

Easton's Neighborhoods was completed in 1993 and was an instant best seller. It took only 13 years to sell out its run of 1000 copies. Since 2006 there has been a clamor of one or two people a year asking for the book to be republished. Others, more aware of the flaws in the original, have asked for a revised edition. At this point neither of those options seem likely. Thus, I've decided to make the original chapters available here on the Easton Historical Society and Museum's website. The original maps, but not the photos, have also been included as well as an additional map of 19th century school districts

Much of the research for the book was done in haste and there are too many sentences with words like "perhaps," or "maybe." Too much of the book was dependent on secondary sources, and the original research that was done meant going to archives in person for all too brief periods. Today that research strategy seems archaic in the new age of abundant internet resources. The book was also done before the Easton Historical Commission began its extensive and generally excellent series of historic house surveys found at the MACRIS website. All in all, there has been a huge influx of new information about Easton's history since the book was written.

Mistakes were made. Despite my best efforts and that of an excellent editor, there are errors of fact in the book. The book also lacks footnotes, a key way for readers to check for accuracy, although a strong effort was made to include internal references to other authors. As with previous writers, I was heavily dependent on the mostly accurate and excellent work of William Chaffin our first town historian. One of my goals was to include more information about women and ethnic groups. Over the years, I was sad to discover that, typical of 19th century men, Rev. Chaffin chose to neglect the movement for women suffrage, abolition, and the stories of our many immigrants. One of the reasons that a revision of **Easton's Neighborhoods** is not likely any time soon is that my research has become completely focused on the mid-19th Century when people in Easton were leaders in the fight for human rights.

Finally, the choice to focus on neighborhoods was both a problem and an insight. The ten chapters in the book expanded on the seven traditional neighborhoods and was based on the school districts of the mid-19th century. Because most people got around most days on foot, every neighborhood had a school, stores, and a characteristic occupation. In 1996 a growth management study discovered that even a century later one could discern the outlines of these neighborhoods. On the other hand, a book based on the smallest level of human organization misses bigger things like wars, westward expansion or the Spanish Flu of 1918. The topical versus chronological approach is a constant question for historical writers. Chaffin solved the problem with a hybrid approach, and in retrospect I wished I had done the same thing.

Despite its flaws, I hope you find this book interesting and helpful. Cave, Lector.