

EHT ||| TRACERIES
HISTORIC D.C.
NEIGHBORHOODS
History and Architecture Overview



Presentation Overview



D.C.'s Historic
Neighborhoods



Most Common
Architectural Styles



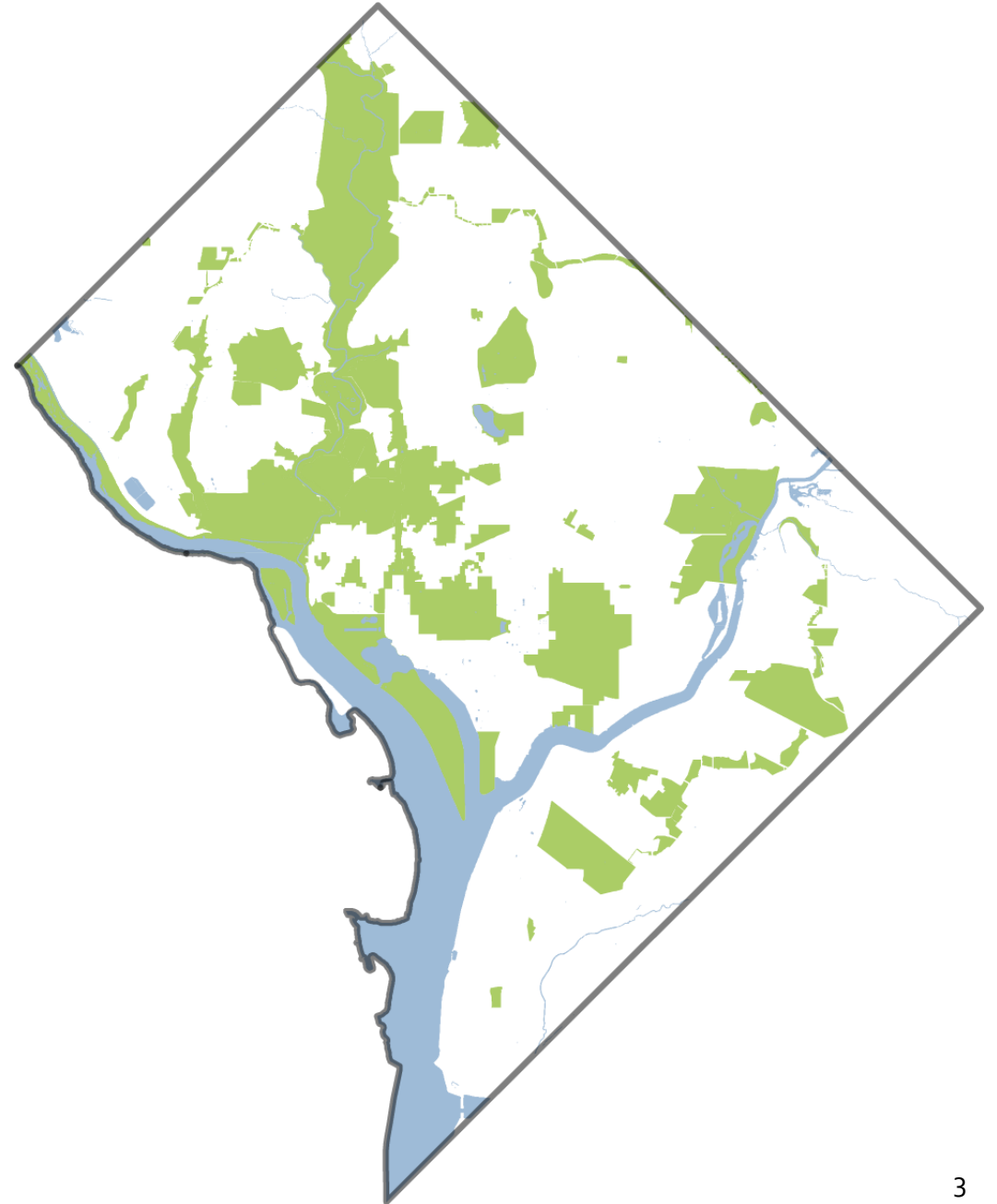
Deeper Dive

D.C. Historic Districts

There are nearly **70 historic districts** in Washington, DC!

Generally, we separate these into three main categories:

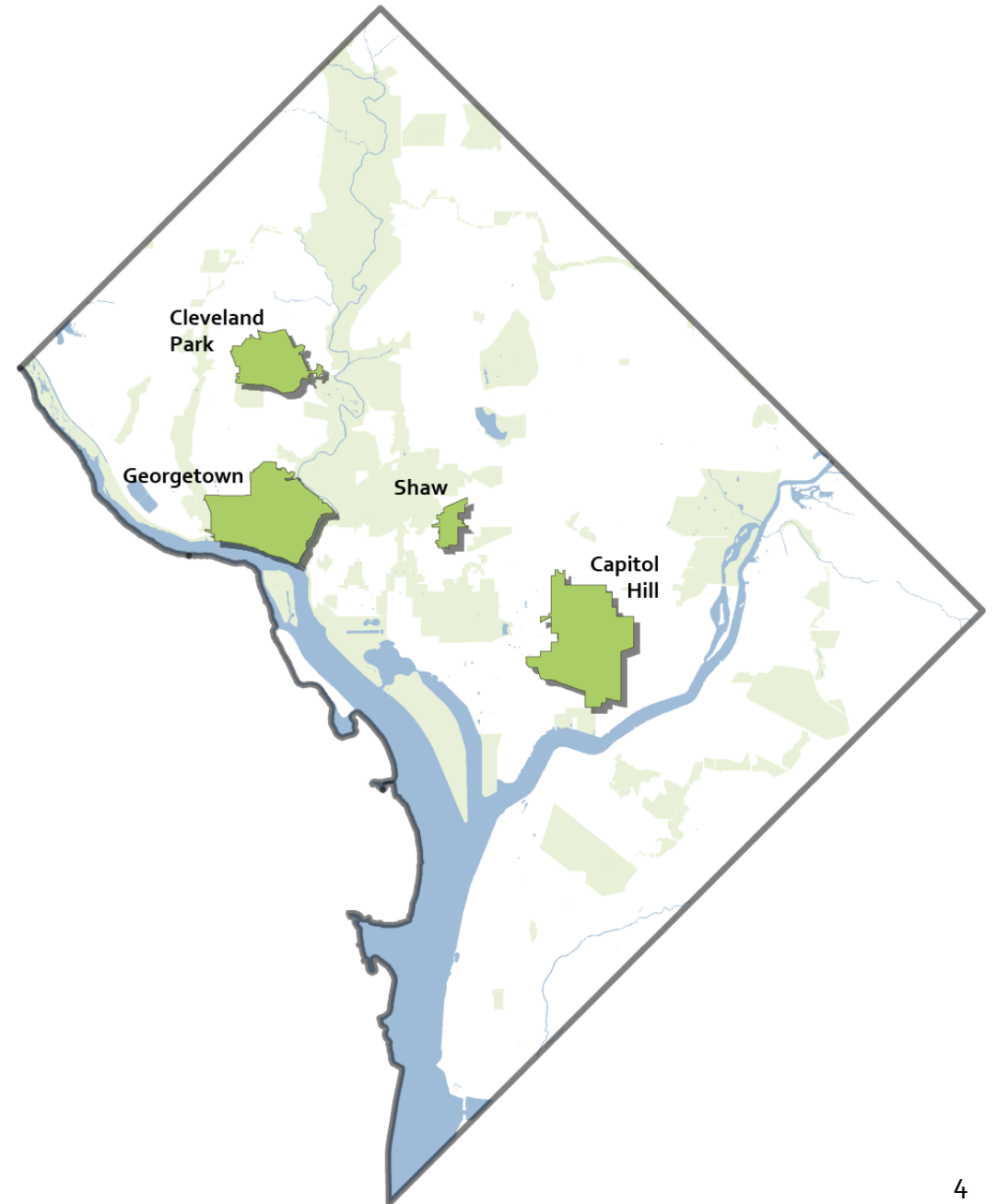
- Government and Institutional Historic Districts
- Park and Parkway Historic Districts
- Neighborhood Historic Districts



DC Historic Districts

Neighborhood Historic Districts include:

- Anacostia
- Blagden Alley/Naylor Court
- Bloomingdale
- Capitol Hill
- Cleveland Park
- Downtown
- Dupont Circle
- Emerald Street
- Foggy Bottom
- Fourteenth Street
- Foxhall Village
- Georgetown
- Grant Circle
- Grant Road
- Kalorama Triangle
- Kingman Park
- LeDroit Park
- Logan Circle
- Massachusetts Avenue
- Meridian Hill
- Mount Pleasant
- Mount Vernon Square
- Mount Vernon Triangle
- Shaw
- Sheridan Kalorama
- Sixteenth Street
- Strivers' Section
- Takoma Park
- U Street
- Union Market
- Washington Heights
- Woodley Park



D.C.'s Oldest Building?

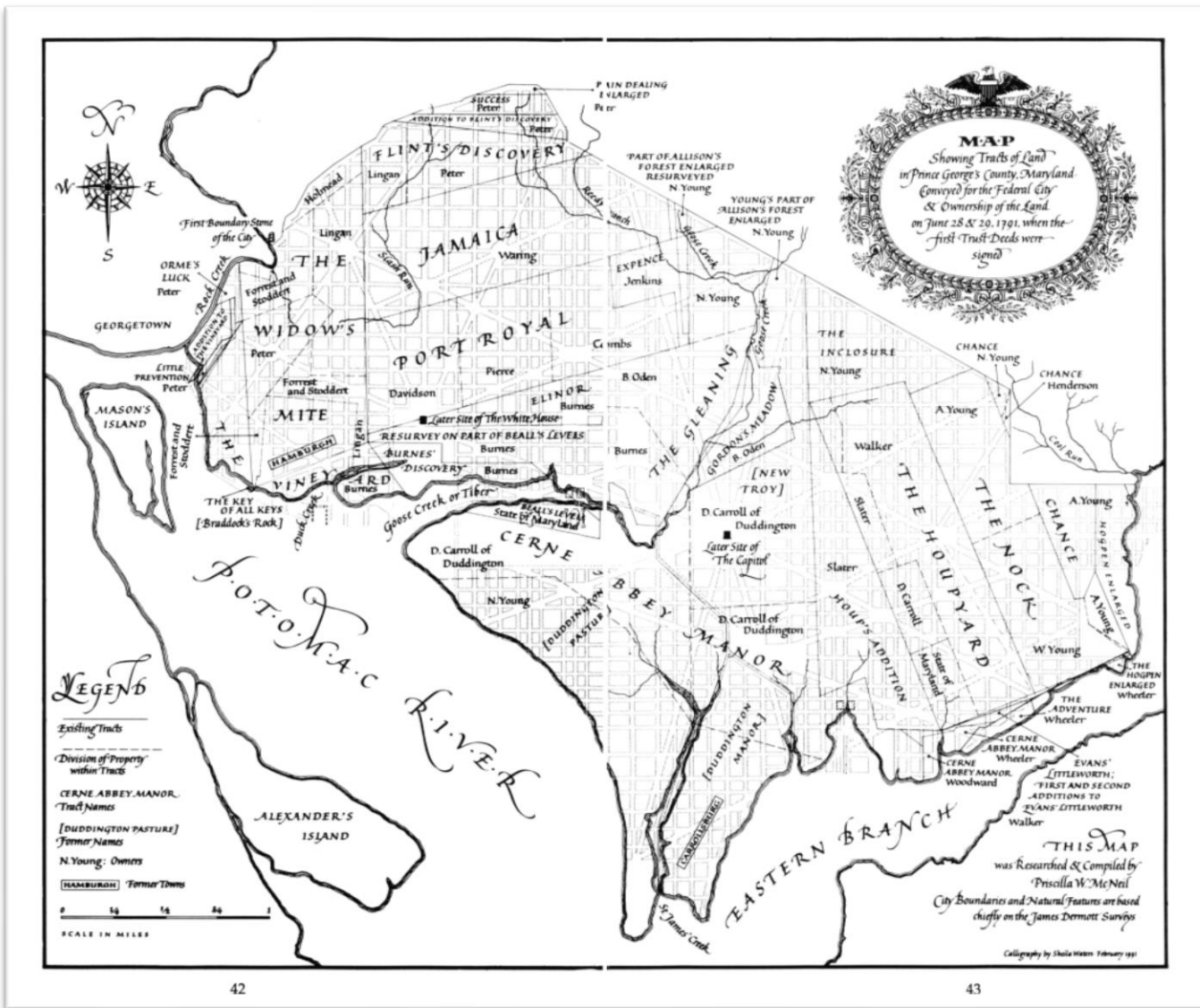
- "The Lindens," 1754
- Originally built in Danvers, Massachusetts and rebuilt in D.C. in 1935-1937



The Lindens (*Architectural Digest*)

The Federal City

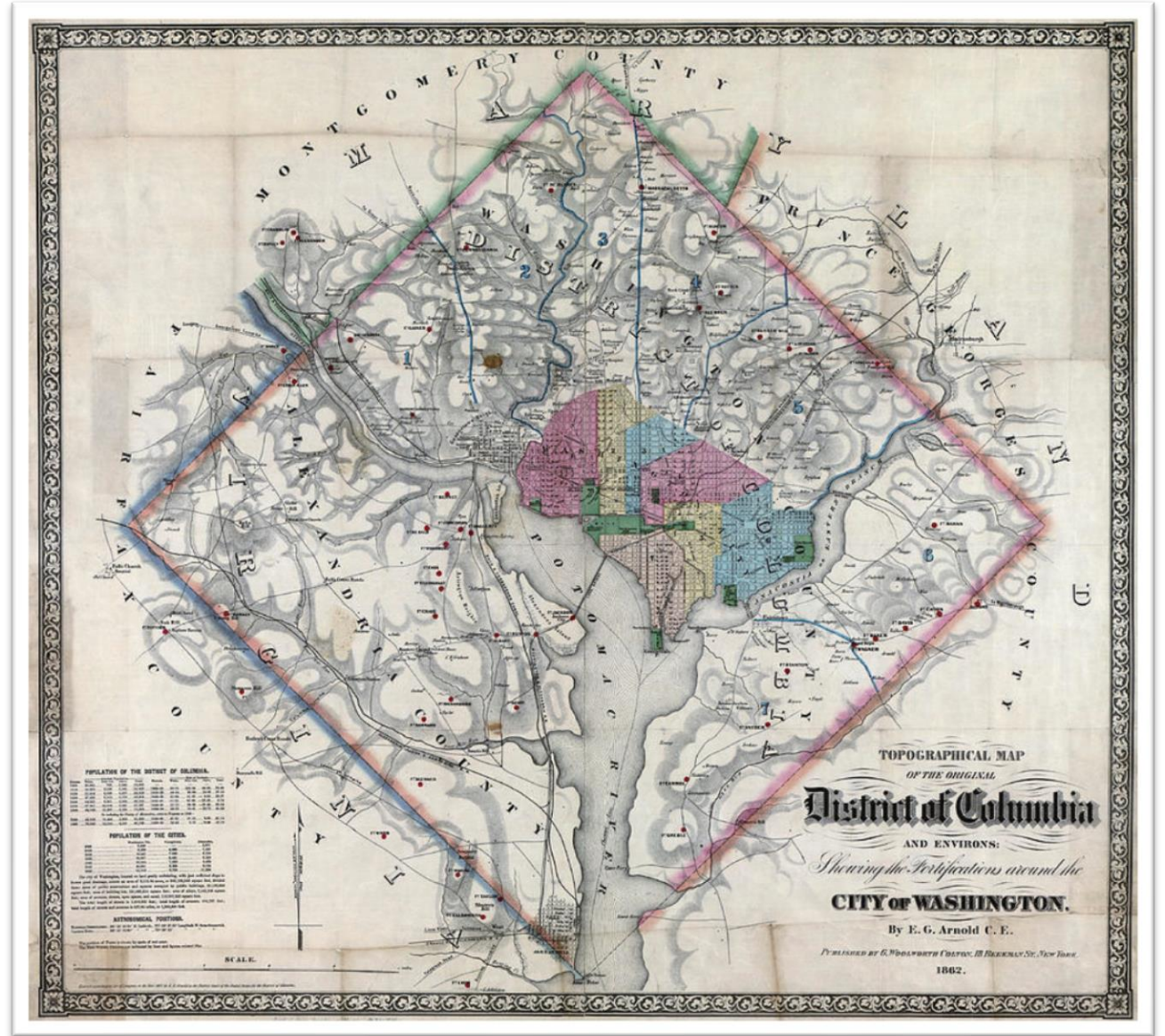
- The District of Columbia was created in 1791, while the federal government arrived in 1800.
- Most of the area was still rural when the District was created.



Map of the 18th-Century Land Grants in Washington (Washington History)

The Federal City

- Originally divided between Washington County and Washington City.
- Two previously settled areas were Georgetown and Alexandria.
- Between 1800 and 1860, clustered settlements formed in some areas like Capitol Hill, Foggy Bottom, and Southwest.



Map of the original District of Columbia. Colored portions are Washington City
(Library of Congress)



Federal

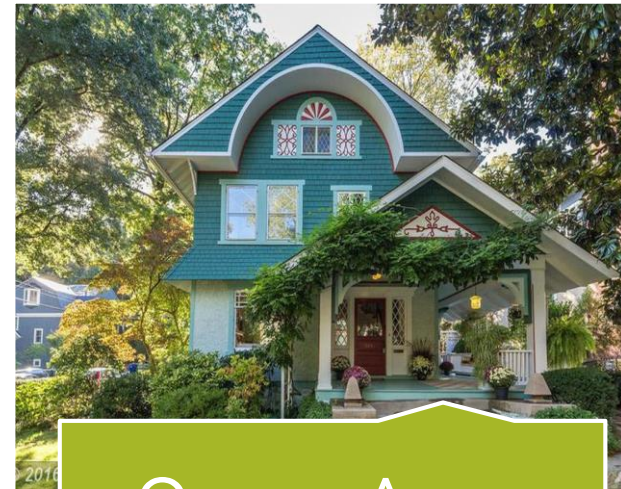


Italianate



Second Empire

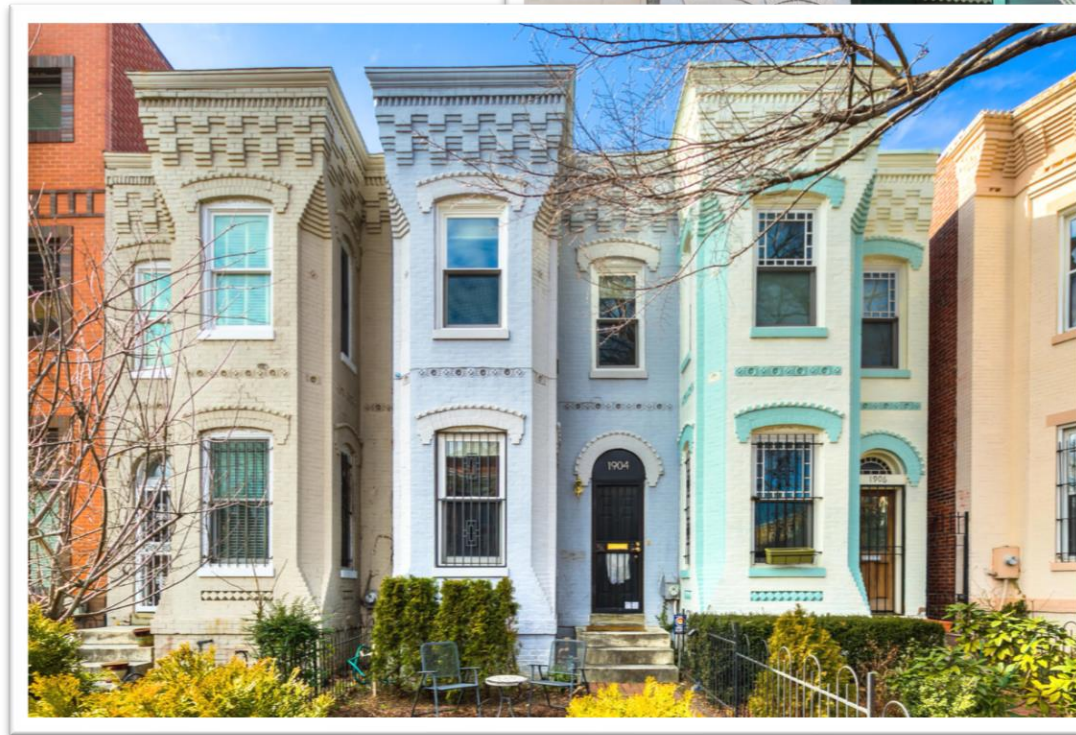
Common Architectural Styles



Queen Anne

Historic D.C. Architecture

- In Washington, buildings were seldom built in pure, academic styles. Instead, many incorporate elements from several styles.
- Lots of housing not built by architects but masons and builders, who displayed their skills in exuberant brickwork throughout the city.
- Often, buildings were modified over time as styles came into and out of fashion.
- At the end of the Victorian era – popular modifications made buildings look more classical, such as painting red brick facades white.



Brickwork
Examples
from
Anacostia and
Greater U
Street

Federal Style *(Sometimes "Adam" Style)*

Ca.
1780-
1820

- Wheat Row, Fourth Street, SW
- Built circa 1794



Wheat Row

Federal Style *(Sometimes "Adam" Style)*

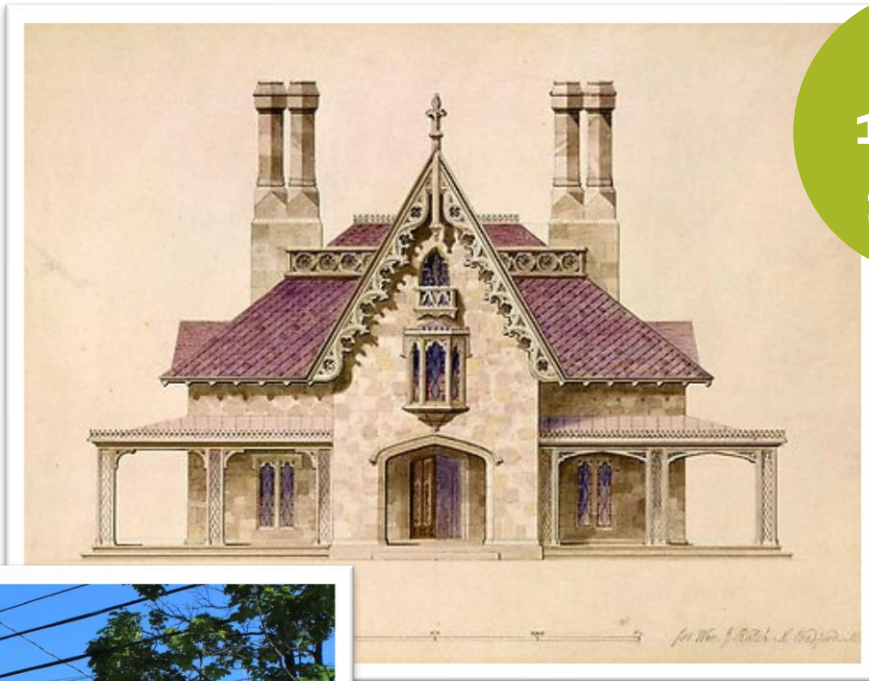
Ca.
1780-
1820



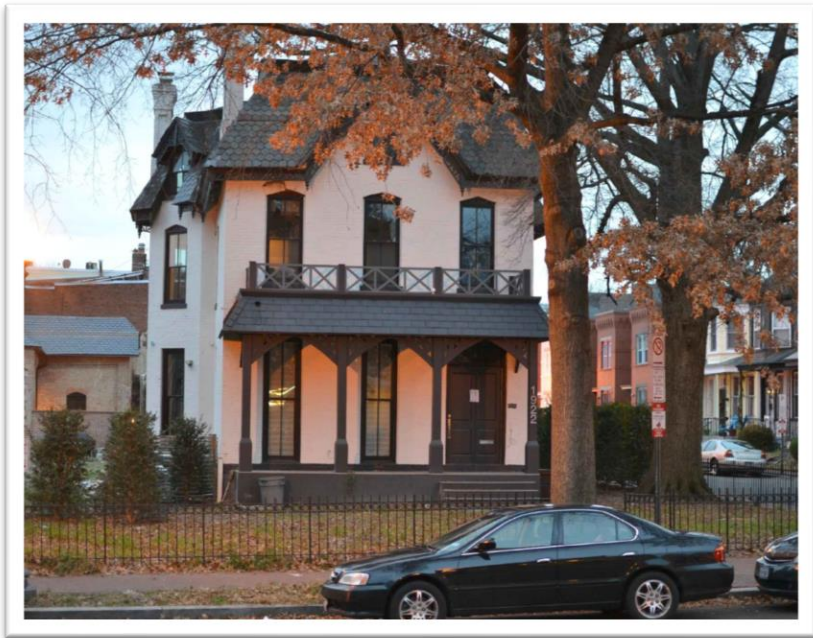
Georgetown (left) and Capitol Hill (right) Federal row houses

Italianate Style

- The Italianate style was modeled after Italian villas and popularized in the 1840s by architects like Alexander Jackson Davis.
- Limited examples of the villa form can be seen throughout D.C.



Ca.
1860-
1890

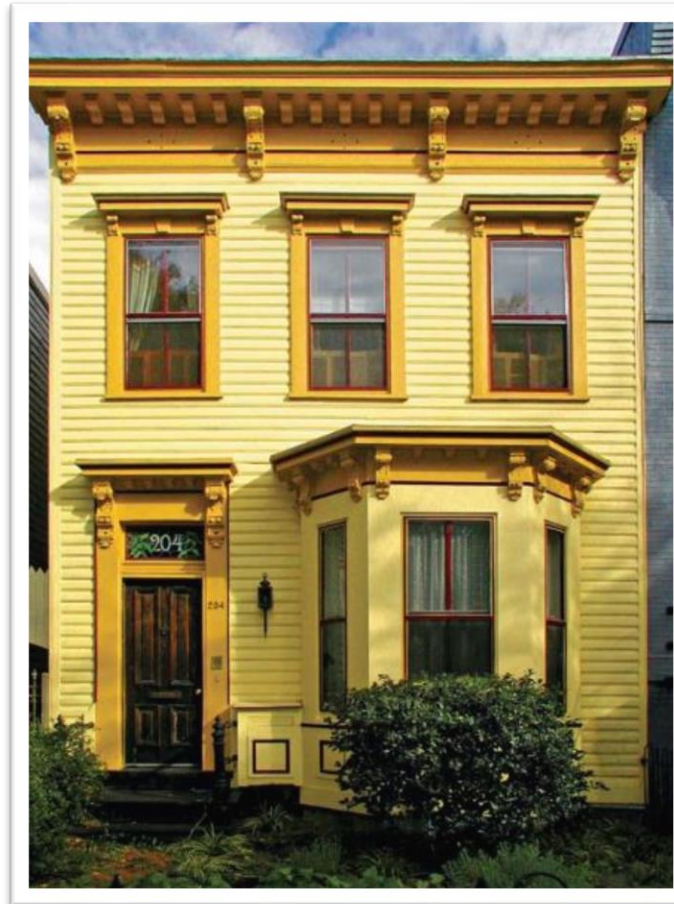


Above: Alexander Jackson Davis-designed villa (Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Far Left: LeDroit Park.
Left: Anacostia

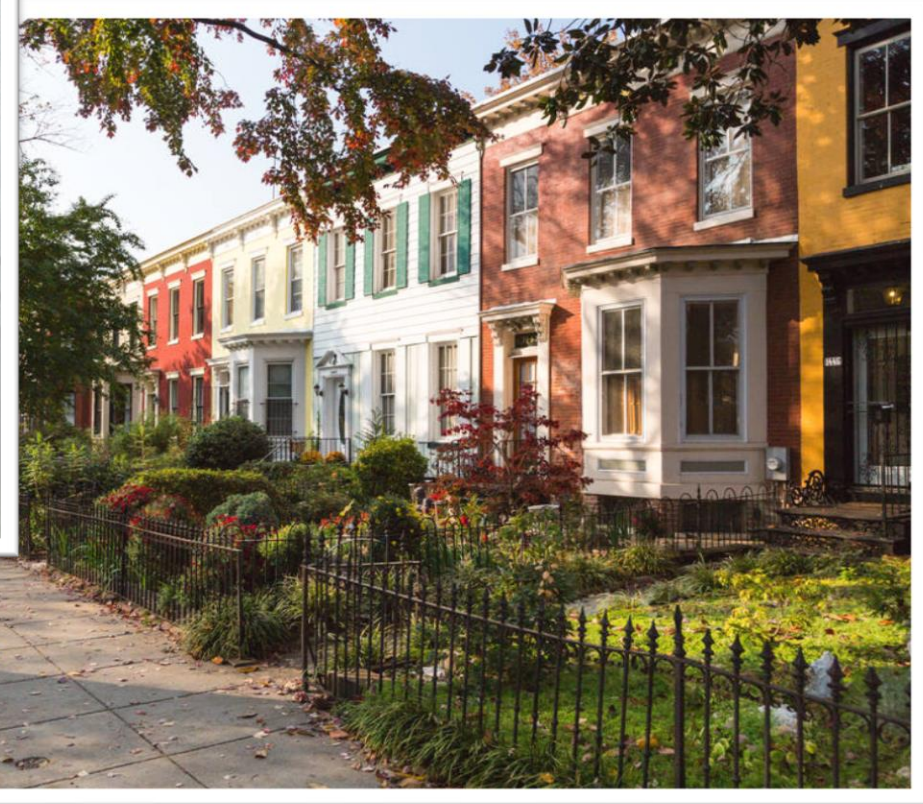
Italianate Style

- Wide cornices with prominent brackets.
- Flat or low-pitched roof.
- Windows are often hooded and rounded at the top.
- Sash windows with two or four lights are typical.
- Windows and doors are often bracketed and/or pedimented.



Left: Italianate Row Home, Capitol Hill.
Below: Italianate Row Homes in Greater Fourteenth Street (Logan Circle)

Ca.
1860-
1890



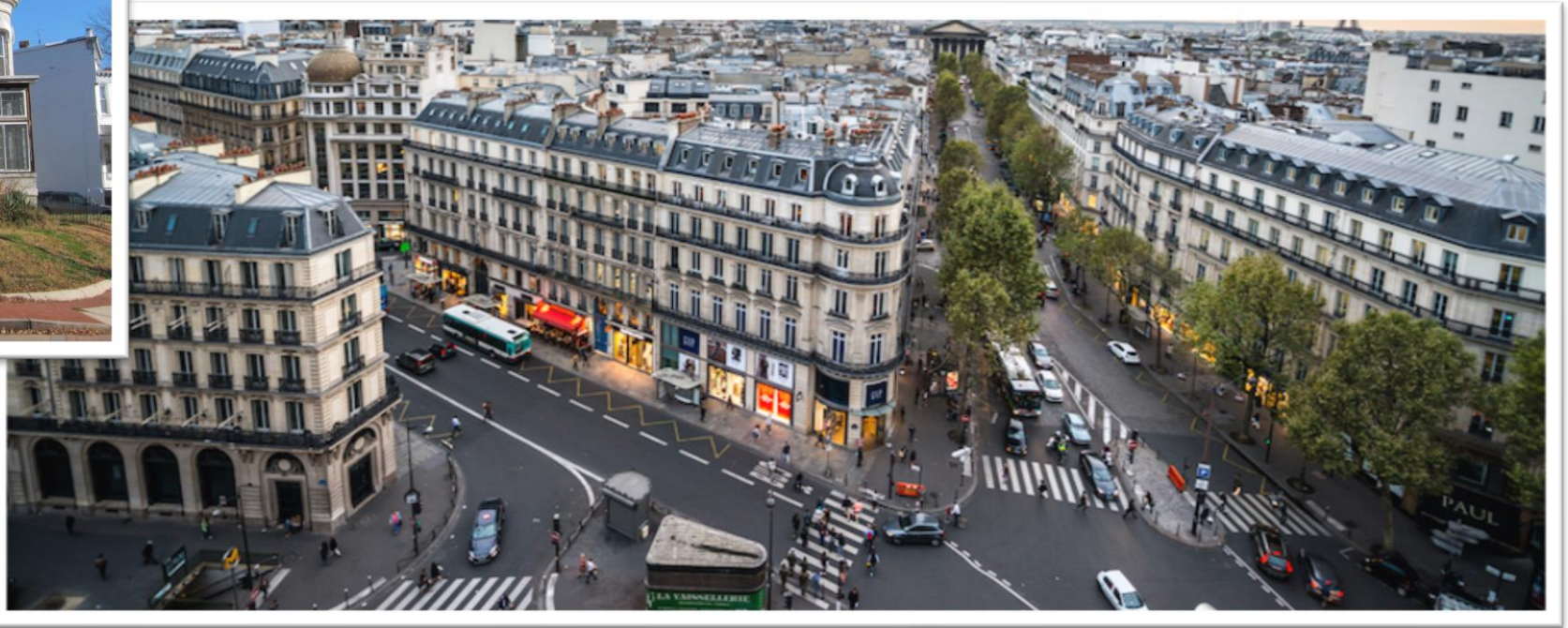
Second Empire Style *(Sometimes "French Second Empire")*

Ca.
1860-
1880



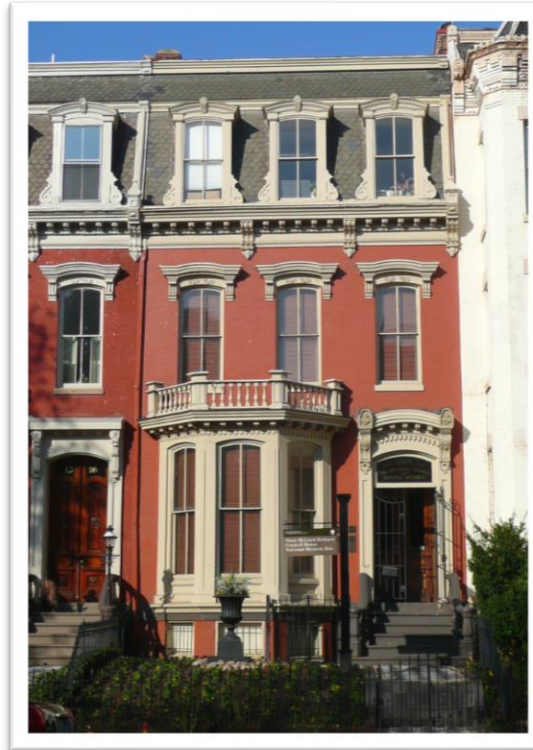
Second Empire House in LeDroit Park (above); Aerial view of Paris (right)

- Influenced by French Baroque architecture of the 17th century
- Witnessed a resurgence in the 1850s during the renovation of Paris under Napoleon III



Second Empire

- Principal feature is the Mansard roof with dormer windows.
- Molded cornices
- Decorative brackets under the eaves.
- Often has projecting, first-floor bay window.
- Details are often similar to Italianate, but can be expressed in a variety of styles



Ca.
1860-
1880

Above: Second Empire row house in Logan Circle; Above Right: Second Empire house in Shaw; Right: Second Empire row houses in Kalorama Triangle



Queen Anne Style

- Varied, multi-textured surfaces and rooflines.
- Front-gabled roof.
- Turrets and projecting bays are common
- Single-family homes often have a large, wraparound front porch.
- More common in single-family homes, but also found in row houses, especially in D.C.

Ca.
1880-
1910



Queen Anne row houses in LeDroit Park



Right: Queen Anne row house in Georgetown; Left: Dupont Circle row houses; Below: Queen Anne home in Cleveland Park

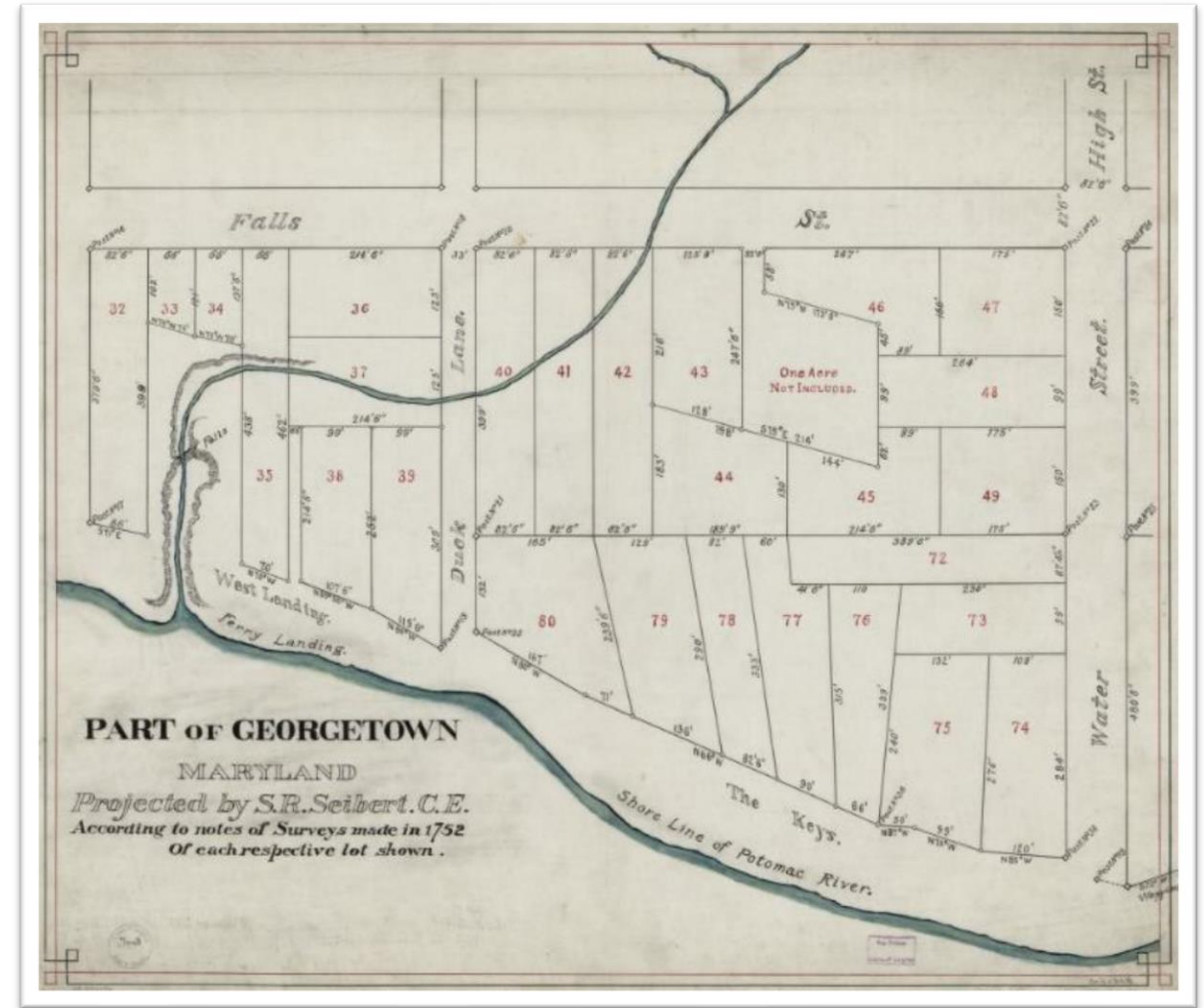


Queen Anne Style



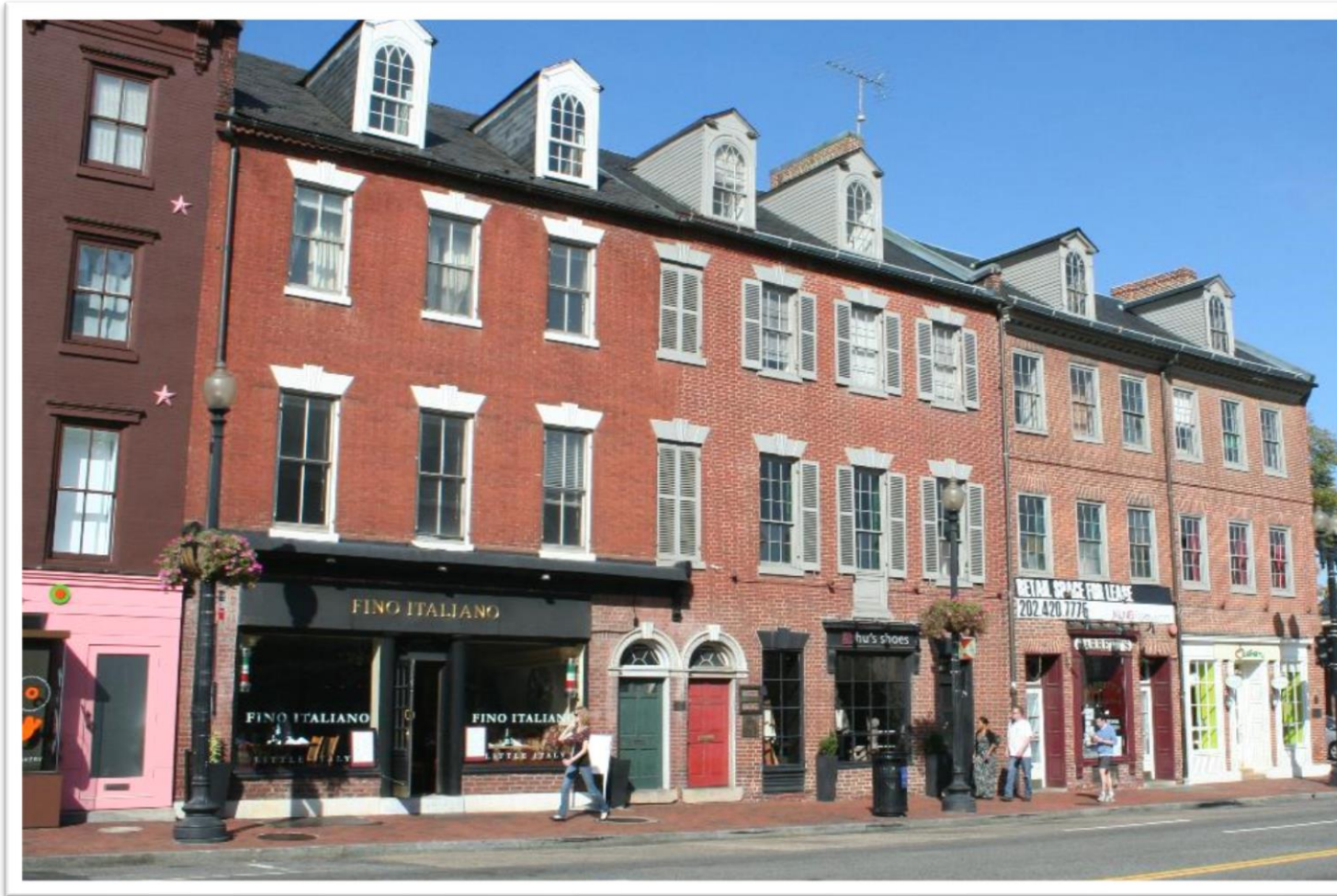
Georgetown – Overview

- Founded in 1751 as a port town for the tobacco trade. Fine harbor near the head of the Potomac River.
- Predates the District of Columbia and remained an independent town until 1871.
- Late 1800s prosperity led to a construction boom, shift from small town to urban neighborhood.
- Wide range of houses from simple frame dwellings to spaciouly landscaped mansions representing all social levels of the community.



1752 Cadastral Map of Georgetown (Library of Congress)

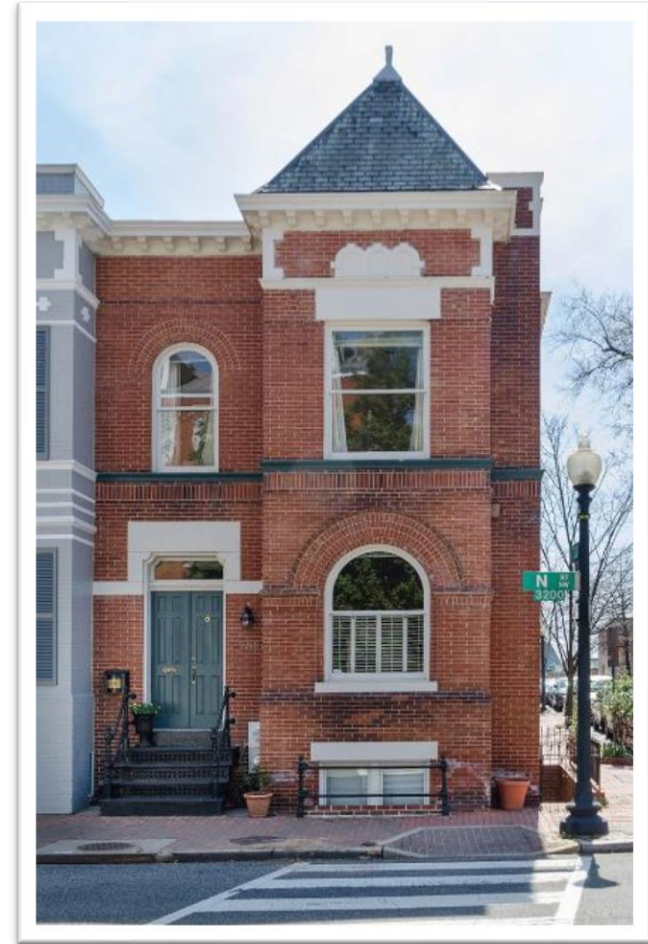
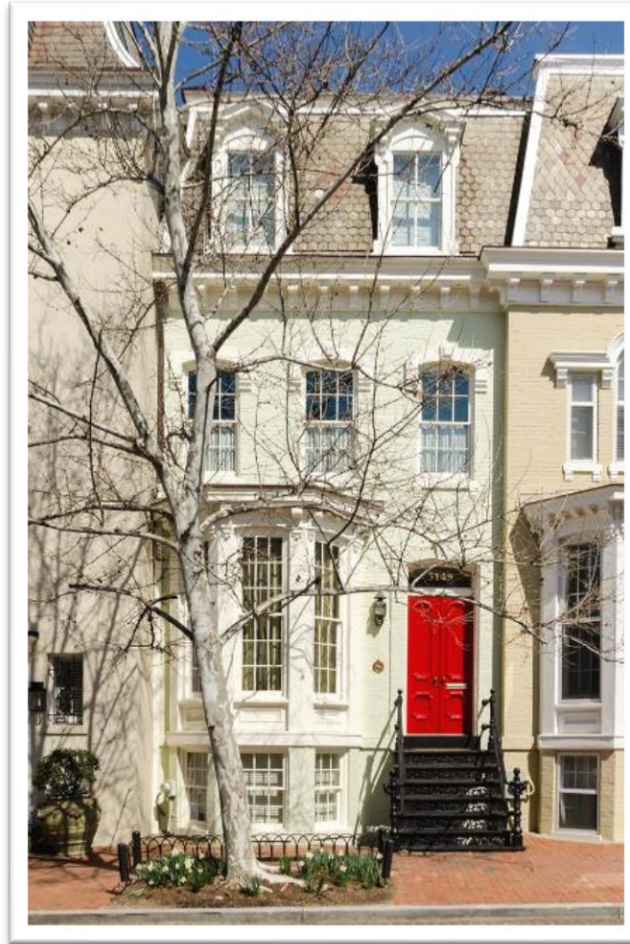
Georgetown – Architecture



M Street Commercial Buildings

- Home to many of the District's oldest buildings
- Narrow grid streets create intimate, neighborhood scale
- Mix of commercial, residential, and industrial buildings.
- Large variety of styles – Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, and more – due to continuous occupation.

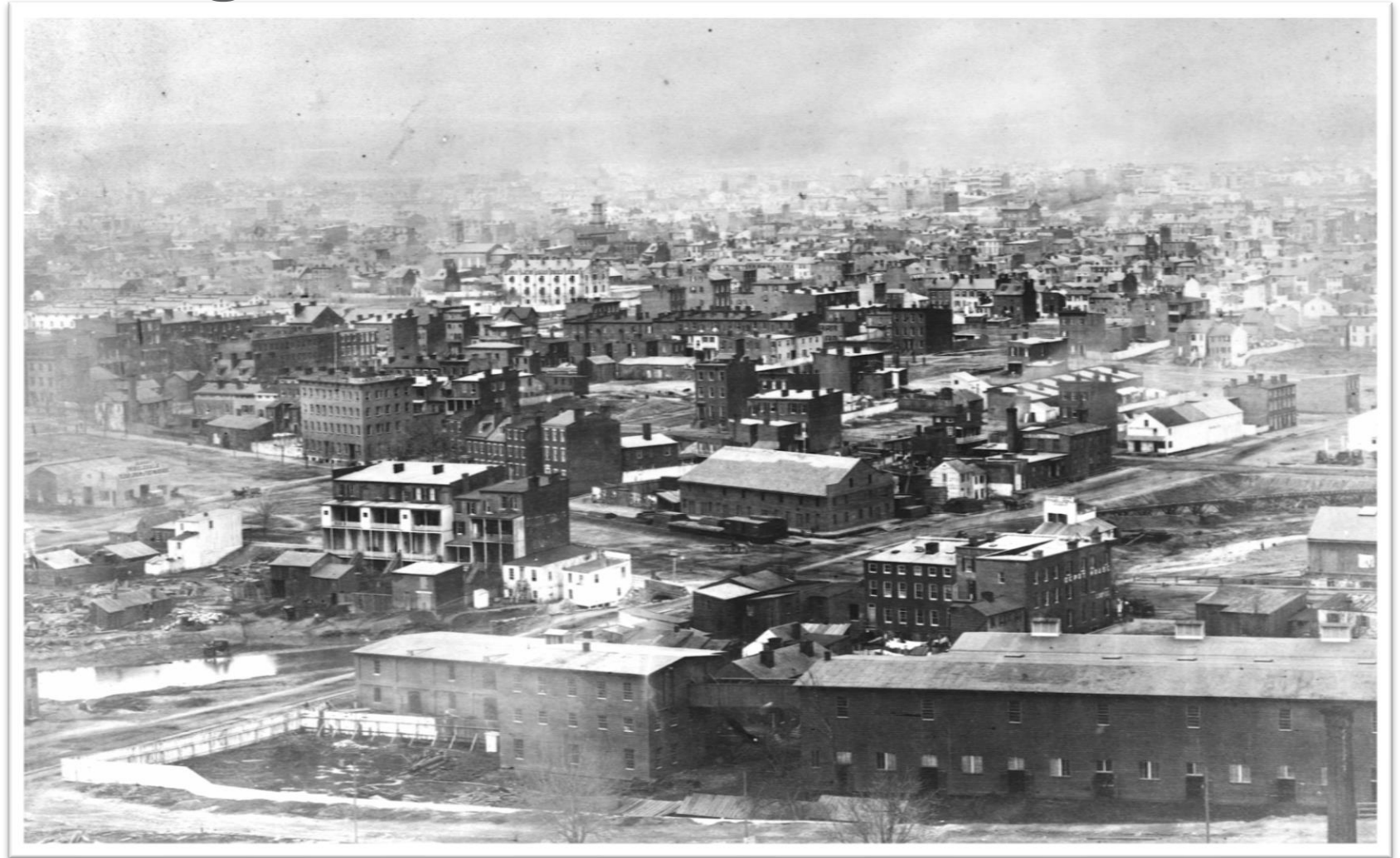
Georgetown – Architecture



From Left: Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne row homes (2016 Georgetown House Tour)

Postbellum Washington

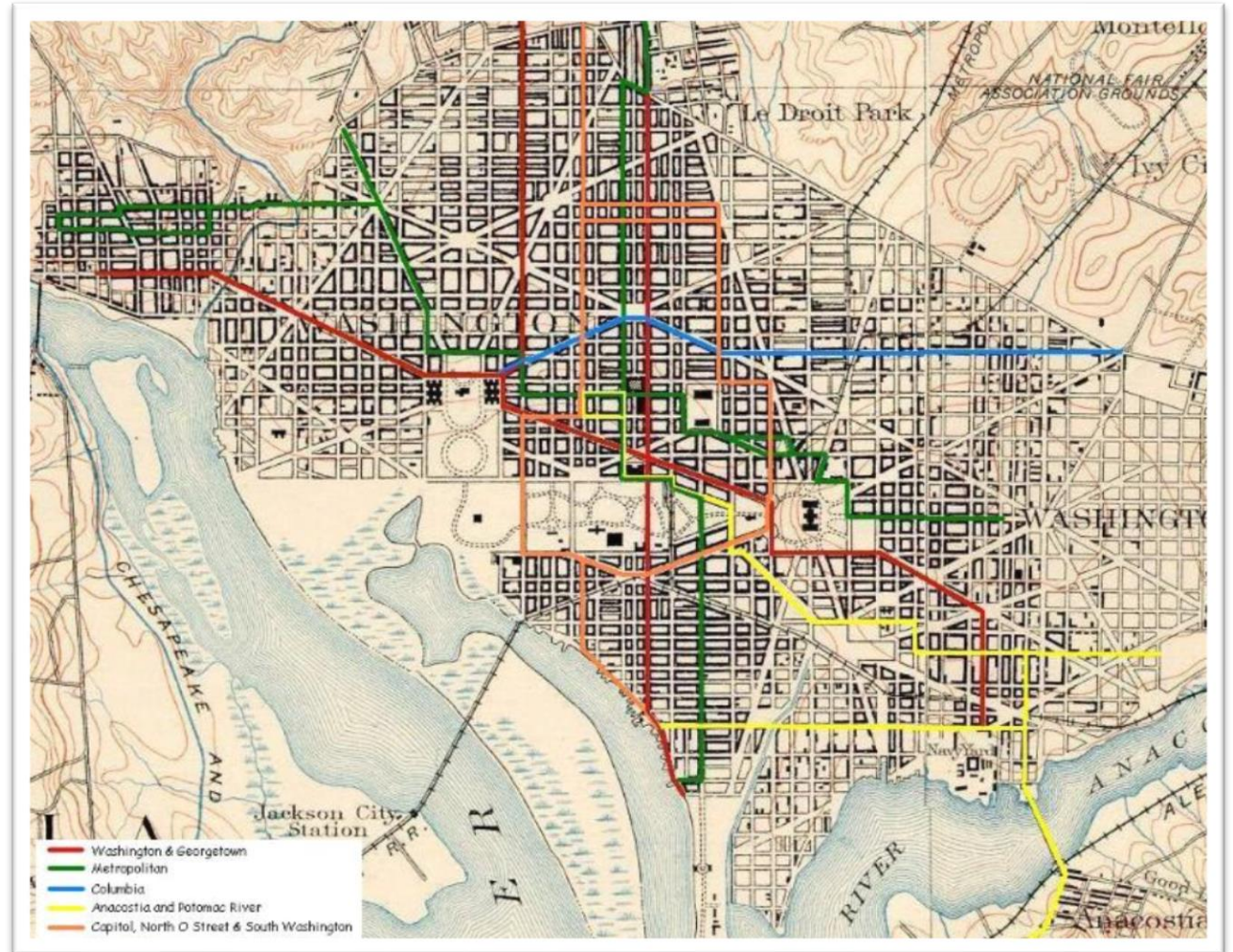
- During the after the Civil War, the expanded federal government brought new workers to the city.
- Population had doubled during the Civil War and jumped another 46,000 during the 1870s.



Downtown Washington in the 1860s (Library of Congress)

Postbellum Washington

- Introduction of horse-drawn streetcars in 1862 resulted in new communities in the former Washington County.
- Georgetown, Washington City, and Washington County consolidated as the District of Columbia in 1871.



1888 D.C. streetcar map (Tracerics archive)

Regulating Building Construction

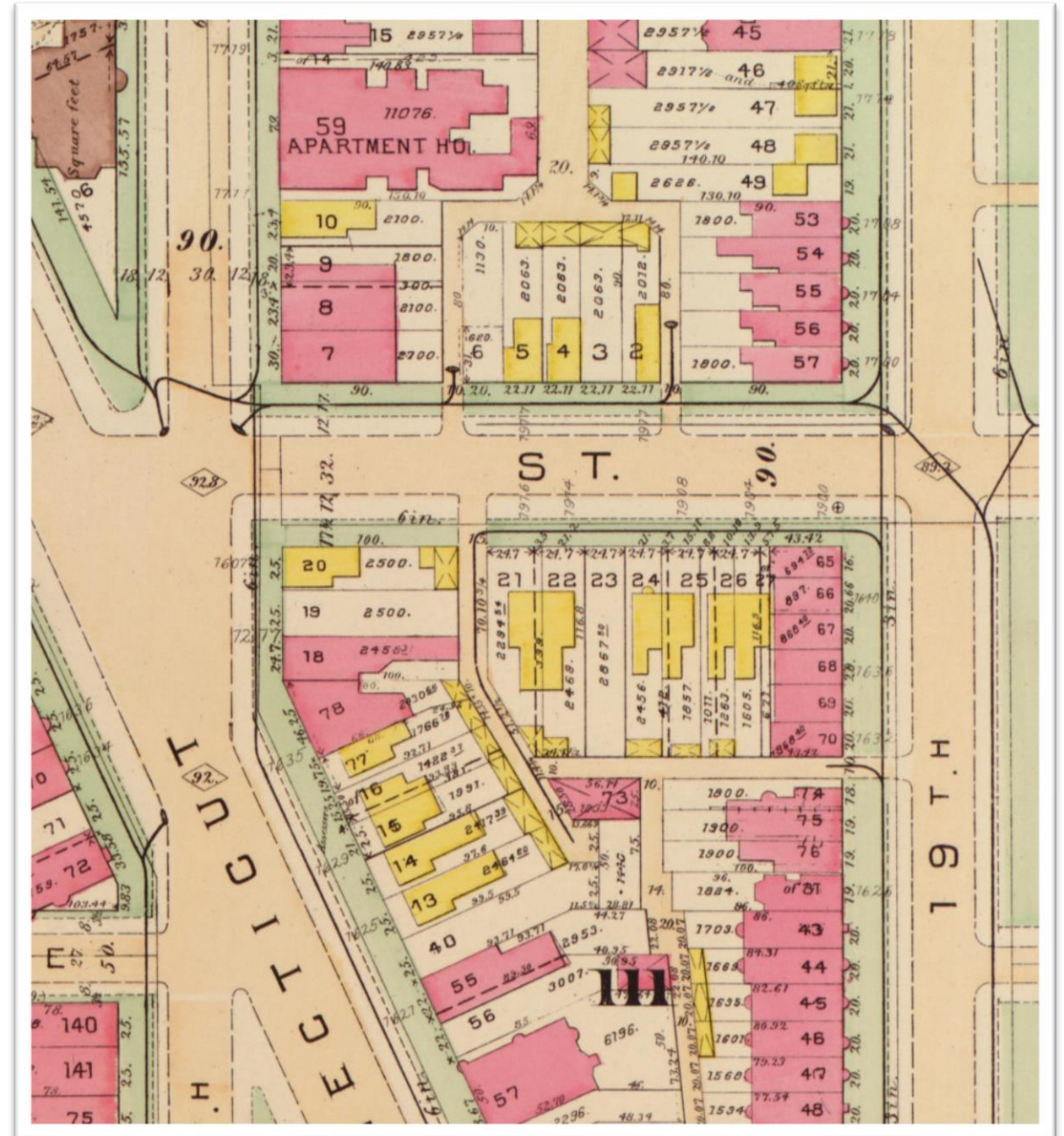
- The Projection Act of 1871 allowed homes to project into public space with bay windows, porches, and stairs, which led to more complex and fewer flat façades.
- Before 1871, buildings were prohibited from extending past the lot line in any form.
- Wood frame buildings in dense areas must be from 1877 or before: frame buildings were banned within Georgetown and Washington City after 1872 and throughout the District of Columbia after 1877 because of fire risk.



Regulating Building Construction

- Using historic maps to “read” development across a neighborhood
- Frame rowhouses (yellow) built before 1871
- Flat-fronted masonry rowhouses (pink) likely built before 1871
- Bay-fronted masonry rowhouses built after 1871

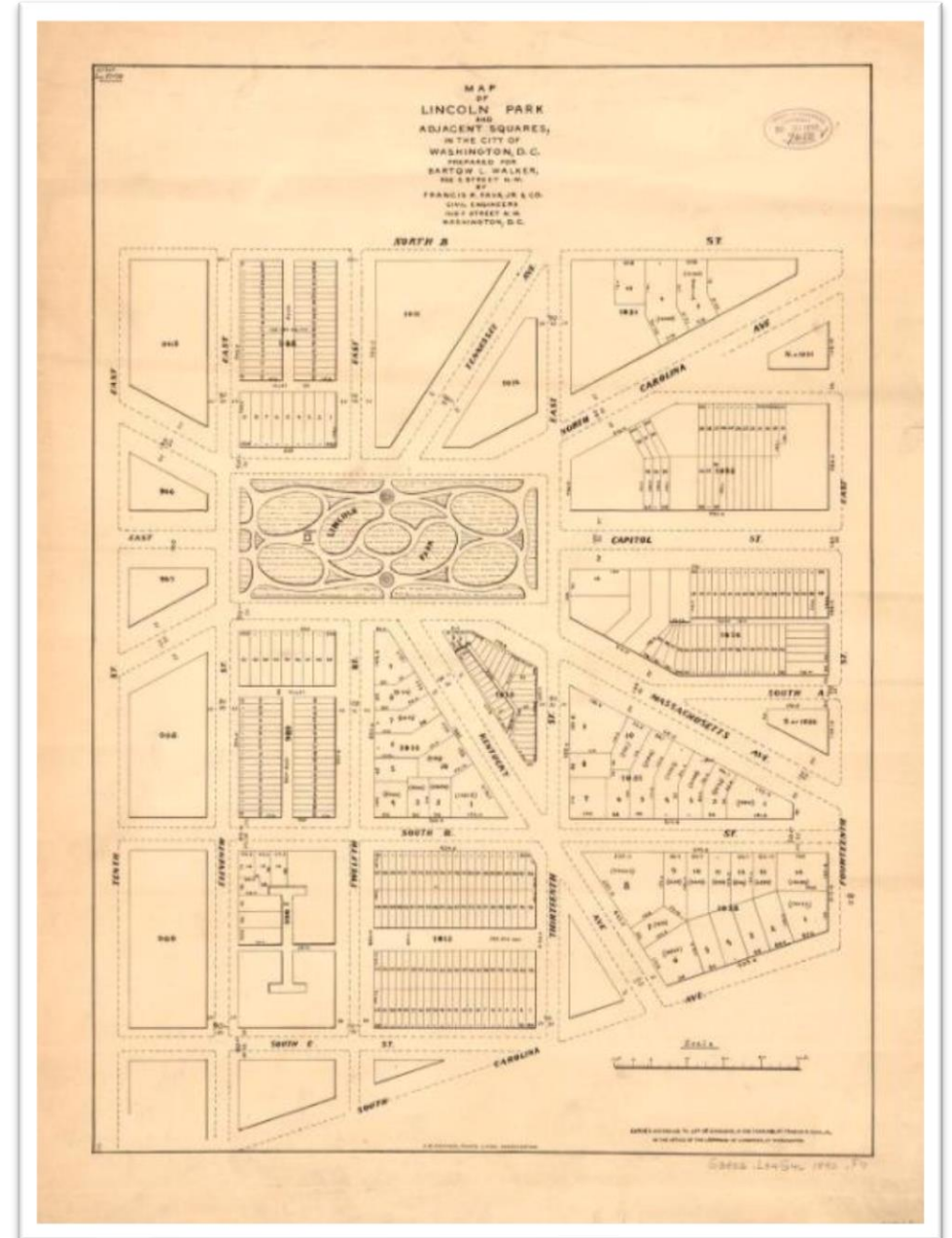
1903 Baist Real Estate Atlas
(Library of Congress)



Capitol Hill - Overview

- Earliest buildings were boarding houses for Congressmen built around 1800.
- Grew slowly through the 1800s, with the main period of growth between 1880 and 1893.
- First D.C. horse-drawn streetcar between Georgetown and the Navy Yard (c.1862) encouraged development along Eighth Street SE.
- Alley dwellings sprang up as main streets were filled.
- Development moved east through the mid-20th Century filling in between Capitol and Anacostia River.

1890 Map of Lincoln Park and Adjacent Squares
(Library of Congress)



Capitol Hill - Architecture



Queen Anne row houses in Capitol Hill

- Characterized by blocks of identical row houses.
- Common styles are Italianate and Queen Anne, which often appear in large groups.
- Second Empire and Richardsonian Romanesque homes are slightly less common; appear alone or in small groups

Capitol Hill - Architecture

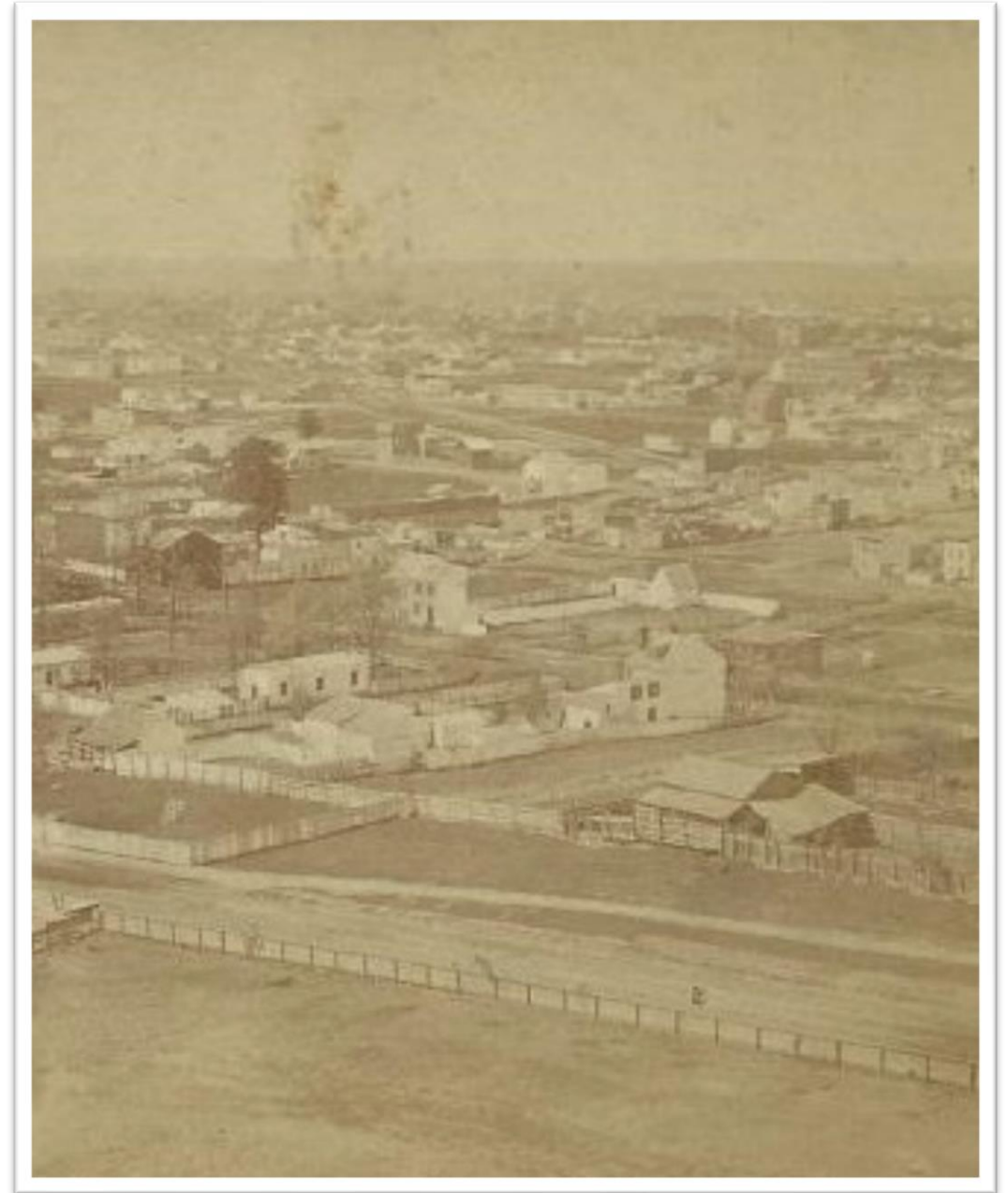


From left: Flat-fronted Italianate row houses; Richardsonian Romanesque; projecting Italianate row houses

Shaw – Overview

- Rural until the Civil War.
- Originally home to European immigrants and African-Americans.
- Shaw's early development reflects mixed use and racially diverse character.
- Development surged after introduction of the 7th Street streetcar.
- Became primarily African-American in the early 20th century.

Streetscape near Howard University, circa 1870



Shaw – Architecture



A varied Shaw streetscape

- Area was largely built by individuals, not developers, so blocks are sometimes less uniform than elsewhere in the city.
- Some vernacular construction (no discernable style).
- Examples of Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne row homes.

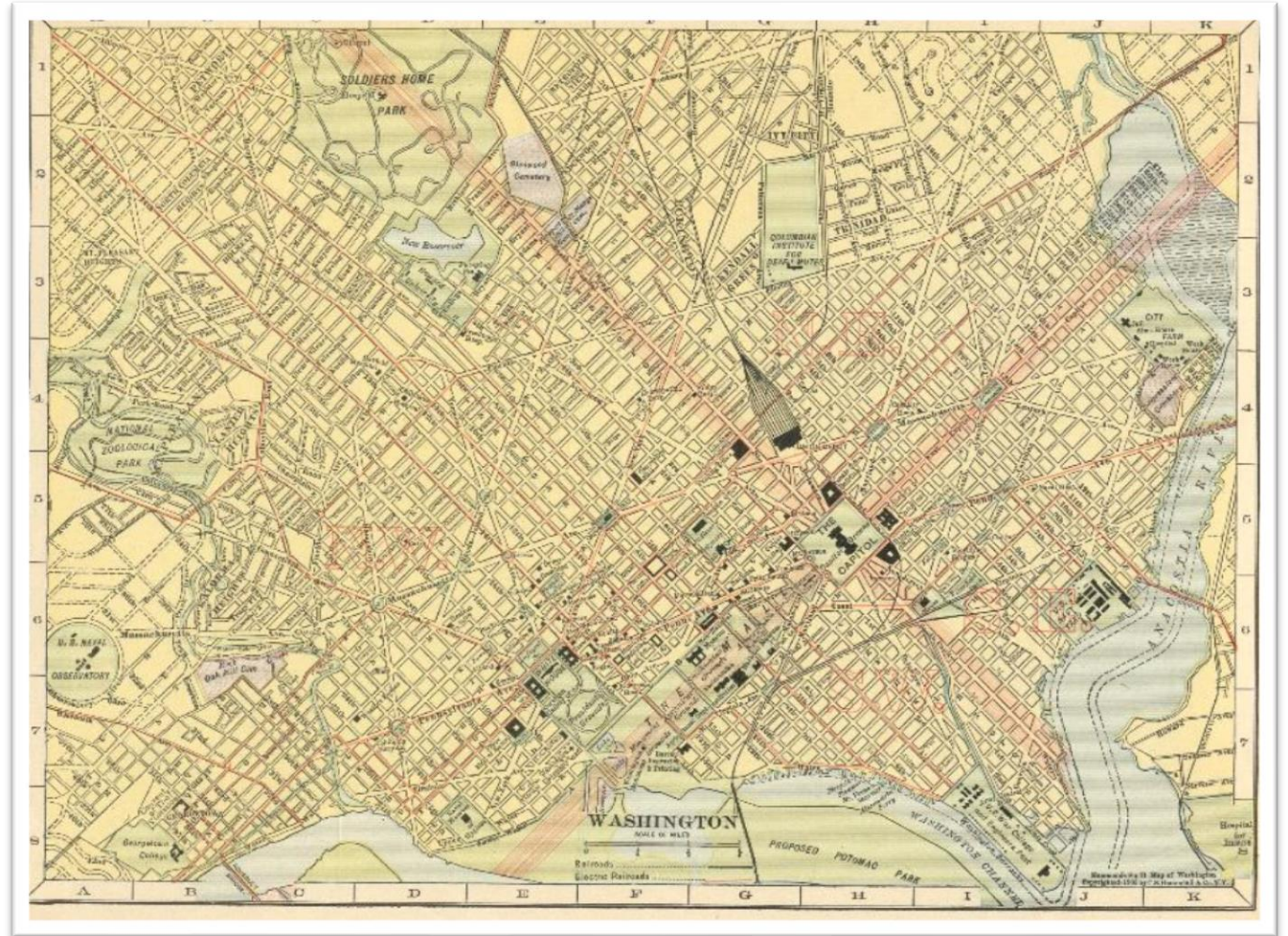
Shaw – Architecture



From left: An 1850 brick home; Blanche K. Bruce House; Carter Woodson House NHS

Suburbia in the City

- The Civil Service Act of 1883 made federal government employment more secure, which led workers to buy homes.
- The increased presence of foreign governments after the Spanish American War of 1898 attracted elite from other U.S. cities.
- Suburban neighborhoods sprung up, connected to downtown by the new electric streetcar lines.



Hammonds 1910 D.C. Streetcar Map (Traceries archive)

Cleveland Park – Overview

- Former farmland was divided into country estates during the 19th century.
- Grover Cleveland (the area's namesake) had a summer home there during his time in office.
- Electric streetcar service began on Wisconsin and Connecticut Avenues in the early 1890s.
- Developed by the Cleveland Park Company, which prided itself on houses individually designed by notable local architects.
- Commercial buildings along Connecticut Avenue support the residential community – firehouse 1916, movie theater, apartments and Park and Shop.



Grover Cleveland's summer home in the future Cleveland Park c. 1887 (Library of Congress)

Cleveland Park – Architecture



Queen Anne home in Cleveland Park

- Many frame houses built between 1890 and 1930.
- Larger homes built by the Cleveland Park Company alongside smaller homes built after that company's 1905 collapse.
- Some buildings remain from earlier country estates.
- Apartment buildings and condos along Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenues were built in the 20th century.

Cleveland Park – Architecture



From Left: Colonial Revival-style house; Queen Anne/Craftsman-style house; and multi-unit building

For More Information: Historic District Brochures



Brochures containing overviews of many neighborhood historic districts are available online and in print through the **D.C. Historic Preservation Office**

For More Information: Design Guidelines



**FOXHALL VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT
DESIGN GUIDELINES**



D.C. HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD



**EMERALD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
DESIGN GUIDELINES**

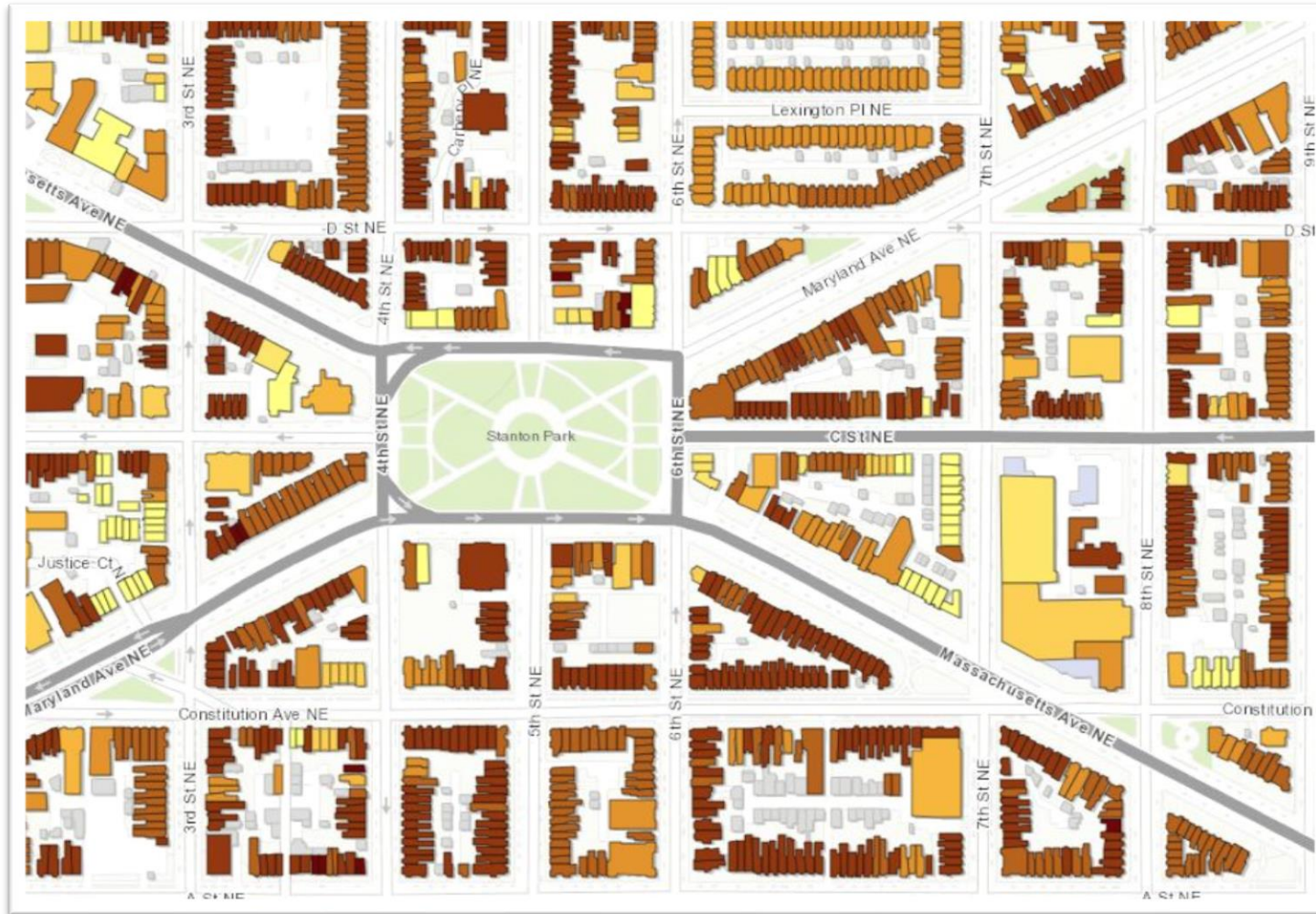


D.C. HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD



Design guidelines provide information on several D.C. historic districts with guidance for compatible treatment. Guidelines are available online through the **D.C. Historic Preservation Office**.

For More Information: HistoryQuest DC



HistoryQuest DC uses GIS mapping to overlay historic building permit data on building footprints.

HistoryQuest is available online through the D.C. Historic Preservation Office at:

planning.dc.gov/page/historyquest-dc

[DC Historic Sites](#), a free [Iphone](#) and [Android](#) app created by the DC Preservation League, serves up the DC Inventory of Historic Sites with photos, blurbs and maps. Most of the app's contents are far humbler than the big monuments (though those are in there, too): apartment buildings, churches, obscure statuary and more.

Future Historic Districts?

- Though not currently designated, various neighborhoods are exploring the possibility of designating historic districts including **Eckington**, **Colony Hill** and **Burleith**.
- Historic designation and the resultant design review is a way to ensure appropriate alterations and additions in historic neighborhoods.



Queen Anne Row Houses in Bloomingdale

Guess the Neighborhood!

A.



B.



C.



D.

