



HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD  
ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

## CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)  
**FROM:** Serena Bolliger, Historic Preservation Planner  
**DATE:** April 12, 2022  
**SUBJECT:** CoA 22-09, 4102 N. Old Glebe Rd., Walker Chapel Local Historic District

### **Background Information**

Walker Chapel is believed to be the third-oldest congregation in Arlington County. The beginning of the congregation can be traced back to house-to-house Sunday School classes conducted by Mrs. Jane Bowden Edwards. The oldest burial site at the Walker Graveyard is that of David Walker, who died in 1848. The original church was built in 1871, after 58 men of the Mt. Olivet Church pledged to commit resources toward the building of a church at or near the Walker Family Graveyard. Robert and James Walker donated the land for the building and later contributed their labor in the effort. The original church was a small frame building built in 1871, the current chapel was constructed by 1962. The Walker Cemetery is still active, and the entire parcel consists of approximately 2.13 acres.

The Walker Chapel Local Historic District (LHD) was designated in 1978 before individual design guidelines were developed for LHDs, and therefore all exterior changes must be reviewed by the HALRB and considered according to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. Most recently, the HALRB approved CoA 19-27 for the repair of a retaining wall in the rear, installation of a rear stair and wheelchair access, and installation of a columbarium (conditionally approved in January 2020 with final approval in March 2021).

### **Proposal**

The applicant would like to replace the existing defunct air handler, compressor, and condenser for the chapel with new units to handle the capacity of the building. The replacement units would be installed on the existing concrete platform at the southwest corner of the transept beneath the ground level. The units would be shielded by both the grade change and existing boxwood plantings.

### **DRC Review**

The Design Review Committee (DRC) considered this application at its April 6, 2022, virtual meeting. The DRC members had no questions or concerns and placed this application on the Consent Agenda for the April 20, 2022, virtual HALRB public hearing.

## **Recommendation**

The Historic Preservation staff recommends approval of the subject application as submitted. The project allows the continued use of the church, which supports Standard #1 of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*: "A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment." The hidden location of the proposed units, combined with the existing screening, complies with Standard #2: "The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided."

Finally, had this project been proposed in any of the LHDs with design guidelines, this type of typical mechanical equipment replacement and upgrade would have been called out for staff approval through an Administrative CoA.