

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

New Designation

Amendment of a previous designation X

Please summarize any amendment(s)

Property Name: Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional Documentation)

If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.

Address: Roughly bounded by 16th and Harvard streets NW, Adams Mill Road NW, and Rock Creek Park (Mount Pleasant Historic District, DC Inventory: 1986, National Register: 1987)

Square and lot number(s): Multiple

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission: ANC 1D

Date of Construction: 1962-1991 Date of major alteration(s):

Architect(s): Multiple Architectural style(s): LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS

Original use: Multiple – See Nomination Present use: Multiple – See Nomination

Property owner(s): Multiple

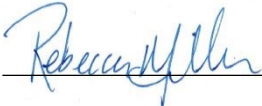
Legal address of property owner: Multiple

NAME OF APPLICANT(S): DC Preservation League

If the applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.

Address/Telephone of applicant(s): DC Preservation League, 1328 Florida Avenue NW, 2nd Floor Washington, DC 20009, (202) 783-5144

Name and title of authorized representative: Rebecca Miller, Executive Director, DC Preservation League

Signature of applicant representative:  Date: February 25, 2025

Name and telephone of author of application: DC Preservation League, (202) 783-5144

Date received
H.P.O. staff

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional Documentation)Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)**2. Location**Street & number: Roughly bounded by 16th and Harvard streets NW, Adams Mill Road NW, and Rock Creek ParkCity or town: Washington State: DC County: N/ANot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional

Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☐

District

☒

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

Object



Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

0

Noncontributing

0

buildings

2

0

sites

1

0

structures

0

0

objects

3

0

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1086

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling/Multiple Dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store/Restaurant

EDUCATION: School

GOVERNMENT: Correctional Facility: Police Station

HEALTH CARE: Clinic

LANDSCAPE: Park

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Work of Art: Mural

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling/Multiple Dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store/Restaurant

EDUCATION: School

GOVERNMENT: Correctional Facility: Police Station

HEALTH CARE: Clinic

LANDSCAPE: Park

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Work of Art: Mural

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, wood, concrete, stucco, asphalt, slate

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Mount Pleasant neighborhood, located on the heights above Rock Creek and just beyond the original city limits, is considered one of Washington's earliest suburbs. It traces its origins to the end of the Civil War, when businessman Samuel P. Brown purchased a rural estate and platted it into a tight residential subdivision that he aptly called Mount Pleasant. From the outset and for the next few decades, Mount Pleasant was a small village isolated from the city. But as roads and transportation networks improved, especially in the early twentieth century, the village, with its beautiful setting and proximity to the city, became a highly desirable suburban destination encouraging the growth of Mount Pleasant into an urban residential neighborhood. Retail shops, churches, schools, a library, a police station, and other institutional buildings arose to support the residential core of detached dwellings, rowhouses, and newly emerging apartment buildings. In recognition of its distinct identity defined by its wooded and hilly terrain, its street layout and its architecture, the Mount Pleasant neighborhood was listed as an historic district in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987 under Criterion C with Architecture and Community Planning and Development as its areas of significance and a period of significance of 1870-1949.

The historic district encompasses approximately 200 acres bounded by Harvard Street NW to the south; Adams Mill Road NW and Rock Creek Park to the west; Rock Creek Park and Oak Street NW to the north; and 16th Street NW to the east. The architectural typologies and styles present in the Mount Pleasant Historic District are diverse, representing several developmental eras from the

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth, although the vast majority of the district's buildings date from the first two decades of the twentieth century.

Nearly 40 years old, the National Register nomination for Mount Pleasant provides extensive information on the early planning history of the neighborhood and its architecture. It concerns itself less with the community's social and cultural history and the people who lived and worked there. For much of its early history, Mount Pleasant was a solidly white middle-class community, but beginning in the postwar years, the neighborhood's racial demographics began to change. In the 1950s, whites left the city for newer suburbs and African Americans, who had been largely shut out from the neighborhood through racially restrictive deeds until 1948, moved in alongside war refugees from Europe. From the 1960s into the 1990s, Mount Pleasant and the adjacent Adams Morgan neighborhood attracted greater numbers of immigrants and evolved to become the epicenter of a Latin American expatriate community in the District of Columbia.

This additional documentation provides a historic context for the Latino community in Mount Pleasant, adds Latino (Hispanic) ethnic heritage to the areas of significance, and introduces a second period of significance, 1962-1991, related to this theme. It identifies properties associated with the Latino community, particularly those that have contributed to the district's distinctive Latino character. This additional documentation does not propose a boundary increase or provide other revisions to the 1987 nomination. Furthermore, it neither develops an historic context for nor evaluates other demographic, social, or cultural influences that may have affected the present character of Mount Pleasant.

Narrative Description

Architecturally, Mount Pleasant is characterized by a stylistic variety of late-nineteenth- and early twentieth-century detached dwellings and rowhouses, its apartment buildings, churches, schools and other institutional buildings, as well as its commercial corridor along Mount Pleasant Street. The building typologies and streetscapes of the historic district are thoroughly described and analyzed in the 1987 nomination. Based upon its period of significance, there are 1086 contributing and 120 non-contributing resources within the historic district boundaries.

Since the second half of the twentieth century, Latinos and Latinas¹ have lived, worked, and played in various spaces, structures, and buildings throughout the Mount Pleasant neighborhood. Nineteen of the previously identified 1086 contributing resources have notable associations with and contribute to the Latino heritage of Mount Pleasant. In addition, three resources (two sites and one structure), not previously counted have been determined to have important associations with the district's Latino heritage and thus contribute to the historic district. These include two gathering places for the Latino community—Lamont Park (site) and La Esquina (site)—and *Canto a la Esperanza*, a mural painted on a retaining wall (structure).

¹ Henceforth in this document "Latinos and Latinas" will be shortened to Latinos/as.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

These 22 resources are a representative sample selected from the research undertaken to document the history of the District of Columbia's Latino community. The buildings, structures, and sites were selected based on repeated references to their significance in secondary and primary sources, such as published scholarly works and oral history interviews. Many more places in Mount Pleasant—more than can be identified—may have associations with Latino individuals; however, the 22 selected here are those that have been repeatedly referenced for their significance to the collective Latino community.

The majority of buildings in Mount Pleasant date to the first decades of the twentieth century, well before the Latino presence in the neighborhood emerged. All of the 22 resources identified in this additional documentation were built within the period of significance named in the 1987 nomination (i.e., 1870-1949). None of these were built by members of the Latino community or were built with a Latino community in mind. In earlier years, they had primarily been occupied by white middle-class residents of Mount Pleasant who dominated the neighborhood's demographics from the late nineteenth century through the 1960s. These properties became associated with the Latino community as the Latin American population in Mount Pleasant increased from the 1960s through the 1990s. With the increase in Latino residents, dwellings, institutions, and commercial storefronts were adapted to and by the newcomers, often with new uses that catered to Latinos/as living in Mount Pleasant and adjacent neighborhoods. Such an example is 3247 Mount Pleasant Street, erected as a store in 1921 and converted to the **Fourth District Police Center** by the Metropolitan Police Department 50 years later. The center provided bilingual policing from 1971 to 1983 catering to the Spanish-speaking community.

This list of 22 resources ranges in typology from residential to institutional, but the majority are commercial. As Latinos/as established themselves in the neighborhood, they opened stores and restaurants along Mount Pleasant Street with Latin American products and cuisine that appealed to a Latino and broader clientele. Lined with shops, services, and restaurants, Mount Pleasant Street remains the neighborhood's primary commercial thoroughfare and the heart of Mount Pleasant. The buildings identified for their important associations with the Latino community generally retain their historic integrity from their origins pre-dating the Latino presence. They were often distinguished by Spanish-language signage or display windows advertising restaurant fare or retail products directly related to Latin American cultures and heritages. This material evidence of the neighborhood's Latino heritage on Mount Pleasant Street remains apparent to resident and visitor alike, and it contributes to the district's history and culture.

Mount Pleasant Street itself acts as an open-air space wherein Mount Pleasant's diverse inhabitants meet and interact. Such spaces hold their own significance for DC's Latino population. Political marches relating to the United States government's involvement in Central America would start or end in Rabaut (or Pigeon) Park, just south of Harvard Street and in **Lamont Park** at the north end of Mount Pleasant Street.² Less-formal outdoor spaces emerged as impromptu gathering places, such as **La Esquina**, the northwest corner of the intersection of Mount Pleasant Street and Kenyon Street NW. Nothing more than a pocket park and a red-brick-paved stretch of sidewalk,

² Jorge Granados, interview with Heather McMahon (Washington, DC: 19 February 2024).

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

this street corner became a place for *esquineros*—a term that generally refers to middle-aged Salvadoran men—to socialize and play chess or checkers, starting in the late 1970s. The spot continues to serve as an improvised gathering place for members of the Latino community.³

Public art projects alert visitors to the neighborhood’s history as a center of the Latino barrio. The Chicano Mural Movement was inextricably linked with Chicano and Puerto Rican identity politics and solidarity movements in the 1960s and 1970s. In Washington, artists from Latin America employed the medium as a form of communication, education, and advocacy. These “murals became part of the identity of the neighborhoods, or *barrios*, in which they were painted” and “provide a sense of connection among Latinos because they portray various stories and a shared ethnic aesthetic.”⁴ Murals on the retaining wall along Kingle Road from where it crosses Beach Drive on the south to where it intersects with Rosemount Avenue on the north, act as a gateway to the neighborhood. Known collectively as *Canto a la Esperanza*, the vignettes pictorially represent the history and culture of the various cultures that comprise the Latin American immigrant community in the District of Columbia. The panels were painted by Latino students under the direction of artist Jorge Somarriba and sponsored by the Latin American Youth Center over the course of three summers from 1988 to 1990.

In their origins and design, these buildings and sites do not necessarily manifest an obvious association with DC’s historic Latino community. But as a collection of buildings and as a streetscape, with its open spaces and Spanish signage, Mount Pleasant Street provides a tangible association with a Latino community that has called Mount Pleasant home from the 1960s through today. The 22 resources identified as contributing to the Mount Pleasant Historic District for their association with Latino heritage are listed in the table below.

Latino-associated Resource	Address (Parcel)	Year Built	Year(s) of Latino Association	Type	Significance
Adelante Advocacy Center	3220 17 th Street (Square 2607, Lot 85)	1913	1991-1995	Building	Bilingual housing organization founded in 1976; moved to 3220 17 th Street in 1991.
Adelante Cooperative	3149 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2595, Lot 634)	1909	ca. 1970s-current	Building	Built in 1909, the apartment building was Latino-dominated beginning in the 1970s.

³ Tara Bahrapour, “A street corner that offers DC Latinos ‘a cure for the heartbreak of being away from home,’” *Washington Post* (12 March 2018); accessed 2/24/24: https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/a-street-corner-that-offers-dc-latinos-a-cure-for-the-heartbreak-of-being-away-from-home/2018/03/12/bddd2a78-217a-11e8-94da-cbf9d112159c_story.html.

⁴ Maria Sprehn-Malagón, Jorge Hernandez-Fujigaki, and Linda Robinson, *Latinos in the Washington Metro Area* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2014) 95.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property					
Barney Neighborhood House	3118 16 th Street (Square 2595, Lot 1057)	1913	1960-ca. 1990s	Building	Built in 1916 as a dwelling; occupied by the Barney Neighborhood House, a social services agency, 1960- ca.1990s.
<i>Canto a la Esperanza</i>	Klinge Road and Rosemount Avenue	1945	1988-current	Structure	Murals painted by Latino students under the direction of artist Jorge Somarriba and sponsored by the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC).
Casa Diloné	3161 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2595, Lot 677)	1912	1962-1998	Building	Built in 1912, this store became Mount Pleasant Street's first bodega in 1962 and was a social center for Washington's Spanish speakers.
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)	3112 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2596, Lot 638)	1909	ca. 1985-1990s	Building	1909 rowhouse with retail on first floor; became CARECEN offices ca. 1985.
Committee for the Aid and Development of Latin America in the Nation's Capital (CADOLANCA)	1614 Hobart Street (Square 2591, Lot 750)	1913	ca. 1970-1979	Building	A 1913 rowhouse used as the offices of CADOLANCA, an early Latino community organization from ca. 1970-1979.
Corado's Restaurant	3217 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2608, Lot 1043)	1907	1983-current	Building	Corado's Restaurant which opened in this storefront building in 1983 features Guatemalan cuisine reflecting the influx of Central Americans in the 1980s-1990s.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property					
El Progreso	3158 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2596, Lot 1055)	1921	ca. 1970s-current	Building	A neighborhood bodega.
Fourth District Police Center (1971-1983)	3247 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2608, Lot 822)	1921	1971-1983	Building	The Washington Metropolitan Police Department operated a bilingual liaison center in this storefront from 1971 to 1983.
Freddy's Carry Out/Arcos del Espino/Don Jaime's Restaurant	3209 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2608, Lot 646)	1909	ca. 1975-1990s	Building	The storefront at 3209 Mount Pleasant Street has historically housed Spanish-speaking restaurants since the late 1970s, including Freddy's, a Bolivian carry out restaurant, then Arcos del Espino, a Salvadoran restaurant, and later Don Jaime's Restaurant.
Kenesaw Apartment House	3060 16 th Street (Square 2594, Lot 175)	1905	ca. 1967-ca. 1986	Building	A 1905 apartment building; home of the Spanish Catholic Center from 1967 to ca. 1986 and offices of <i>El Pregonero</i> , one of the earliest Spanish-language newspapers in DC, from 1977 through the 1980s. The locus of a long and highly publicized battle for affordable housing starting in the 1970s.
La Casa Community Health Action Center	3166 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2596, Lot 881)	1911; 1927	1974-current	Building	A former dwelling with storefront addition was converted into a community space

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property					
					and the Life Skills Center in 1974, providing education to new arrivals. Since 2016, an arm of La Clínica del Pueblo.
La Esquina	Northwest corner of Kenyon Street and Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2596, south of Lot 1057)	Ca. 1987	ca. 1979-current	Site	An open-air space where <i>esquineros</i> have socialized and played chess or checkers since the late 1970s.
Lamont Park	Bounded by 17 th Street, Lamont Street, and Mount Pleasant Street (Reservation 309)	Ca. 1894	ca. 1970s-current	Site	A small park and important open-air leisure and activist space for the neighborhood, including the Latino community.
Los Primos	3170 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2569, Lot 880)	1920	ca. 1970s-current	Building	A bodega opened in the 1970s by Dominican cousins of the Dilonés.
Martinez Barbershop	3106 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2596, Lot 641)	1909	ca. 1976-current	Building	A 1909 storefront first opened as a barbershop ca. 1976 by Dominican-émigré, Viterbo Martinez. It later became a tailor's shop.
Pan American Laundry	3127 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2595, Lot 833)	1936	ca. 1980-current	Building	A coin-operated neighborhood laundromat frequented by the Latino community in Mount Pleasant.
Parkfair Apartments	1611 Park Road (Square 2609, Lot 822)	1941	ca. 1970s-1990s	Building	Apartment building having a high concentration of Latino occupancy from the 1970s into the 1990s.
Rosemount Center	2000 Rosemount Avenue (Square 2618, Lot 811)	1911	1972-current	Building	Built in 1911 as the House of Mercy and converted in

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property					
					1972 into the Rosemount Center—the first bilingual infant daycare facility in DC.
Sacred Heart School	1625 Park Road (Square 2609, Lot 857)	1930	ca. 1950s-current	Building	A parochial school with a large Latino student body from 1950s through today. Home of GALA Hispanic Theater 1985-2001.
The Monsenor Romero Apartments	3145 Mount Pleasant Street (Square 2595, Lot 1055)	1908; 1958; 2014	ca. 1970s-current	Building	Constructed as two separate apartment buildings in 1908 (Chesterfield and Winston) and combined into a single building in 1958, called the Deauville; beginning in the 1970s, became home to the immigrant Latino community, particularly Salvadorans. After a fire and rebuilding in 2014, building was named The Monsenor Romero Apartment after a Catholic priest who had been murdered in the Salvadoran civil war.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☒ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: HISPANIC

Period of Significance

1962-1991

Significant Dates

1991

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Mount Pleasant Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987 under Criterion C with Architecture and Community Planning and Development as the areas of significance. The nomination recognizes Mount Pleasant as one of the city's earliest suburbs, on the immediate outskirts of the original Washington City limits. The neighborhood is defined by its hilly and wooded site on the edge of today's Rock Creek Park, its street layout, and its cohesive and varied collection of residential, commercial, and institutional buildings that together contribute significantly to the architecture and urban planning history of Washington, DC. Under Criterion C, the 1987 National Register nomination for the Mount Pleasant Historic District provides thorough background information on the early planning history of the neighborhood and its architecture. It also establishes a period of significance of 1870-1949, representing the period when the vast majority of buildings within the historic district were constructed. The nomination provides little information, however, on the community's social history and its residents. For much of this history, Mount Pleasant was a solidly white, middle-class community. From the 1960s into the 1990s, Mount Pleasant and the adjacent Adams Morgan neighborhood evolved, eventually becoming the epicenter of the Latin American expatriate community in Washington.

This additional documentation provides a historic context for the Latino community in Mount Pleasant, expands the historic district's period of significance to recognize that influence, and identifies properties associated with the Latino community. This additional documentation is intended to supplement the original nomination with this specific context history; to add Ethnic Heritage (Hispanic) to the areas of significance; and to provide a second period of significance, correlated to this historic context. This additional documentation does not propose a boundary increase or provide any revisions to the 1987 nomination. Furthermore, it neither develops an historic context for nor evaluates other demographic or social influences that may have affected the character of Mount Pleasant during its historical development.

The period of significance for this additional documentation under Criterion A is 1962-1991. The start date is based upon two notable events: 1) the Barney Neighborhood House (a social welfare agency) staff recognized the neighborhood's shifting demographics and the emergence of a Latino community, and 2) the first bodega opened in Mount Pleasant. It ends with the Mount Pleasant Riots of 1991, which altered the political landscape for the Latino community, giving it greater political representation within the local governmental structure as well as elective politics.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: ETHNIC HERITAGE (HISPANIC)

Early Immigration Patterns in the District of Columbia and Mount Pleasant: 1900-1950

Until the fourth quarter of the twentieth century, the District of Columbia's population was overwhelmingly native-born. The city's immigrant population not only represented a very small percentage of its total population throughout much of the twentieth century, but it was also much smaller than that of other major urban centers across the country. In 1900, the District's foreign-born population accounted for only 7% of inhabitants, while immigrants accounted for one-third of the population in Boston, New York, Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland. The percentage of foreign-born in DC actually decreased over the next several decades, comprising only 4% of the population in 1970. From the 1924 passage of the Immigration Act until the passage of the Hart-Cellar Act in 1965, immigration regulation was tightly controlled, and the United States experienced the lowest immigration rates in its history.⁵

In 1930, Census tract 27, which covered the entire neighborhood of Mount Pleasant, had a total population of 8,125, of which 97.7% were white Americans, 2% were African Americans, and 0.3% represented other races. Among its white residents, 81.5% had parents who had been born in America, 18% had foreign parents, and 0.5% were themselves foreign-born. The nativity of Mount Pleasant's 2.3% non-white residents was not tallied, but the numbers clearly illustrate that this was an almost entirely white and native neighborhood at the start of the Great Depression.⁶ This began to change in the 1930s, with newcomers seemingly drawn to the city by the increase in the size of the federal government during the New Deal. Between 1930 and 1940, the District experienced a 36.2% increase in population. Residents of Mount Pleasant in 1940 numbered 10,341, 7.2% of whom were foreign-born.⁷

This interwar population boom contributed to a District-wide housing crisis as existing housing stock was limited to pre-Depression population numbers and new construction had severely lagged during the Great Depression. To meet new demand, single-family houses were divided into multiple rental units, and renters took extended family members or boarders into already

⁵ Audrey Singer, "Metropolitan Washington: A New Immigrant Gateway." In *Hispanic Migration and Urban Development: Studies from Washington, DC, Research in Race and Ethnic Relations*, Volume 17, ed. Enrique S. Pumar (Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2012) 4-5.

⁶ In 1935, the U.S. Bureau of the Census published detailed data on every census tract within Washington, DC, based information gathered in the 1930 decennial census. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *District of Columbia Census Tracts* [Map] (Washington, DC: Census Bureau, 1935). Retrieved from the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/item/87694028/

⁷ Open Data DC, "Census Tracts in 1940" [GIS Data Set] (Washington, DC: DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer, 2018); accessed 11/15/24: <https://opendata.dc.gov/datasets/DCGIS::census-tracts-in-1940/about>.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

overcrowded housing.⁸ Another 43% population increase during World War II caused a major housing shortage.⁹ Before the war, Mount Pleasant was a whites-only streetcar suburb with sizeable detached, semi-detached, and attached houses occupied as single-family dwellings, but during the war the neighborhood's "many dwellings, both large and small...were converted to apartments and rooming houses to accommodate the thousands of young people flooding into Washington to work for the expanding government."¹⁰

Many of these young people were "government girls" recruited from every corner of the country to work for the swelling civil service. Among these were several Puerto Rican and Mexican-American citizens who came to Washington in search of professional federal jobs.¹¹ They are exemplified by the story of Elisa Gonzalez, a Chicana from El Paso, Texas. After passing the civil service examination, Gonzalez moved to Washington in September 1941 and attained a clerk position in the Department of War. Her duties included conducting inventories of ordnance. Gonzalez and a few female colleagues from El Paso shared rooms in a boarding house at the corner of Columbia Road and 13th Street NW in Columbia Heights.¹² Gonzalez's experience as a lodger in a boarding house was typical of that of many local residents, especially during the mid-twentieth century.

After Marcela Davila came to Washington from Puerto Rico in 1943 to work in the Social Service Commission, she moved into a rowhouse at 1235 Shepherd Street NW in Petworth, the neighborhood with the third-highest concentration of people with Spanish surnames by 1960.¹³ Mount Pleasant remained almost exclusively white from 1940 (98.3%) to 1950 (98%). This homogeneity was almost entirely the result of the implementation of racially restrictive deeds and petitions on Mount Pleasant properties by developers and homeowners through the 1920s and

⁸ Tanya Edwards Beauchamp, *The Mount Pleasant Historic District* [Brochure] (Washington, DC: The Historical Society of Washington, DC and Historic Mount Pleasant Inc., 2000).

⁹ United States Bureau of the Census, "Estimated Population of the Washington, DC. Metropolitan Area: 1940 to 1948," *Current Population Reports: Population Estimates*, Series F-25, No. 28 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, 21 August 1949) 1; accessed 11/16/24:

<https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/1949/demographics/P25-28.pdf>.

¹⁰ Mara Cherkasky, *Mount Pleasant* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2007) 69.

¹¹ Olivia Cadaval, "The Latino Community: Creating an Identity in the Nation's Capital," in *Urban Odyssey: A Multicultural History of Washington, D.C.*, ed., Francine Curro Cary (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996) 234. Patrick Scallen, "The Bombs that Drop in El Salvador Explode in Mount Pleasant," from *Cold War Conflagration to Immigrant Struggles in Washington, D.C., 1970-1995*. Dissertation (Washington, DC: Georgetown University, 2019) 125-126. Sprehn-Malagón et.al. 2014: 7-8.

¹² Elaine A. Peña, "The Latino DC History Project: 2009-2010 Synopsis." (Washington, DC: Latino Center, Smithsonian Institution, December 2010) 5. Repository: Washington, D.C.: DC History Center, P 5030: <https://dchistory.catalogaccess.com/library/100669>.

¹³ In 1960, census-takers began enumerating Latinos/as in a separate category labeled "Puerto Rican or Spanish Surname Population." The top ten concentrations were in Dupont Circle, in which Latinos/as represented only 1.6% of census tract 53's total population; Georgetown (1.1% of census tract 1); Petworth (1% of census tract 25); Reed-Cooke (0.9% of census tract 38); Columbia Heights (0.9% of census tracts 28 and 37); East End (0.9% of census tract 59); Fort Lincoln (0.8% census tract 90); Takoma (0.7% census tract 17); and Adams Morgan (0.7% census tract 40). Open Data DC, "Census Tracts in 1960" [GIS Data Set] (Washington, DC: DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer, 2018); accessed 11/15/24: <https://opendata.dc.gov/datasets/DCGIS::census-tracts-in-1960/about>.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

1930s. By the 1940s, approximately 85% of the lots were subject to restrictive covenants barring people of color from buying or renting them.¹⁴ Afro-Latinos/as in the 1940s and 1950s generally lived north or south of the neighborhood.

As the federal government expanded in the 1940s, so too did the presence of international aid organizations in Washington that attracted foreign-born personnel. Global institutions like the World Bank (1944) and the Inter-American Development Bank (1959) were established in the postwar years. The list of postwar foreign missions in the District nearly doubled from its prewar number and the majority of these were representatives of new, post-colonial nations as well as Latin American countries:

The decades following World War II ushered in Washington's transformation from a chocolate-and-vanilla government town to an increasingly multi-cultural international city, spurred at least in part by significant Latin American migration. ...Many countries that had previously not maintained permanent presences in the United States established official diplomatic embassies in Washington. The staff of these international organizations, combined with those of new embassies, infused a formerly provincial southern town with a multitude of diverse languages and cultural traditions, galvanizing its rise to fame as an international city.¹⁵

Davila gave an interview in 1982 in which she emphasized the role of embassies and international organizations—rather than the federal government—in employing Latinos/as in the 1940s. Many Latin Americans came from their respective countries to work as cooks, nannies, and chauffeurs for privileged diplomatic families.¹⁶ An example of this migration story is Juana Amparo Campos, who emigrated from the Dominican Republic in October 1940. Campos had been contracted to work as a seamstress for a Dominican diplomatic family who eventually returned home, but Campos decided to remain in the District, where she married and started a family.

Immigrant Latinas in service positions formed the rudiment of a nascent Latino community in the 1940s and 1950s, but no one nationality has ever constituted a majority among DC's Latino expatriate community. Puerto Ricans, who had U.S. citizenship, constituted the largest percentage of the Latino community in this period, followed by Mexicans, Panamanians, Cubans, and Spaniards. Many from the Caribbean were Afro-Latinos/as, and when they arrived in Washington, they encountered a segregated city the likes of which were unfamiliar to them. Campos, arriving in 1940, was "perplexed by the vast social distance between African Americans and whites in the United States," and "neither in New York City, where her boat from the Dominican Republic had

¹⁴ Prologue DC, "Mapping Segregation in Washington, DC: From Restrictive Covenants to Racial Steering," [Website] 2024; accessed 11/16/24: <https://mappingsegregationdc.org/>. Prologue DC, "Mapping Segregation in Washington, DC: The Legacy of Racial Covenants, 1940-2010," [Website] 2023; accessed 11/16/24: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=54fecadcf61a45619534d7a88e1e3225>. See also Open Data DC, "Census Tracts in 1940."

¹⁵ Scallen 2019: 121-122.

¹⁶ Marcela Davila interview, 23 February 1982. In "Latino Youth Community History Project" (Washington, DC: 1981-1982). Repository: Washington, DC: DC Public Library, The People's Archive; accessed: <https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A86729>.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

docked, nor in her hometown of Pelmar had she experienced the kind of visibly entrenched Jim Crow segregation that characterized the U.S. Capital.”¹⁷ Segregation determined where Afro-Latinos/as could shop, eat, live, and even learn. Before the DC public schools desegregated, parochial schools were important institutions for expatriate Latinos/as. After **Sacred Heart School** at 1625 Park Road in Mount Pleasant was integrated in 1950, Adams Morgan resident Campos sent her son and daughter there. From its opening in 1931, Sacred Heart was a co-educational grade school with an increasingly international student body. Administered by the Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, it was preferred by many Latin American immigrants.

In 1940, Mount Pleasant was still 98.3% white. This homogeneity was almost entirely the result of the implementation of racially restrictive deeds and petitions on Mount Pleasant properties by developers and homeowners through the 1920s and 1930s. By the 1940s, approximately 85% of the lots were subject to restrictive covenants barring people of color from buying or renting the lots and/or houses on them.¹⁸ Latinos/as in the 1940s and 1950s generally lived north or south of the neighborhood. Davila lived at 1235 Shepherd Street NW in Petworth, the neighborhood with the third-highest concentration of people with Spanish surnames by 1960, surpassed only by Dupont Circle and Georgetown.¹⁹

Demographic Change in Mount Pleasant: 1950-1970

In 1950, Mount Pleasant remained almost exclusively white (98%). Although it had begun to attract a sizeable immigrant community (10% of its 11,005 residents were foreign born), the vast majority of newcomers were white Europeans.²⁰ A handful of Spanish- or Portuguese-speakers included an Argentine, four Brazilians, four Chileans, fourteen Cubans, one Costa Rican, two Guatemalans, nine Mexicans, two Panamanians, seven Puerto Ricans, two Spaniards, and three Venezuelans. Eight of these worked at their respective embassies or consulates.

¹⁷ Ginetta E.B. Candelario, “‘Black Behind the Ears’ – And Up Front Too? Dominicans in the Black Mosaic,” (Northampton, MA: Smith College, Faculty Publications, Sociology, 2001) 55.

¹⁸ Prologue DC, “Mapping Segregation in Washington, DC: From Restrictive Covenants to Racial Steering,” [Website] 2024; accessed 11/16/24: <https://mappingsegregationdc.org/>. Prologue DC, “Mapping Segregation in Washington, DC: The Legacy of Racial Covenants, 1940-2010,” [Website] 2023; accessed 11/16/24: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=54fecadcf61a45619534d7a88e1e3225>. See also Open Data DC, “Census Tracts in 1940.”

¹⁹ In 1960, census-takers began enumerating Latinos/as in a separate category labeled “Puerto Rican or Spanish Surname Population.” The top ten concentrations were in Dupont Circle, in which Latinos/as represented only 1.6% of census tract 53’s total population; Georgetown (1.1% of census tract 1); Petworth (1% of census tract 25); Reed-Cooke (0.9% of census tract 38); Columbia Heights (0.9% of census tracts 28 and 37); East End (0.9% of census tract 59); Fort Lincoln (0.8% census tract 90); Takoma (0.7% census tract 17); and Adams Morgan (0.7% census tract 40). Open Data DC, “Census Tracts in 1960” [GIS Data Set] (Washington, DC: DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer, 2018); accessed 11/15/24: <https://opendata.dc.gov/datasets/DCGIS::census-tracts-in-1960/about>.

²⁰ Open Data DC, “Census Tracts in 1950” [GIS Data Set] (Washington, DC: DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer, 2018); accessed 11/15/24: <https://opendata.dc.gov/datasets/DCGIS::census-tracts-in-1950/about>.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

A decade later, the neighborhood was changing; 73% of residents were white, 24.3% Black, and 2.7% were of another race.²¹ This transition is largely attributed to *Hurd v. Hodge*, the District companion case to *Shelly vs. Kramer* and the 1948 Supreme Court decision that found racially restrictive deeds and covenants unenforceable. This decision, coupled with the integration of DC public schools in 1954, initiated a major shift in the demographics of residential Washington as African Americans moved into formerly all-white neighborhoods such as Mount Pleasant from the mid-1950s on. In doing so, they opened them up to other non-whites. Newly arrived Latinos/as tended to settle in transitioning neighborhoods where housing was more affordable. However, in 1960, when Mount Pleasant's population peaked at 11,554 residents, with 12.6% foreign born, still only a handful (0.5%) of Latinos/as lived there.²² But it was on the cusp of greater change.

The demographic shift in Mount Pleasant was reflected in the student body of the Sacred Heart School. In an interview, Carmen Marrero Doren, who attended the school from 1959 to 1964 recalled,

As for Hispanics at Sacred Heart School, there were a significant number back in the 50s and early 60s. Once the Dominicans pulled out and the Franciscan order took hold, there's been an exponential increase of Hispanics in attendance, as more and more settled into Mount Pleasant. The early Hispanics attending Sacred Heart were predominantly of Dominican and Puerto Rican descent. ...We were taught Latin and English. We were discouraged from speaking Spanish. None of the nuns spoke Spanish. French was the universal language at the time; the Latin was so we could pray and understand the prayers. As for our cultural backgrounds, nada, zippo, rien. We were Americans. Not Hispanic-American nor Latin American. Just Americans.²³

When the social welfare agency **Barney Neighborhood House** relocated from Southwest DC to the eastern edge of Mount Pleasant in 1960, it served a predominantly African American base in that and adjacent neighborhoods. When employees Harry Struthers and Ann Houston were interviewed in 1982, they recalled that by 1962 or 1963, Mount Pleasant's population was leaning Hispanic. With no Spanish-speaking social agencies in the neighborhood, the Barney House's director George Flannigan—who had worked with Casita Maria in New York—offered programming to serve Latino children. Although this shift was reflective of the growing Latino community in Mount Pleasant, and while the numbers of Spanish-speaking children had increased to a point of informing new programming, the organization then had only one bilingual social worker on staff. In 1966, it obtained United Planning Organization (UPO) funds to start a Spanish-

²¹ Beauchamp 2000. Cherkasky 2007: 69. Mara Cherkasky and Jane Freundel Levey, *Village in the City: Mount Pleasant Heritage Trail* [Brochure] (Washington, DC: Cultural Tourism, DC, 2006). Open Data DC, "Census Tracts in 1960." Prologue DC, "Mapping Segregation in Washington, DC: From Restrictive Covenants to Racial Steering."

²² Open Data DC, "Census Tracts in 1960."

²³ Carmen Marrero Doren, interview with Mara Cherkasky (Washington, DC, n.d.)

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

Speaking Community program, which taught English as a Second Language (ESL) and assisted with career development.²⁴

The year 1962 could be considered a watershed for Latinos/as in Mount Pleasant as it also marked the opening of **Casa Diloné** at 3161 Mount Pleasant Street. Considered the neighborhood's first bodega, the grocery was opened by Francisca Marrero-Dávila Diloné, from Puerto Rico, and her husband Félix Antonio Diloné, a native of the Dominican Republic. The couple and their six children, who helped mind the store, lived in the apartment above the business. The store "quickly [became] the social center for the city's Spanish-speaking community and...attracted Latino residents to the neighborhood."²⁵ Until it closed in 1998, Casa Diloné carried produce and goods from Latin America and the Caribbean that appealed to immigrants and embassy employees. Its location attracted more Latino businesses to Mount Pleasant Street, which became secondary only to the Columbia Road and 18th Street commercial corridor.²⁶ Small businesses catering to a specific clientele has always been a bellwether of demographic representation and growth, and groceries and restaurants, in particular, were the most common path for Latino entrepreneurship in this early postwar period.

In the first half of the 1960s, the District's Latino community expanded more rapidly than in any previous decade,²⁷ fueled by émigrés fleeing economic hardships and political strife. The era saw an uptick in both legal and illegal immigration from several countries, but none so large as the Cuban emigration after that country's revolution. By the end of the decade, social service agencies were being formed to integrate Spanish-speaking immigrants into American life. The **Spanish Catholic Center** (El Centro Católico Hispano, or simply Centro Católico) opened in 1967 as the first such agency for DC's expatriate Latino community. It was established by the Archdiocese of Washington and operated from the **Kenesaw Apartment House** at 3060 16th Street.²⁸ Under the

²⁴ Olivia Cadaval, "Appendix A: A Brief Chronology of the History of the Latino Community Prepared by the Latin American Youth Center's Oral History Project, 1982." In Creating a Latino Identity in the Nation's Capital: The Latino Festival (New York: Routledge, 1998) 217. Cherkasky and Levey 2006. Luis Gonzales interview, 10 March 1982. In "Latino Youth Community History Project" (Washington, DC: 1981-1982). Repository: Washington, DC: DC Public Library, The People's Archive; accessed:

<https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A72684>. Ann Houston and Harry Struthers interview, 15 March 1982. In "Latino Youth Community History Project" (Washington, DC: 1981-1982). Repository: Washington, DC: DC Public Library, The People's Archive; accessed:

<https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A72207>.

²⁵ Cadaval 1996: 232.

²⁶ Cherkasky 2007: 101. Cherkasky and Levey 2006.

²⁷ Although Hispanic/Latino was not a category in the 1960 decennial census, reverse-engineered numbers estimate that approximately 10,000 Spanish-speaking individuals were enumerated in DC in 1960, accounting for roughly 1.3% of the total population. This percentage is more than triple the proportion of Spanish- and Portuguese-speakers identified in the 1950 decennial census, which roughly accounted for 0.4% DC's total population. José Sueiro, interview with Patrick Scallen (Washington, DC: 25 November 2017), *Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project*. Repository: Washington, DC: DC Public Library, The People's Archive; accessed:

<https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42740>.

²⁸ The Spanish Catholic Center remained in the Kenesaw Apartment House through 1986. From circa 1987 to 1992, various directories of social service agencies or Catholic charities listed the Spanish Catholic Center's address as 2700 27th Street NW, in the Woodley Park neighborhood. From circa 1994 through today, its offices have been located at 1618 Monroe Street NW. This building served as the Shrine of the Sacred Heart Academy—a small, all-

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

leadership of Father Leo Beato, the Spanish Catholic Center offered English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, after-school tutoring for children, and other services meant to assist new arrivals. As it grew, the Spanish Catholic Center broadened its scope of services to advise on legal matters, including immigration and housing, and to provide healthcare.²⁹ The Spanish Catholic Center was instrumental in establishing in 1977, with Luis Sanchez Espinar, a Peruvian émigré, one of the earliest Spanish-language newspapers in Washington. The offices of *El Pregonero* were also in the Kenesaw through the early 1980s.

The **Committee for Aid and Development of Latin America in the Nation's Capital (CADOLANCA)** was founded in 1968 by Reverend Antonio Welty and Carlos Rosario, two early leaders in DC's Latino community. Originally operating from the Church of the Good Shepherd at 15th and Irving streets,³⁰ CADOLANCA moved two years later into a rowhouse at 1614 Hobart Street NW which had been Rosario's home since 1957.³¹ The 1970 *Directory of Spanish Speaking Organizations in the United States* described the organization's objectives as "Assist[ing] the Spanish speaking in filling out tax forms, and with immigration problems. Referral through proper channels for such services as health, welfare, housing, education, employment, etc. Establish programs for English classes and skills."³² The organization was conceived as a means of building coalition support and bringing the issues of Latino residents to the attention of local government officials. Growing out of the Civil Rights movement, it was a grassroots, participatory, advocacy group intended to inspire Latinos/as living in the District to demand their civic and legal rights.³³

The riots that shook Washington after the April 4, 1968 assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. devastated the 14th Street corridor. Mount Pleasant resident Charlene Howard recalled that, "After the '68 riots, there wasn't anything up here. We were lucky we had a grocery store... [A]fter the riots, everything pretty much changed."³⁴ As Howard explained, many locals lost their jobs, and the micro-economy suffered because several stores had been lost in the violence. White flight

girls, preparatory school—from the late 1930s through the mid-1980s, and then as the Archdiocese' headquarters for its Catholic Charities organization from 1987 onward.

²⁹ DC History Center, "Movements + Moments: Latinx Youth Organizing" [Video Recording]. Panel Discussion with Latino/a/x Advisory Group and staff at the LAYC (Washington, DC: 16 February 2023). Stephanie A.T. Jacobs, "The Secretariats for Spanish Speaking and Black Catholics," *Catholic Standard*, 1 April 2021; accessed 8/13/24: <https://www.cathstan.org/the-secretariats-for-spanish-speaking-and-black-catholics>. Scallen 2019: 128.

³⁰ Located at 3047 15th Street NW, the Church of the Good Shepherd was located in the sanctuary constructed for the Central Presbyterian Church in 1913. The Spanish-speaking church was opened by Rev. Welty in 1968. In 1970, Welty converted the entire church property—which included the sanctuary and a large basement area; a rear wing at 1470 Irving Street NW, which had previously functioned as a parochial school; and a former manse (rowhouse) at 3045 15th Street NW—into the Woodrow Wilson Center, a community center that leased space to educational and social service agencies, most of which were tailored to serve the needs of DC's Latino community.

³¹ Cherkasky 2007: 97. Linda Low and Mara Cherkasky, "Mount Pleasant: An Urban Village," in *Washington At Home: An Illustrated History of the Neighborhoods in the Nation's Capital*, ed. Kathryn Schneider Smith (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010) 226.

³² U.S. Congress, Cabinet Committee on Opportunity for the Spanish Speaking, *Directory of Spanish Speaking Organizations in the United States* (July 1970) 113.

³³ Cadaval 1998: 217. Appendix A. Davila 1982. Scallen 2019: 128-129.

³⁴ Charlene Howard, interview with Patrick Scallen (Washington, DC: 31 October 2017), *Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project*. Repository: Washington, DC: DC Public Library, The People's Archive; accessed: <https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42422>.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

to the suburbs accelerated. With abandoned storefronts and entire apartment buildings left empty, real-estate values in adjacent neighborhoods plummeted. But this provided an opportunity for some, as “low housing prices attracted a diverse mix of young people, artists, musicians, and families fleeing political and economic turmoil in Central America, Southeast Asia and elsewhere” to Mount Pleasant.³⁵

Although white flight had been in effect since the mid-1950s, the 1968 riots accelerated urban abandonment and many middle-class Latino families also left for the suburbs. By 1970, Mount Pleasant’s resident population had dropped to 10,304. The white population had declined from 73% to 32.5% in a decade, while the African American population had increased from 24.3% to 65%. Notably, 4.7% of residents in Mount Pleasant identified as Spanish American, a significant increase from the 0.5% in 1960.³⁶ Mount Pleasant was still on the periphery of the geographically expanding Latino community. Nearby Adams Morgan—especially with its Latino-owned businesses along Columbia Road and 18th Street—was considered, then, the center of the barrio.

The Rise of Latino Institutions in Mount Pleasant: 1970s

Mount Pleasant’s Latino population increased through the early 1970s, and institutions to support the community encouraged further in-migration of Latinos. In 1971, the House of Mercy, a home for unwed mothers established in the nineteenth century, decided it needed a new focus and engaged sociologist Richard Zamoff to explore alternative areas of service. Zamoff identified a lack of infant daycare facilities, especially in “the low and middle income Mount Pleasant area,” as a pressing community need. As many as 60% of mothers interviewed had expressed interest in a licensed daycare facility.³⁷ As a result, the House of Mercy’s board closed the institution in early 1972, and a newly incorporated board reopened the facility on October 2 of that year as the Rosemount Infant Day Care Center.³⁸ Its ambitious mission was to “establish a bilingual infant day care program in a center...designed...to provide day care services, professional consultations, and family support from social workers...[and] to serve as a nucleus for a program to train and supervise local adults who would offer day care in their own homes.”³⁹ From the outset, the

³⁵ Cherkasky and Levey 2006.

³⁶ In 1970, the top ten neighborhoods where Latinos/as lived were Adams Morgan (11.4% of census tract 40’s total population); Foggy Bottom (9.1% of census tract 57.02); Kalorama Triangle (8.8% of census tract 41); Reed-Cooke (8.3% of census tract 38); Friendship Heights (8.3% of census tract 11); Cleveland Park (8.2% of census tract 6); Lanier Heights (8.1% of census tract 39); West End (8.1% of census tract 55); Woodley Park (7.3% of census tract 5); and Dupont Circle (7.2% of census tract 53.01). Open Data DC, “Census Tracts in 1970” [GIS Data Set] (Washington, DC: DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer, 2018); accessed 11/15/24: <https://opendata.dc.gov/datasets/DCGIS:census-tracts-in-1970/about>.

³⁷ Julia Morgan, “Statement of Mrs. Donald Lee Morgan, President, Rosemount Center,” in District of Columbia Appropriations for 1974: Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, Ninety-third Congress, First Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973) 1663-1664.

³⁸ Rosemount Center, “Rosemount Center’s History,” [Video] 23 November 2022; accessed 11/27/24: <https://youtu.be/IWfsWY6zPkI>.

³⁹ Julia Morgan, “Day Care Programs: Witness Mrs. Julia Morgan, President, Rosemount Day Care Center,” in District of Columbia Appropriations for 1975: Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

Rosemount Center was a multicultural, racially integrated, and inclusive institution that served locals from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Alternately known as El Centro Rosemount, it developed a program to teach both English and Spanish-speaking children a second language. It was the first bilingual infant daycare center in the Washington area.⁴⁰

Bilingual education programs and social service agencies tailored to meet the needs of Spanish-speaking immigrants proliferated in the 1970s, during an era when the Latino community of DC found its voice and a collective identity.⁴¹ Activism and social services were the hallmark of this decade and at the core of the Latino community's formation. One example of a Latino social service agency was the **Adelante Advocacy Center, Inc.**, founded by Richard Gutierrez in 1976 as a bilingual organization meant to address local housing needs. It was an outgrowth of the Spanish Catholic Center. Adelante's offices were originally located in the Wilson Center building at 3045 15th Street NW, just east of Mount Pleasant in Columbia Heights. Between 1991 and its closure in 1995, Adelante had its offices in the **Argyle Apartments** at 3220 17th Street NW in Mount Pleasant.

The Community of Christ was an activist, ascetic, and communal congregation that left Dupont Circle, purchased and moved into the storefront at 3166 Mount Pleasant Street in 1974. There, they opened **La Casa** as a community space for recreational activities. From La Casa the group operated the Life Skills Center, which had been founded by a church member to provide valuable education to new arrivals. The Clinica del Pueblo purchased the building in 2017 and maintains it today as a community service center.

Latino-owned businesses proliferated on Mount Pleasant Street in the 1970s. From the late 1970s to the mid-1980s, **Freddy's Carry Out**, a Bolivian restaurant, was one of several popular Latino-owned eateries on Mount Pleasant Street. This restaurant was followed by the Salvadoran restaurant, **Arcos del Espino** which occupied the same storefront at 3209 Mount Pleasant Street into the mid-1990s. Eventually, Bolivian immigrant, Jaime Carillo who had purchased the building in 1983, opened his own restaurant, **Don Jaime**, there in the late 1990s where it remained until recently. Two more bodegas opened in the mid-1970s, **Los Primos** and **El Progreso**. Los Primos was opened by Dominican immigrants who were cousins (*primos*) to the Dilonés.

Latino businesses were not limited to merely food service. Commercial enterprises broadened in their scope in the 1970s and included shops for shoe repair, tailoring, and hair cutting.⁴² For

Appropriations, House of Representatives, Ninety-third Congress, Second Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974) 1187.

⁴⁰ Rosemount Center. Morgan 1973: 1663, 1665. Jackie Stone, "Homes' New Programs," *Washington Star-News*, 1 October 1972, F-5. Martha Livdahl Grigg, Mercy! On The Road to Rosemount (Washington, DC: independently published, 2015) 33.

⁴¹ Unlike in previous decades, many new arrivals in the 1970s were immigrants unassociated with the embassies and international organizations that had attracted previous generations. A substantial number came from South and Central America, fleeing repressive regimes and violence, but they were not refugees in the legal sense of the word. Regardless of their legal status, they found themselves in a new homeland and needing support structures. Language and cultural barriers, in addition to economic downturns through the 1970s, made acculturation difficult.

⁴² Cadaval 1996: 239.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

example, Rodolfo de León, who had emigrated from Guatemala in 1969, opened **Leon's Shoe Repair** at 3201 Mount Pleasant Street in 1979, still operated today by his son Randy.⁴³ Viterbo Martinez emigrated from Santo Domingo in 1967, first settling in New York City and opening a business there. Around 1976, Martinez brought his family to Washington and opened a barbershop on Mount Pleasant Street that attracted a mostly Latino clientele.⁴⁴ Members of the Martinez family also operated a sewing shop in the rear of the store that offered repairs, alterations, and custom pants for men.

From the 1960s through the 1980s, older, once-luxury apartment buildings offered affordable housing options for new arrivals from Latin America. Among these were the Parkfair Apartments at 1611 Park Road and several apartment buildings along the 3100 block of Mount Pleasant Street, including the Deauville at 3145 (now the Monsenor Romero Apartments); the New Bloomfield (now the Adelante Cooperative) at 3149; the Monticello at 3151; and the Mount Pleasant at 3155. The Deauville was originally constructed in 1908 as two identical apartment buildings named the Chesterfield and Winston. In 1958, the two buildings were joined by a common central entrance and, as combined, were named the Deauville. After a devastating fire in 2008 and a rebuilding completed in 2014, the Deauville was named the Monsenor Romero Apartments after a Catholic priest who had been murdered in the Salvadoran civil war.

But the most notable of the apartment buildings associated with the Latino migration to Mount Pleasant was the Kenesaw. Built in 1905 as the first luxury apartment building in this part of the city, the Kenesaw became home to a significant number of Latino immigrants and was an important gathering place for the Latino community since the Spanish Catholic Center opened there in 1968. Kenesaw residents also played an important role in the struggle for affordable housing in Washington. In 1964, the original owner of the Kenesaw Apartment House sold the building to a purchaser. Eleven years later, the buyer gave the property to Antioch College, along with 681 outstanding housing code violations, unbeknownst to Antioch. Once Antioch learned of the extent of these violations, it sought to sell the property, but the Black and Latino tenants of the Kenesaw formed a cooperative and successfully fought Antioch College from doing so. The groups reached an agreement by which a quasi-independent city agency would purchase the building, renovate it, then sell it to the cooperative. However, by the time of the sale in 1984, the tenants lacked the necessary funds to buy the building. Instead, under a complicated agreement, 51 empty units were sold, at market rate, as condominiums, while those 32 units occupied by the cooperatives' members were reserved as a low-cost cooperative for the period those residents remained in their units. The struggles over the Kenesaw situation inspired David Clarke, a DC Councilman, to sponsor the 1980 Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA). This act, intended to help forestall gentrification, gives tenants the right of first refusal to purchase their building when their rental property is put up for sale. The Kenesaw was not only the inspiration for this important legislation, but it was the first to take advantage of it.

⁴³ Cherkasky 2007: 115.

⁴⁴ Viterbo Martinez interview, 7 March 1982. In "Latino Youth Community History Project" (Washington, DC: 1981-1982). Repository: Washington, DC: DC Public Library, The People's Archive; accessed: <https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A86733>. Cadaval 1998: 217. Arturo Griffiths, interview with Maria Sanchez-Carlo (Washington, DC: 27 February 2024).

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

The growing numbers of Latinos/as in Mount Pleasant prompted the Washington Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to open the **Fourth District Police Center** in a commercial storefront on Mount Pleasant Street in 1971. Between October of that year and 1983, the station was staffed by three bilingual officers and supervised by Officer Larry J. Moss, an ordained Baptist minister who had previously worked in Latin America. The Fourth District Police Center was intended as a liaison office in which a few Spanish-speaking “community services” officers could provide counseling and referral services and strengthen relations between the police force and Latinos/as residing in Mount Pleasant, Columbia Heights, and Upper Cardozo. The bilingual officers worked with community members who had been victims of crime and domestic abuse, providing counseling to both walk-in and call-in residents. The officers educated the wider immigrant community on issues ranging from housing and employment to immigration law and consumer protections. Primarily, the officers worked in dispute settlement using tactics such as conciliation, mediation, and arbitration, which were not a part of the regular officer training at that time. By the late 1970s, the Fourth District Police Center had become a valuable resource to the whole community, fostering good relations with its diverse members.⁴⁵

Mount Pleasant Becomes the Heart of the Barrio: 1980s

The 1980s were a turning point for the DC Latino community. Starting in 1978, political strife and violent civil wars in Central America resulted in huge numbers of largely undocumented immigrants—Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Salvadorans—coming to the United States via Mexico. Many of these Central American immigrants—especially Salvadorans—settled in the District where Central American migrant laborers had established roots in previous decades. The 1980 decennial census—the first to use the term “Hispanic”—enumerated 638,333 residents in the District, of whom 2.8% were labeled Hispanic.⁴⁶ In Mount Pleasant, where the foreign-born population reached a new height of 17.7% in 1980, the census recorded the population as 38% white, 49.4% Black, 0.3% Native American, 2.9% Asian, and 9.4% other. Of these, 12.65% of respondents reported Hispanic origin or heritage. By then, Mount Pleasant had taken first place among neighborhoods for highest proportion of residents with Latin American origins.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ “Interview with Daniel Flores,” 29 July 1986. In Columbia Historical Society Oral History Project Collection, MS 0892 (Washington, DC: 1986). Repository: Washington, DC: DC History Center, OHT 1986.F66, Container 1, Folder 9. <https://dchistory.catalogaccess.com/archives/109410>. U.S. Department of Defense Overseas Schools, “Testimony of Officer Larry J. Moss, Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, DC on Police Practices and Domestic Violence,” in Joint Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Labor Standards and the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, Ninety-fifth Congress, Second Session, on H.R. 9892. Hearing Held in Washington, DC, February 1, 1978 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978) 427.

⁴⁶ More recent scholarship asserts that 9.3% of DC’s residents in 1980 were born in Latin America. Peña 2010: 5.

⁴⁷ The top ten census tracts/neighborhoods for Latino residents in 1980 was, in first place, census tract 27.02, which represented half of Mount Pleasant, with 17.4% Latino residents; Lanier Heights (16.8% of census tract 39); Downtown/K Street/Franklin Park (14.5% of census tract 51); Columbia Heights, between 14th and 16th streets, Harvard Street and Spring Road (12.1% of census tract 28); census tract 53.01, which aligns with the southeastern half of Dupont Circle (12.1%); Adams Morgan (11.5% of census tract 40); Reed-Cooke (10.9% of census tract 38); census tract 55.02, which is half of the West End neighborhood (10.8%); census tract 42.01, or half of the area north of Dupont Circle (9.9%); and census tract 5.02, or half of Woodley Park (8.6%). Open Data DC, “Census Tracts in

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

The influx of Central Americans to the District is reflected by businesses in the barrio. “When the Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, DC, became home to Central American migrants in the 1980s, restaurants began selling pupusas and gallo pinto (“spotted rooster,” a Nicaraguan and Costa Rican version of rice and beans).”⁴⁸ In Mount Pleasant, **Corado’s Restaurant**, a Guatemalan eatery, opened along Mount Pleasant Street, along with **Arcos del Espino**, a Salvadoran restaurant that had taken the place of **Freddy’s Carry Out**, which had previously offered Bolivian food. In 1990, Nimia Haydee Vanegas, an émigré from El Salvador, and her husband Mario Alas purchased Trolley’s Restaurant at 3203 Mount Pleasant Street and by 1997, they had closed Trolley’s and opened Haydee’s Restaurant at 3102 Mount Pleasant Street. The Don Juan Restaurant, at 1660 Lamont Street, was purchased by a Salvadoran in 1993.

The Washington metropolitan area became known for its Salvadoran community. “Church-affiliated refugee centers, solidarity networks, and service providers soon opened offices in Adams Morgan, Mount Pleasant, and Columbia Heights, locations accessible to the newly arrived immigrants.”⁴⁹ The most significant of these was the **Central American Resource Center**, or **CARECEN**, established in July 1981 as a nonprofit, legal-aid organization. Its founders were Joaquín Dominguez Parada, a Salvadoran lawyer who emigrated in 1980, and Patrice Perillie, a local lawyer who focused on political asylum applications and immigration law. With a tight operating budget provided by the DC Office of Latino Affairs, Parada and Perillie opened a small office in the Wilson Center that was staffed largely by volunteers. By 1985, they had moved to Mount Pleasant Street. CARECEN set out to defend the legal and civil rights of Central American immigrants in the greater Washington area through education, litigation, and activism. It “emerged as a pillar of Washington’s Latino immigrant community,” advocating for the end of U.S. intervention in El Salvador and for immigration reform.⁵⁰ CARECEN also created two health clinics of great significance to the city’s Latino population: La Clínica del Pueblo and Salud, Inc.⁵¹

Latino arts thrived in the District in the 1980s through the 1990s, particularly in the forms of mural painting, dramatic (often street) theater, music, and dance (including folk dancing). The GALA (Grupo de Artistas Latino Americanos) Hispanic Theatre, a Spanish-language dramatic theater company founded in 1976, found a home in **Sacred Heart School** from 1985-2001. The school, which had an international student body since its 1931 opening, had increasingly become associated with the Latino community of the area. In 1950, several Latino children were enrolled and their numbers increased through the 1960s. By the late 1990s or early 2000s, the school had created its bilingual program. Today, two letter signs flank the entry on the stone water table:

1980” [GIS Data Set] (Washington, DC: DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer, 2018); accessed 11/15/24: <https://opendata.dc.gov/datasets/DCGIS::census-tracts-in-1980/about>.

⁴⁸ Jeffrey M. Pilcher, “Coming Home to Salsa: Latino Roots of American Food,” in *American Latino Heritage* [Theme Study] (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2013).

⁴⁹ Ana Patricia Rodríguez, “Becoming ‘Wachintonians’: Salvadorans in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan Area,” *Washington History*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Fall 2016): 4-5.

⁵⁰ Scallen 2019: 142.

⁵¹ Shae Corey [DC Preservation League], “Latinx Heritage Tour: La Clinica del Pueblo,” *DC Historic Sites*, [Website]; accessed 4/25/24: <https://historicsites.dcpreservation.org/items/show/1102>. Scallen 2019: 143-144. Sprehn-Malagón et.al. 2014: 38-39.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

“Sacred Heart School,” in English, and “Escuela del Sagrado Corazón,” in Spanish, attesting to the importance the school still has for the local Latino community. A notable example of mural painting is still prominent on a retaining wall along Klinge Road below the Rosemount Center. Over three consecutive summers between 1988 and 1990, three sections of murals were painted on the concrete wall: “A Tribute to Life,” “Youth of the World,” and “A Chant for Hope” or *Canto a la Esperanza*. Under the direction of artist Jorge Somarriba, and over the graffiti that had covered the wall, Latin American Youth Center members painted colorful “windows,” from abstract geometric shapes to figural scenes depicting ancient and folk cultures on several continents.⁵²

Both leisure and political activities took place in the public realm throughout the city in the 1980s, and open-air spaces hold their own significance for DC’s Latino population. Marches relating to the United States’ government’s involvement in Central America would start or end in Rabaut (or Pigeon) Park, just south of Harvard Street and adjacent to Mount Pleasant, and in **Lamont Park** west of 19th Street.⁵³ Informal outdoor spaces emerged as impromptu gathering places, such as **La Esquina**, the “corner” northwest of the intersection of Mount Pleasant Street and Kenyon Street NW. No more than a small open space and a stretch of sidewalk, in the late 1970s, it became a place for *esquineros*—a term that generally refers to middle-aged Salvadoran men—to socialize and play chess or checkers. The spot continues to serve as an improvised gathering place for members of the Latino community.⁵⁴

The Mount Pleasant Street corridor and the Columbia Road corridor themselves became social spaces and promenades for Latinos/as.⁵⁵ From the 1960s through today, Mount Pleasant Street has functioned as an important commercial thoroughfare in the greater Latino barrio. Chico Diaz recalled the scene in the 1980s:

Mt. Pleasant was the place to go on the weekends if you worked... Mt. Pleasant and Columbia Road were the corridors to walk. A lot of folks would come out. We used to think it was la plaza. In our countries, you used to go, especially on Sundays because there is a Mass... And that’s what I remember happening, also. It used to be kind of the same feeling because on Sundays, Sacred Heart Church, it would get packed. After Sacred Heart Church, people would walk through Mt. Pleasant, through Columbia Road. That’s how I remember it: that feeling of you are among folks from your countries. Because you could buy, I don’t know, your pupusas, atole, and only at those locations, mainly.⁵⁶

⁵² Lynn Prowitt, “Latino Youths Cover Graffiti with Portrait of Hope,” *Washington Post* (3 August 1988).

⁵³ Granados 2024.

⁵⁴ Bahrapour 2018.

⁵⁵ The Mount Pleasant Street Corridor spans from Harvard Street NW north to Park Road NW. Except for a small leg on the east side of Rabaut Park, the entirety of the street is located within the Mount Pleasant Historic District.

⁵⁶ José “Chico” Diaz, interview with Patrick Scallen (Washington, DC: 15 December 2017), *Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project*. Repository: Washington, DC: DC Public Library, The People’s Archive; accessed: <https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42739>.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

The Mount Pleasant Riots: 1991

By 1990, Mount Pleasant and Columbia Heights had the highest concentration of Latino residents in Washington. The 1990 decennial census counted 11,192 residents of Mount Pleasant, 42.6% of whom were white, 36.5% Black, 0.45% Native American, and 3.5% Asian. Now, 26.8% identified as Hispanic. Racial tensions increased as longtime residents and newcomers, white and Black, increasingly voiced concerns about loitering, public drunkenness, and noise on Mount Pleasant Street. Answering the complaints of Mount Pleasant residents, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) began to patrol the area more vigorously, leading to increased confrontations between Latino residents and police officers. Around 7:30 pm on Sunday, May 5, 1991, MPD officers Angela Jewell and Grisel del Valle arrested Daniel Enrique Gomez, a Salvadoran immigrant, for public inebriation and disorderly conduct. The arrest took place in front of Don Juan's Restaurant at 1660 Lamont Street. What happened next is still debated. Police testimony is that Gomez pulled a knife from his boot and threatened Jewell. Multiple witnesses gave conflicting accounts of what had occurred: some said that Gomez was handcuffed, on his knees, had no knife, and posed no threat, while others said he only had one handcuff on and that he did brandish a knife. What is certain is that Jewell used her firearm and shot Gomez, seriously wounding him.

This gunshot was singular in its effect. Word quickly spread through the Latino community that Gomez had been shot by police officers while handcuffed, angering a community that already had a toxic relationship with the MPD. Latino youths in the vicinity began to gather at the scene and hurl rocks, glass bottles, and bricks at police officers responding to Jewell's call for assistance. The altercations escalated into destruction of property. Chico Diaz, 23 years old at the time, rode his bike to Park Road and 16th Street, where he witnessed a police car burning and youths slinging rocks at officers. They were also setting fire to plastic garbage cans along Mount Pleasant Street, filling the area with black smoke and a noxious stench. Mark Poletunow counted as many as eleven cruisers torched and he saw others rocked by youths clashing with officers. The Church's Fried Chicken restaurant at 3124 Mount Pleasant Street was set afire, and storefront windows were broken. The night ended after police chased youths through the streets for six hours.⁵⁷

The rebellious behavior of the Latino youths caught the MPD and the Mayor's Office completely by surprise. Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly's initial response was to angrily denounce the uprising as a group of subversives, on whom she would call the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The following morning, Monday, May 6, leaders of the Latino community met in the basement of Sacred Heart Church to discuss the night's events and to confer with government officials. In an attempt to soothe tempers and to redirect protest to non-violent, civil disobedience, they scheduled

⁵⁷ Diaz 2017. Hart 2017. Alice Kelly, interview with Patrick Scallen (Washington, DC: 2 February 2018), *Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project*. Repository: Washington, DC: DC Public Library, The People's Archive; accessed: <https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42738>. Mark Poletunow, interview with Patrick Scallen (Washington, DC: 18 November 2017), *Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project*. Repository: Washington, DC: DC Public Library, The People's Archive; <https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42741>. Scallen 2019: 227. Scallen 2020: 35-36. Sueiro 2017.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

a march for that evening, to be led by community and church members including Poletunow, Father O'Malley, Roland Roebuck, Pedro Avilés, and others. To prevent a repeat of Sunday's events, Mayor Kelly "declared a state of emergency and set a 7:00 p.m. curfew in Mount Pleasant, Adams Morgan, and Columbia Heights."⁵⁸ A police command center was stationed in an office trailer placed in Meridian Hill (or Malcolm X) Park, while the Shrine of the Sacred Heart was used as a police staging ground and a refuge for community members frightened by the violence.⁵⁹

Monday progressed without incident. The community's anger was still evident, and the day was filled with people discussing the previous night's events and what had prompted them. The riots, as the press called them, made national news in print and on television. The press focused on the fact that the shooting that precipitated the rioting occurred on Cinco de Mayo, suggesting that Gomez, who (by most accounts) was heavily intoxicated at the time of the arrest, had simply overindulged celebrating Mexico's independence. The coverage downplayed the underlying reason for the uprising, the accumulated anger and distrust between the community and police. Marco del Fuego, who had come from El Salvador as a teenager in the mid-1980s, believed that negative and stereotypical portrayals of Salvadorans inflamed the anger felt by Latinos/as.⁶⁰

Media attention also had the effect of advertising the uprising outside of the neighborhood. The first night had been homegrown and spontaneous, confined to a couple of blocks on Mount Pleasant Street and 16th Street. The second night—Monday, May 6—was organized. Interlopers entered Mount Pleasant and Adams Morgan to loot and cause mayhem. What started as an uprising turned into riots, where the political point was lost amid the destruction for destruction's sake focused on 14th Street and Columbia Road.⁶¹

Youths took control of the street despite the increased police deployment. Chief Ike Fullwood informed his officers not to use force but mobilized the Special Operations Division to shut down 16th Street. On the same street, a police van was pelted with rocks, forcing the officers to escape through the passenger side door. Once they were out, a kid put a lit flare in the gas tank, exploding the vehicle. Rioting youths blocked traffic and attacked city buses, with one driver simply abandoning his bus on the street. More police cars and private vehicles were torched. More than two dozen stores on Columbia Road were looted.⁶² Mayor Kelly deployed about a thousand officers in riot gear to the area "where residents had long experienced increasing racial tension, discrimination, police harassment, crime, and violence."⁶³ Helicopters were deployed to surveil the neighborhood. Some residents believed that the heightened police presence in militaristic gear

⁵⁸ Rodríguez 2016: 5.

⁵⁹ Gabe Bullard, "Listen: The Mt. Pleasant Riots, 30 Years Later." Local News [Audio Recording] on *WAMU* 88.5 [Website], 6 May 2021; accessed: <https://wamu.org/story/21/05/06/listen-the-mt-pleasant-riots-30-years-later/>. Poletunow 2017. Beatriz Otero, interview with Heather McMahon (Washington, DC: 21 February 2024).

⁶⁰ National Museum of American History [NMAH], "Remembering the 1991 Disturbances in Mt. Pleasant" [Video Recording]. Panel discussion with Jose Cerritos (moderator), Pedro Avilés, Olivia Cadaval, Marco del Fuego, Chief Ike Fullwood, and Mayor Sharon Pratt (Washington, DC: 5 May 2011).

⁶¹ Cherkasky and Levey 2006. Diaz 2017. Howard 2017. Poletunow 2017. Scallen 2020: 36. Sueiro 2017.

⁶² NMAH 2011. Scallen 2020: 36. Sueiro 2017.

⁶³ Rodríguez 2016: 5.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

only incited more violence, which culminated with the police lobbing tear gas canisters into the crowd.⁶⁴

The riots continued for three days, with the worst damage that Monday evening. Sporadic events were reported on Tuesday and into Wednesday on Columbia Road, between 14th and 15th streets, but the rioting subsided with the curfew. From Monday night, the Latin American Youth Center kept its Drop-in Center in the basement of the Wilson Center open for people to escape the tear gas and chaos. By the end of the violence, 230 people had been arrested and 50 had been injured, but no one was killed.⁶⁵ Some Salvadoran youths were deported.⁶⁶

In the aftermath of the uprising and riots, the Latino community and the entire city were shaken. During the violence, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the National Council for La Raza (now UnidosUS) met with Latino community leaders at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart to diffuse the situation. With the input of these national organizations, city officials established a multicultural task force to understand the precipitating causes. Latino community leaders established their own council—the Latino Civil Rights Task Force, headed by Pedro Avilés—and spent the next six months exploring the social, economic, and political issues at the root of the uprising. Their report, “The Latino Blueprint for Action,” laid out the inequalities and systemic discrimination that the Latino community faced in eight areas: police/community relations, housing needs, human rights, economic development, employment services, education, recreation, and human services. The report also proposed solutions to be administered by local government. Both the blueprint and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights’ “Mount Pleasant Report” found that Latinos did experience disproportionate mistreatment and pervasive racism from the MPD and neglect by local government in terms of funding, social services and programs, and bilingual access. The “Mount Pleasant Report” stressed how underrepresented Latinos/as were in city government as elected officials and agency staff, despite comprising a tenth of the city’s population.⁶⁷

The work of the Latino Civil Rights Task Force brought positive change. Over time, the city government funded more social service organizations, and the Office of Latino Affairs (founded in 1976) became more robust as well. The city also worked to enhance the Latino small-business sector. In July 1991, the Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC) was established as a community-based, nonprofit by a coalition of business and financial professionals with civil rights activists. Perhaps most significantly, the uprising and its aftermath brought the Latino community from the margins of public attention to District-wide visibility, a “defining moment in the life of the city.”⁶⁸ According to José Sueiro,

⁶⁴ Poletunow 2017.

⁶⁵ In a 2011 panel discussion at the National Museum of American History, held on the twentieth anniversary of the 1991 Mount Pleasant uprising, Chief of Police Ike Fullwood stated that 90% of the arrests were for curfew violations and that most paid their fines and were quickly released. NMAH 2011.

⁶⁶ Cherkasky and Levey 2006. Diaz 2017. NMAH 2011. Poletunow 2017.

⁶⁷ DC Latino Civil Rights Task Force, “The Latino Blueprint for Action: Final Recommendations to the District of Columbia Government,” (Washington DC: October 1991). Kamasaki 2024. Otero 2024. Poletunow 2017. Reinhard 2017: 8-9. Rodríguez 2016: 5-6. Scallen 2019: 233-234. Sueiro 2017.

⁶⁸ NMAH 2011.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

The riots in '91 [were] very negative. In many ways it was violent. It was destructive. But in terms of development of this community that was already largely here at that point, that had grown incredibly, it was a bump that generated greater opportunity. It generated greater awareness of this community. As I said, historically it's the most famous incident that ever happened to the Latino community in Washington. It was the only time the Latino community in Washington, DC made national news. Good or bad. And it created a much more sophisticated community, much more lively community. A community that wasn't so inhibited about expressing... about demonstrating its power and being more up front, or more in-your-face kind of thing.⁶⁹

On the first anniversary of the Mount Pleasant uprising, the Latino Civil Rights Task Force organized a peaceful march and demonstration to highlight the demands of the Latino community as expressed in "The Latino Blueprint for Action."⁷⁰ There have been periodic remembrances on subsequent anniversaries. In 2011, to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the event, a panel discussion was held at the National Museum of American History. Participants and audience members expressed the opinion that there was still a long way to go to reach genuine equity and dignity for the Latino community, addressing racism, police relations, inequity in the government's distribution of resources, and affordable housing. Ronald Chacon spoke from the audience, reminding everyone present what it was like to be a Latino youth on the street in those days:

I was at the Mount Pleasant Riots, day one, two, and three, and I just want to clarify something... we were a bunch of scared kids, a bunch of scared 16, 17, 18 years olds afraid for our lives, we were afraid that the police were going to shoot us, we were afraid that we were going to get beat up, we were gonna get jailed. Those tactics that were used weren't guerrilla tactics, those were survival tactics. At that moment I felt, as a young person, that I was defending myself... because this is my neighborhood, and I belonged there.⁷¹

Conclusion

In the minds of many District residents, Mount Pleasant Street and the entire neighborhood of Mount Pleasant came to be inextricably associated with the Latino community in the fourth quarter of the twentieth century, an association that lingers. The Mount Pleasant Historic District was recognized in 1987 for its significance under Criterion C for Architecture and Community Planning and Development. This additional documentation shows that Mount Pleasant is also significant at the local level for its association with Latino (Hispanic) ethnic heritage under Criterion A with an additional period of significance of 1962-1991. The year 1962 was a watershed moment for Mount Pleasant in terms of a growing Latino presence. By 1962-1963, staff at the Barney Neighborhood House, which had previously served a primarily African American clientele, noted the demographic shift and began offering programs and services in Spanish. Casa

⁶⁹ Sueiro 2017.

⁷⁰ Cadaval and Reinhard 1992: 41.

⁷¹ NMAH 2011.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

Diloné, the neighborhood's first grocery carrying primarily Latin American products, also opened at that time. Mount Pleasant's Latino community continued to grow through the 1970s and 1980s, reflected in the proliferation of commercial businesses catering to Latino customers. By 1990, Mount Pleasant and Columbia Heights had the highest concentration of Latino residents in the city, and the following spring, Mount Pleasant Street was the site of a pivotal moment for the Latino community. Although the Mount Pleasant uprising or riot was an eruption of anger and violence, positive change occurred in its aftermath. From the destruction rose a better-solidified Latino polity and leadership structure that could bargain for parity and equity with the local government.

Criterion G: Less than 50 Years of Age

The nomination for the Mount Pleasant Historic District identified a period of significance from 1870 to 1949, which now well precedes a 50-year immediate past considered an appropriate distance from which to evaluate the significance of most resources. It should be noted, however, that when the neighborhood was designated, not 40 years had elapsed since the end of this period of significance. The present additional documentation proposes a second, later period of significance (1962-1991) whose terminal date is also less than 50 years from the present. This end date is defined by the 1991 Mount Pleasant uprising/riots, considered one of the most important events associated with the District's Latino community in the twentieth century and of exceptional historical significance. Although less than 34 years have elapsed since that event, enough time has passed to allow for appropriate perspective of the event. According to José Sueiro, "historically it's the most famous incident that ever happened to the Latino community in Washington. It was the only time the Latino community in Washington, DC made national news. Good or bad."⁷²

The Latino community of Mount Pleasant emerged as early as 1962, or 63 years prior to today. By 1975, 50 years prior to the present, the District's first bilingual infant daycare center and first bilingual police service center had opened in the community, as had the La Casa Community Health Action Center and the bilingual programs at the Barney Neighborhood House—all demonstrating the rise of the Latino community in Mount Pleasant. Various businesses catering to Latino clientele emerged on Mount Pleasant Street through the 1960s and 1970s, so that by the 1980s, Mount Pleasant had become the heart of the barrio, a nebulous geographic area that encompassed the cores of the adjacent neighborhoods of Adams Morgan, Mount Pleasant, and Columbia Heights in the late twentieth century. The growth of a Latino identity associated with Mount Pleasant occurred within the last 50 years, but enough time has passed to confidently assess how this neighborhood has fostered the growth of a Latino community identity in the District since the last quarter of the twentieth century.

⁷² Sueiro 2017.

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

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Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

Name of Property

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Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

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Documentation)

Washington, DC
County and State

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Documentation)

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Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

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Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☒ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other
Name of repository: DC History Center; Kiplinger Library; DC Public Library;
The People’s Archive

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ca. 200

[See map in 1986 nomination]

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: [See 1986 nomination for coordinates]
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: Longitude:
2. Latitude: Longitude:

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the Mount Pleasant Historic District were established and described in the 1986 National Register of Historic Places nomination form. This additional documentation does not alter or amend the boundaries in any way. For a verbal description of the boundaries, see the 1986 National Register nomination.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

For a justification of the boundaries, see the 1986 National Register nomination.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Heather McMahon

organization: Heather McMahon, Architectural Historian (HMAH)

street & number: 3062 Old U.S. Highway 64, Apt. B

city or town: Lexington state: NC zip code: 27295

e-mail: heathermcmahon.archhistory@gmail.com

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date: December 27, 2024

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Number	Title	Facing	Photo By	Date
1	Adelante Cooperative, 3149 Mount Pleasant Street NW	E	Zachary Burt	2/21/25
2	Former Barney Neighborhood House, 3118 16 th Street NW	W	Zachary Burt	2/21/25
3	<i>Canto a la Esperanza</i> Mural and Rosemount Center from Intersection of Klinge and Adams Mill Roads NW, Looking Northwest	NW	Zachary Burt	2/24/25
4	<i>Canto a la Esperanza</i> Mural and Rosemount Center from Klinge Road NW, Looking Northeast	NE	Zachary Burt	2/24/25
5	Former Casa Diloné, 3161 Mount Pleasant Street NW	N	Zachary Burt	2/21/25
6	Former offices of CADOLANCA, 1614 Hobart Street NW	S	Zachary Burt	2/21/25
7	El Progreso, 3158 Mount Pleasant Street NW	N	Zachary Burt	2/21/25
8	Kenesaw Apartment House, 3060 16 th Street NW	SW	Zachary Burt	2/21/25

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC
County and State

9	La Esquina at Mount Pleasant and Kenyon Streets NW	NW	Zachary Burt	2/21/25
10	Lamont Park from Intersection of Mount Pleasant and Lamont Streets NW	NW	Zachary Burt	2/21/25
11	Los Primos Signage Above Sidewalk, 3170 Mount Pleasant Street NW	NW	Zachary Burt	2/21/25
12	Pan American Laundry, 3127 Mount Pleasant Street NW	N	Zachary Burt	2/21/25
13	Sacred Heart School, 1625 Park Road NW	NE	Zachary Burt	2/24/25
14	The Monsenor Romero Apartments, 3145 Mount Pleasant Street NW	SE	Zachary Burt	2/24/25
15	Eastside of 3200 Block of Mount Pleasant Street NW	SE	Zachary Burt	2/21/25

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 1



Photo 1: Adelante Cooperative, 3149 Mount Pleasant Street NW
(Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 2



Photo 2: Former Barney Neighborhood House, 3118 16th Street NW
(Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 3



Photo 3: *Canto a la Esperanza* Mural and Rosemount Center from Intersection of Klinge and Adams Mill Roads NW, Looking Northwest (Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 4



Photo 4: *Canto a la Esperanza* Mural and Rosemount Center from Klinge Road NW, Looking Northeast (Zachary Burt, February 2025).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 5



Photo 5: Former Casa Diloné, 3161 Mount Pleasant Street NW
(Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 6



Photo 6: Former offices of CADOLANCA, 1614 Hobart Street NW
(Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 7

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Photo 7: El Progreso, 3158 Mount Pleasant Street NW
(Zachary Burt, February 2025).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 8



Photo 8: Kenesaw Apartment House, 3060 16th Street NW
(Zachary Burt, February 2025).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 9



Photo 9: La Esquina at Mount Pleasant and Kenyon Streets NW
(Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 10

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 10: Lamont Park from Intersection of Mount Pleasant and Lamont Streets NW (Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 11

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 11: Los Primos Signage Above Sidewalk, 3170 Mount Pleasant Street NW (Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 12

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property
Washington, DC
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 12: Pan American Laundry, 3127 Mount Pleasant Street NW
(Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 13

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)
Name of Property
Washington, DC
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 13: Sacred Heart School, 1625 Park Road NW (Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 14



Figure 14: The Monsenor Romero Apartments, 3145 Mount Pleasant Street NW
(Zachary Burt, February 2025).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Pleasant Historic District (Additional
Documentation)

Name of Property

Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photos Page 15



Figure 15: Eastside of 3200 Block of Mount Pleasant Street NW (Zachary Burt, February 2025).