register Historic District is contiguous with the campus boundaries and is comprised of 74 buildings, structures, objects, and sites on a landscaped campus. Resources include monumental, multi-story buildings housing laboratory and administrative spaces. Brick, marble and granite are the predominant construction materials along with aluminum and glass. Buildings in the historic district were designed by HLW International who introduced such concepts as the modular laboratory. Ample landscaping, a suburban setting, and the use of the International Style are central in their design. The inclusion of such elements in research campuses became standard practice during the postwar years.

RESOURCES FOUND POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE FOR LISTING IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

These resources have been surveyed for their eligibility and have been recommended for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places by the Maryland Historical Trust

C.G. Statler House (late 1800s), M: 21-7, 8700 Oakmont Street, Gaithersburg, Private Residence

The Statler House is a late 19th-century Queen Anne-style house located on a residential lot in a largely late 20th century residential subdivision. Despite its altered surroundings, the house retains high architectural integrity and exhibits a wealth of late 19th-century ornament generally associated with the Queen Anne and stick styles of architecture.

