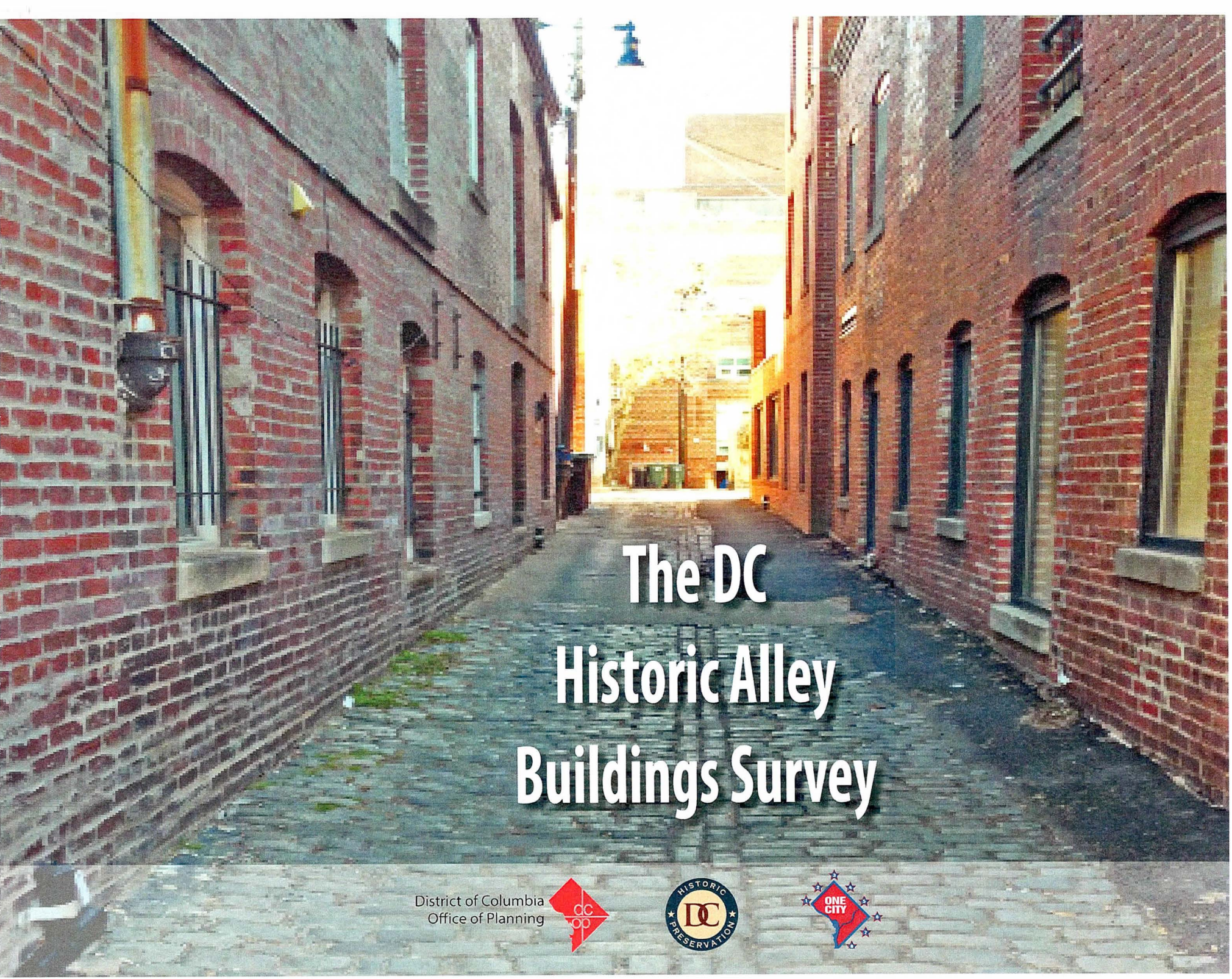


The DC Historic Alley Buildings Survey

District of Columbia
Office of Planning

The DC Historic Alley Buildings Survey
Research and Text by Kim Prothro Williams, Architectural Historian/National Register Coordinator, DC Historic Preservation Office
Design by Kim Elliott, Architect, DC Historic Preservation Office

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Introduction

Project Overview

The D.C. Historic Alley Buildings Survey is an extensive and on-going survey of the city's historic alley buildings that began in the Spring of 2011. The survey is being conducted by the D.C. Historic Preservation Office (HPO) with the assistance of volunteers and student interns. The boundaries of the survey were defined to include all of the alleys within the city's designated historic districts, located within and just beyond the original L'Enfant Plan (the "Old City"). Phase 1 of the survey comprises all of those alleys located in the city's northwest quadrant historic districts, including Georgetown, while Phase 2 of the survey consists of the Capitol Hill Historic District. Subsequent phases will expand the survey work to other historic districts outside of the original city limits and to areas not designated as historic districts known to have notable collections of alley buildings. Although the survey project is still on-going, Phase 1 and 2 have been substantially completed and its findings have been compiled in this report.

The Alley Buildings Survey is a basic-level survey designed to identify extant alley buildings determined to be 50 years or older. The goal of the project has been to provide an inventory of these alley buildings, record basic information about them, research and develop an historic context for better understanding and evaluating alley buildings, and to make recommendations for future preservation action.

Using methodology developed by the Historic Preservation Office, a team of volunteers and student interns collected on-site and archival information, photographed the surveyed alley buildings and entered the historical and architectural information about the buildings into the city's historic buildings survey database (DCHPS) for recordation and analysis.



Alley Building Streetscape at the rear of 600 block A Street, NE, Capitol Hill Historic District

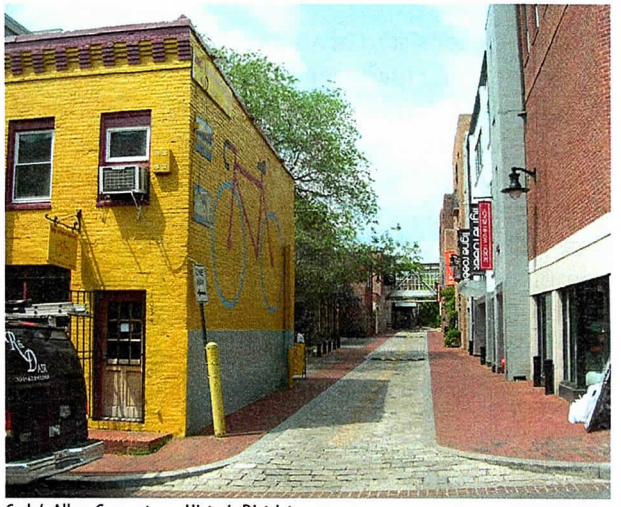
The following report is a record of the survey efforts to date. It describes the purpose of the survey, details its methodology, provides historical background information for understanding the evolution of the city's alleyways and alley buildings, and relates and analyzes the findings from the survey. Based upon these findings, this report also proposes recommendations and strategies to guide the Historic Preservation Office and the Office of Planning in the preservation of and urban planning for the city's historic alleyways and its buildings.

Statement of Need

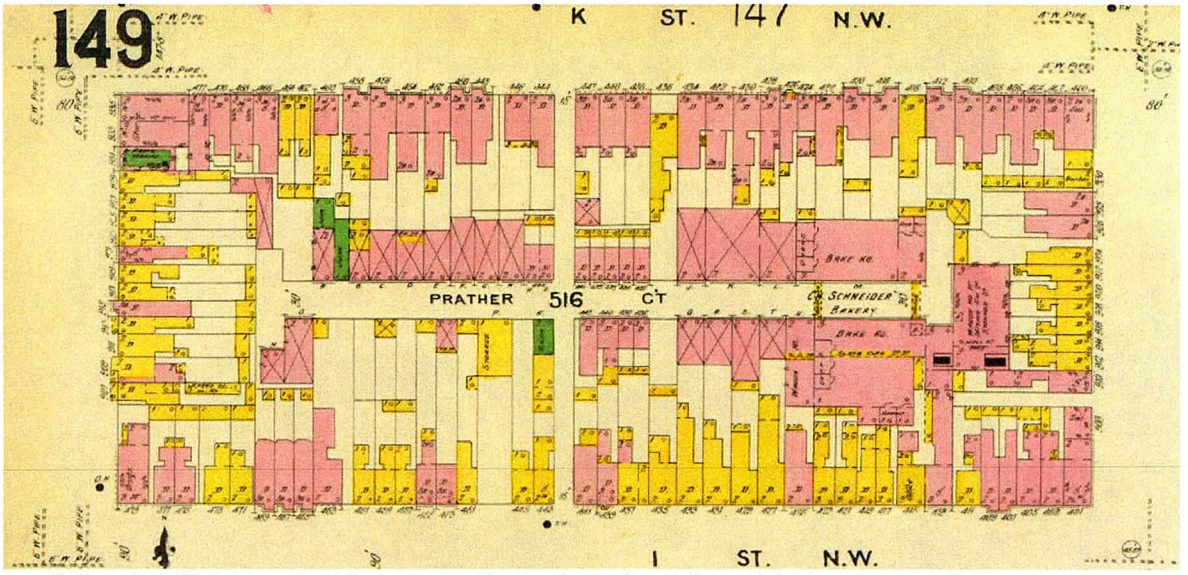
Although alleyways were not included within the original L'Enfant Plan for the City of Washington, they were introduced into the urban plan in the initial years of the city's development, ultimately becoming an integral part of its cultural landscape. Due to changing social and economic trends that have reduced the functional necessity of alley buildings, they have become increasingly rare, and those that do survive are often in poor repair and considered anachronistic. However, recent studies and developments in D.C. and other cities show that "activated" historic alleys can provide distinctive urban spaces that contribute to a vibrant social realm. We hope that this study is a step towards the re-discovery and re-invention of the city's alleys and its alley buildings.

Generally, the city's alleys and alley buildings have not been the subject of any comprehensive study or documentation effort. Two of the city's significant and adjacent historic alleys—Blagden Alley and Naylor Court—are exceptional in this respect in that they have been officially recognized for their intact alley networks and their cohesive collections of historic buildings. For architectural and cultural reasons, these alleys have been designated as the Blagden Alley/Naylor Court Historic District. The historic district is today celebrated as an important cultural landscape and is experiencing physical rehabilitation and social rejuvenation. Similarly, Cady's Alley in the Georgetown Historic District has been recently renovated, and its formerly under-utilized collection of 19th century stables, warehouses and alley dwellings have been converted into an exclusive shopping district filled with high-end designer show rooms, office spaces, and a restaurant.

This Historic Alley Buildings Survey project is the first attempt to comprehensively and systematically document the alley buildings within the alleyways of the city's designated historic districts. As a rule, at the time that these neighborhoods were designated as historic districts, only the buildings facing the city's principal streets had been closely examined. The buildings in the center of the squares were generally ignored, leaving an incomplete understanding of the architectural history of these historic districts. A survey of the city's alley buildings was needed to enhance this partial understanding and to provide guidance in the rejuvenation of the alleyways and their historic buildings.



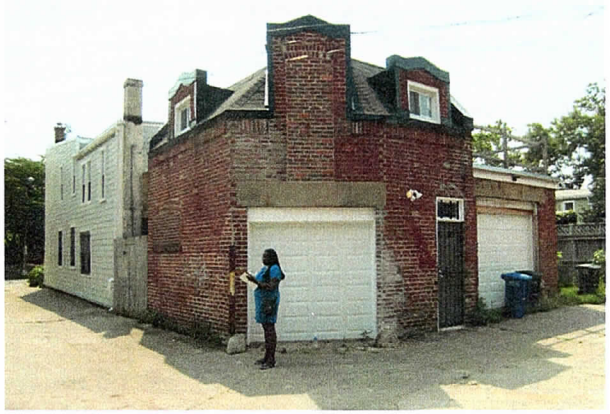
Cady's Alley, Georgetown Historic District



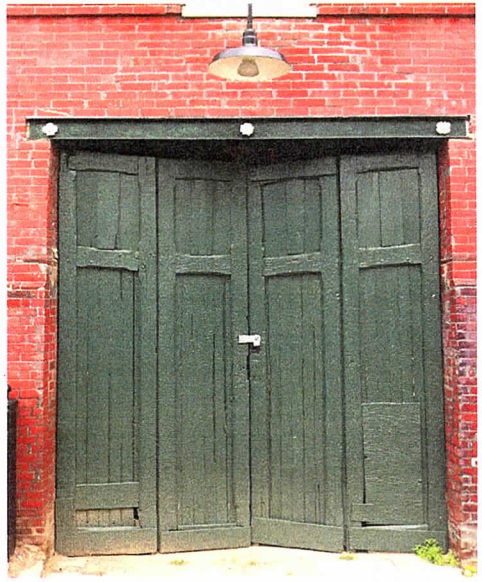
Map of Prather's Alley in the Mount Vernon Triangle Historic District showing a dense and varied alleyway of alley dwellings, stables, bakery complex, blacksmith shop, and warehouse. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1904*

Survey Methodology

The Survey consisted of an on-site and archival study under the management of the Historic Preservation Office. With current-day maps in hand, survey volunteers walked the identified alleys and updated the maps, identifying extant and demolished alley buildings. For those extant ones determined to be fifty years or older, volunteers completed a basic-level survey form and took photographs of the buildings. The on-site survey collected such information as address, building type, building materials, building height, character-defining features, and notable alterations.



Volunteer Surveyor in Dupont Circle Historic District



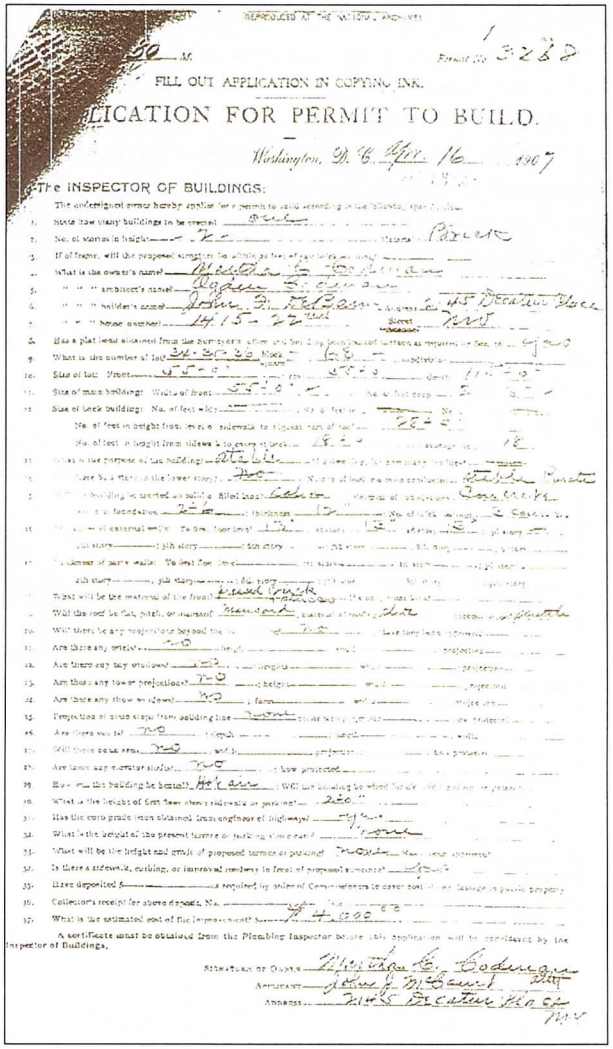
Detail of carriage door, 946 (Rear) T Street, U Street Historic District



Recently renovated alley buildings in Blagden Alley



Detail of stall window on stable in Green Court



FILL OUT APPLICATION IN COPYING INK.

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT TO BUILD.

Washington, D. C. April 16 1907

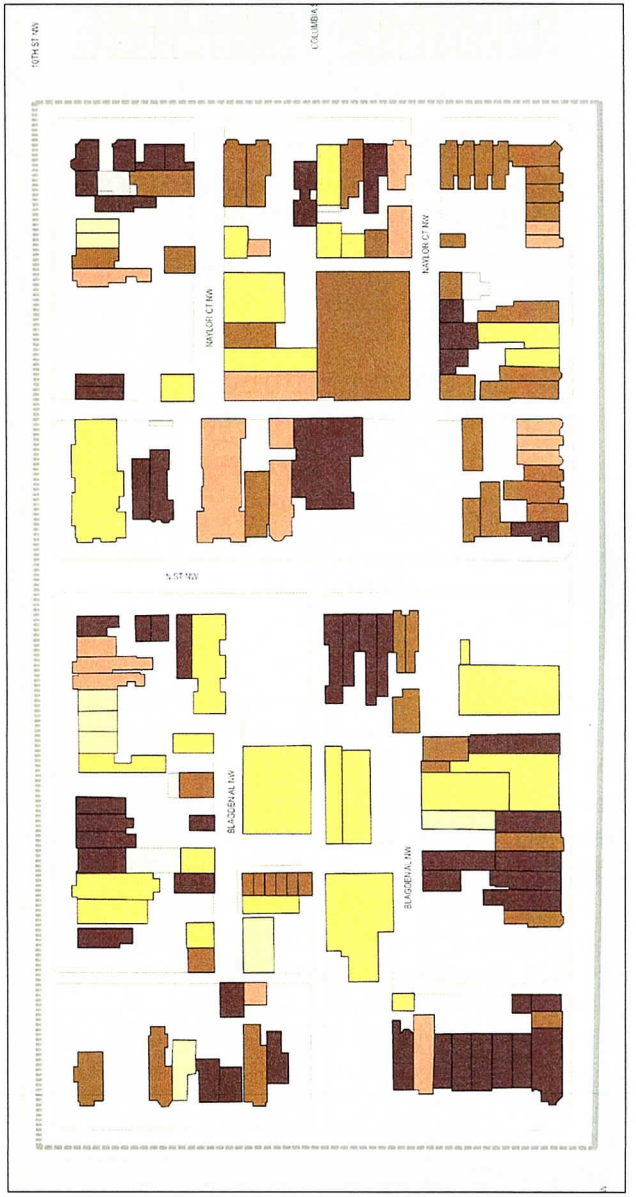
The INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS:

Building permit from 1907 for private stable (Codman Carriage House), 1415 (Rear) 22nd Street, NW

An archival study of maps and permits supplemented the on-site information and provided a date of construction (or date range) for the surveyed building, its original building type/use, and the name of the architect, owner, and builder, if identified. This archival and on-site information was then entered into the D.C. Historic Preservation Software system (DCHPS) for later retrieval and analysis. In addition, photographs of all of the surveyed alley buildings were uploaded into the database. Simultaneous to the building-specific survey and research, a literature search was conducted to compile information on the history of alleys and alley buildings in D.C. This research was conducted to provide an understanding of the history and evolution of the city's alleys and alley buildings. A written overview of this historical context is provided in this document.

This established survey methodology resulted in the successful development of an inventory to date of 1,249 alley buildings. The collection of data has provided the Historic Preservation Office with an important framework by which to evaluate the significance of the surviving alley buildings both independently and as a collection, and to begin to develop a plan for the preservation and "reactivation" of the alleys and their buildings.

Although only basic-level survey data was collected during this phase, the survey provides a comprehensive inventory of historic alley buildings in the selected historic districts. Subsequent phases of the survey will be expanded to include historic districts outside of the original city, and areas not currently designated as historic districts.



Map of Blagden Alley/Naylor Court Historic District showing buildings by date of construction

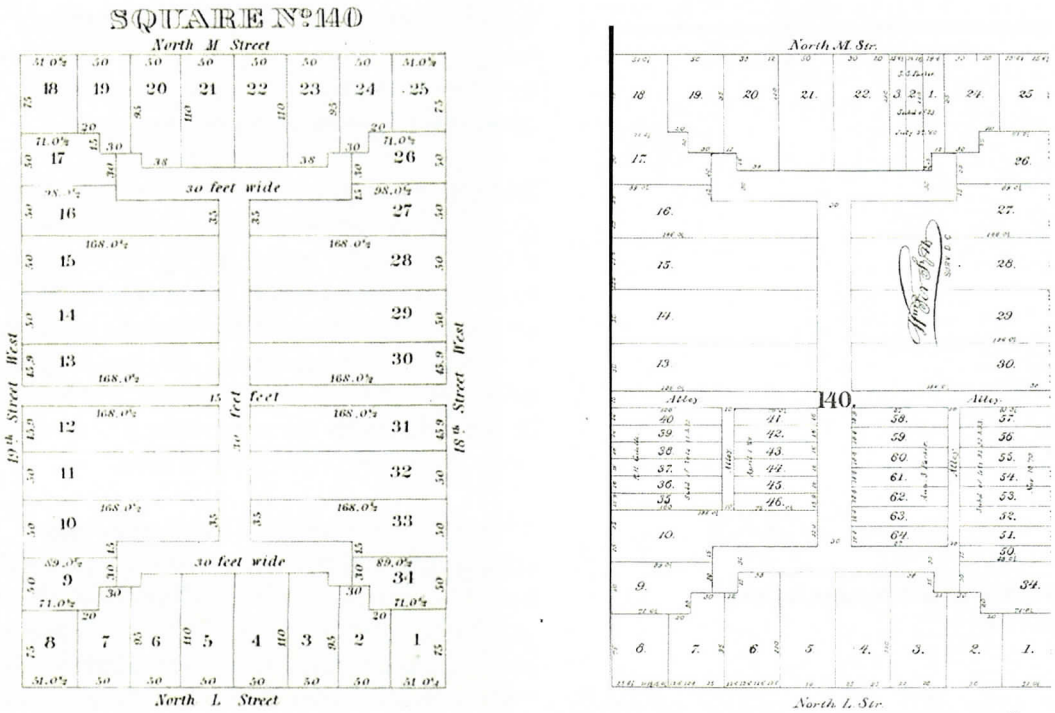
Historic Context

History of Alleys in Washington, D.C.

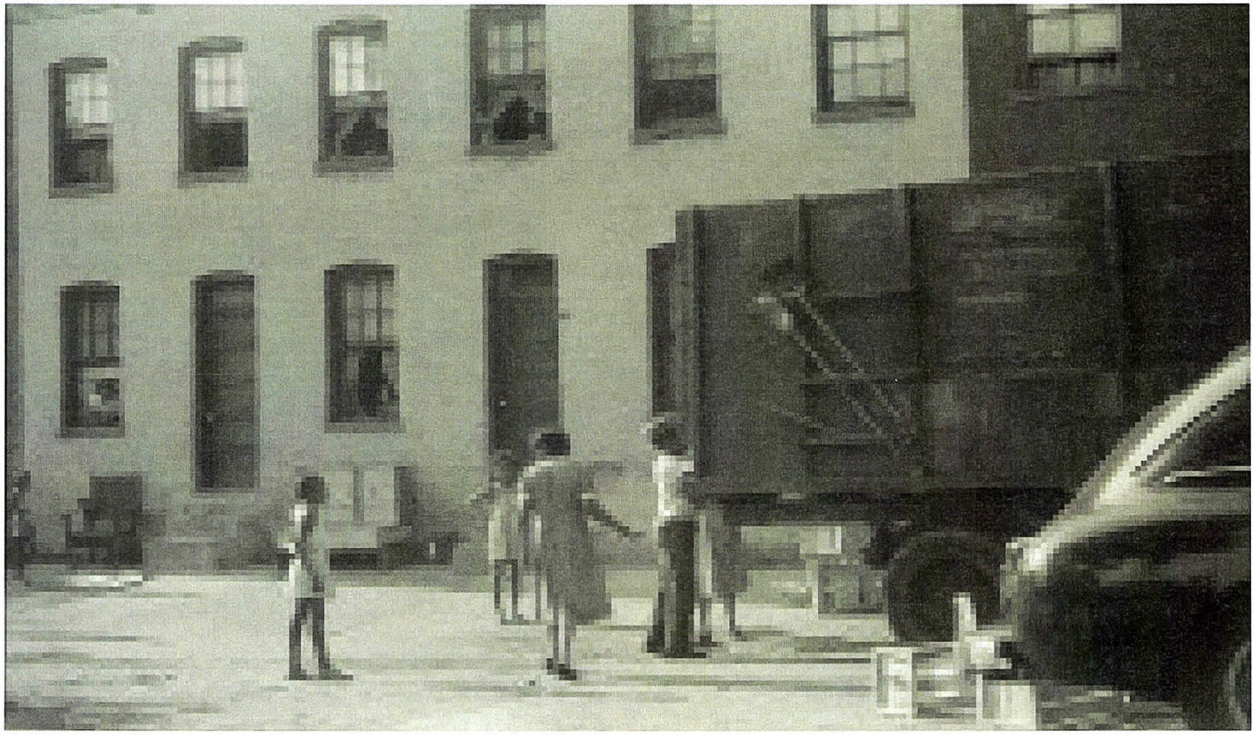
> "Any court, thoroughfare, or passage, private or public, thirty feet or more in width, that does not open directly with a width of at least thirty feet upon a public street that is at least forty feet wide from building line to building line…"
>
> Definition of an alley according to the Alley Dwelling Act of 1934

Alleyways were introduced into the L'Enfant Plan during the initial years of the city's establishment. The "Original Survey of Squares" dated 1793-1796, delineates the original city squares, subdivided generally with wide and deep lots that were bisected in the center by public alleys. [1] The alleys varied in configuration, but most often had I-shaped or H-shaped forms that stretched 30-feet wide at the center of the square and were accessed from the public streets by narrower 15-foot alleys. [2] Alleys were planned to provide access to the rear of the large lots which would likely have had kitchens, stables, carts, wagons, and animals, along with other dependency buildings, equipment and storage areas.

As the "walking city" began to fill with houses, many of the large and deep lots became subdivided, cutting off the rear of the lots from the public street and creating lots that had frontages solely on the alleyways. This phenomenon occurred as the city's population was increasing and land values were rising, making alley-facing lots appealing both to property owners who could realize income from lot rentals, and to the city's poorest residents who could not afford the rents of the row houses lining the public streets. As more and more interior lots were sold or rented and modest houses built upon them, there came to be an extensive social system within the interior of the blocks that was wholly independent from the properties fronting on the surrounding streets. [3] Essentially invisible from the public streets, these alleys were later dubbed "blind alleys." According to alley historian James Borchert and earlier research, the number of alley dwellings in the city before the Civil War was limited, but grew substantially in the decades following it. Prior to the Civil War, only 348 heads of household were reported in 49 alleys. These alley dwellings were rented primarily to the laboring classes and were 65% white-occupied. [4]



These plat maps from 1852 (left) and 1874 (right) of Square 140 show the typical evolution of the interior of city squares where large lots that originally extended from the public streets to rear alleys were divided to create rear lots with frontages solely on the alleys. As shown here, lots 11-12 and 31-33 in the 1852 plat were subdivided by 1874 for the accommodation of alley dwellings. *Atlas of Plat Squares, Washington, D.C., 1852 and Faehtz and Pratt Real Estate Directory of the City of Washington, 1874*



Photograph of children unloading truck in alley in Washington, D.C., Edwin Rosskam photographer, 1941 *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Collection*



This view shows a collection of wood frame dwellings in a D.C. alley. Although the city's first alley dwellings were of frame, rather than brick construction, there are no frame alley buildings left in the city. *Shorpy.com*



During an alley dwelling building boom in the 1880s, brick replaced frame as the principal building material. *Shorpy.com*

Following the Civil War, a large influx of African Americans into the city greatly increased the number of inhabited alleys and reversed the racial make-up of alley dwellers from white to black. Generally, the alley dwellings were built by white property owners who realized a considerable rate of return on their investment by building and then renting out cheaply constructed alley houses. By 1871, the great majority of the city's alley dwellers remained unskilled workers and 81 percent of them were African American. [5]

The first alley dwellings were of frame construction with no indoor plumbing or heat. Shared water pumps, outhouses and lack of a sewerage system contributed to unhealthful and insanitary conditions which attracted the attention of housing and social reformers. In 1871, the city's first Board of Health was established with the primary mission being to condemn alley dwellings that were deemed unfit for human habitation. The Board reported that many alleys were "lined on both sides with miserable dilapidated shanties, patched and filthy." As a result of its findings, the Board condemned and demolished over 300 alley dwellings and recommended hundreds more for rehabilitation. [6]

Within its first ten years of existence, the Board of Health was abolished, and condemnation proceedings of alley dwellings were halted. [7] With no more legal restrictions preventing their construction, the development of alley dwellings boomed. As rental rates went unchecked, so did population rates as more people shared alley dwellings and the rent.

During the 1880s alley building boom, brick replaced frame as the principal alley dwelling building material. Despite the brick construction, the houses still lacked basic amenities, including plumbing and running water. Overcrowding continued as extended families shared the small houses and even rented out space to borders to help cover the rent. The insanitary conditions and the perceived moral decay of alley inhabitants again attracted the attention of housing and social reformers who mounted campaigns to improve the living conditions for the alley dwellers. Again, Congress took action and in 1892, it passed a law that prohibited the erection of dwellings in alleys less than 30 feet wide and not supplied with sewerage, water mains and light. Though no new construction was permitted in the alleys by virtue of this law, the ban did not abolish alley housing that already existed.

An 1896 house-by-house investigation of 35 alleys by the Committee on Housing of the Civic Center compelled the Committee to conclude that the city's alleys were unsanitary, overcrowded, and harbored disease and immoral behavior. The physical conditions of the alley dwellings appalled the investigators. Houses were described as "being without cellar or attic"; "floors rested upon the earth and were not built to withstand the cold or rain"; "drainage and precautions for cleanliness were lacking; and a stench from decomposing rats and cats and horse manure often permeated the alleyways and alley dwellings." [8]











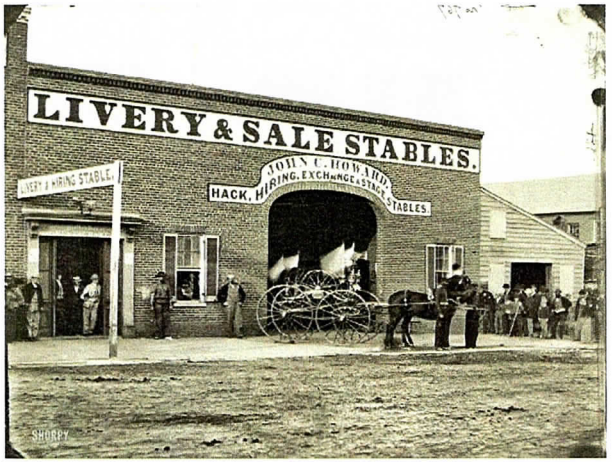
An inventory of the city's alleys in 1912 determined that there were 3,337 alley dwellings in the city's 275 alleys identified as "inhabited." According to the present survey, 108 alley dwellings remain. Notable collections of alley dwellings survive on Capitol Hill, in Georgetown and in Foggy Bottom. Three of these—F Street Terrace and Gessford Court on Capitol Hill and Pomander Walk (Bell's Court) in Georgetown retain all of the original alley dwellings identified in the 1912 inventory. Whether built as part of a row, as a pair, or independently, the alley dwelling is, typologically, a vernacular building that follows the same standard building form. It is invariably a two-story, two-bay-wide building set upon a low foundation, and covered with a flat roof.

In 1904, reformers brought the noted humanitarian Jacob Riis to Washington to visit alleys and report his findings to Congress. This report and the publicity attending it won over President Theodore Roosevelt who, in a 1904 Congressional address concluded that the

> "hidden residential alleys are breeding grounds of vice and disease and should be opened into minor streets."
>
> As quoted in Blagden Alley/Naylor Court NR nomination, p. 8-16.

Following this address, the Board for the Condemnation of Insanitary Buildings was created in 1906 with the stated goal being to condemn alley buildings, and to convert the city's alleys into minor streets or parks, thereby eliminating the "blind" alleys at the interior of the squares. While this latter goal proved challenging due to physical and legal constraints of the city's alleys, the eradication of the dwelling units themselves continued by the city, social reformers, and non-profit organizations in an episodic manner over the course of several decades.

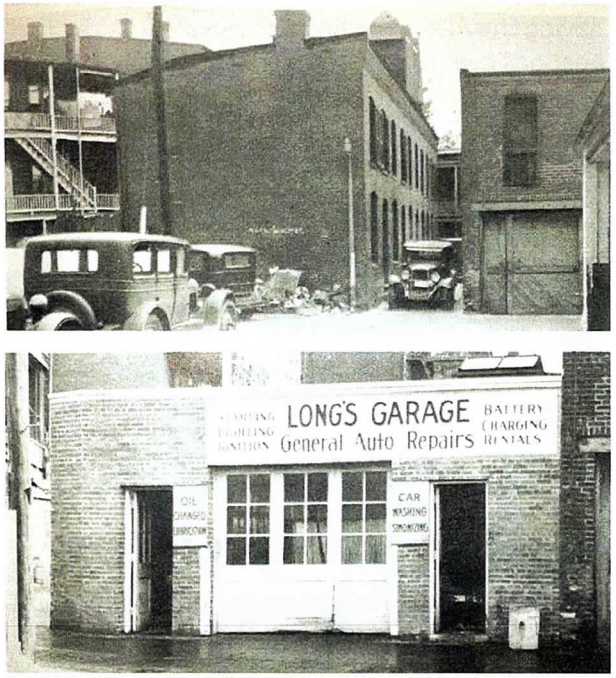
Other socio-economic forces also contributed to the demise of alley dwellings. The introduction and expansion of the city's streetcar system in the late 19th century, for instance, allowed for population dispersal beyond the "walking city" thereby reducing the pressure to build housing in the



Stables, and later garages, began to replace alley dwellings as the principal alley building type during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. *Shorpy.com*

alleyways. Similarly, the need for horse stabling facilities (and later garages) further encroached upon residential life in the alleyways. As Washington grew into a densely developed city, stabling facilities became indispensable for housing the growing population of horses and carriages. The largest and most prominent of these livery stables typically fronted public streets, but others could be found within the city's alley network next to, and/or replacing alley dwellings. In addition to large livery stables, alleys offered prime real estate for private stables out of sight from the public streets, yet convenient to local residents.

The final blow to alley dwellings came in 1934 when Congress established the Alley Dwelling Authority (ADA) to eliminate all alley dwellings and to encourage economic redevelopment of the squares. According to the law, no alley houses were to be inhabited after July 1, 1944. To this end, the ADA was authorized to purchase, or acquire by condemnation, any land, buildings, or structures situated in or adjacent to inhabited alleys in D.C., for the replatting and improvement of the square. Annual reports by the ADA documented the progress of the its efforts. For instance, in 1936, a list of the year's accomplishments included: the clearing of alley dwellings and "dilapidated street houses" in St. Mary's Court pending redevelopment; the construction of 11 single-family rowhouses in Hopkins Place; the construction of an apartment building in Bland's Court; construction of three garages in three different alleys; the sale of alley acquisitions to private owners for redevelopment; and construction of an automobile repair shop in Ruppert's Court.



In 1936, the Alley Dwelling Authority published a report highlighting its annual progress, showing among other projects, this one in Ruppert's Court that involved the replacement of a row of alley dwellings (top photo) with a garage (bottom photo). *Report of the Alley Dwelling Authority, 1936, Historical Society of Washington*

The Authority made considerable progress in re-developing the city's alleys in the 1930s, but the advent of World War II, and the resulting housing shortage postponed full enforcement of the abolition of alley dwellings. In 1944, an official 10-year postponement of the enforcement went into effect. In 1953, all alley dwellers were told they had two years to move to street-frontage buildings. By then, however, many of the city's alley dwellings, namely those in Georgetown, Capitol Hill and Foggy Bottom, had been renovated by wealthy white residents who rose up in protest. Aided by citizens groups and preservationists, these owners banded together and ultimately succeeded in having the Alley Dwelling Act repealed. In public hearings over the issue, residents argued that they had essentially fulfilled the basic purpose of the law by cleaning up the dangerous eyesores. And, in so doing, the new alley residents of Georgetown argued, they had also brought back some of Georgetown's old Colonial atmosphere. [9]

During the 1950s, the local press reported on many of the renovated alleys, with Schott's Alley on Capitol Hill and Snow's Court in Foggy Bottom garnering significant attention. Schott's Alley, renamed Schott's Court at the time of its renovation, was according to local press, "transformed from a rat-infested, overcrowded and rowdy alley to an L-shaped row of luxury type apartments."

While the social reform movement of the 19th and 20th centuries sought to eliminate the unhealthy and dangerous conditions in the city's alleys to improve the quality of life for alley dwellers, several studies and research by later historians, such as James Borchert, argued conversely that the efforts more often destroyed communities and upset tight-knit social relationships. In addition, while the crowded and unsanitary conditions in the alleys reported on by social reformers were undeniable, those reports on the dangers and evils of the alleys were likely over-exaggerated and misunderstood. In 1970, Borchert reported that there remained at least 20 inhabited alleys in the city of Washington, a substantial decrease from the numbers of alleys in the 19th century. Today, 108 alley dwellings survive in the city's alleys, though not all of them are occupied. On the other hand, other alley buildings, such as stables, garages and former commercial buildings are being converted into residential use.



Owners shown at work renovating former Capitol Hill 'slum' dwellings. —Star Staff Photos.

Private Owners Reclaiming Neighborhood Once Known as Capitol Hill 'Slum'

Although many of the alley dwellings of Georgetown, Capitol Hill and Foggy Bottom were renovated and survive into the present, those in the city's downtown and neighborhood commercial areas did not fare as well. After World War II when the city experienced a major exodus to the suburbs, downtown D.C. lost much of its residential base. The alleyways as domestic service areas gave way to commercial and semi-industrial spaces with warehouses and shops replacing the earlier stables and garages. Along 14th Street, for instance, an entire industry of service garages associated with the automobile sales shops grew up in the minor streets and alleys behind "Automobile Row," contributing to the growing commercial character of the residential blocks.

At the same time and later, many of the city's alleys were closed entirely, not only eliminating the alley buildings, but the rights-of-way themselves. In most cases, developers sought the alley closings in order to amass a series of adjacent lots that were often separated by interior alleys, on which to build large, multi-storied office buildings, hotels and apartment buildings that stretched from the front streets to the center of their blocks. According to city law at that time, the City Council could close an alley if it was deemed "useless and unnecessary." Opponents of alley closings argued that alley closings encouraged greater density and altered the historic character of neighborhoods. Despite the large loss of alleyways and alley buildings in Downtown and the city's residential neighborhoods over the course of the city's history, many others survive as viable functional and cultural spaces in need of attention from preservationists, urban planners, and city politicians.

In its Zoning Regulations Review of 2013, the Office of Planning has begun to address at least one aspect of alley life by allowing Accessory Dwelling Units as a matter of right in the city's residential zones. This change would allow property owners to use existing alley buildings as Accessory Dwelling Units, or to build new ones, in accordance with city zoning and preservation laws and regulations. This proposed zoning change is a step towards revitalizing what was once a vibrant part of the city's urban landscape.



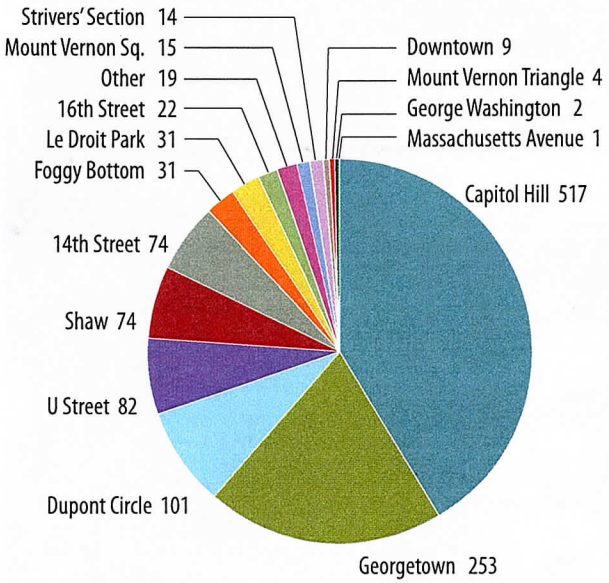
Union Row at 14th and V Streets

Survey Findings and Statistics

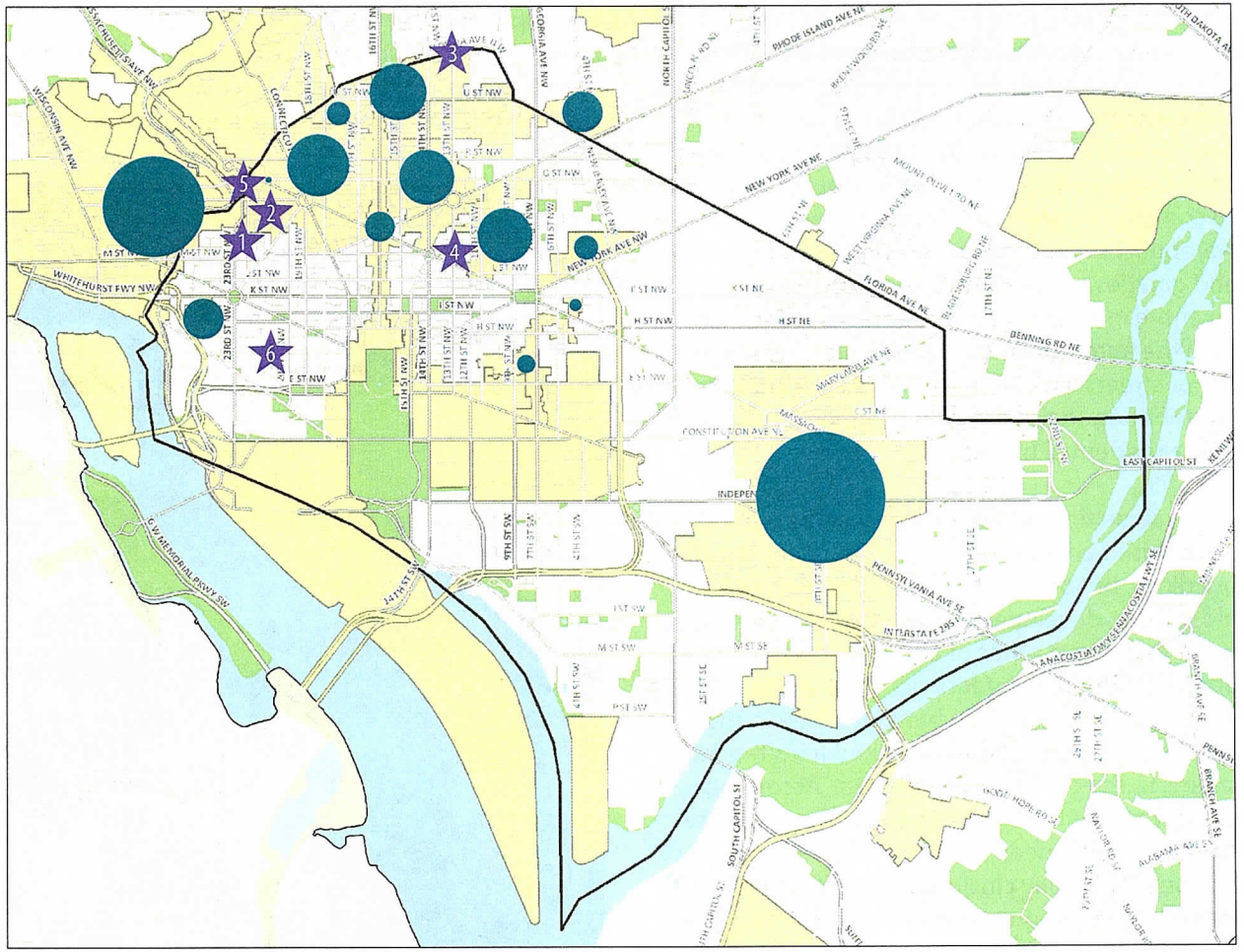
Alley Building Distribution

This first phase of the Historic Alley Buildings Survey resulted in the identification of 1249 alley buildings.

Number of Alley Buildings by Historic District



1249 alley buildings identified
(based on survey to date)



Alley Building Distribution by Historic District within the L'Enfant Plan

Proportional Number of Alley Buildings

Historic Landmark Alley Buildings

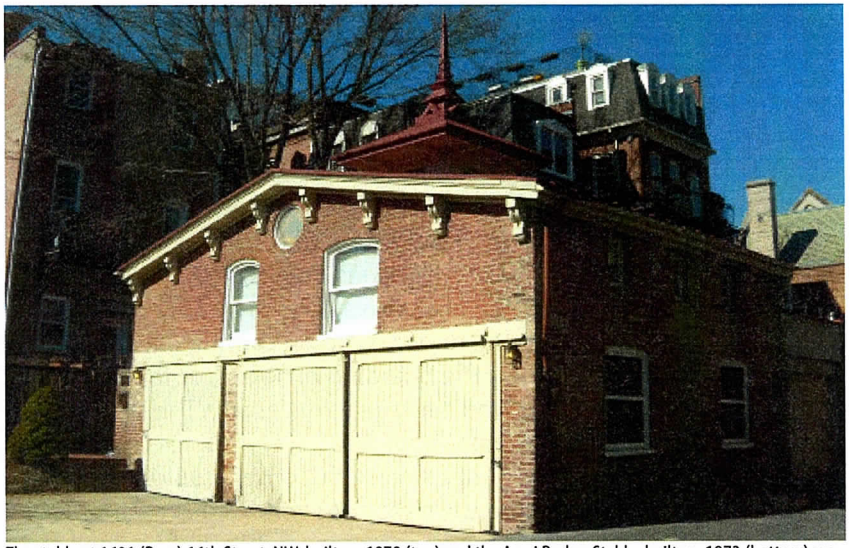
1 Codman Carrige House and Stable, 1415 22nd Street NW
2 Spencer Carriage House and Stable, 2123 Twining Court NW
3 Manhattan Laundry, 1326-1346 Florida Avenue NW
4 Proctor Alley Livery Stable, 1211-1219 (Rear) 13th Street NW
5 Walsh Stable, 1511 (Rear) 22nd Street NW
6 John J. Earley Office and Studio, 2131 (Rear) G Street NW

Alley Building Dates of Construction

The goal of the Historic Alley Buildings Survey was to identify extant alley buildings that were fifty years or older. The oldest alley buildings, constructed prior to 1878, are almost exclusively stables and many of them are located in the Blagden Alley/Naylor Court Historic District. Two of the oldest buildings, based upon tax book research, date from between 1863 and 1874 and are much-altered attached former stables at 1219 (Rear) 10th Street, NW and 1221 (Rear) 10th Street, NW. The most intact of the earliest alley buildings is the Amzi Barbour stable in LeDroit Park, built ca. 1873.

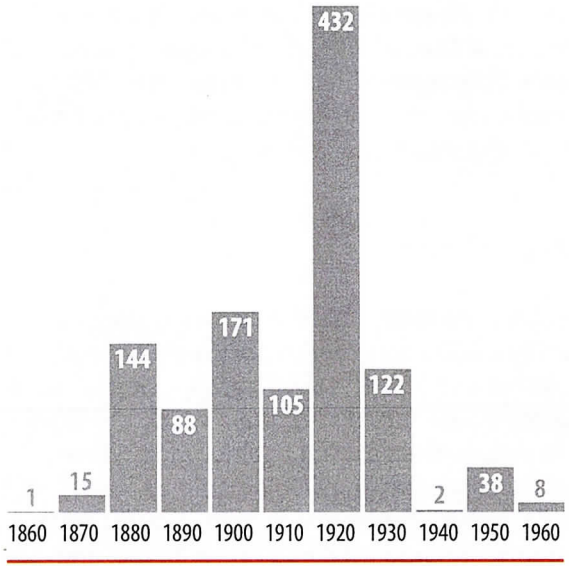
A review of the construction dates by decade reveals certain building trends. For instance, a high concentration of alley buildings during the 1880s represents the construction of both stables and alley dwellings before enactment in 1892 of a law that banned construction of new alley dwellings in the city.

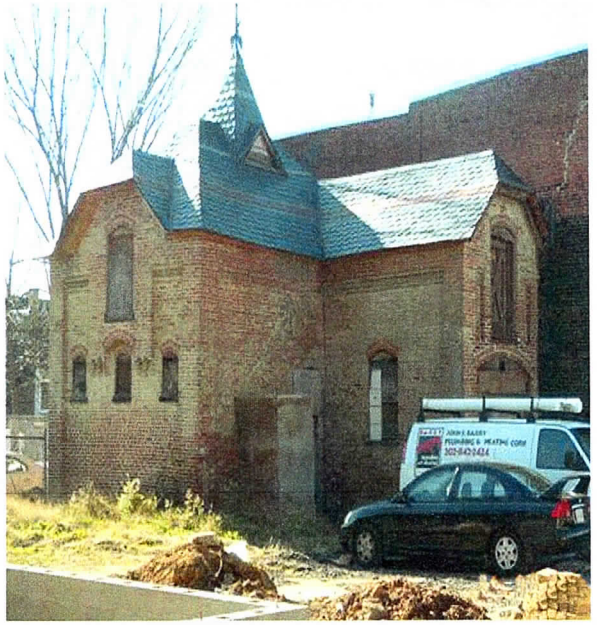
Although construction of alley dwellings was banned, stables continued to be built in the 1890s and the 1900s along with warehouses and workshops. By the 1910s, as the mode of transportation was transitioning from horse-drawn carriages to automobiles, the number of stables decreased as garages began to emerge. A large number of garages, both private and commercial continued to be built through the 1930s, but dropped off in the 1940s most likely as city dwellers left the city for the emerging suburbs.



The stable at 1601 (Rear) 16th Street, NW, built ca. 1878 (top) and the Amzi Barber Stable, built ca. 1873 (bottom) are two of the oldest surviving stables in the city.

Number of Alley Resources by Decade





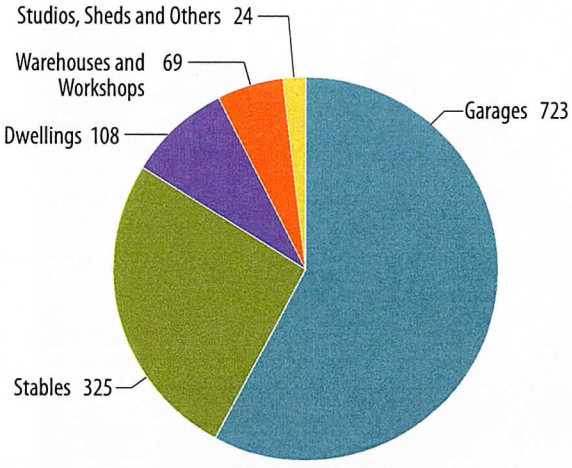
Amzi Barber Stable (1873), LeDroit Park Historic District

Alley Building Types

The Historic Alley Buildings Survey identified a variety of building types from residential to commercial to service-oriented buildings, including those from the horse-drawn and automobile eras. While more than 25 building types and sub-types were identified, the largest concentration of building types falls within the following categories: Stables; Garages; Dwellings; Warehouses and Workshops.

A discussion of the survey findings by these alley building sub-types follows in order of concentration.

Number of Alley Buildings by Typology



1249 alley buildings identified
(based on survey to date)

STABLES

Stables of all kinds—commercial and private—were an integral part of all 19th century cities. As Washington grew into a densely developed city in the post-Civil War era, stabling facilities became indispensable for housing the growing population of horses and carriages. For the most part, since horses were expensive both to buy and maintain, the general public relied on commercial livery stables for the boarding of horses, or the hiring out of horse and carriage as necessary. The largest and most prominent of these livery stables typically fronted public streets, but others could be found within the city's alley network. More common, however, were the private stables built by and for individual horse owners or speculative builders and located in the alleys behind primary residences.

For the purposes of this alley survey, the identified stables have been classified as Private Stable and Commercial Stable. The private stable is much more heavily represented with more than 300 examples identified. In contrast, only a handful of commercial stable buildings survive.

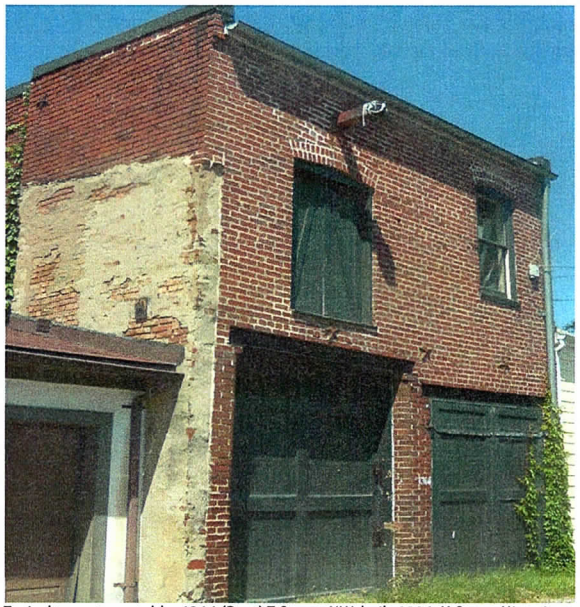
STABLES: PRIVATE

Definition: The term "stable" is generally used to describe a building in which horses are housed, harnessed and fed. The term "carriage house" more accurately describes a building in which carriages are stored, washed and maintained, and where coachmen, grooms and stablemen may reside. In urban settings, stables and carriage houses were commonly incorporated into one building, and are referred to interchangeably as either carriage house or stable. Ironically, especially in urban settings, stables did not necessarily provide stalls for horses, but may simply have been used for the storage of carriages, while the horses were boarded at commercial liveries. Because it is not always apparent whether a stable building included room for carriages, and/or stalls for horses, all of the identified stables and/or carriage houses in this survey are being referred to as stables. Those buildings commonly called carriage houses (generally associated with wealthy Washingtonians) are still being counted as stables for the purposes of this survey.



This angled stable building in Hillyer Court in the Dupont Circle Historic District, built in 1903, was designed to align with the irregular alleyway.

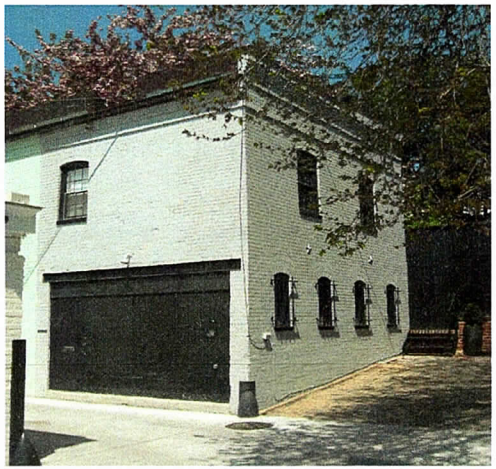
The city's private stables range from large and stylistically impressive buildings to more modest vernacular ones. Generally, the common stable structure tends to follow an established vernacular building form, while the larger stable building does not have standard massing or style. The common stable is typically a two-story, two- or three-bay brick structure with a wide carriage door and pedestrian door on the first floor and a hayloft opening and windows on the second story.



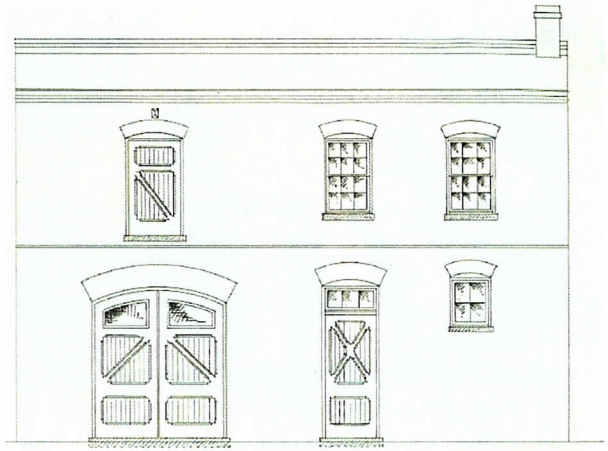
Typical two-story stable, 1314 (Rear) T Street, NW, built 1906, U Street Historic District

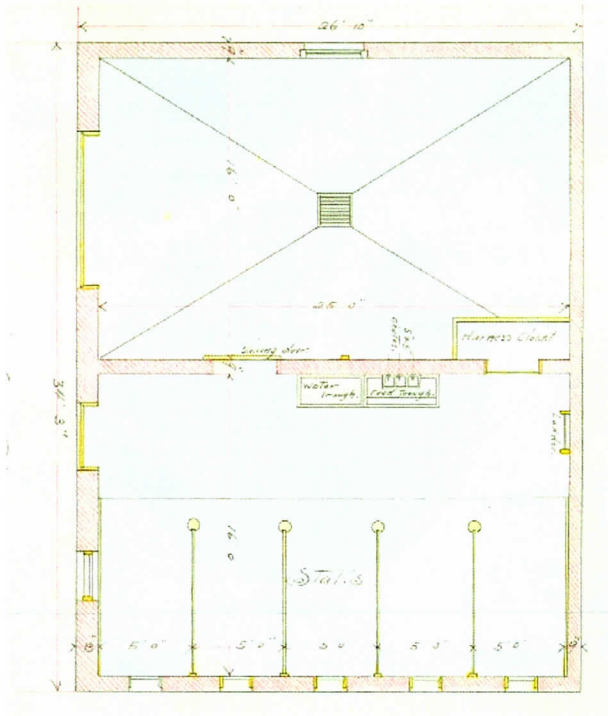
Wealthier Washingtonians often constructed more sizeable and stylishly designed structures that deviated from the standard two- or three-bay examples. Stall windows are most often located along the side wall of the stable, but can also be found on the front or rear, or not at all. Although stall windows were generally recommended in historic treatises on stable construction for the health of the horses, not all of the city's surveyed stables featured stall windows.

> "a horse's mind is kept keener when he is thus allowed to see passing objects than when tied against a blank wall; and his eyesight is certainly not strained as is that of a horse which is taken from a dark stall into the bright daylight."
>
> Jorrocks, The Private Stable: Its Establishment, Management, and Appointments. Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1899, p. 54.



Detail of horse stall windows on stable at 3310 (Rear) P Street, NW, Georgetown Historic District



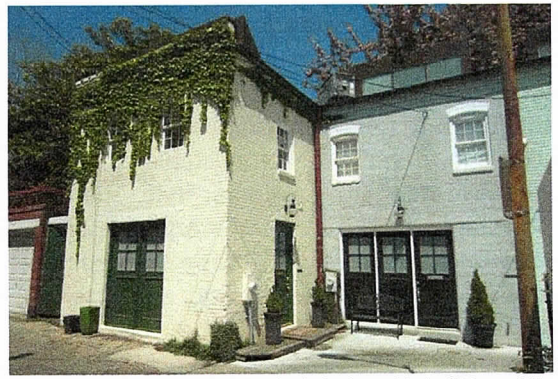


First floor plan and elevation of typical stable building.

Distribution:

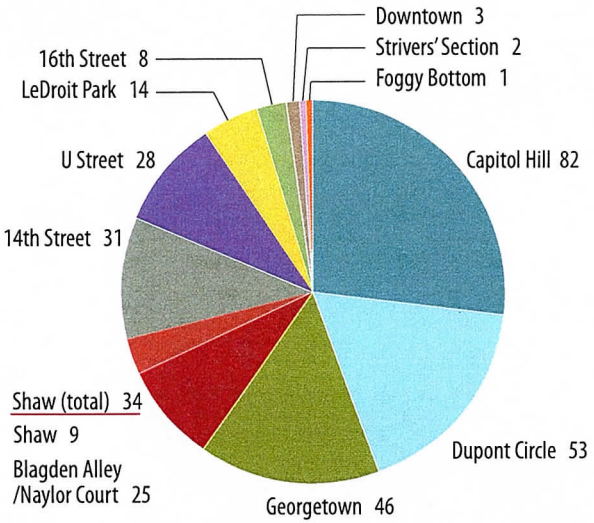
Blagden Alley-Naylor Court Historic District is remarkable for having the most intensive clustering of stable buildings within its alleys. Twenty-four stables are located within the Blagden Alley-Naylor Court Historic District, including attached and freestanding examples that provide the most complete illustration of the city's historic alley context. The Guy Carlton (1899) and John Limerick (1906) stables located across from each other in Naylor Court and both recently rehabilitated and converted into residential use, are particularly fine examples of the private stable building.

Still, other notable groupings of stables exist outside of Blagden Alley/Naylor Court. In particular, in Georgetown and on Capitol Hill there are several fine collections of stables lining the alleyways. Similarly, an array of six, two-story former stables still lines St. Matthew's Court in Dupont Circle; seven stables survive in Square 242 between 14th Street and Logan Circle in the 14th Street Historic District; and nine stables make up the alley between 4th and 5th Streets in LeDroit Park, just above Florida Avenue.



This attached group of stables in the alley behind 3300 block of P Street, NW in Georgetown was built together by the same owner-architect team in 1902.

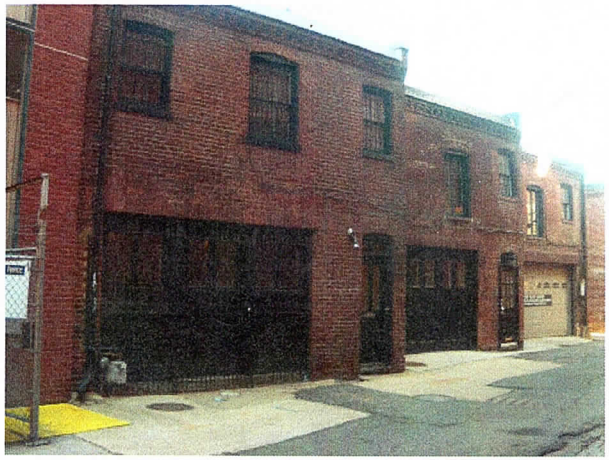
Number of Stables by Historic District



302 stables identified
(based on survey to date)



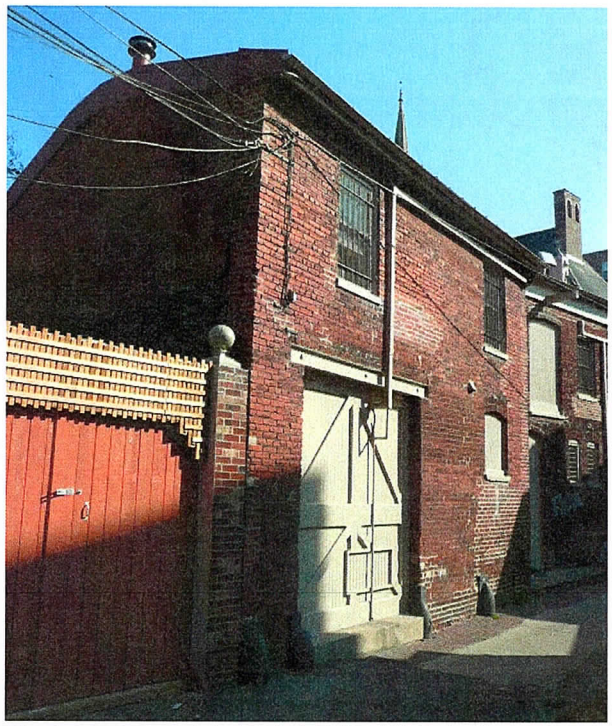
This stable at 1315 Naylor Court, built 1899, is one of 24 stables in the Blagden Alley/Naylor Court Historic District, notable for its sizeable collection of alley buildings.



These attached stables in St. Matthew's Court in the Dupont Circle Historic District are visually intriguing for their staggered effect lining the diagonal alley.



This former stable at 1835 (Rear) 5th Street, NW in the LeDroit Park Historic District, built 1907, was recently renovated for use as a private residence.



Alley view showing two attached stables behind the 1300 block of Vermont Avenue, NW in the 14th Street Historic District.

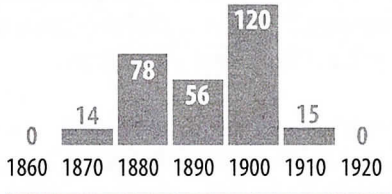


This Georgetown stable at 1680 (Rear) 31st Street, NW built in 1878, has one of the more ornate hay loft doors of the surviving city stable buildings.

Construction Dates:

The highest concentration of stables occurred in the period from 1880 to 1910. The earliest identified stables were built between 1869 and 1873 according to tax records and the most recently constructed stables were built between 1913 and 1919 according to map research. Interestingly, the largest number of extant stables were built in the first decade of the 20th century, at the cusp of the automobile era.

Number of Stables by Decade

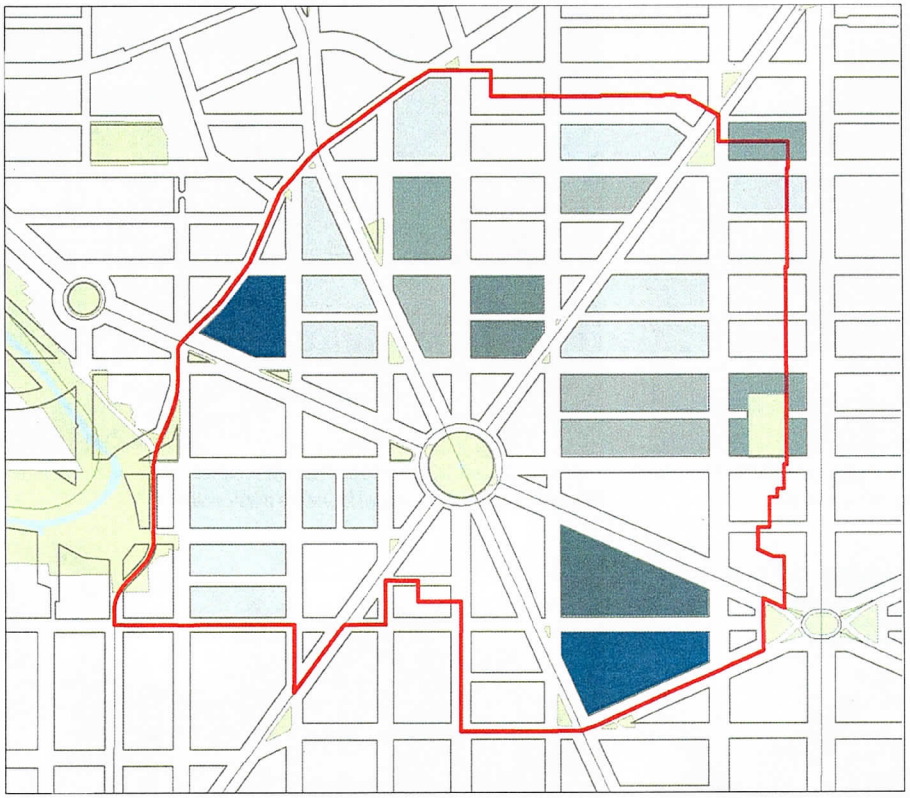


Several of the earliest identified stables (built prior to 1879), including the Amzi Barbour Carriage House in LeDroit Park, and the stables at 3042 (Rear) N Street, the Worthington Stable at 1680 (Rear) 31st Street, and the Charles Huntley Carriage House at 1601 (Rear) 16th Street, NW stand out as some of the most stylistically notable stables in the city.

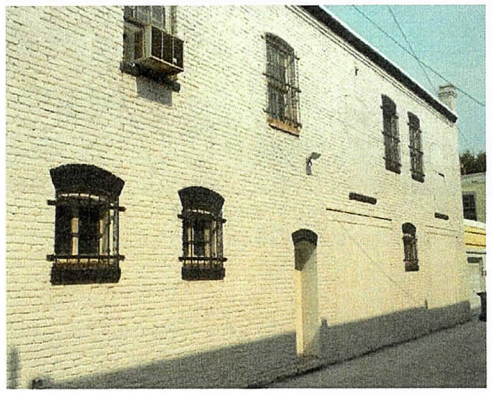
Building Style and Characteristics:
As noted above in the definition, the city's private stables are generally vernacular structures that followed a common building form with a two-story, two- or three-bay configuration. All but two of the stables are of brick construction, the exceptions being the stucco-clad Heurich Carriage House and the 1885 stable in Georgetown built of cut stone.

Whether or not it follows a common vernacular form, or is architecturally unique, the stable building is universally characterized by certain elements, including carriage door openings, hayloft doors with block and tackle hardware, and horse stall window openings. If present, stall windows are found along the side or rear elevations.

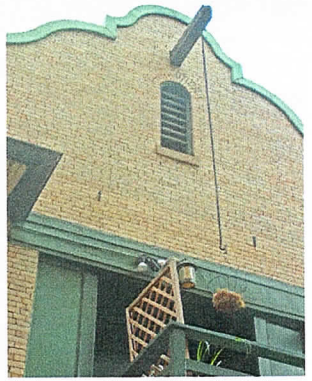
Some stables offer architectural embellishments, including arched windows with voussoirs and imposts, corbelled cornices, integrated brickwork, stepped parapets, and *bas-relief* sculptural detail.




The Heurich House Carriage House, built in 1902 for successful German-American brewer Christian Heurich, is characterized by its Renaissance Revival style, design by architect Appleton P. Clark.


Quill Stable built in 1914 at 315 (Rear) Constitution Avenue on Capitol Hill features a series of stall windows lining the building's long elevation.


The Wiehle Stable at 1619 (Rear) Connecticut Avenue, NW built in 1899 is one of the most ornate stables in the city and features intricate brickwork including this brick horse head *bas-relief*.

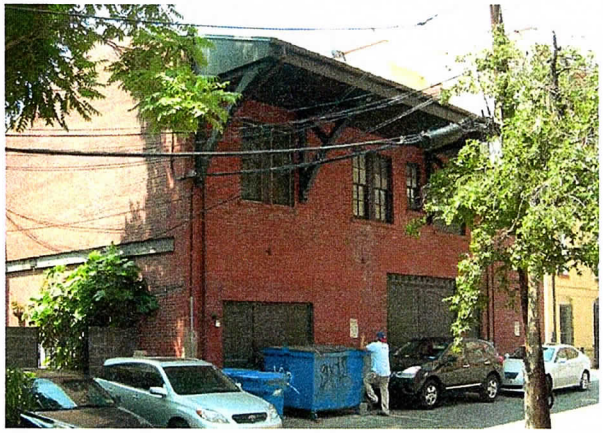

Block and tackle at Walsh Stable, 1523 (Rear) 22nd Street, NW

Wealthy residents often eschewed this common building form to build larger, more impressive and stylistically notable stable buildings that would more appropriately showcase their wealth. These large-scale and/or stylistically conscious examples were generally designed by architects and reflected a variety of styles that were either compatible with the owner's principal dwelling, offered a different style that set it apart from the principal dwelling. Some of the most stylistically notable stables include Walsh Stable, Codman Carriage House, Spencer Stable, Heurich Carriage House, Fraser Stable, Wiehle Stable, Clover Stable, Charles Huntley Stable, Toutoursky Stable, Worthington Stable, and the stable at 1633 (Rear)16th Street, NW.

Several large private stables that dominate their alleys are noteworthy simply for their size. The extensive two-story brick stable in the alley behind Kingman Place (now the Kingman Place Boys and Girls Club), is one of the largest stable buildings surveyed and may have served commercial purposes. It measured 50' x 25' when first constructed in 1880, but was later added onto, further extending the building down the alley behind Kingman Place. Similarly, two attached private stables, built by Curtis J. Hillyer in 1886 in the alley behind the 1500 block of P Street, now known as The Mews, extend more than 72 feet along the center of the alley.



The Seth Ledyard Stable in the alley behind Kingman Place in the 14th Street Historic District is one of the largest stables identified.



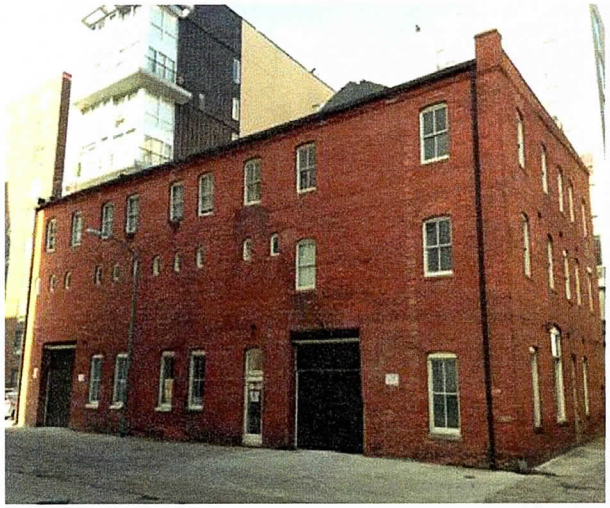
The Clover Stable off of Church Street was built in 1892 for Mrs. Richardson Clover, who lived nearby in a house that no longer stands.



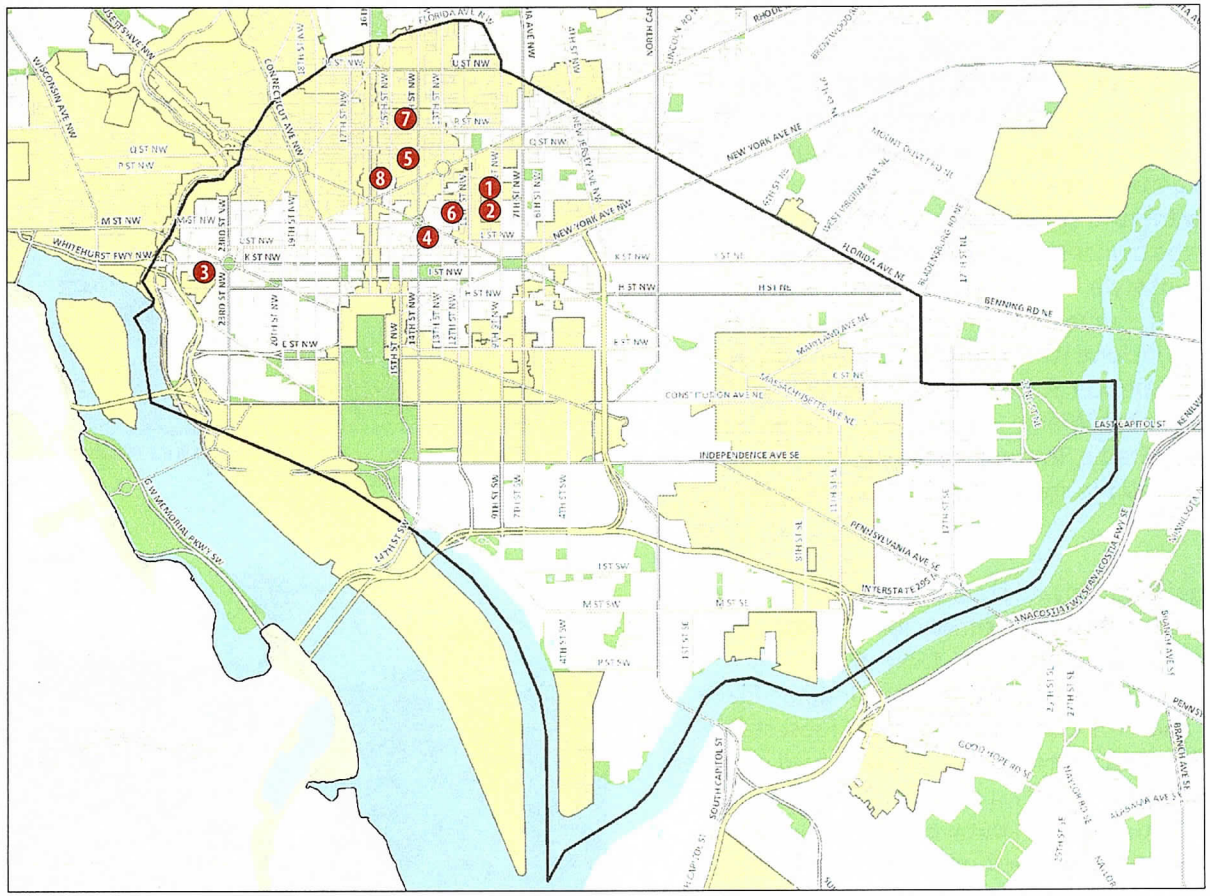
The Fraser Stable at 1735 Fraser Court , NW was built in 1892 for James Fraser who two years earlier had built the nearby Fraser Mansion at 1701 20th Street, NW. James Fraser hired the notable Washington architecture firm of Hornblower and Marshall to design both his house and stable.

STABLE: COMMERCIAL

Definition:
The commercial stable or livery stable is a large stable structure where horses and carriages could be had for hire, or where horses were kept and fed for a fixed charge. Of the more than 300 stables surveyed, only eight are considered as having possibly been used for commercial purposes. (10) City directories indicate that the city had 40-70 livery stables at any given period between the 1870s and the 1910s. The vast majority of these livery stables, however, had addresses on streets as opposed to alleys. A lesser number of livery stables were located in the alleys during the same time frame. Only a few of those are extant today.



The Proctor Alley Livery Stable at 1211 (Rear) 13th Street, NW, a D.C. Landmark, is a rare surviving example of a large-scale commercial livery stable in the city. The three-story stable had its horse stalls on the second floor, as indicated by the stall windows on the exterior.



Commercial Stable Buildings Still Standing

1. Tally Ho Stables (1883), 1300 Naylor Court, NW
2. Wilbur F. Nash Stable (1909), 926 (Rear) N St, NW
3. Wilbur F. Nash Stable (1914), 920 Snow's Court, NW
4. Green Court Stable (1889), 1333-1335 Green Court, NW
5. Phelps Stable, (1880)1529 (Rear) Kingman Place NW
6. Proctor Alley Livery Stable (1894), 1211 (Rear) 13th Street, NW
7. Sellman Stables, (1906) 1737 (Rear) Johnson Avenue, NW
8. Curtis Hillyer Stables (The Mews) (1886), 1514-1520 (Rear) P Street, NW



The building permit for this stable in Green Court indicates that it was built as a private stable, but based on the building's size, it may well have offered some stabling facilities for rent.

Distribution:
The surviving commercial stables are evenly distributed in the downtown area, though two important examples are located in the Blagden Alley-Naylor Court Historic District.

Construction Dates:
The commercial stables range in date from 1880 to 1914. City directories indicate that in 1932, one livery and boarding stable still operated in the city, though it was not located in an alley.

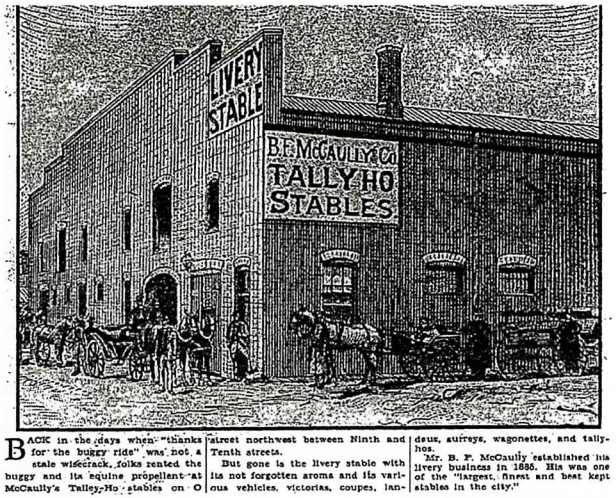
Building Style and Characteristics:
The extant livery stables are generally sizeable vernacular buildings with multiple carriage entrances, hayloft openings and stall windows. The livery stable is often three, rather than two stories in height, of brick construction, and tends to have had its horse stalls on the upper level(s) as opposed to the ground floor. The horses would reach the upper level stalls via ramps. The Proctor Alley Livery Stable, the Tally Ho Stables and Nash's Stables in Snow's Court all had their horse stalls on the second floors, as indicated by horse stall windows at those upper levels.



The former Tally Ho Stables at 1300 Naylor Court, NW currently serves the D.C. Archives



Snow's Court Stable, Foggy Bottom Historic District



BACK in the days when "thanks for the buggy ride" was not a stale wisecrack, folks rented the buggy and its equine propellent at McCaully's Talley-Ho stables on O street northwest between Ninth and Tenth streets.

But gone is the livery stable with its not forgotten aroma and its various vehicles, victorias, coupes, landeus, surreys, wagonettes, and tallyhos.

Mr. B. F. McCaully established his livery business in 1886. His was one of the "largest, finest and best kept stables in the city."

Tally Ho Stables, 1883
Historic rendering of Tally Ho Stables, built 1883, Washington Post, December 4, 1931

GARAGES

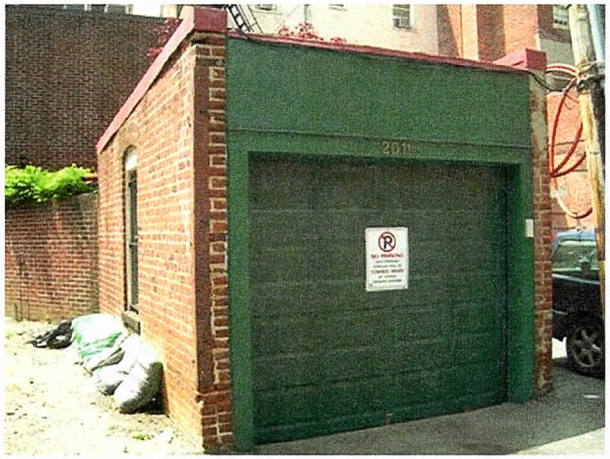
As private car ownership increased, so too did the need to store them. Many new car owners demolished or remodeled existing stable buildings at the rear of their lots to build their own private garages. At the same time, private developers and builders constructed large public garages in or near residential neighborhoods where local car owners could store their cars for a fee. At the outset, storage garages tended to be multi-functional and offered service and repair facilities as well as parking. Eventually, though, purpose-built service garages arose, eventually representing a sizeable percentage of the city's commercial garage buildings. The garages in the Historic Alley Buildings Survey have been classified as either Private Garage (including single and garage rows), or Commercial Garage (including public and service garages).



Array of garages to either side of older two-story stables, converted into garages, Dupont Circle Historic District

PRIVATE GARAGES

Definition:
The private garage represents the largest concentration of garage buildings surveyed and is defined for the purposes of this survey as a building erected for the storage of a private vehicle or vehicles. The private garage tends to be a modest, one-story brick structure with single-bay openings for a single car and located at the rear of residential lots and facing the alley. Garage buildings are either freestanding or attached and built independently or together in rows.

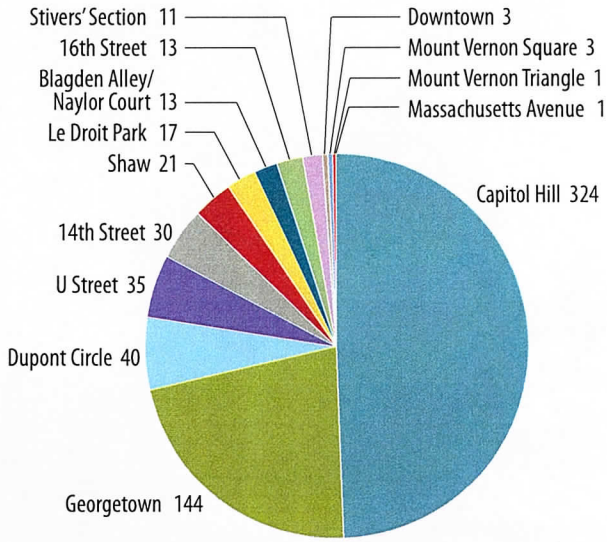


Early 20th century detached garage at 2011 (Rear) R Street, NW, Dupont Circle Historic District

Distribution:
The private garage as a building type is most heavily represented in Capitol Hill and Georgetown, but is otherwise fairly evenly distributed across the old city's historic neighborhoods.

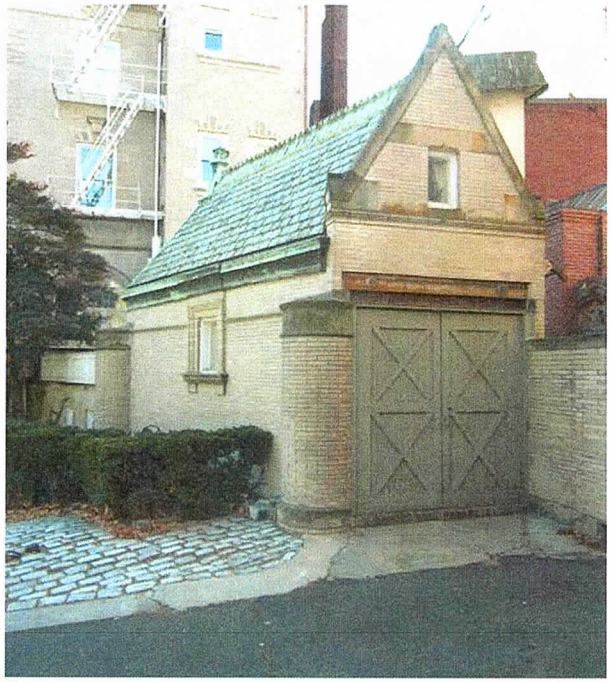
Several factors likely contribute to the higher percentage of garages in Capitol Hill and Georgetown: 1) distance from downtown beyond the "walking distance;" 2) widespread residential renovation in Capitol Hill and Georgetown during the 1930s as automobile ownership became more commonplace; 3) narrower streets and more difficult street parking in Georgetown encouraged more garages to be built in alleys. Easy alley access and broad alleys provided for ample parking in Capitol Hill.

Number of Garages by Historic District



656 garages identified

Construction Dates:
The majority of the garages surveyed were built in the 1920s-1930s. The earliest identified private garage dates to 1900. It was constructed along with the principal dwelling at 2201 Massachusetts Avenue, built for Capt. Federick A. Miller and designed by architect Paul Pelz. A single building permit for the dwelling and garage identifies the garage as an "automobile house" and highlights it as "the first." A 1902 garage on Capitol Hill was identified in permits as a "Locomobile Shed." The Locomobile Company was an automobile manufacturing company founded in 1899 to build affordable steamcars.



The garage at 2201 (Rear) Massachusetts Avenue, NW, built 1900, is the first known private garage to have been constructed in the city and is identified as an "Auto House" on the building permit. It was built at the same time as the mansion house which it served and was designed as a diminutive version of it.



The garage at 622 (Rear) A Street, NE (1902), is identified as a "Locomobile Shed" and clearly intended to house a car manufactured by the Locomobile Car Company, established in 1899.



The Edmund K. Fox "Auto Barn" at 1618 (Rear) 29th Street, NW and built in 1904 may have served as both a car garage and horse stable, Georgetown Historic District.

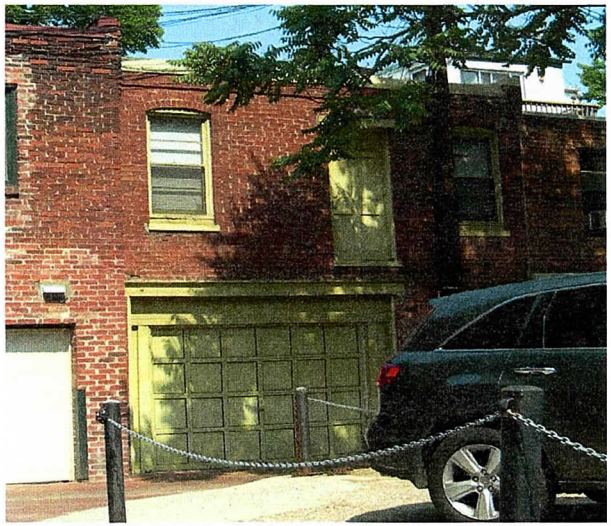
Building Style and Characteristics:
The standard garage form—a small, one-story, single-bay structure—was fully developed and widely built by the 1910s. Typically, the garage is purely utilitarian with a garage door opening on the front, sometimes a window on one side wall, flat roof, and little or no ornamentation. Garages were built as freestanding structures and as attached structures, both independently and together.

Garages generally extend linearly along the alleyway, with the garage doors opening directly onto the alley. In some cases, however, where a garage occupies an intersection of two alleys, car bays are arranged perpendicular to one another, such as at 1325 (Rear) 21st Street.

The earliest private garages are often the most stylish and architect-designed structures, most likely since they were built by wealthy residents who were, of course, the first to buy and own cars in the city. Stylistically, these garages often mimicked the aesthetic of the principal house which they served. They often also served dual purposes as stables and garages as they were built in the transitional period between the horse-drawn and automobile eras. As a result, these early garages also often retained certain features of the earlier stable buildings.

Of particular note is the 1904 "Auto Barn" at 1618 (Rear) 29th Street in the Georgetown Historic District built for Edmund K. Fox, a Georgetown banker. Fox hired architects Speiden & Speiden to design his two-story, buff brick structure with a garage in the center bays and stables at either end. Despite the inclusion of stabling facilities, the Permit to Build specifically identifies the building as an "auto barn" and not as a stable.

Some of the early garages may not have necessarily included accommodations for horses or carriages, but were still modeled architecturally after their predecessor stable buildings. For instance, in 1907 architect Nicholas R. Grimm designed a two-story brick "automobile shed" at the rear of 1613 19th Street. Despite its classification as "automobile shed" on the Permit to Build, the building is indistinguishable from the contemporaneous brick stables to either side.



"Automobile shed" at 1613 (Rear) 19th Street, NW (1907), Dupont Circle Historic District

One early private garage at the rear of 1432 U Street was constructed in 1910 for a Dr. Coblentz who lived in a house in front of the garage. Designed by architect Arthur Towne, the substantial two-story brick garage is notable largely for its size. The original permit notes that a family lived above the garage, but does not indicate the capacity of the garage. It is likely that the building housed several cars and that the chauffeur lived in the building with his family.



Dr. Coblentz Garage, 1432 (Rear) U Street, NW
Doctors were often the first to have cars and garages to make house calls quicker and more convenient; this garage likely housed several cars for such house visits.

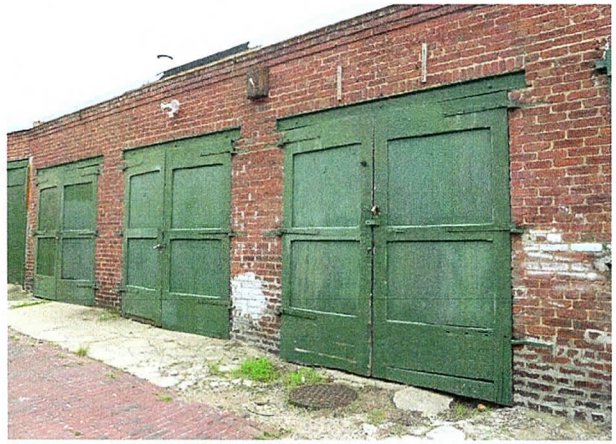
During the 1910s, chauffeurs' quarters were often included within garages resulting in a 1-1/2-story garage form that allowed for living quarters in the loft level. But by the 1920s, the garage had settled into its one-story, flat-roofed form without quarters above, generally with one or two bays for cars. The garage row— a row of three or more garage bays built as a single structural unit under a common roof—was most common after the 1920s, though earlier examples also exist. In some cases, the garage row appears to have been built in association with new apartment buildings, especially in Georgetown during the 1930s, but in other cases, it appears to have been a purely speculative development whereby builders constructed long rows of garages in the center of the city's historic row house neighborhoods, with the intention of renting or selling the individual garage bays to local car owners and residents.



Historic photograph showing rows of garages facing each other across a broad alley in Washington, D.C. *Shorpy.com*


1 1/2-story garage with chauffeur's quarters in loft level, 1606 (Rear) New Hampshire Avenue, NW (1910), Dupont Circle Historic District

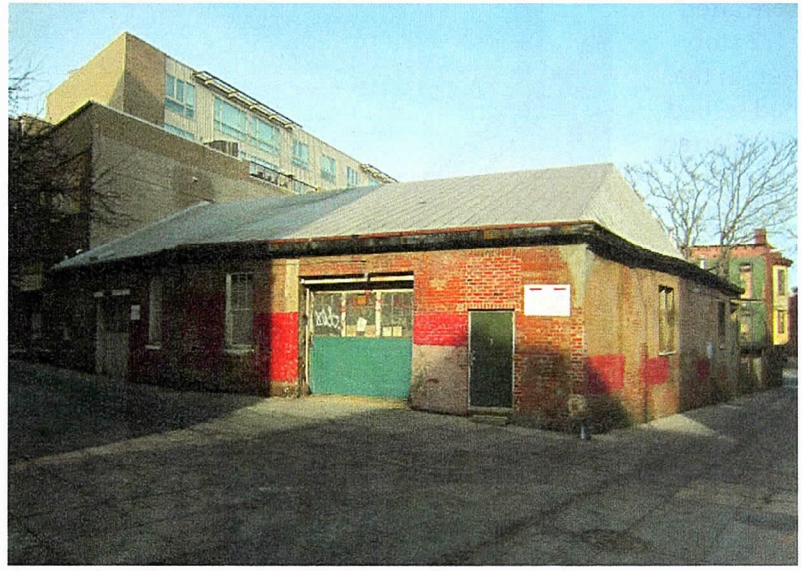

Garage row at 1657 (Rear) 31st Street, NW (1909), Georgetown Historic District


Garage Row, 120 (Rear) W Street, NW (1914), Bloomingdale neighborhood

COMMERCIAL GARAGES:

Definition

Commercial garages, as a building type emerged as automobile use and ownership became more prevalent in the first decade of the 20th century and a need to house, fuel, maintain and repair cars became necessary. For this reason, early commercial garages were generally multi-functional spaces and included storage areas for vehicles; battery charging rooms for charging battery-supplied cars; fueling rooms with gasoline storage tanks for gasoline-operated cars; repair facilities for the maintenance and repair of cars; car wash rooms for washing cars; and employee lounge rooms for repair technicians and chauffeurs. In some instances, garages also included display areas for the display of cars for sale. Commercial garages generally charged a monthly fee for storage and additional fees for other services.

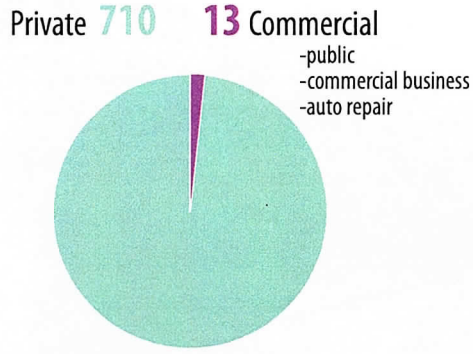


The Mount Pleasant Garage, 2412 (Rear) 18th Street NW (1912), Washington Heights Historic District



Mount Pleasant Garage, 2416 18th Street, NW (1916), Washington Heights Historic District

Private Garages vs. Commercial Garages



723 total garages

The commercial garage has also been defined by this survey to include garages that were built by commercial property owners to house their own fleets of commercial vehicles.

Distribution

Many dozens of commercial garages were built in the city beginning around the turn of the 20th century, and although they were more commonly constructed along the public streets, or along minor streets off of important transportation corridors (i.e. Johnson Avenue off of 14th Street, NW), others still were built exclusively within the city's alleys. One commercial garage, the Mount Pleasant Garage, began with construction of the garage at 2412 (Rear) 18th Street, NW in 1912, but soon expanded to include the larger and more architecturally imposing street-fronted garage at 2416 18th Street, NW in 1916.



The Holzbeierlein Bakery Company Garage on Wiltberger Alley was built in 1914 with a capacity for 12 delivery trucks.

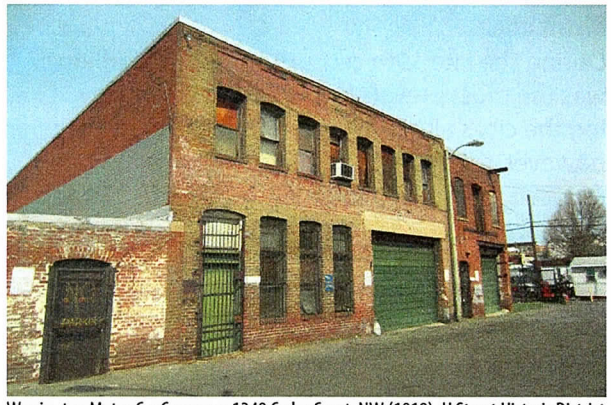
Building Style and Characteristics

Due to the multi-functional and evolving use of the building type, the commercial garage does not follow a specific form. However, the building type does share certain features and relationships. In particular, according to period architectural journals, the following conditions were considered in the construction of the commercial garage:

Garage Conditions

Siting	Siting the commercial garage with both street and alley frontage was important for easy access into and out of building. And, location on a sizeable lot was critical for the storage of fuel outside of the garage proper.
Materials	The garage was generally built of fireproof materials (concrete and brick) to protect the valuable contents within the building.
Floor Plan	The commercial garage needed unencumbered open area for easy maneuverability and storage of cars.
Fenestration	Large windows and skylights were deemed critical for lighting repair shops and sales rooms.
Technological Features	Elevators were needed to carry cars between floors.

Over time, as the public garage lost favor to private garages, and automobile showrooms evolved specifically for auto sales, the commercial garage became more singular in its function, and focused exclusively on car repair.



Warrington Motor Car Company, 1349 Cedar Court, NW (1919), U Street Historic District



Belmont Garage at 1711 14th Street, NW (1904) is the earliest surviving public garage building and has both street and alley frontages, 14th Street Historic District



The garage building at 720 (Rear) 11th Street, SE historically housed a fleet of delivery trucks for the Meinberg Bakery located at 719 12th Street, SE Capitol Hill Historic District

Construction Dates

The earliest known and extant public garage building in D.C. is the Mutual Automobile Company (Belmont Garage) at 1711 14th Street. Constructed in 1904 and designed by B. Stanley Simmons, the building extends the full depth of its lot from 14th Street to the alleyway with garage doors facing directly upon the alley. [11] This public garage was built to accommodate 100-150 cars and repair shops. The garage features large arched windows, a key character-defining feature of early commercial garage buildings.

The Warrington Motor Company Garage in Cedar Court, NW, built around 1920, is a substantial brick building with large upper story window openings. Painted signage identifying the building as Warrington Motor Company is faintly visible on the brick wall between the first and second floors. The Warrington Motor Car Company building is part of a complex of stable and garage buildings occupying the center of the square to the east of 14th Street, between S and T Streets, NW.

ALLEY DWELLINGS

Definition

The alley building as a building type falls into two categories: The alley building constructed before passage of the 1892 law that forbade their construction, and the alley dwelling substantially renovated or built anew during the mid-20th-century in spite of the law or after its repeal. In both cases, the alley dwelling faces directly onto the alley with no street frontage and, as a rule, occupies its own lot separate from the street fronting lot to which it abuts.

Distribution

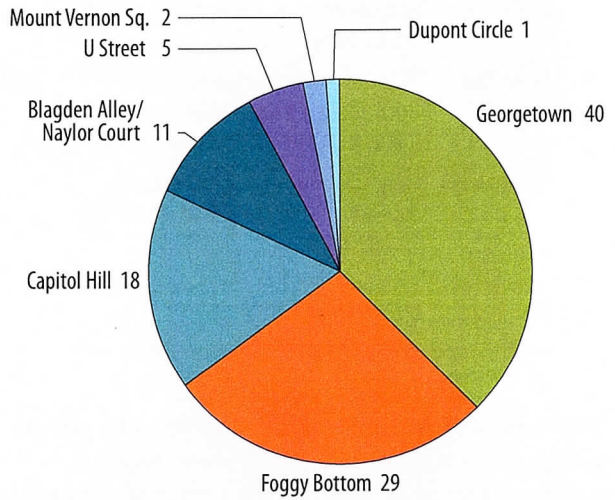
During the late 19th century, the alley dwelling was the most prevalent building type occupying the city's alleyways. During the last century, however, the number of alley dwellings has been reduced to a small percentage (3%) of its historic high (according to the 1912 alley survey, there were 3,337 alley dwellings in the city; today 108 alley dwellings still stand). The existence of the alley dwelling suffered from various forces, namely that of social reformers who sought to eliminate them, and from new modes of transportation that encouraged their replacement, first with stables, and later with garages.

Today, alley dwellings are found in isolated pockets throughout the old city, and several intact collections of them are located in Foggy Bottom, Georgetown and Capitol Hill. The alley dwellings of Foggy Bottom represent a particularly cohesive collection, where rows of alley dwellings are clustered in a tightly-knit two-block area along Snow's Court and Hughes Mews. Although the surviving alley dwellings in Foggy Bottom represent only a portion of the alley dwellings that historically characterized Foggy Bottom, this collection provides one of the best physical representations of the historic character and feeling of the city's interior residential alley fabric.



A pair of alley dwellings built in 1884 in Snow's Court, Foggy Bottom Historic District

Number of Dwellings by Historic District



108 dwellings identified

The alley dwellings of Georgetown and Capitol Hill are located across a broader area, but are still found clustered on certain streets. In Georgetown, Cherry Lane and Pomander Walk offer good intact rows of 19th century dwellings, as do Archibald Walk, Miller's Court and F Street Terrace on Capitol Hill. Scott Place and Caton Place in Georgetown provide examples of 20th century alley dwellings, built on the newly dubbed "places" and "lanes."



Dwelling at 1 Pomander Court



Construction Dates

All but eight of the alley dwellings identified were built before passage of the 1892 law banning construction of alley dwellings. The eight 20th century ones are located in Georgetown, along Caton and Scott Place, two historic alleys which were renovated during the mid-20th century.

Building Style and Characteristics

The 19th century alley dwelling is typically a two-story, two-bay-wide dwelling measuring approximately 12′ x 30′. Alley dwellings were built on low brick foundations (no basements) and were covered with flat roofs, historically covered in tin. Front elevations often featured decorative brickwork, such as corbelled cornices and jack-arched or segmentally arched brick lintels.

The interior generally consisted of four rooms. The first floor housed a front living room and a rear kitchen, while the upstairs held two bedrooms. The living room could also be used for sleeping. Alley dwellings often had small rear yards with outhouses.

Alley dwellings of the 20th century do not follow a standard form. In some cases, these dwellings are major renovations of historic alley dwellings, or have combined two alley dwellings into a single one. Others are entirely new structures. The renovated and new dwellings tend to reflect Georgian Revival-style forms and features.



The original alley dwelling at 1601 Caton Place, NW built in 1891, was renovated and sandwiched between two end wing additions in the 1950s.



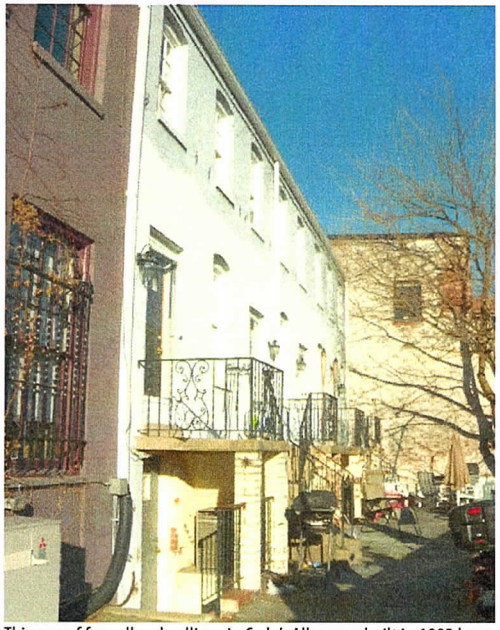
Long row of alley dwellings in Snow's Court, built 1884 and renovated in the 1950s, Foggy Bottom Historic District



1326 Naylor Court, NW



The dwelling at 3210 Scott Place, NW was built in the early 1950s on the site of five 19th-century alley dwellings.



This row of four alley dwellings in Cady's Alley, was built in 1892 by Dennis T. Keidy, after whom the alley was named.



Alley dwellings in Terrace Court, NE (1889), Capitol Hill Historic District



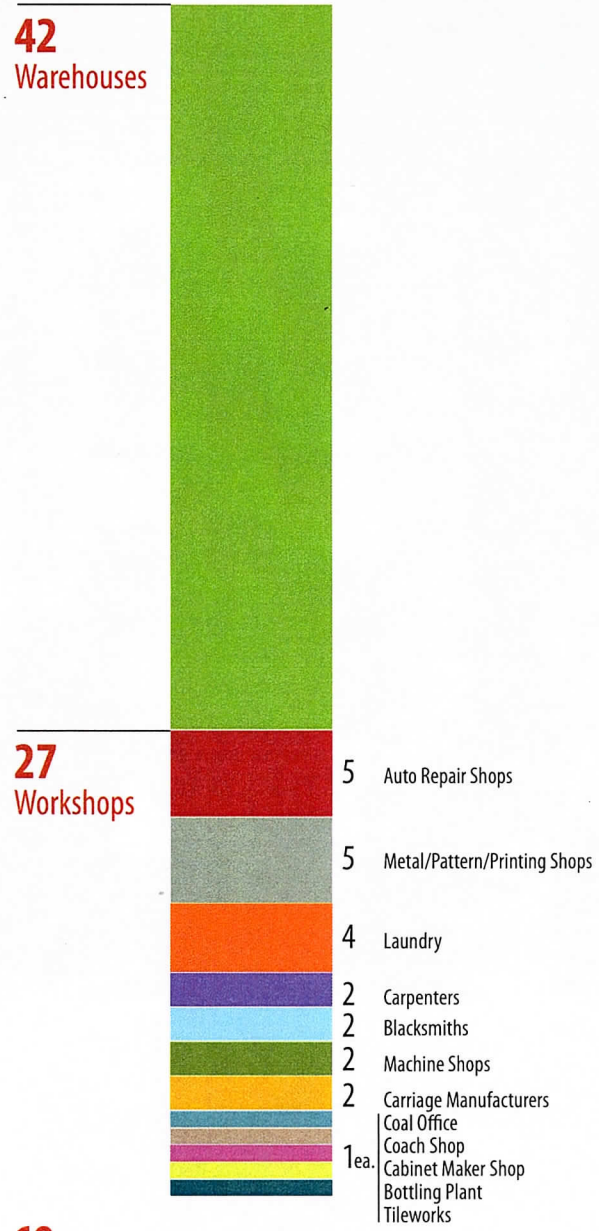
These alley dwellings in Miller's Court, NE in the Capitol Hill Historic District were built before 1888 and have distinctive pitched roofs.

WAREHOUSES AND WORKSHOPS

Definition

Warehouses are the fourth-most heavily represented building type in the Historic Alley Buildings Survey with 69 warehouses identified. For the purposes of this survey, the warehouse is being defined as any building that is used for the storage, manufacturing, processing, or repair of goods. The warehouse thus includes many sub-types such as laundries, printing presses, bakeries, bottling plants, carriage manufactories, blacksmith shops and more. However, given the limitations of the basic-level survey, it was not always possible to determine the original warehousing function. Original building permits, if found, generally only note "warehouse" under building use; in some cases the name of the owner as listed on the permit reveals the business use. In other cases, maps were useful in providing more specific information on the building's warehousing function. Based on the specific uses identified as gleaned from permits and maps, 27 of them have been classified as workshops, and include carpenter shops, cabinet maker shops, model shops, blacksmith shops, and machine shops. In rare cases, a more specific use was identified, such as with the "pattern and cabinet shop" and the "model" shop, both located on Essex Court in the Downtown Historic District. Given the alley's proximity to the Patent Office (present-day Museum of American Art and the Portrait Gallery) these workshops may have been engaged with the production of models for patents.

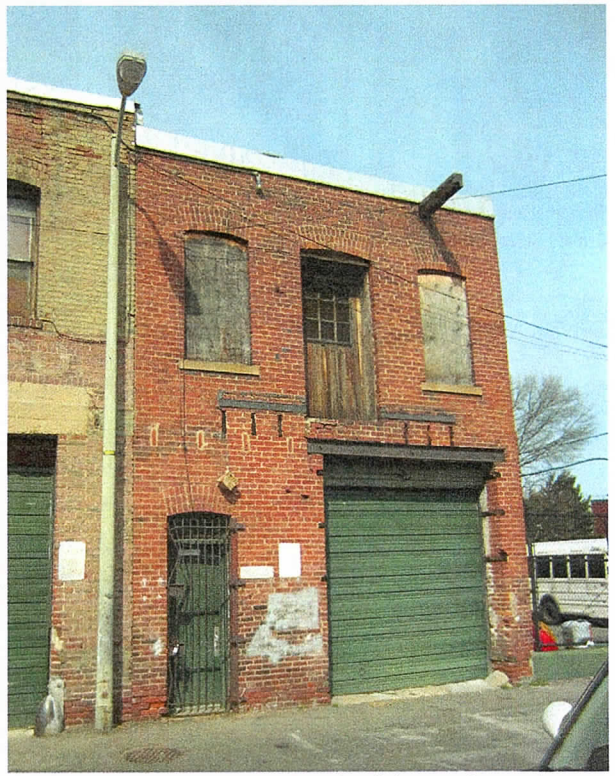
Types of Warehouses and Workshops



69 warehouse and workshops identified

Distribution

Warehouses are fairly evenly distributed across the Old City, with pockets located in Georgetown, Blagden Alley/Naylor Court, Downtown, and within the 14th Street Historic District. The largest concentration of warehouses is located in Georgetown, evidently due to its location on the waterfront and the historic port. Of the ten warehouses identified in Georgetown, nine of them are located in squares either just above or below M Street, with several clustered along Cady's Alley.



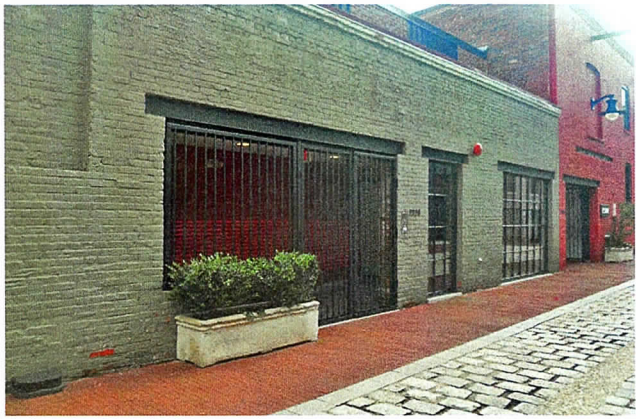
This alley building at 1349 Cedar Court, NW is identified as a warehouse on its building permit, though its form and details make it indistinguishable from a stable building.



Printing Shop, 1232 (Rear) 9th Street, NW (1946), Blagden Alley/Naylor Court Historic District



Sheetmetal Warehouse, 1219 (Rear) Wisconsin Avenue, NW (1916), Georgetown Historic District

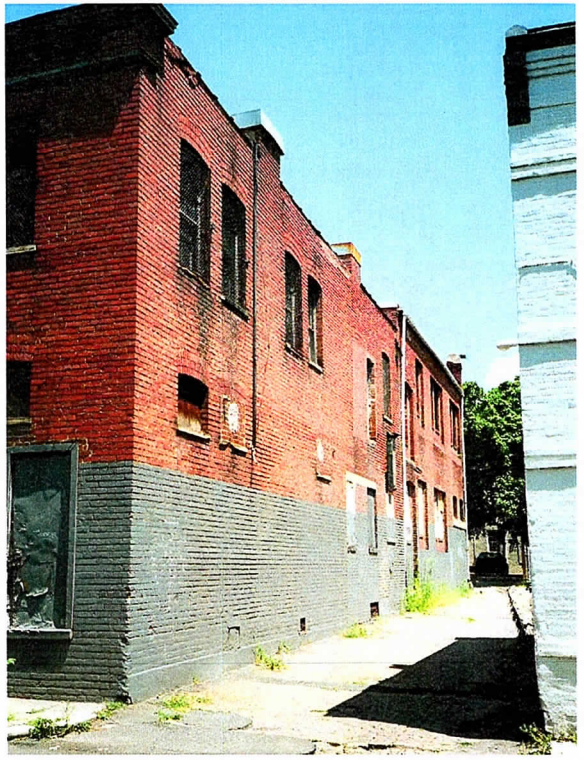


Mid-20th-century warehouse, 3340 Cady's Alley, NW Georgetown Historic District



Georgetown Historic District: Number of Warehouses by Square

5 2 1



Holzbeierlein Bakery at 1815-1817 Wiltberger Street, NW (1913)

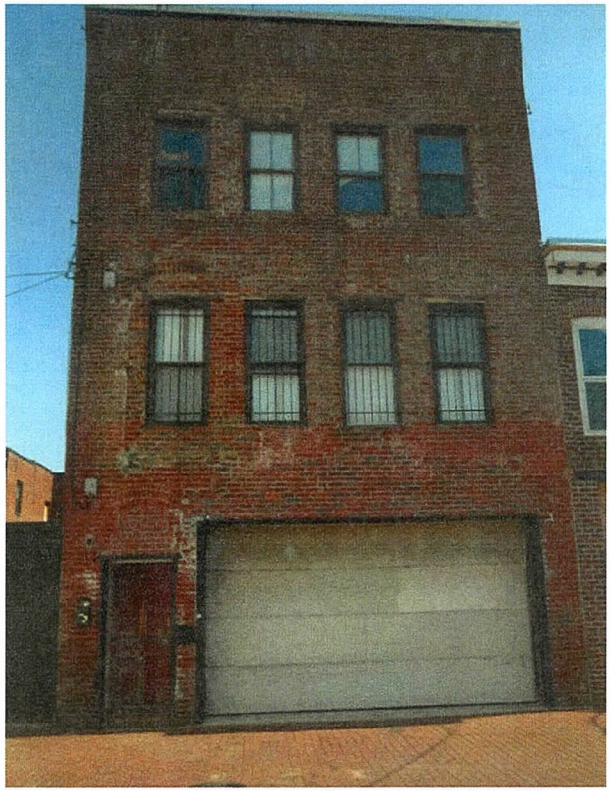
Construction Dates

The 43 identified warehouses date between about 1888 and 1959. However, all but five of those fall within the 20th century date range. The oldest dated warehouse is the pre-1888 tin shop located in Blagden Alley. The G.W. Mason Wagon Works and Carriage Repository, constructed in 1893, is the oldest of two surviving carriage manufacturers known of in the city. The other is the William Walter's Son Carriage Company at 322 (Rear) 3rd Street NE, on Capitol Hill.

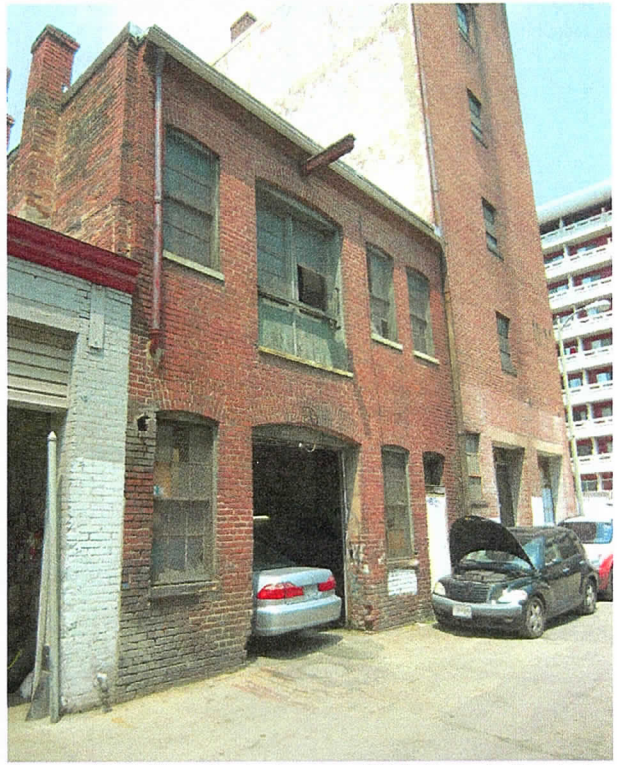
Of the 20th century examples, there are five metal/pattern/printing shops, two blacksmith shops, two machine shops, a "hardware" warehouse, and a battery shop.



The G.W. Wagon Works and Carriage Repository at 1074 (Rear) Thomas Jefferson Street, NW (1893).



This three-story warehouse building at 1240 (Rear) 9th Street, NW is identified as a tin shop on the 1888, 1903 and 1927 historic Sanborn maps.

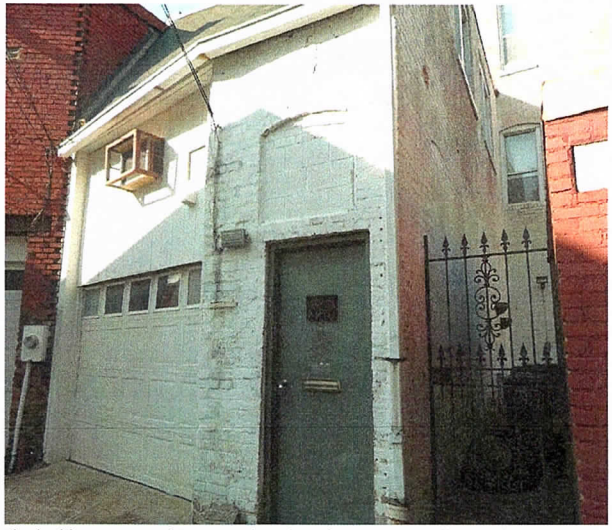


Clarence and Bessie Wise are listed as the owners of this "pattern and cabinet shop" built in 1912 on Essex Court , NW downtown. Given the alley's proximity to the Patent Office, this warehouse may have built patterns for persons seeking patents for inventions.

Building Style and Characteristics

The warehouses found in D.C.'s alleys do not follow any prescribed building form, though some have similar features to stables, such as large first-story openings and loft doors. In general, all of the warehouses share brick as the common building material and offer an astylar, vernacular quality.

Despite the vernacular quality, some of the warehouses were actually designed by architects, according to identified Permits to Build. William Beuchert who owned and developed Prather's Alley, hired architect B.F. Sneeling to design his blacksmith shop, just as the Rose Brothers hired Frank Russell White to design its warehouse at 1349 Cedar Court. Clarence Wise acted as owner, builder and architect on his pattern and cabinet shop, built at 618 (Rear) I Street, NW in 1912.



This building at 318 3rd Street, NE (1911) is adjacent to the William Walter's Son Carriage Repository and is identified as a Coach Shop on the building permit.



Detail of Beuchert's Blacksmith Shop, 443 (Rear) I Street, NW (1912), showing ghosting of business advertisement at cornice line.



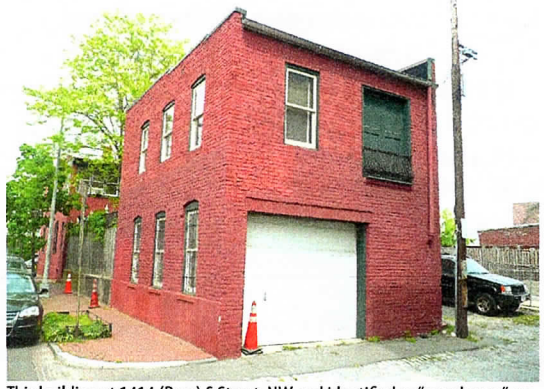
Prather's Alley, located between 4th and 5th Streets and I and K Streets, NW retains an intact collection of three attached warehouse buildings. The oldest of these, Beuchert's Blacksmith Shop shown at the far left of the group, was built in 1912. Beuchert built the attached warehouse, in the center, three years later. The warehouse at the right side of photo followed in 1918.



According to the building permit, architect Frank Russell White designed this 1913 warehouse at 1349 Cedar Court, NW.



This two-story warehouse at 629 G Street, SE is identified as a mattress factory on the 1904 Sanborn map



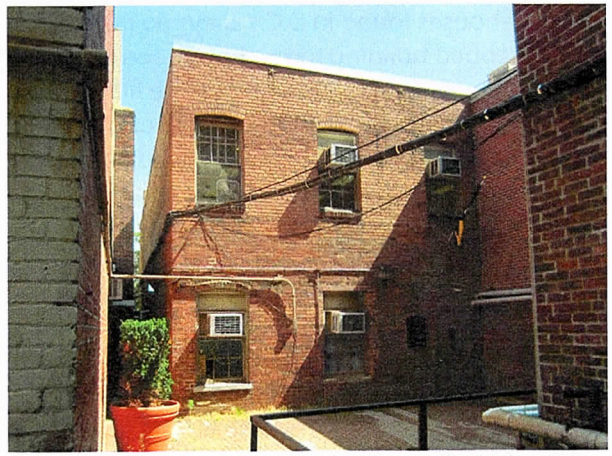
This building at 1414 (Rear) S Street, NW and identified as "warehouse" on its 1912 permit, is similar in form and detail to the alley's stables.

STUDIOS, SHEDS, AND OTHERS

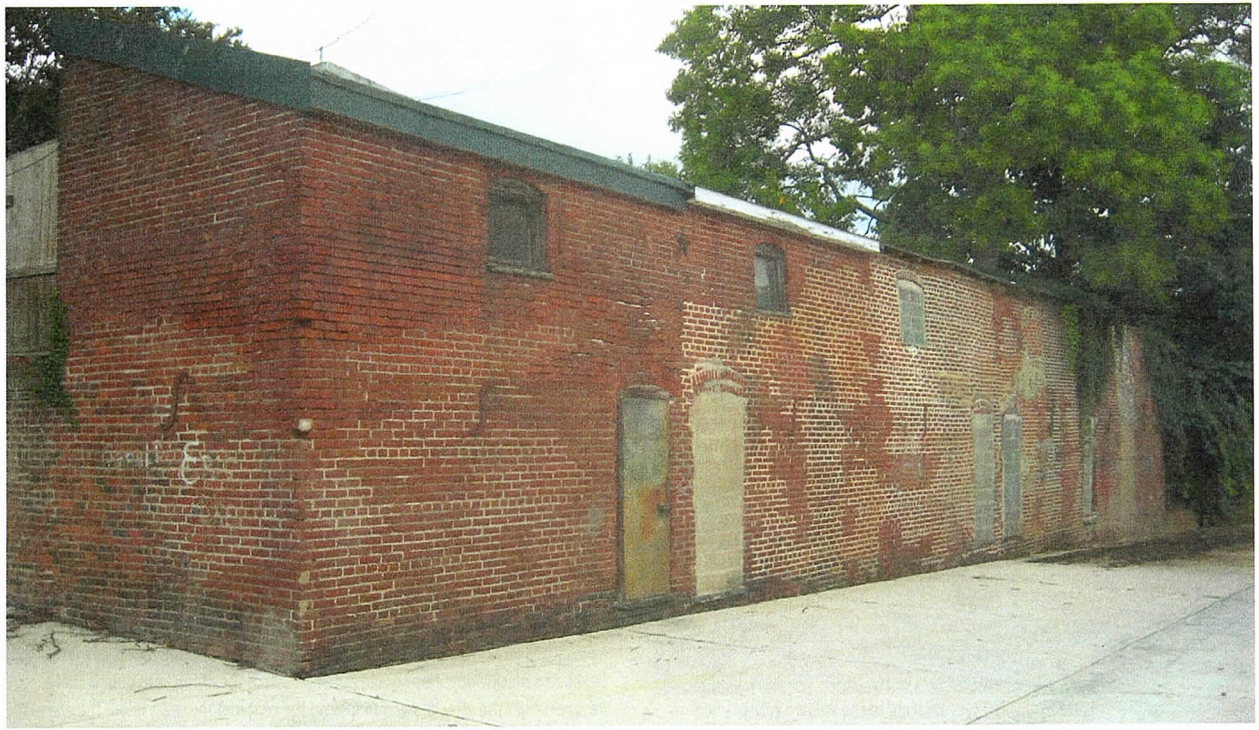
Other buildings, not readily classified under the established categories deserve mention for their age or rarity. Of particular note are sheds and studios. A review of the city's earliest and most detailed maps that include building footprints (1887 Hopkins and 1888 Sanborn maps) indicates that small sheds were a common element within the city's alleyways. Over time, these sheds were replaced by stables and garages, were demolished, or simply fell down. Still, sixteen sheds survive. Two of these are substantial brick buildings that date from before 1888, and another is a wood frame one from the early 20th century.

Not surprising in a city where building was a primary industry, architects, contractors and artists built their own studios, many of which were located along the quieter alleyways. The Historic Alley Buildings Survey identified five studios: the John J. Earley Studio (DC landmark), Mary Bussard Studio, Henry Ellicott Studio, the Harvey Page Studio and the Joseph Wilkinson Workshop.

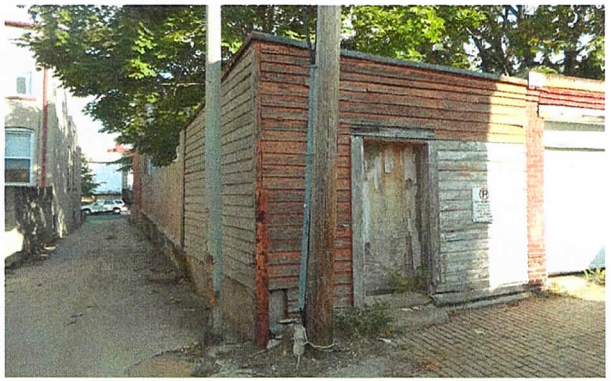
In addition to these purpose-built studios, many of the alley buildings that historically served as stables or other purposes, were and continue to be, converted into artist and other studios. Two alleys—St. Matthew's Court and Artists' Alley (the alley behind the 3300 block of P Street, NW)—became veritable artist colonies during the 1930s. Artists' Alley housed studios for five women artists, including Katherine Hobbs, animal sculptress; Gladys Jones, portrait sculptress; Virginia Curran, a ceramicist; Vivi Rankine, abstract painter; Kitty Claude; a water colorist; and Thorberg Rostad, an oil painter. The stables of St. Matthew's Court not only offered studios and living quarters for a group of artists, but they also offered restaurants -- the Federation Tea Room (later the Iron Gate Inn), the Desert Inn -- and a community theater called Theater Lobby. As rents skyrocketed during the late 1950s, New York artist Bruce Moore who was sculpting a bust of Billy Mitchell was in-residence as its sole-surviving professional artist in the alley.



In 1911, artist Marie Bussard built a studio for herself at 2129 (Rear) G Street, NW.



The two-story row of sheds at 611-619 G Street, SE date from before 1887, and are the oldest surviving sheds identified.



This frame shed at 316 (Rear) 3rd Street, NE was built in the early 20th century.



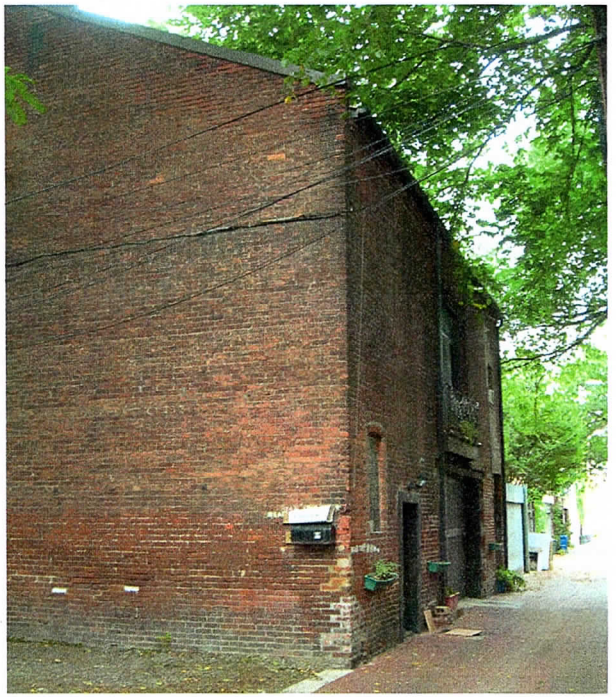
The two-story brick dependency building at 109 (Rear) 2nd Street, NE and built in 1893 is identified through building permits as a fuel house. Fuel houses historically described buildings that were used for the storage of wood for domestic purposes.



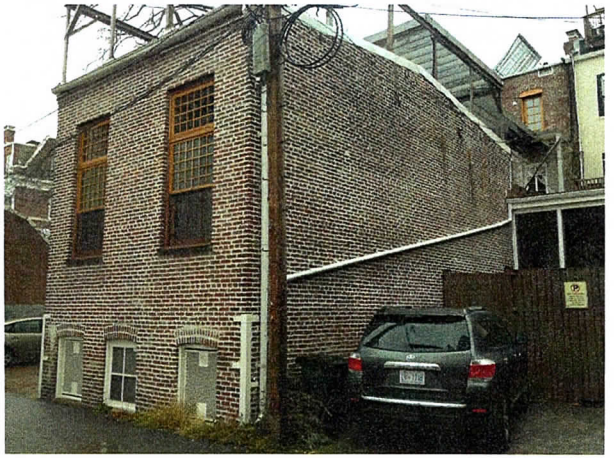
This one-story brick building, built before 1888, is a rare surviving 19th-century shed

"The pretty home of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Page on Nineteenth street was filled with a gay company from 4 to 6 o'clock yesterday, who had been bidden to a "studio tea." Everybody wondered what a studio tea would be, and they found it to be a delightfully informal affair, where every one was jolly, and nothing was stiff, and many pilgrimages were made to the lovely new studio of Mr. Page, where the delicious studio tea was served, which wasn't tea at all, but a mysteriously-brewed punch from some mysterious recipe, known only to the host."

From "A Tea in a New Studio: Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Page Hold a Delightful Entertainment" (Washington Post, 3/25/1890)



The Ellicott Studio at 1749 ½ 18th Street, NW built 1894, housed the studio of sculptor Henry J. Ellicott, known especially for his Winfield Scott equestrian statue on Scott Circle.



Studio of architect Harvey Page, 1727 (Rear) 19th Street, NW (built 1889)

Recommendations

As indicated in the previous sections of this report, the alleys of Washington, D.C. offer a deep and fascinating history. More than one thousand buildings survive from various aspects of this history, and together present an architecturally compelling story that evokes a palpable sense of time and place.

In general, alleyways are visually appealing and socially alluring spaces. These narrow and often hidden passageways offer lower density and smaller-scale buildings that create a humanizing and pedestrian friendly atmosphere. At the same time, the "rear yard" informality of alleyways often allows for greater social activity. Indeed, in conjuring up old world charm, most people envision a labyrinth of side streets and crooked alleys with a maze of cafes and shops, such as those in Venice, the famous hutongs in Beijing, the souks of Morocco, and the covered bazaars of Istanbul.

At the same time, alleyways have historically been perceived as unsafe and unsanitary places that are best avoided.

This recommendations section is intended to explore opportunities for re-discovering and re-inventing the city's alleyways and its buildings and to inspire an effort to more formally address the city's alleys as viable spaces for living, working and socializing in an increasingly dense and expanding city.

1 Increase Visibility of Alleyways

By nature, alleyways are not readily visible and entrances into the alleyways are not easily recognized.

- **Name Alleys and Establish Signage**
  Historically, most of the city's alleyways were named. These names were often associated with their owners, residents, or activities that took place in the alleys. Most alleys are no longer known by their names. Officially designating alleys by their names, with signage to the alleys, will increase public awareness and visibility of alleys.

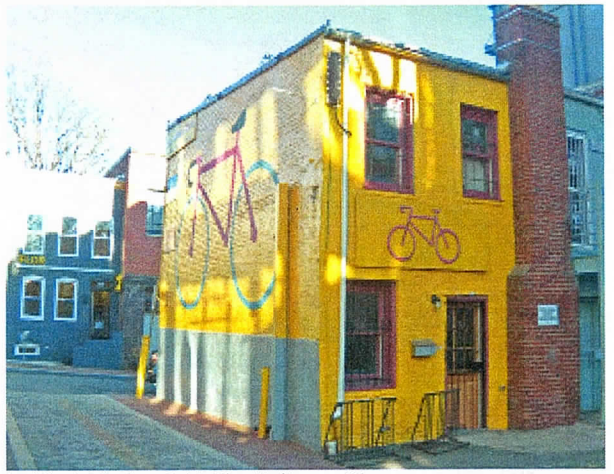
- **Encourage Public Art**
  Public art on the sides of buildings along alleyways will increase awareness of the alleyway and encourage access to the alleys.

2 Encourage Heritage Tourism of Alleys

- Develop virtual tours of the city's alleys, highlighting alley history and architecture

- Develop walking and biking tours through neighborhood alleys in conjunction with preservation groups

- Expand architectural survey of the city's alleys to historic districts outside of the city limits, including Sheridan-Kalorama, Mount Pleasant, and Washington Heights. Expand survey to other, non-historic districts such as Near Northeast, Bloomingdale and Petworth.



Big Wheels Bike Shop, Cady's Alley, Washington, DC



Colorful concrete paving, San Francisco, CA



Artistic trashcans in Nashville, TN



Alley mural, U Street NW, Washington, DC

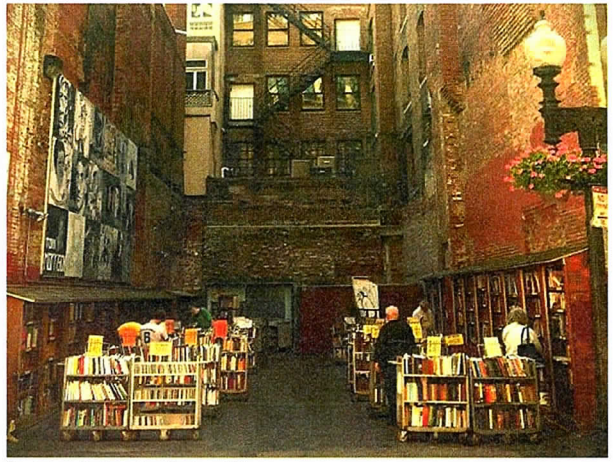
3 Develop Ideas to Re-invent Alleys

Re-examine the functional vs. cultural landscape of alleys and develop a plan to re-invent one or more of the city's alleyways as a neighborhood amenity on a temporary or permanent basis. Other cities have engaged in such re-inventions, holding events such as the Dally in the Alley in Detroit and the Alley Palooza in Seattle.

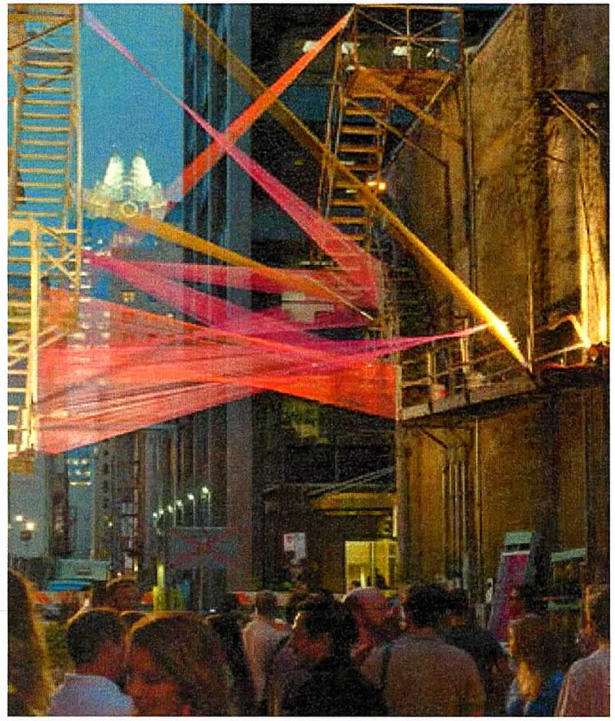
- Fair —hold an outdoor alley fair with food and live music
- Film Screening—organize a film screening on a summer evening, drawing local residents and tourists into the alley
- Public Art—encourage artists through grant funds to introduce artwork into a specified alley
- Community Garden/Urban Farm—develop an urban garden for local residents, or restaurant owners
- Playground—develop playgrounds or play areas for children



Green wall landscape, Toronto, Ontario, Canada



Bookstore in the alley, Boston, MA



"20' WIDE", collaborative case study in creating temporary activations for downtown alleys, Austin, TX. Artists Dan Cheetham and Michelle Tarsney
Photo by Michael Knox, City of Austin, Economic Development Department

4 Engage the Planning Community

- Organize an alley planning team of alley residents, planners and preservationists
- Hold community workshops to field ideas for re-activating alleys
- Develop an Alley Master Plan that would encourage an array of alley uses through zoning and other regulations



Alley Open House - Seattle, WA



World Cup Soccer watching party, Nord Alley, Seattle, WA

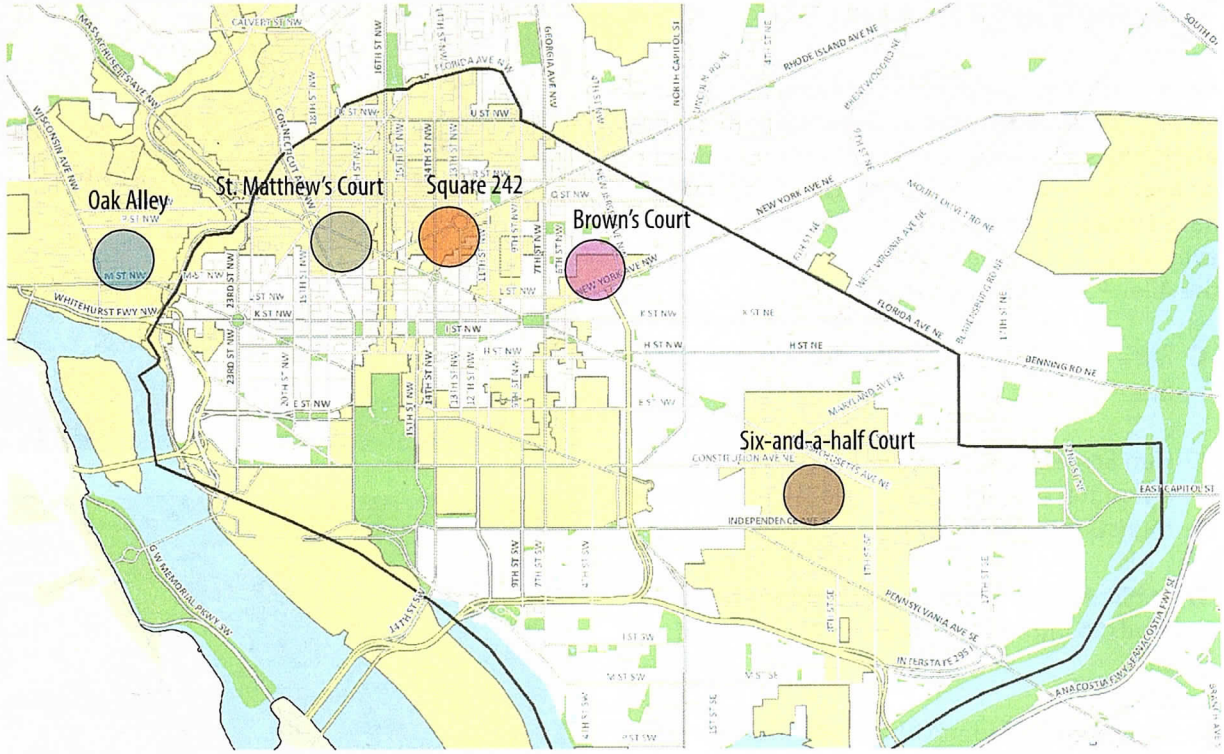
5 Develop Case Study for "Re-Activating Alley(s)

One of the stated goals of the alley survey was to better know the city's historic alleyways in order to provide guidance for their rejuvenation. To that end, the survey has identified several alleys that would be good candidates for a "Re-Activation" Case Study. The identification of these alleyways was based on the following characteristics:

- Quality and cohesiveness of historic building fabric
- Potential for multi-use rehabilitation projects
- Proximity of alleyway to existing commercial nodes
- Accessibility and safety of alleyway

Based upon these criteria, the following alleyways are being proposed for a Case Study:

- Congress Street/Oak Alley (Square 1208)
  The Georgetown Historic District
- St. Matthew's Court (Square 159)
  The Dupont Circle District
- Square 242, The 14th Street Historic District
- Brown's Court (Square 514)
  The Shaw Historic District
- Six-and-a-half-Court, NE (Square 868)
  The Capitol Hill Historic District

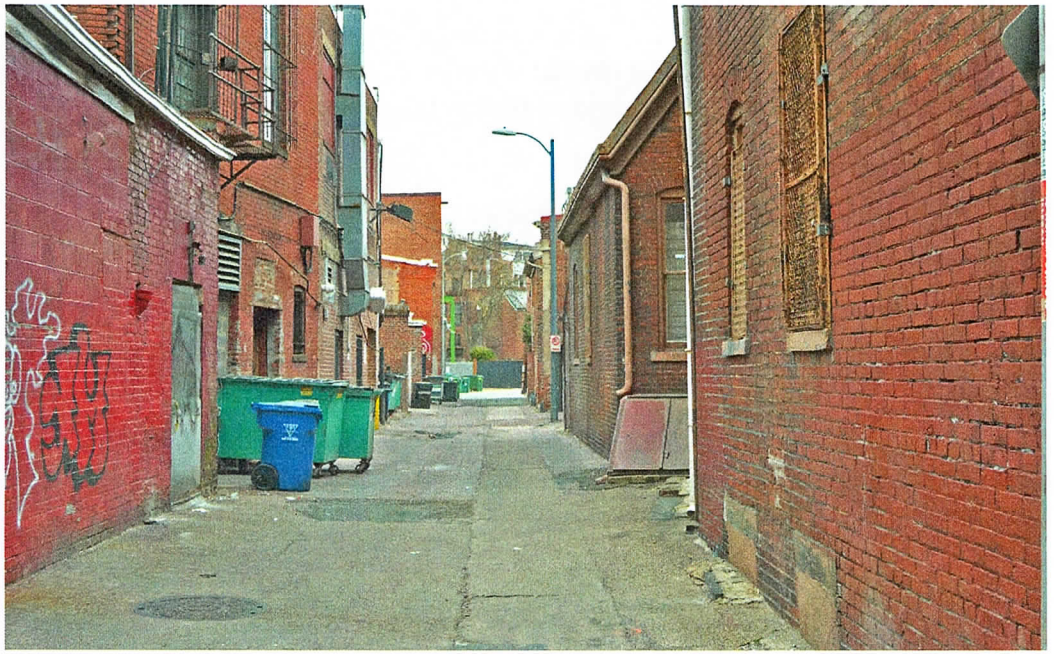


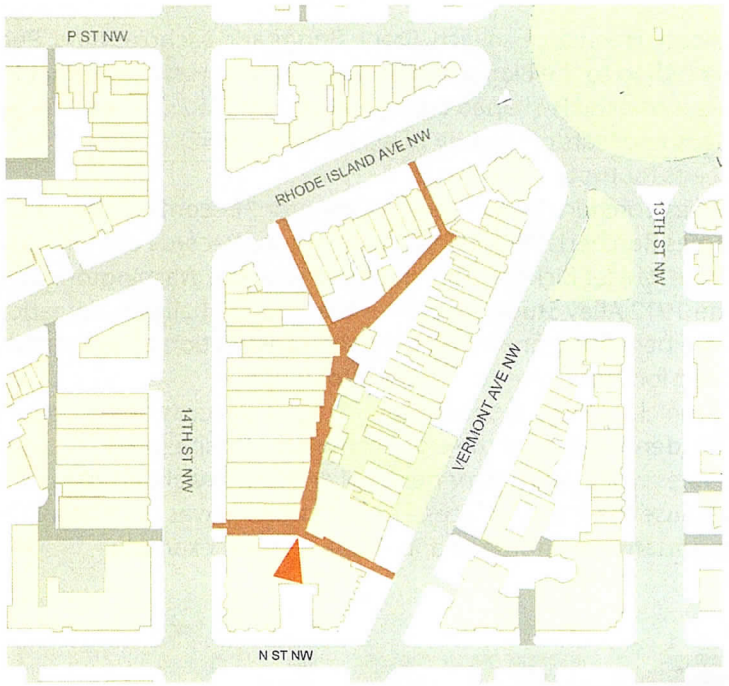
Potential sites for re-activating alleys





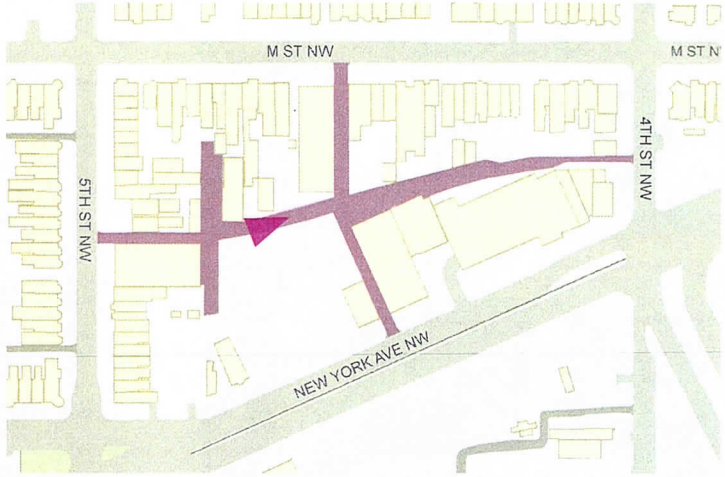
Oak Alley





Square 242

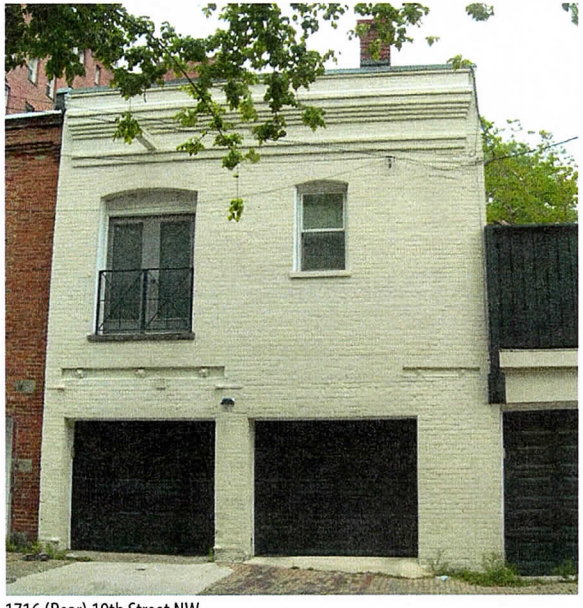




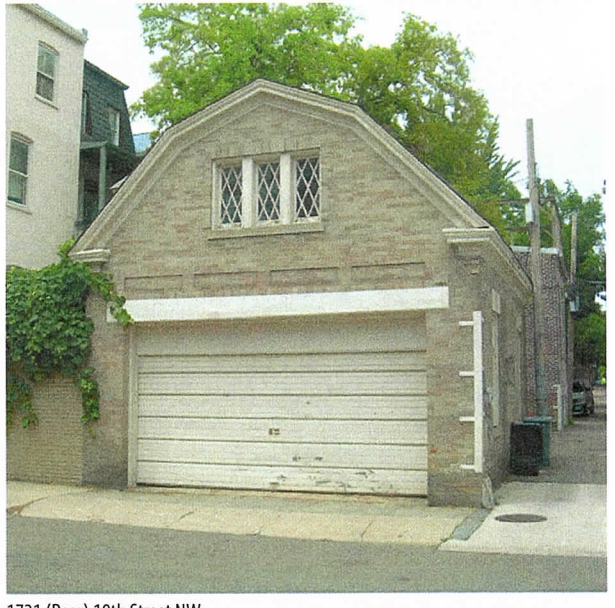
Brown's Court

Endnotes

1 Ellicott, Freeman, Fenwich, Brent, Briggs and Nicholas King, Register of Squares, 1793-1796, National Archives Record Group 351.
2 According to the Blagden Alley/Naylor Court Historic District National Register Nomination, in the 1793-1796 plat of squares, 176 of the 487 squares with alleys had the H-shaped configuration. By 1852, 223 squares had H-shaped alleys out of a total of 381 squares with alleys (as gleaned from Boyd Hamilton, Maps and Plats of the City of Washington, 1852).
3 Needs footnote—Borchert?
4 James Borchert, "Alley Life in Washington," Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C., vol. 49, p. 245.
5 James Borchert, "Alley Life in Washington," Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C., vol. 49, p. 245.
6 Grace Vawter Bicknell, The Inhabited Alleys of Washington, D.C., p4.
7 The 1912 Alley Study speculates that the 1871 alley reclamation project may have been discontinued due to the political influence of property owners who were benefiting financially from the construction of and rental of alley dwellings.
8 Need footnote here and check quotations.
9 Chronicler's Report, September 23, 1953. Records of the Columbia Historical Society, vol. 153-156, p. 390-398.
10 The identification of the eight commercial stables was strictly based upon the size of the buildings. Building permits tended to identify all stables as private stables whether used for personal or commercial purposes. This identification as commercial is thus purely conjectural and requires additional research.
11 Because the building faces a public street, it was not actually surveyed as part of the Historic Alley Buildings Survey. However, the building does have an important alley frontage and thus a relevant example.


1716 (Rear) 19th Street NW


1619 (Rear) Connecticut Avenue NW


1721 (Rear) 19th Street NW

Acknowledgments

The D.C. Historic Alley Buildings Survey has been undertaken by the D.C. Historic Preservation Office under the coordination of Kim Prothro Williams, National Register Coordinator, with help from Amanda Molson, Preservation Planner, and Chardé Reid, Assistant Archaeologist. The survey work and research was conducted by the HPO and by a team of student interns and interested volunteers. The final report was written by Kim Prothro Williams and designed by Kim Elliott, Historic Preservation Architect.

The project is indebted to the student interns and volunteers who spent hours walking the city's alleys from the spring of 2011 through the winter of 2014 to identify and document surviving alley buildings. The volunteers also helped conduct map and permit research and entered the information into the DC Historic Preservation Software system database for storage and analysis.

In addition to their efforts, these volunteer surveyors brought great energy and enthusiasm to the project, even as the numbers of one-story garages began to outstrip the numbers of more architecturally intriguing stables, warehouses, or other more unique buildings.

The D.C. Historic Preservation Office is indebted to the work of the following persons:

Namon Freeman	student intern, 2011
Courtney Ball	student intern, 2011, 2012
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Renan Snowden	student intern, 2012
Mollie S. Hutchings	student intern, 2013
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Jacqueline Drayer	student intern, 2014

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Volunteer Mollie Hutchings surveying alley buildings

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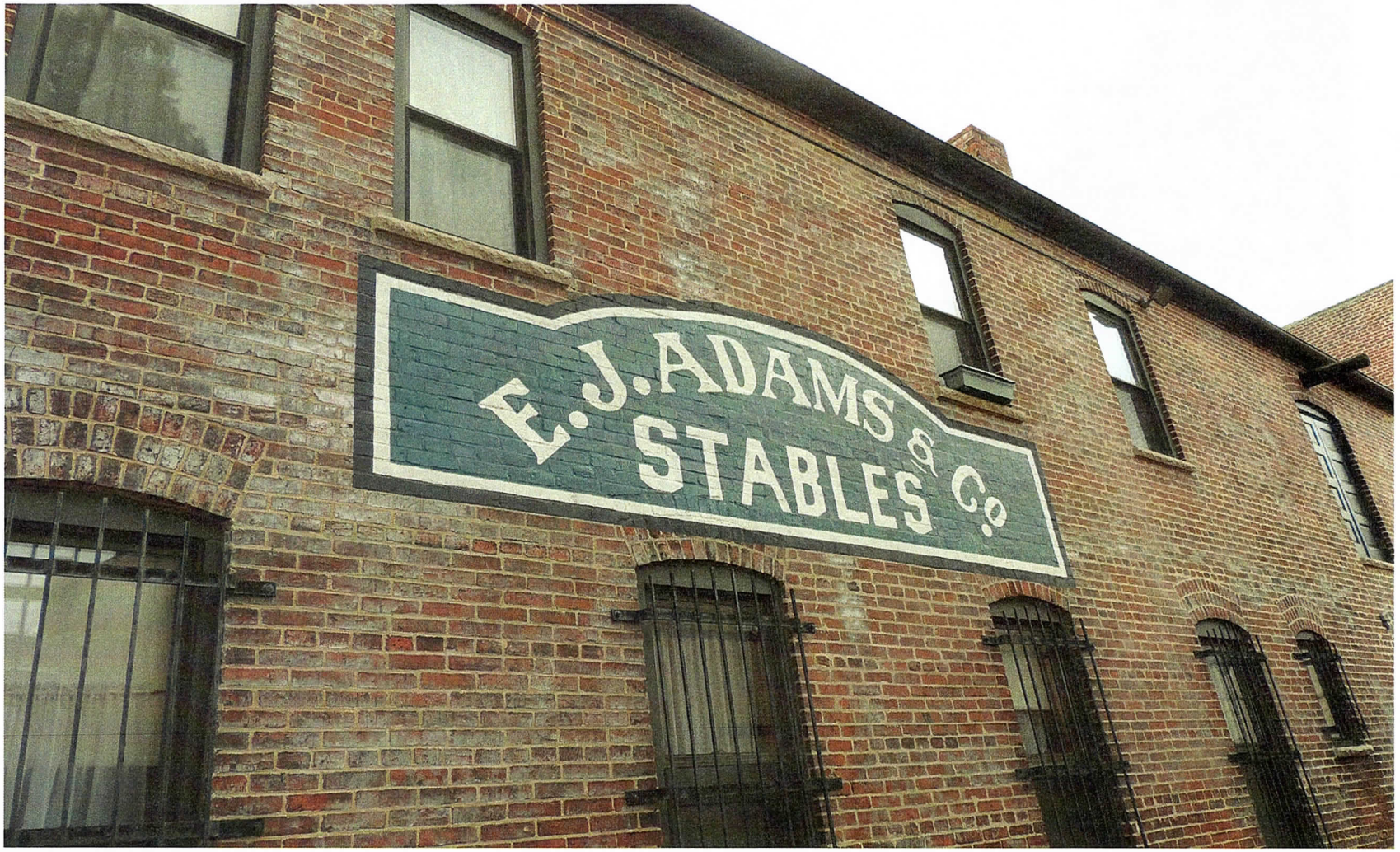
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E.J.Adams & Co. Stables, Naylor Court

elish