



**MINUTES OF THE  
HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD**

**Wednesday, June 15, 2022, 6:30 PM**

*This was a virtual public meeting held through electronic communication means.*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Aiken  
Omari Davis, Vice Chair  
Jennie Gwin  
Gerald Laporte  
Joan Lawrence  
Robert Meden  
Rebecca Meyer  
Mark Turnbull  
Andrew Wenchel\*

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

Robert Dudka  
Sarah Garner  
Carmela Hamm  
Richard Woodruff, Chair

*\*Given that Mr. Wenchel's reappointment by the County Board was still pending, he could not vote in this meeting*

**STAFF:** Cynthia Liccese-Torres, Historic Preservation Program Manager  
Lorin Farris, Historic Preservation Planner  
Serena Bolliger, Historic Preservation Planner  
Mical Tawney, Historic Preservation Specialist

**CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order. Ms. Liccese-Torres read the roll and determined there was a quorum.

**EXPLANATION OF PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES**

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair explained the virtual Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB) public hearing procedures and stated that the virtual meeting format was necessitated as a precaution to protect the Board, staff, and community members from the spread of COVID-19. He communicated the legal authority under which the County was able to hold virtual public hearings, citing the Governor's Executive Orders, legislation adopted by the Virginia General Assembly, and the County Board's Continuity of Operations Ordinance adopted in March 2020. Mr. Davis then described the logistics of how the virtual meeting would proceed via the Microsoft Teams platform and/or the call-in number.

**APPROVAL OF MARCH 16, 2022, AND APRIL 20, 2022, MEETING MINUTES**

The Vice Chair asked for comments or amendments for the draft minutes for March and April. Upon hearing none, he made a motion to approve the March minutes. Ms. Gwin seconded the motion. Ms. Liccese-Torres called the roll and the motion passed 7-0-2, with Mr. Aiken and Mr. Wenchel abstaining. Mr. Davis made a motion to approve the April minutes. Mr. Aiken seconded the motion and Ms. Liccese-Torres called the roll. The motion passed 5-0-4, with Mr. Meden, Ms. Meyer, Mr. Turnbull, and Mr. Wenchel abstaining.

**PUBLIC HEARING FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS (CoAs)  
CONSENT AGENDA**

The Vice Chair asked for any concerns or questions on the consent agenda. Mr. Laporte had a question about consent agenda item #3 (CoA 21-31A). Mr. Davis moved to approve the consent agenda without item #3 and to allow for the question separately. Ms. Lawrence seconded the motion. Ms. Liccese-Torres called the roll and the motion passed 8-0-1, with Mr. Wenchel abstaining.

**PUBLIC HEARING FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS (CoAs)  
DISCUSSION AGENDA**

**Discussion Agenda Item #1: CoA 21-31A, 3421 21<sup>st</sup> Ave. N.**

Mr. Laporte offered to ask his question without a staff report. He commented that there were four items in the rendering which could be visually interpreted as artwork or sculptural pieces, and he wanted to confirm that they were plantings. The applicant made this confirmation. Mr. Laporte asked that this be noted on the plans.

The Vice Chair then made the following motion:

I move that the CoA for 3421 21<sup>st</sup> Ave. North be approved as presented with additional notation noting bushes to be used in the front planter on the cover sheet.

Mr. Laporte seconded the motion. Ms. Liccese-Torres called the roll and the motion passed 8-0-1, with Mr. Wenchel abstaining.

**DISCUSSION ITEM: MAYWOOD IN-KIND WINDOW REPLACEMENT GUIDANCE**

Ms. Bolliger explained that the language and staff recommendation presented to the HALRB in May had been updated to consider both the community’s and HALRB’s feedback. She stated the definitions for “typical” and “special” windows had been more clearly defined, and staff had made recommendations about adopting the language suggested by the commissioners in the May meeting. Ms. Bolliger noted that three public comments had been submitted in advance and shared with the commissioners (see below). She further stated there was one public speaker for this item.

**Comment #1**

*Amanda Davis, Maywood Community Association (MCA) President (also a speaker):*

*On behalf of the MCA, representing the work of the Maywood Guidelines Committee which formed in 2016, here are comments regarding Appendix H for the June 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.*

*The MCA is looking for language that yields consistent and principled outcomes. While the MCA recognizes and appreciates the role of the HALRB in upholding historic*

*preservation principles and our Design Guidelines, the MCA's interest is that the language discourages subjectivity. We appreciate that every project is unique, however we would like to limit the degree to which subjectivity is applied in the outcomes. Our hope is that Appendix H will provide a framework for clear guidelines which incorporate consistent standards. In our view, this is the purpose and spirit of this exercise.*

Comment #2

*James Anderson: I hope the HALRB will make it easier to allow for the full replacement of historical windows. I have had several original windows refurbished in my own home. Non of them work well or have lasted long. They are still old, drafty and difficult to use. At some point, the windows just need to be replaced. Can we find ways to do this while still maintaining the desired look. It would also help the homes be more energy efficient and comfortable which is important. On and other front. Is there anything we can do to encourage home owners to eliminate gas appliances as they remodel? Elimination of gas appliances improves indoor air quality and reduces the use and leakage of methane which is very bad for the Climate. Electric stoves, water heaters and furnaces*

Comment #3

*Janet Barsy: I would like to reiterate my support for the initial draft language, which I believe is clear.*

Ms. Bolliger invited the single public speaker, Ms. Amanda Davis, who is the President of the Maywood Community Association. Ms. Davis stated that the civic association was very supportive of Appendix H as it was currently written. She said it allowed people to have clarity when they came in front of the commission to replace their windows. She explained that she appreciated how straight forward the language was and urged the commissioners to approve it as written.

The Vice Chair invited the board to speak. Ms. Gwin applauded staff for their work and stated she supported the proposed language with no further comment. Ms. Lawrence agreed that the definitions had been clarified appropriately and that she supported the appendix.

Mr. Laporte stated a concern that the definitions were not explicit enough. He asked for clarification on who would review the applications. Ms. Bolliger confirmed that all applications would be reviewed by the HALRB, but that the language would allow in-kind replacements of “typical” windows to be placed on the consent agenda while requiring “special” window replacements to be placed on the discussion agenda. Mr. Laporte recommended clarifying this language to list all “special” windows. Ms. Gwin expressed concern that specifying all “special” windows might overlook some forgotten styles and that she felt it was safer to list standard “typical” windows and allow all remaining exclusions to fall under “special” windows. Ms. Liccese-Torres agreed with Ms. Gwin that staff had chosen not to survey the neighborhood and outline every type of “special” window so as to avoid excluding extant examples. Ms. Liccese-Torres encouraged other commissioners to express if they had concerns about the definitions and asked Ms. Davis if the community association was satisfied with the definition. Ms. Davis replied affirmatively.

Ms. Meyer agreed that defining too narrowly would limit the commission and she supported the proposed language as written. Mr. Aiken said he supported the proposed language and the retention of the definitions as stated. Mr. Turnbull, Mr. Wenchel, and Mr. Meden each stated that they supported the language as drafted.

The Vice Chair concurred with the general consensus supporting the draft language. He asked for final questions and upon hearing none, made a motion:

I move that the HALRB approve “Appendix H: In-Kind Window Replacement Guidelines” as submitted by HPP staff in the revised document, dated June 1, 2022.

Ms. Gwin seconded the motion. Ms. Liccese-Torres called the roll and the motion passed 8-0-1, with Mr. Wenchel abstaining. Ms. Liccese-Torres announced staff would post the updated *Maywood Design Guidelines* on the County website and would alert the community with a post card mailer when the amended guidelines were available.

**PARK NAMING: N. DANVILLE ST. AND 11<sup>TH</sup> ST. N.**

Ms. Bolliger invited Diane Probus, a planner in the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), to introduce the renaming effort for this one-acre park at N. Danville St. and 11<sup>th</sup> St. N. currently undergoing a renovation starting in the summer of 2022.

Ms. Probus explained that the community was given the opportunity to provide potential park names through an online public engagement initiated in March. In April, a second online engagement allowed respondents to rank four potential park names that met the County’s park naming criteria. The four name suggestions were ranked by 164 participants, resulting in a ranking score for each name. The name 11<sup>th</sup> St. Park received the highest score. The civic association also had been polled and preferred the name 11th St. Park. Ms. Probus noted the HALRB’s comments and vote on the proposed name would be shared with the Park and Recreation Commission. She then invited Ms. Alyssa Cannon to speak on behalf of the civic association; however, since she was not present, Mr. Dave Cheek spoke in her stead. He said the civic association had completed an online survey and the results reflected those collected by DPR during their community engagement. Mr. Cheek identified the surrounding community as very transient and as such, he believed it was important for the park to have a clear and direct name to help new residents find and use it. He expressed appreciation for Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Bich’s contribution to the area but preferred the name 11<sup>th</sup> St. Park at this location.

Ms. Bolliger reminded the commissioners they had received one comment in advance for this item (included below).

Comment #1

*Dear HALRB members,*

*I am writing to express my support for naming the park at 11th St. N and North Danville Street after Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Bich, a stalwart community citizen who was active in providing services for Arlington's immigrant community--particularly refugees from Vietnam and other parts of Southeast Asia—after the fall of Saigon in 1975 and through his death in 2016. Mr. Bich, as he was known (pronounced "Bick"), played an important role in the development of the former Little Saigon that existed in Clarendon from 1975 through the 1980s.*

*I am a writer in Arlington who has documented the history of Arlington's Little Saigon in numerous ways, including articles, podcasts, videos, speeches, and most notably, the authoring of a booklet called *Echoes of Little Saigon: Vietnamese Immigration and the Changing Face of Arlington*, published with support from Arlington County and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. Mr. Bich played a big role in this work, and the booklet is dedicated to him, includes part of an oral history with him, and features a Vietnamese poem that he translated called "Rebirth." I was honored to know Mr. Bich and to see firsthand his love for the Vietnamese community and the Arlington community at large, and how hard he worked to build bridges between these two communities.*

*Born in Vietnam, Mr. Bich was an author, educator, translator, and community coordinator who taught adult education, elementary school, and high school in Arlington, as well as at Trinity College, George Mason University, and Georgetown University as a teacher trainer in bilingual and multicultural education. He was the first community coordinator hired by the Arlington County Government to serve as a liaison to the waves of Vietnamese immigrants to the area after the fall of Saigon, and he worked with Vietnamese and other immigrants in both official and unofficial capacities, including starting a long-standing cultural festival that lasted in Arlington for many years.*

*I understand from the PowerPoint that 164 citizens voted on the park names and that "11th Street Park" and "Danville Park" got higher numbers of votes than a name honoring Mr. Bich. It's worth noting that 164 respondents total just 0.06% (six-hundredths of one percent) of the current county population. This is probably not the purview of HALRB, but I'd like to submit my hope that future engagement on park names goes farther to capture a more representative sample size of our robust and diverse population.*

*That said, I do understand that a name like "11th Street Park" or "Danville Park" is easy and straightforward. But "straightforward" can also be "generic." Naming the park after Mr. Bich would not only be more interesting, it would allow for greater understanding of what Arlington did for newcomers after the fall of Saigon and, even more importantly, what these newcomers did for Arlington.*

*In an Arlington Sun Gazette article about this park naming process (dated June 8, 2022), Parks Department and Parks Commission members spoke about this process and signaled their support for one of the more straightforward names. Given the citizen vote and these public comments, I recognize that it's most likely they will vote for one of those two names. So while I am submitting these comments to you to support naming the park for Mr. Bich, I also acknowledge that he could be honored through other means, and I encourage this body to consider and support alternatives if the park is not named for Mr. Bich. Diane Probus of the parks department said to the Sun-Gazette that Mr. Bich (she referred to him by his surname, Nguyen) "could be remembered by an historical marker."*

*You might know that the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, in conjunction with the City of Falls Church, recently installed a historical roadside marker at the Eden Center that honors Vietnamese immigrants to Northern Virginia, recognizing the community that began as Little Saigon in Arlington and later moved to the Eden Center. It would be fitting for Arlington to round out the story with some permanent recognition of this important part of our local and national history as well.*

*However, it's much more likely that any such historical marker would tell a larger story about Little Saigon, especially if it were installed at or near the Clarendon Metro Plaza, which would make the most sense in terms of location. While I would support this kind of recognition of Little Saigon, I still believe that naming the park on 11th Street after Mr. Bich would be the best way to honor his singular and significant contribution to Arlington County.*

*In my mind, there is room for both. Regardless of what happens, I hope that Arlington County will continue to use our public places to honor both individuals and communities*

*that were significant to Arlington County.*

*Thank you for your attention to these comments and for your work!*

*All the best,*

*Kim O'Connell*

Mr. Meden asked for confirmation on which name received the highest number of votes. Ms. Probus replied there had been ranked voting and 11<sup>th</sup> Street Park had averaged the highest. Mr. Aiken asked for clarification on whether Mr. Bich had made local contributions or contributions to the County at large. Ms. Probus noted that Mr. Bich had contributed greatly to the Vietnamese community in the local area, particularly in downtown Clarendon. She said he had lived in Springfield but worked in Arlington and lobbied for Vietnamese refugees. Mr. Aiken asked if there were any opportunities or plans to honor Mr. Bich.

Mr. Laporte said that given this park had no connection to Mr. Bich, he believed the HALRB should move to support the most popular name and encourage the installation of an honor or marker for Mr. Bich closer to downtown Clarendon. Mr. Aiken agreed with Mr. Laporte. The Vice Chair asked staff if there were plans to honor Mr. Bich closer to the [Clarendon] area. Ms. Liccese-Torres replied there was interest both by the HPP and the Public Art program to install some interpretation in Clarendon, but she did not have information on what the project might be or when it might commence. She encouraged the commissioners to read more about Mr. Bich's contribution to Arlington in the [County's] Little Saigon publication dedicated in his memory.

Ms. Lawrence said that since the community would be using this space most often, she supported naming it after what they had selected.

The Vice Chair asked for final questions. Upon hearing none, he made the following motion:

I move that the HALRB support the naming of the park at 11<sup>th</sup> Street North and North Danville Street, as "11<sup>th</sup> Street Park" as selected from the list of four potential park names. Moreover, the HALRB supports the naming of a future park or commemorative element after Nguyen Ngoc Bich.

Ms. Meyer seconded the motion. Ms. Liccese-Torres called the roll and the motion passed 7-0-2, with Mr. Turnbull and Mr. Wenchel abstaining.

### **HISTORIC MARKER REVIEW: W-L HIGH SCHOOL**

Ms. Bolliger stated that the alumni of Washington-Liberty High School had returned with changes to their proposed historic marker previously approved by the HALRB in July 2017. Mr. Fleming, an alumnus working on the project, introduced the proposal and explained that the alumni also had discussed creating a companion marker highlighting the school's civil rights history.

Mr. Laporte complimented the applicants on their improved marker. He made several grammatical recommendations including:

- Adding a hyphen in "Beaux-Arts"
- Language about the W-L Cadet Corps, the first JROTC in Northern Virginia, in the main text was repeated almost exactly in an image caption, and it would be a better use of space to only retain it under the image
- Under the "1945" chronological item, removing the '44-'45 reference as it was implied in the title

- Under “1959” the reference to “Stratford” was unrelated to the history of W-L, so consider just stating that “the first 4 black students enrolled in W-L in September” to bring that historical reference to W-L
- Under “1966” adding an apostrophe after “boys” as it was possessive and to save an extra word (to read “The boys’ varsity basketball team is the first integrated team to win the Virginia state championship.”)
- The central image had a different notation style than all the other images, with an overlaid date and no caption, which was confusing given the caption style for the other images
- The logo would need to be updated to the new County logo

Mr. Fleming said the alumni had been back and forth about the content, including deciding whether to include the names of the four students who desegregated the school. Ms. Lawrence noted that she did not necessarily agree with Mr. Laporte’s comment about changing the language about the Stratford reference, particularly if there was going to be a companion marker about civil rights, as it could tie the information together. Mr. Laporte suggested saying at minimum “Arlington’s Stratford Junior High School” to help readers understand the context. Ms. Liccese-Torres pointed out that Ms. Hamm and Mr. Peck’s voices were absent and recommended allowing this decision to be made by the marker sponsors. The Vice Chair agreed. Mr. Fleming explained that with the renaming of Stratford, and with permission from Ms. Hamm and her family, he recommended a hall of honor be installed in the building which could increase the educational opportunities for the students.

The Vice Chair recommended rewording the last paragraph as he did not consider the Olympics, World Series, and Super Bowl to be ‘awards’ in the same way as the Nobel and Pulitzer prizes were. He then made a motion to approve the marker:

I move that the HALRB approve the W-L High School historic marker as submitted with additional technical and conforming changes that have been suggested during the HALRB meeting as well as with any minor editorial corrections resultant from further HPP staff review.

Ms. Lawrence seconded the motion. The Vice Chair asked for final questions. Upon hearing none, Ms. Liccese-Torres called the roll. The item passed 7-0-1 (Mr. Turnbull had left during the conversation and Mr. Wenchel abstained). Mr. Fleming further recommended the HALRB consider the idea of a hall of honor identifying Arlington’s educational heroes.

## **REPORTS OF THE VICE CHAIR AND STAFF**

### **Vice Chair’s Report**

The Vice Chair thanked everyone for their collaboration during his first time chairing the commission. No other updates were noted or shared with the group.

### **Staff and Other Reports**

Ms. Liccese-Torres invited Mr. Laporte to introduce the upcoming Arlington Committee of 100 panel presentation on the status of historic preservation in Arlington. Mr. Laporte summarized the program and invited everyone to register for the virtual presentation, any time up to the meeting.

Ms. Liccese-Torres gave a progress report on the *Historic Preservation Master Plan* update effort. She explained that the timeline needed to be shifted a few months to allow more time to address internal feedback received on the draft document. She thanked the commissioners for their interest in the outreach activities and explained that there would be more opportunities in the coming months.

Lastly, Ms. Liccese-Torres stated that staff had received several new requests for Local Historic District designation which would be brought forward to the HALRB in due time. Ms. Gwin asked if staff could elaborate on the districts. Ms. Liccese-Torres replied that they could not since staff was still communicating the information to some of the owners.

The Vice Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:01 pm.