



Newsletter

June 2026

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Advocacy Update

DCPL Joins Coalition and Files Suit to Protect West Potomac Park



The District Cup Polo Match Played in West Potomac Park, DCPL Archives, 2026.

On Monday, the DC Preservation League joined a coalition of advocacy, conservation, and historic preservation organizations, and an individual Washington, DC resident, to save West Potomac Park.

In the complaint, the [National Parks Conservation Association](#), DCPL, [National Mall Coalition](#), [Olmsted Network](#), the [Committee of 100 on the Federal City](#), [The Cultural Landscape Foundation](#), and resident Steve Longenecker are seeking to stop the Trump-Vance administration’s unlawful attempt to remake West Potomac Park, national park land that belongs to all Americans. The coalition is represented in the matter by [Democracy Forward Foundation](#).

[Read the full press release here](#)

[Read the full complaint filed here](#)

[Read more about the East and West Potomac Parks Historic District](#)



Photo by Carol M. Highsmith, courtesy of Library of Congress.

Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool

The National Park Service has contracted a company to apply an industrial-grade "protective coating" in "American Flag Blue" and is proceeding without compliance under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). By bypassing standard regulatory processes for what it describes as "national aesthetics and readiness" ahead of the 250th anniversary, the administration has not scheduled any public planning hearings.



Rendering of the Triumphal Arch.

Triumphal Arch (Memorial Circle)

Plans are moving forward for a 250-foot-tall Neoclassical "Victory Arch" to be located at Memorial Circle on Columbia Island, positioned directly between the Lincoln Memorial and Arlington National Cemetery. This structure is intended to commemorate the US Semiquincentennial, marking the 250th anniversary of the country. However, it would overshadow the 99-foot-tall Lincoln Memorial and disrupt the historic views of Arlington House. Local preservationists have strongly opposed the project, and a

Instead, advocacy efforts are focused on an active federal [lawsuit filed by The Cultural Landscape Foundation](#), which seeks to mitigate the adverse effects on the reflecting pool and the broader cultural landscape of The National Mall. Additionally, upcoming congressional appropriations hearings are addressing the project's shifting costs.

A hearing on a preliminary injunction will be held in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia on May 21st; and on June 10th, the plaintiff withdrew its motion for a temporary restraining order. Judge Nichols has asked for a briefing schedule and status report that was filed on June 17th.



Image released by the Secretary of the Department of Interior.

East Potomac Park (Golf Links Redesign)

The Trump Administration has officially announced a major redesign proposal by Fazio Design to transform the century-old municipal golf property into an upscale, championship-level facility spanning 7,660 yards, with the capability to host major PGA tournaments. This initiative follows a newly established long-term lease agreement with the National Links Trust (NLT), ensuring that the courses remain open and affordable for local residents.

However, a federal lawsuit filed by local golfers and the DC Preservation League is still pending. The lawsuit claims that the administration failed to conduct mandatory environmental and historic resource reviews as required by the Administrative Procedure Act.

Active litigation is ongoing in federal court, and the next hearing is scheduled for July 2nd at 2 pm at the U.S. District Court, Courtroom 12, before Judge Ana C. Reyes. We encourage the public to attend.

coalition of Vietnam War veterans have filed a lawsuit to prevent its construction, arguing that it would alter the solemn atmosphere of Arlington Cemetery.

Since our last update, the project received concept and final approval from the Commission of Fine Arts, and the commissioners of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPD) voted to approve the staff report which highlighted issues such as traffic management, flight path issues, and violation of the 1910 Height Act. [Read the full staff report here.](#)

The National Park Service initiated Section 106 on the Arch on June 5th with a mere 10 day comment period and did not approve DCPL's or other preservation nonprofits' request for party status. [Read DCPL's comments here.](#)

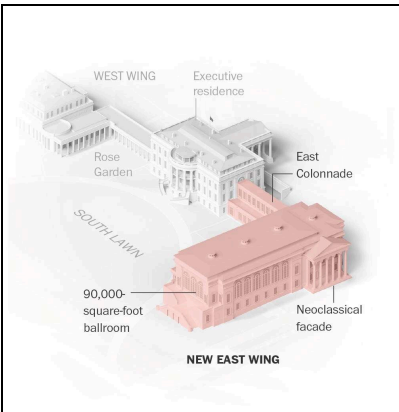


Image by The Washington Post.

White House Ballroom (East Wing Modernization)

The physical landscape of the White House complex is undergoing its most significant modifications in a generation. The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPD) has formally approved the design and planning phases of the East Wing Modernization Project. This project includes a substantial 90,000-square-foot footprint, which features a 22,000-square-foot State Ballroom designed in the Gilded Age style.

Attention has now shifted significantly to congressional oversight due to the rising \$600 million budget. This change comes in light of a transition from funding through private donors to federal defense and security spending, especially after recent security incidents in April. Additionally, the construction includes plans for an extensive, fortified underground military command center beneath the building.

Judge Leon of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ruled in favor of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, ordering a halt to construction of the above-grade East Wing addition until the project receives congressional authorization.

The DC Circuit Appeals Court heard arguments from both the National Trust and DOJ on June 5th and a decision is expected later this month.



Rendering of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building with a painted exterior.

Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB)

The current administration has proposed a major "Exterior Beautification Project" to paint the historic gray granite exterior of the EEOB, which is designed in the French Second Empire style, solid white. Preservationists have strongly opposed this \$7.5 million plan, arguing that painting the granite would cause irreversible changes to both the historical significance and structural integrity of one of Washington, DC's most distinctive landmarks. A total of 900 letters were submitted to the Commission on Fine Arts, with 100% opposing the painting. Additionally, nearly 2,000 letters were sent to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), with all but two opposing the plan.

The lawsuit filed by Cultural Heritage Partners and the DC Preservation League is still pending and challenges the General Services Administration's authority to delegate its oversight of the management and maintenance of the EEOB to the Executive, thereby avoiding regulatory requirements.

[Read more about the lawsuit and the expert opposition to the proposal.](#)



Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, 1980.
Photo by Carol M. Highsmith, courtesy of Library of Congress.

The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Ongoing legal battles continue over the administration's controversial mandate to completely close the renowned performing arts venue for up to two years to facilitate major renovations and to change the branding of its facade.

Preservationists, architectural advocacy groups, and lawmakers—including Representative Joyce Beatty (D-OH)—have filed lawsuits seeking injunctions. They argue that the Kennedy Center Board has not obtained the necessary congressional authorization and has failed to comply with the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

After back-to-back federal court hearings, Judge Cooper ruled in the Beatty case that Donald J. Trump's name must be removed from the façade and the Kennedy Center can not close on July 5th.

The DCPL et al. case is still pending in the U.S. District Court and Judge Cooper has made clear that no construction activity outside of the maintenance work authorized by Congress in the "Big Beautiful Bill" may take place.

The plaintiffs and defendants will file their next joint status report on July 31st.

Seeking Volunteers and Potential Future Board Members

If you have a passion for Washington, DC's rich history and want to play an active role in shaping its future, the DC Preservation League (DCPL) invites you to make a meaningful impact by volunteering your talents. DCPL is currently seeking dedicated individuals to help champion local heritage by getting involved in **educational programming, graphic design, fundraising initiatives, and government affairs**. Whether you want to inspire the community through historic walking tours and lectures, help secure vital resources for preservation advocacy, or engage with local leadership to protect our city's landmarks, your unique skills are needed. Furthermore, for those looking to step into a deeper leadership role, DCPL is actively identifying civic-minded individuals interested in **future board service**. Join us today to protect, celebrate, and advocate for the diverse history embedded in the District's built environment—your voice and vision can help preserve DC for generations to come.

[Click here to send us an email about your interest!](#)

Upcoming Event

Public Meeting: Black Women's Suffrage Movement in Washington, DC (1848-1973)

Wednesday, June 24th | 7:00 - 8:30 pm
Online via Zoom



Ida B. Wells and the Alpha Suffrage Club marching in the Women's Suffrage Parade in Washington, DC on March 3, 1913.
Photo from the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 5, 1913.

In 2020, the DC Preservation League partnered with the DC State Historic Preservation Office to implement grant funding from the National Park Service to produce a context study on Women’s Suffrage in Washington, DC.

Adding on to that project, in 2022, DCPL received a competitive grant from the National Park Service to underwrite development of a Historic Context Statement on the Black Women’s Suffrage Movement in Washington, DC.

This June, join researchers Dr. Portia Hopkins and Dr. Synatra Smith to learn more about their findings for the Black Women's Suffrage Movement in Washington, DC (1848-1973) Historic Context Study.

This event is free and open to the public. Your feedback and questions are welcome and encouraged at this presentation!

[Register Here](#)

Upcoming Event

Walking Tour: Founding Fathers Madison and Monroe

Friday, June 26th | 10:00 - 11:00 am
In Person, Foggy Bottom



Arts Club of Washington (2017 | Street NW); Image courtesy of Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress.

Join DCPL for this exciting tour offered in partnership with [Washington Walks!](#)

Discover an overlooked aspect of DC’s Foggy Bottom neighborhood: a collection of Federal era mansions hiding in plain sight that were homes to men such as Founding Fathers James Madison and James Monroe.

In the early 1800s wealthy, influential politicians and officials built substantial residences in Foggy Bottom, lending an elite presence to the area located immediately west of the White House. The walking tour will include stops at:

- **The Octagon (1799)**, one of the oldest, most historically important homes in Washington, and a former residence of President Madison.
- **Ringgold-Carroll House**, built in 1825, and known today as the DACOR-Bacon House, an organization for foreign affairs professionals.
- **Maxwell Woodhull House**, built in 1854 and current home of the Textile Museum.
- **An exclusive Interior tour of the James Monroe House, and more!**

The walk will conclude at the Arts Club of Washington, built in 1802, and from 1811 to 1817 home to future U.S. president James Monroe. Participants will receive an interior tour of the mansion and hear about how this important historic building transitioned from being a family residence to housing the oldest nonprofit arts organization in the nation’s capital.

Tickets for this event are \$35 per person. Refunds for cancellations will only be considered 7 or more days in advance. Administrative fees may apply.

Register Here

Upcoming Event

Walking Tour: LGBTQIA+ History in Washington, DC

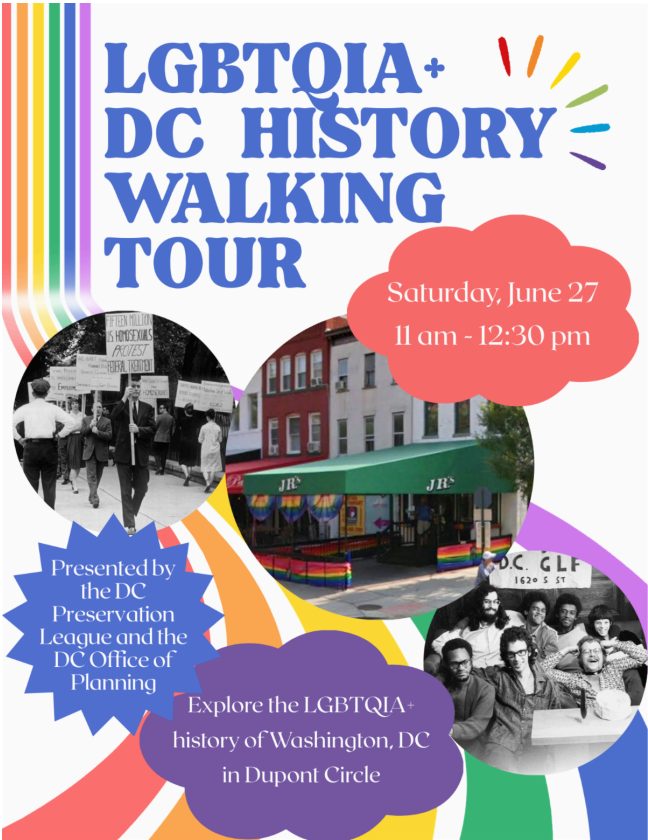
Saturday, June 27th | 11:00 am - 12:30 pm
In Person, Dupont Circle

This tour, presented by the DC Preservation League and the [DC Office of Planning](#), will visit several LGBTQ+ historic sites in the Dupont Circle neighborhood -- long seen as the historic center of DC's queer community.

This history is local, but by nature of being in the nation’s capital, ties into larger stories of the queer community and the American experience.

Join us to celebrate pride and learn more about the resilience, tenacity, diversity, and joy of the queer community in Washington, DC.

Tickets for this event are \$15 per person. Refunds for cancellations will only be considered 7 or more days in advance. Administrative fees may apply.



Register Here

Recent DCPL Webinars Now Available on YouTube

Was there a recent DCPL webinar that you were not able to attend? No worries! The following webinars are now available to watch on YouTube — whenever, wherever:

- **Brookland Public Education Project**

At this virtual public meeting, [Heather McMahon](#), the project consultant, presents her initial findings related to DCPL’s Brookland Public Education Project. Once completed, this project will provide important documentation of Brookland’s historic commercial corridor along 12th Street NE. Following the presentation, Heather and community members Ra Amin and Bob Malesky answer questions and respond to comments from the audience.

Watch Public Meeting

- **Housing Black Washington Multiple Property Document**

At this public meeting, architectural historian [Heather McMahon](#) gives a presentation about the Housing Black Washington Multiple Property Document. This project, managed

by the DC Preservation League and DC Historic Preservation Office, is funded by an Underrepresented Communities Grant from the National Park Service.

Watch Public Meeting

- **Yes, In Your Backyard: How ADUs Are Compatible in Historic Districts**

This webinar, hosted by the [Cleveland Park Historical Society](#) and DC Preservation League, explores how Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), including basement apartments, backyard cottages, and garage conversions, can be thoughtfully integrated into historic districts. This program focuses on the idea that preservation and change can work together to support a more inclusive and sustainable city.

Architect [Ileana Schinder](#) defines what qualifies as an ADU and explains the different types homeowners might consider. [Todd Jones of the Historic Preservation Office at the DC Office of Planning](#) provides an overview of the common ways that ADUs appear in historic districts, how preservation guidelines apply, and how HPO evaluates proposals to ensure compatibility with existing historic resources.

Watch Webinar

Celebrating Pride Month



As the seat of federal power, it is no surprise that Washington, DC, has been a major focal point in the fight for LGBTQ rights and resistance. From protests to lift the ban on gay and lesbian federal workers to those legalizing same-sex marriage, DC has a strong history of activism and community.

To learn more about this history and celebrate Pride Month, click below for a digital LGBTQ history tour that you can take from home. This tour is a collection of sites located in the District that have been historically significant to the city’s LBGTQ community. Not every site is a designated landmark, yet each location is historically significant. For additional information on DC's LGBTQ historic sites, check out the historic context statement completed in 2019, and "LGBTQ+ History is DC History," a 2024 webinar presented by Dr. Megan Springate.

DC's LGBTQ History Tour

LGBTQ Historic Context Statement

LGBTQ+ History is DC History Webinar

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