

April 6, 2026

Jonathan Kaplan

[REDACTED]
Wheaton, MD 20902
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Re: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission FY27 Operating Budget: Historic Preservation staff

Montgomery County Council Members -

As a recent transplant to Montgomery County, I was immediately struck by the county's wide range of diversity. My new home of Wheaton alone is home to so many communities from around the world as well as local communities that stretch back many generations.

Getting out and exploring the county exposed me to the physical history of these communities, as I would stumble upon sites like the Scotland AME Zion Church on Seven Locks Road and the Thomas Harper Cabin in Wheaton Regional Park. The county's proactive preservation of these links to the past was one of the things that motivated me to serve on the Historic Preservation Commission.

For all the amazing work the Historic Preservation Division does in preserving these treasures, its lack of staff is reflected in the current three to four-year turnaround time for the designation of historic properties. Clearing out the backlog of properties that are still on the 1970s Locational Atlas would accelerate the designation process and ensure that the county's living cultural record will remain available for future generations.

Adding this position would increase the division's ability to protect vulnerable sites before they're gone forever, and it would also allow more robust community outreach to make this rich history accessible to all county residents. This is why I'm excited at the prospect of an additional cultural resources planner.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Kaplan