

## **OBITUARY**

Ann Hughes Hargrove, a longtime Washington community activist and leader in historic preservation, land use planning and zoning, died of cancer at her home in Washington on November 7, 2014.

Mrs. Hargrove, a native of Texas, moved to Washington in 1963 after graduating from Baylor University and earning an advanced degree in political science from the New School for Social Research in New York. She joined the Office of Economic Opportunity in the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker division, where she developed and administered training and housing programs, traveling extensively across the Deep South and elsewhere in the mid-sixties.

At the same time she immersed herself in District. Long before of the enactment of DC's historic preservation law in 1979, she became a preservation advocate, especially for protecting inner city residential neighborhoods -- often officially perceived at the time as irredeemably blighted -- from destruction by commercial encroachment, massive redevelopment or freeway construction. She joined in the fight against the ring of freeways proposed by city leaders to encircle downtown, with her neighbors successfully opposed an ill-conceived urban renewal project that would have demolished large portions of Adams Morgan and destroyed the Reed-Cooke community, and years later, in 1991, helped Reed-Cooke residents get rid of the last vestiges of industrial zoning that city fathers had imposed on it. Planners had drawn plans envisaging the shabby but historic Adams Morgan commercial strip replaced by sleek high-rises, so she persuaded the Zoning Commission to down-zone, lowering the building height limit.

In 1967 she returned to New York where she joined Mayor John Lindsay's Housing Development Administration in its Planning and Programs division, and later the planning and development firm Candeub, Fleissig and Associates, developing comprehensive plans and fiscal and housing studies for such cities as Bridgeport and Norwalk, Connecticut, and Takoma, Washington, as well as the State of Rhode Island.

Returning to Adams Morgan in Washington in 1970, she plunged again into planning, land use and preservation issues in the District, attacking problems case-by-case but also advocating for changes in governing regulations, making regular appearances before District and Federal agencies. In 1976 she helped found the Citizens Planning Coalition to ensure that citizens had a voice in preparing the first Comprehensive Plan under Washington's newly-achieved home rule. When the

Washington Hilton Hotel proposed to expand by demolishing the historic Wyoming Apartments and two adjacent apartment buildings, she helped to organize public protests while convincing the District's Zoning Commission to adopt an emergency order permanently banning hotel construction or expansion in residential neighborhoods citywide. She served on the task force that helped draft the city's historic preservation law, and later would invoke the landmarking provisions of that law to leverage a favorable outcome with developers threatening historic structures, as when the MacDonald's corporation proposed to replace a building designed by renowned architect Waddy Wood with a standard McDonald's outlet. She joined in the successful community effort to create the Kalorama Triangle Historic District, and later organized and led the effort that produced the adjacent Washington Heights Historic District.

In 2001, working with the national organization Scenic America, Mrs. Hargrove organized opposition to a mayoral proposal to allow huge vinyl wall signs to proliferate throughout the District, circumventing the District's historic ban on billboards. Opponents were able to secure a permanent cap on the number of these "Special Signs", and in 2010 she orchestrated successful opposition to the proposal of another mayor to raise that cap. Serving on the Mayor's task force on the current Comprehensive Plan, she was instrumental in securing the inclusion of a number of key provisions aimed at heightened protection for residential neighborhoods, some of which are reflected in the currently proposed new Zoning Regulations.

During these years she also worked professionally as an independent consultant. Among various projects undertaken in that capacity in the 1970's she placed special value on the work that she did under a Ford Foundation grant on programs for assistance to women ex-criminal offenders, run by the Washington non-profit Wider Opportunities for Women.

She was among the founders, in 1972, and remained a member until her death, of Chestnut Woods Association, a West Virginia land conservation project that has placed several thousand acres of mountain woodland under protective arrangements in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy.

In the mid-1990's, Mrs. Hargrove served as legislative aide to David Clarke, Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, and as chief of staff and legislative aide for Frank Smith, the Ward 1 Councilmember. She was a Commissioner and Chairman of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1C, and an officer of various civic organizations, including the Citizens Planning Coalition,

Kalorama Citizens Association and the Committee of 100 on the Federal City. She was Chairman of the Committee of 100 in the mid-2000's, initiating the Committee's annual Vision Awards honoring outstanding planning and preservation projects. She received lifetime achievement awards from the Ward One Democrats, the Federation of Citizens Associations, and the Committee of 100, and in 2013 was awarded the District of Columbia Mayor's Award for Lifetime Achievement in Historic Preservation.

She was a longtime member of the socially active St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church, having served on its vestry.

She is survived by her husband of fifty-seven years, John Lawrence Hargrove, and her son David Lawrence Hargrove, both of Washington, and a grandson, Benjamin David Hargrove of Frederick, Maryland. Her son John Stephen Hargrove died in 2013.

There will be a memorial service at 10:30 AM, Saturday, November 15, at St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church, 16<sup>th</sup> and Newton Streets, NW, Washington.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers any memorial contributions be directed to one of the following:

Loaves & Fishes Program  
St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church  
1525 Newton Street, NW, Washington DC 20010

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City  
L'Enfant-McMillan Fund  
945 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

The Nature Conservancy in West Virginia  
194 Airport Rd.  
Elkins, WV 26241

Southern Poverty Law Center  
400 Washington Avenue  
Montgomery, AL 36104.