



Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

Out of the Attic

Historic easements in Alexandria

Alexandria Times, May 16, 2019

Image: Lloyd House. Photo courtesy Office of Historic Alexandria.

With the ever-increasing development in Old Town, the historic fabric of the city is always vulnerable to loss or destruction.

While preservation boards, such as the Board of Architectural Review, can be effective in eliminating or minimizing potential impacts to resources, it is not the only tool that can be used in preserving the historic character of Old Town. Preservation easements are often utilized to ensure long-term protection of historic features, such as building exteriors, interiors and open spaces, while they remain in both public and private ownership. The first easement in Alexandria was granted in 1969.

Approximately 80 easements have been recorded in Alexandria and the holders or grantees include the Alexandria Historical Restoration Preservation Commission, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, L'Enfant Trust and the National Architectural Trust. Aside from the intangible benefits of having an easement, there are also financial benefits, which include claiming charitable donation deductions, lower inheritance taxes, lower property taxes and tax credits.

The process for granting an easement on a property generally includes identifying what will be covered by the easement, such as the open space, interior or exterior of historic structures; obtaining a legal description of your property; working with the easement holding organization to finalize the legal documents and filing the easement in the land records of the city or state where it will become a public record.

The majority of easements in Alexandria are held by the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission. The AHRPC was created by the Virginia Assembly in 1962 to preserve and acquire historic buildings and easements in the city. The commission accepts historic preservation easements if the structures or objects on the property are at least 50 years old and the property is significant in city, state or national history or culture.

If you are interested in learning more about easements or would like to place a preservation easement on your property, please contact the Office of Historic Alexandria.





Office of Historic Alexandria City of Alexandria, Virginia

“Out of the Attic” is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as “Marking Time” and explored Alexandria’s history through collection items, historical images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into “Out of the Attic” and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.

These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by staff of the Office of Historic Alexandria.