

CHAPTER IV

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SITES**
- B. APPEARANCE CODE**

The overall pattern of streets, lots, and landmarks was set in the 18th and 19th centuries, and determined, to a large extent, by the nature of the oystering and ship-building industries which characterized Solomons' early years. As a result, the buildings, lot sizes and streets have what is called a "human scale". Street widths and building heights were designed for use by people arriving on foot or by boat.

Two key ingredients of this "human scale" are found in (a) the continuity of the street scene, and (b) height and scale. These characteristics are found in:

- height and bulk
- massing and building modules
- roof forms,
- setbacks and yards,
- construction materials, colors, and textures,
- rhythms, proportions, and size of doors and windows
- construction details - cornices; window trim; decoration.

A. HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SITES

Judging from the earliest remaining photographs and engravings of Solomons, the largest structures on the Island were utilitarian and of a marine industrial nature. The oyster cannery and boat buildings and repair sheds and other miscellaneous machine shops and factories were constructed as industrial buildings have always been built - as inexpensively as possible.

While many of the old building sites on the Island have local significance in terms of previous uses, none of the historical buildings that remain are of such architectural significance that it requires exact restoration to its original appearance. This is true even of the "Solomons House" and the Lore Oyster House, both of which have undergone extensive remodeling.

The most significant structure in the Solomons area, the Drum Point Lighthouse, is no longer on its original site. Moved to its present location on the grounds of the Calvert Marine Museum in 1975, the structure has been restored to its 1900 appearance, and constitutes a landmark for Southern Maryland.

In spite of the many losses to the built environment, Solomons, none-the-less, still conveys today some of the distinctive architectural features of a 19th Century Chesapeake Bay fishing community. Characteristics such as high peaked roofs and narrow wooden clapboard siding, attest to earlier 19th century construction. Later 19th century architecture is also evident in several fine examples of Victorian residences found along Solomons Island Road.

It is strongly recommended that the Historic District Commission develop a current inventory of those structures within the Solomons Island Town Center which possess either historical or architectural merit, and review the possibility of designating the area as an historic district.