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

Wednesday, August 17, 2022, 6:30 PM

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Aiken
Omari Davis, Vice Chair
Alexandra Foster
Sarah Garner
Jennie Gwin
Carmela Hamm
Gerald Laporte
Joan Lawrence
Robert Meden
Rebecca Meyer
Mark Turnbull
Richard Woodruff, Chair

MEMBERS EXCUSED:
Robert Dudka
Andrew Wenchel

STAFF: Lorin Farris, Historic Preservation Planner
Serena Bolliger, Historic Preservation Planner
Mical Tawney, Historic Preservation Specialist

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

The Chair called the meeting to order. Ms. Bolliger called the roll and determined there was a quorum.

EXPLANATION OF PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

The 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. Woodruff then described the logistics of how the virtual meeting would proceed via the Microsoft Teams platform and/or the call-in number.

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

The Chair asked for any concerns or questions on the consent agenda. Mr. Laporte had a question about consent agenda item #2 (CoA 22-17), so it was moved to the discussion agenda and taken up by the board for consideration first.

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

Consent Agenda Item #2: CoA 22-17, 4102 N. Old Glebe Rd.

Ms. Bolliger summarized the application: the trustees of the Walker Chapel Local Historic District had applied to remove a deteriorating fire escape from the rear of the building and convert the doorway into a fixed decorative window with an inlaid cruciform. Further, they proposed to retain the landing on the ground level of the fire escape and reconfigure the metal handrail. Ms. Bolliger stated that staff recommended approval of the application given that the fire escape was not character-defining, and that it was not visible from the front elevation of the church. She explained that the Design Review Committee (DRC) had considered this item at its August 3, 2022, virtual meeting and Mr. Dudka had asked why the doorway had not been infilled with a window to match the other opening. She noted the applicant explained how initially they had planned to infill with a window but the architect had suggested this idea and it had been well received by the Trustees who felt it added to the vista of the church from the cemetery (which otherwise did not appear to be a sacred space from that perspective). Ms. Bolliger said the commissioners then placed this item on the consent agenda for the August 17, 2022, HALRB public hearing.

Ms. Bolliger invited Mr. Larry Danforth to speak on behalf of the Walker Chapel Board of Trustees; he stated that the staff report had covered the information but that he was available for questions.

Mr. Laporte questioned why the doorway would not be infilled with a window matching the other windows on the same elevation. He expressed concern that Standard #9 of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards* was being used as rationale for the approval of this item, as this was not new construction, and he did not believe the differentiation from the existing windows contributed to the integrity of the historic character.

Mr. Danforth explained that the congregation believed this alteration would add to the character of the building, communicating from the rear of the building that it was a religious structure. He noted the fire escape had long concerned the celebrants from a safety and an aesthetic perspective, thereby making that part of the cemetery unattractive for burials. He said the congregation felt that the cruciform would make the area feel more consecrated. Mr. Meden asked if the fire escape was needed for egress, and Mr. Danforth replied it was not.

Hearing no further comments, Mr. Woodruff polled the board informally to help direct his motion. Based on the poll results in support of the application, the Chair proposed a motion:

I move that the HALRB approve CoA 22-17 as submitted.

Mr. Turnbull seconded the motion. Ms. Bolliger called the roll and the motion passed 11-1-0, with Mr. Laporte opposed.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Laporte moved to approve the consent agenda (CoA 21-09A) without item #2. Mr. Davis seconded the motion. Ms. Bolliger called the roll and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Agenda Item #1: CoA 22-18, 5800 Washington Blvd.

Ms. Bolliger provided a project summary, explaining that Swanson School opened in 1940, was the oldest surviving middle school in Arlington, and had been built in the Colonial Revival style with partial support from New Deal funding. Ms. Bolliger invited Ms. Hamm-Modley of VMDO Architects to present more details. Ms. Hamm-Modley described that the scope of the exterior project included the restoration of the operability of the sealed original front entrance doors, the addition of a ramp and all needed mechanisms

for ADA accessibility, the addition of exterior lighting, and the relocation of the flagpole to accommodate the ramp. She stated that additional axonometric and three-dimensional renderings had been provided as requested by the DRC and that a simpler cable design had been selected for the banister of the metal, movable portion of the ramp.

Ms. Bolliger noted that Mr. Dudka had asked in the DRC meeting whether the design guidelines allowed for non-wood doors. Ms. Tawney confirmed that the *Swanson Middle School Design Guidelines* did not require wooden doors. Ms. Bolliger concluded that the staff recommended approval of the application as it would restore the use of a historic opening, allow more access to the building, and increase safety for the students. Furthermore, she said the proposed ramp would not be connected to the building in a permanent way, thus complying with Standard #10 of *The Secretary of Interior's Standards*.

Ms. Gwin thanked the applicant for the changes to the application, including the additional images and the reduction in the number of cables on the metal ramp banister, allowing more visibility of the historic building. She stated that she believed these changes were in line with what the DRC recommended for approval.

Ms. Lawrence asked if the ramp would be connected to the ground or to the building. Ms. Hamm-Modley confirmed the truss would be connected to the ground and the ramp would be connected to the truss.

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

I move that the HALRB approve the subject application as proposed to restore operability of the Swanson School main entrance door. HALRB finds that the project meets the requirements of Standard #6 of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* relating to replacement of missing features, and Standards #9 and #10 relating to new additions and alterations of historic structures.

Mr. Aiken seconded the motion. Ms. Bolliger called the roll and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Agenda Item #2: CoA 21-05A, 2326 N. Jackson St.

Ms. Bolliger introduced the application for 2326 N. Jackson St. as a modification to a previously approved CoA. She provided background context: the original single-family residence at 2326 N. Jackson St. was a 1.5-story minimal traditional vernacular dwelling built before 1923. In 2007 and 2008, the owners took steps to satisfy the requirements of both sections 31.A.F.6 (current 15.7.11) of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance (ACZO) and the Code of Virginia title 15.2-2306.A.3 to list the property for sale for a period of one year, and subsequently filed for a County building permit to demolish the house.

Ms. Bolliger explained that the HALRB approved a new single-family home for the lot in July 2021 (CoA 21-05). However, she noted the new construction had protruded 17.1" higher out of the grade than originally approved and therefore the applicant had returned to the HALRB for retroactive approval of the height change, as well as a new handrail on the front porch (a zoning necessity stemming from the added height from grade). She said the application also included a request for a new wooden window at the basement level on the south elevation.

Ms. Bolliger stated that [at the August virtual meeting of the DRC], the DRC members expressed concern that the applicants had not come forward as soon as they had discovered the issue with the site grade. The height of the project had produced concerns when it was first proposed in 2021, and the applicant had reduced the height by 7' in response to the comments of

commissioners and neighbors, so the community issues with the height were known. Ms. Bolliger explained that based on her analysis of the drawings, the design itself had not changed, only that the height of the grade versus the foundation had been underestimated. As the original home had not had a banister, Ms. Bolliger recommended moving away from the current design which resembled Craftsman and Colonial Revival homes in the neighborhood. She suggested spacing the spindles out further to increase the transparency of the banister. She added that staff did not find the inclusion of the new window inappropriate as windows in stairwells are not uncommon in Maywood homes.

The Chair clarified that the property owner had secured permission to demolish the original dwelling based on the fulfillment of the Code of Virginia and ACZO requirements, but that the HALRB had never “approved” the demolition of the original home.

Jay Hanseman, the architect for the project, explained that given the grade and the requirements for the stormwater planters and drywell, the home had protruded further from visible grade than expected.

Mr. Davis spoke for the DRC. He said DRC’s main concern was that these changes had been applied without the HALRB or [preservation] staff having been informed and that the permission for the height change was retroactive. He stated that the DRC members had expressed an expectation of being included in the [County’s] permitting approval process.

Mr. Hanseman noted the site plan that had been submitted by the civil engineer and approved by the HALRB had included 5 steps on the front porch, as he had identified early in the process that the stormwater planters and drywell would raise the height of the house. He explained there had been a miscommunication and the drawings that had been submitted to the HALRB during its initial review were incongruous with the requirements of the house.

The Chair observed that it appeared that the applicants had only come forward because they needed approval for a very visible banister. Ms. Lawrence stated that as a neighbor, she often passes this property and noticed the additional height. She recognized the stormwater issues but pointed out that all projects in Virginia and Maywood were required to fulfil the same requirements within their approved designs. She recalled a project on 23rd Rd. N. which had its roof constructed 12” higher than proposed and [the owners] had been required to demolish the roof and build it according to the [HALRB-approved] plans. She expressed that she had no issue with either the window or the banister.

The Chair asked Mr. Hanseman to confirm that beyond the house protruding further from the land, the design had not changed from the original, and that the only new modifications were the porch railing and the basement window. Mr. Hanseman confirmed.

The Chair asked for any further questions. Upon hearing none, he made the following motion.

I move that the HALRB approve CoA 21-05A to permit the project as proposed in the subject application. This approval is limited to this specific situation given the tardy coordination of architectural and civil engineering drawings to accommodate the stormwater management required the height increase noted in this application which was not presented in the originally approved CoA application.

Ms. Gwin seconded the motion. The Chair noted that this situation was not precedent setting and a future application with these conditions would not be approved. Ms. Bolliger called the roll and the motion passed 8-4-0, with Ms. Garner, Ms. Lawrence, Mr. Turnbull, and the Chair opposed.

PARK NAMING: BEAVER POND

Ms. Bolliger invited Max Ewart, a planner in the County’s Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), to introduce the renaming effort for a newly renovated park at the intersections of N. Glebe Rd., Fairfax Dr., and Washington Blvd. He explained that in part of the park was a retaining pond that was created alongside I-66 as a stormwater basin but had ceased functioning as such due to invasive species and human detritus. He said the pond was rehabilitated to provide water filtration again. Mr. Ewart recounted the public process that had been held thus far and presented the four most popular naming options: Ballston Wetlands, Crossroads Wetland Park, Thaddeus Lowe Park, and Wetlands Vista Park.

Mr. Aiken asked for information about the connection between Thaddeus Lowe and the wetland. Mr. Ewart replied that his hot air balloon ascent had occurred from Ball’s Crossroads (near the intersection of N. Glebe and Wilson Blvd.), after which Ballston was named. Mr. Ewart noted that this wetland had never occurred naturally and that it had been created at the same time as I-66 for water retention.

Mr. Laporte asked by how much the public had preferred the Ballston Wetlands name. Mr. Ewart checked the number and explained that of 481 votes, about 40% had selected Ballston Wetlands, 33% had selected Crossroads Wetland, with 15% of the vote going to each of the two remaining selections. Mr. Laporte commented that the area had not been known as Crossroads but rather Ball’s Crossroads, so he suggested it was inappropriate to name it Crossroads Wetland without the prefix. Mr. Laporte then stated that his research indicated that Thaddeus Lowe had not been taken seriously in his day and so he wanted more discussion before serious consideration was put to naming the park after him. Mr. Laporte then asked for clarification on the case of the “wetland” portion of the [proposed] names as it was plural in “Ballston Wetlands Park” and singular in “Crossroads Wetland Park.” Mr. Ewart replied that the names had been taken as they were submitted, and the idea of consistency had not been considered.

Mr. Turnbull noted that as a 15-year Ballston resident, he had not heard about this public process. He commented that Crossroads Vista Park indicated a sweeping view, which was not accurate for this site, and that Ballston Wetlands implied a natural feature, which also was not accurate. He stated he preferred Crossroads Wetland Park purely because of the singular use of “Wetland,” indicating the small and contained nature of the park, but agreed with Mr. Laporte that the lack of the prefix of “Ball’s Crossroad” might cause confusion with the better-known Bailey’s Crossroads.

The Chair recommended taking a poll after final comments from the commissioners. Ms. Foster stated she did not believe Thaddeus Lowe needed to originate in Arlington to be honored in Arlington, noting that the Wright brothers were honored on the North Carolina license plate despite being from Ohio. She also did not believe that the contemporary public’s perception of a pioneer aeronautical engineer should factor into the consideration given how forward-thinking scientists had been treated by their peers throughout history.

Mr. Laporte recommended amending the primary candidate to “Ballston Wetland Park” in the singular based on Mr. Turnbull’s comment. Mr. Ewart stated that the commission had every right to propose and vote on a name that was not presented initially. The Chair asked if a poll was sufficient or if a formal vote was necessary. Mr. Ewart asked for an informal poll and then a motion to support the name with the most votes.

The Chair polled the commissioners. The proposed names received the following distribution:

- Ballston Wetland (singular): 9 votes
- Crossroad Wetland Park: 1 vote
- Thaddeus Lowe Park: 1 vote
- Crossroads Vista Park: 0 votes

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

I move that the HALRB recommend the renaming of Beaver Pond to Ballston Wetland Park.

Mr. Laporte seconded the motion. Ms. Bolliger called the roll and the motion passed unanimously.

PARK NAMING: HQ2

Ms. Bolliger invited representatives from JBG Smith to present the project. She explained to the commission that the public art presentation was informational only since no formal approval of the public art was necessary from the HALRB; however, the HALRB would be voting on the names of the parks in which the public art was going to be located. Per the County’s Public Art Guidelines, the artwork had been presented to the Public Art Committee of the Arlington Commission for the Arts and was approved on March 3, 2021. Ms. Bolliger thanked the Arlington Public Art Program for their work on this project and for collaborating with Amazon and JBG developing the proposal.

Ms. Bolliger reminded the commissioners they had received one comment in advance for this item (transcribed below for the record) and that the commenter also had signed up to speak.

Comment #1

Met Park is not an appropriate location for a display that features Queen City/East Arlington. The display would be 0.8 mile southeast of the site of Queen City. That is the same distance as the distance between the Courthouse and Rosslyn Metro stations. The distance is greater than the 0.6 mile between the Pentagon City and Crystal City Metro stations.

There is very little documentation of the name “Queen City”. The name does not appear in any known photographs.

The first mention of the name is on the 1900 Virginia Title Company map of Alexandria County.(1) On that map, Queen City is a station on the Washington, Alexandria and Mt. Vernon Electric Railway. The station was adjacent to the south side of the federal government’s Arlington Reservation, which contained Arlington National Cemetery.

The station was also adjacent to the 2-acre Mount Olive subdivision, which contained the Mount Olive Baptist Church. Some African Americans attended that church after leaving Freedman’s Village.(2)

The name of Queen City does not appear on the 1915 U.S. Geological Survey’s (USGS) topographical map of Washington and vicinity. The map shows that the Washington-Virginia’s Railway’s Mount Vernon Junction was located near Queen City’s former site. The area was part of the larger East Arlington community, whose east end bore a station named “Relee” (for Robert E. Lee). Relee was closer to the site of Met Park than Queen City had been.

A system map of the Washington-Virginia Railway published no later than 1916 shows that Mount Vernon Junction was located between the Queen City and Relee stations. The 1929 USGS topographical map of Washington and vicinity shows the location of East Arlington, but not the location of Queen City or Relee.

Summary of history:

The name of “Queen City” existed for only a short time around 1900. Its location was 0.8

mile northeast of the Met Park site. It soon became part of East Arlington, whose east end (Relee) was named for Robert E. Lee.

Display:

The proposed display will feature a columnar structure bearing the name of “Queen City”. This is inappropriate. Relee was closer to Met Park than Queen City. East Arlington subsumed both Queen City and Relee. The structure should therefore bear the name of East Arlington or Relee.

The text and satellite image of the display, if it will be built, needs to identify Relee. However, from a historical standpoint, it would be best to not construct the display at all, because East Arlington/Queen City/Relee was not close to the display’s site.

References:

*(1) “Map of Alexandria County, Virginia for the Virginia Title Co”. Alexandria, Virginia: The Company. 1900
(<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3883a.ct002287/?r=0.404,0.84,0.223,0.105,0>)*

*(2) “From Freedman’s Village to Queen City: One Community’s Evolution”, Center for Local History, Arlington County Public Library. 2018
(<https://library.arlingtonva.us/2018/01/31/from-freedmans-village-to-queen-city-one-communitys-evolution/>)*

*(3) Marshall, R. B.; Sutton, Frank (1915). “Topography: Maryland - District of Columbia - Virginia, Washington and vicinity.” Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior: United States Geological Survey.
(<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3850.ct004480/?r=0.486,0.705,0.077,0.037,0>)*

*(4) “Washington-Virginia Railway System Map”. Washington-Virginia Railway Company. 1916 or earlier.
(<https://www.facebook.com/168519303161755/photos/a.172199919460360/2816176215062704/>)*

*(5) “Washington and vicinity, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia”. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior: United States Geological Survey. 1929.
(<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3850.ct003609/?r=0.489,0.748,0.079,0.036,0>)*

The JBG Smith representative Madhvi Shukla invited the artist Nekisha Durrett to speak. Ms. Durrett thanked the commission for its time and explained the research and design process which led to the creation of her art installation entitled “Queen City.” She said she had been engaged to design a tribute to a historically African American community nearby which had been displaced during the construction of the Pentagon. She said the red brick tower would have the words “Queen City” protruding in bricks, and during the day the public would be able to enter the tower and look up to see hundreds of blue vessels hanging from the top of the tower, illuminated by a sealed skylight.

Grace Dials of JBG Smith then explained that a public easement had been placed on the northern and southern parcels of the HQ2 sites to provide public parks governed by the County public park process, including the process of naming the parks. She said the applicants had developed name recommendations

based on the County’s naming policy and had submitted three pairs of suggestions to the public for consideration. She described the options as: Pen Place and Met Park (short for Pentagon Place and Metropolitan Park); Elm and Fern Parks (named after the adjacent streets which were named for trees native to the area); and Chickadee and Goldfinch Parks (in honor of the birds seen in the park vicinity).

Ms. Bolliger invited one public speaker, Mr. Berne, to present. He reiterated the concerns stated in his written comment that the artwork on this site should commemorate Brickhaven [a community marked on two 1900s maps as being on the site of the park] and that the park should be named after a more appropriate rail station which, according to his research, had historically been located nearby.

The Chair opened the discussion to the commissioners. Mr. Turnbull asked about the statistics for the public voting. He then stated that “Met Park” did not seem distinguishing, and “Pen Place” might be confused with “Penn Quarter” in Ballston. Given the statistics he had seen, he thought that the second and third choices had not fallen far behind the first choice in popularity. Finally, he voiced his support for the artist’s design.

Ms. Dials explained that the numbers had been transcribed onto the slide incorrectly. She noted the correct tallies: Elm and Fern parks had received 26% of the vote jointly; Chickadee and Goldfinch parks had received 35% jointly; and Met Park and Pen Place received 39% of the vote.

Ms. Lawrence thanked the artist for her strong proposal and stated that it would be a significant contribution to the area. She agreed with Mr. Turnbull that “Met Park” and “Pen Place” left something to be desired and sounded like athletic stadiums.

Mr. Aiken asked Ms. Durrett how the site would be secured at night. She explained that a reclaimed wooden door on the installation would be locked at night, thereby restricting access to the art piece. He thanked her for her presentation and concept.

Mr. Meden asked Ms. Durrett to expand on the lighting of the installation at night. She said she was working with a lighting designer who would be using lights built into bricks which would cantilever out of the structure.

Mr. Davis asked Ms. Durrett if the art piece would have a skylight or if it would be open to the elements. She explained that there would be a skylight, but that the roof would be sealed to the exterior.

Mr. Turnbull stated that the artwork was adequately close to the historical site, given the geographical restrictions preventing interpretation [of Queen City] in situ, and believed it would introduce many people to this important and little-known history. Mr. Aiken associated himself with Mr. Turnbull’s comments and voiced that as an East Arlington resident, he believed it would be a valuable contribution to the area’s historical interpretation.

Mr. Laporte stated there were many facets to the demise of Queen City, and he hoped to see them included in the interpretation planned for the site.

Hearing no further comments, the Chair polled the commissioners about their preferred park names. Many of the commissioners stated their preference for the location directive provided by the reference to the adjacent Elm and Fern streets for identifying the park to visitors, rather than the confusion created by the generic nature of the Met and Pen park names. The proposed names received the following distribution:

- Elm and Fern: 9 votes
- Goldfinch and Chickadee: 2 votes
- Met Park and Pen Place: 1 vote

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

I move that the HALRB recommend that the two parks be renamed Elm Park and Fern Park.

Mr. Laporte seconded the motion. Ms. Bolliger called the roll and the motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS OF THE CHAIR AND STAFF

Chair's Report

The Chair informed the members that Ms. Garner would be stepping down from the commission due to a move outside Arlington. He thanked her for her many years of service and valuable expertise. Ms. Garner thanked the commission and expressed her sadness about leaving. Ms. Bolliger also thanked Ms. Garner for her support through many years and projects.

Staff and Other Reports

Ms. Tawney thanked the commissioners who had signed up to volunteer at the upcoming County Fair and invited the other commissioners to visit staff and the volunteers at the fair on Friday night, Saturday during the day and evening, and Sunday in the afternoon.

Ms. Bolliger explained that the County Board had ratified the mandate to remove Arlington's emergency order which had allowed for entirely virtual commission meetings, and that the Governor of Virginia had required that certain boards, including architectural review boards, have an in-person quorum to conduct business beginning in September. She explained that the HALRB did not have an official quorum in its By-laws but historically "Robert's Rules" had been used, which established quorum at the smallest majority (fundamentally half plus one, which for the current Board make-up would be 7 people). The in-person meetings of the HALRB would be held at 6:30 pm in the newly opened Cherry Room, now 216 on the second floor of the public lobby of the Bozman Government Building at 2100 Clarendon Boulevard. She confirmed that it was a large room, appropriate for the number of commissioners and staff expected to join even by COVID-19 room requirements (which had been lifted). She said a portable air filtration unit had been added to the room for safety and staff booked a second room in the case of many attendees. She explained that parking was free under the County building or in the surface lot after 5 pm and that the building had direct access by Metro. While commissioners would be required to provide a quorum in person, she said applicants would still be able to attend virtually if they chose, or in person.

Ms. Bolliger announced that given the importance of in-person quorum, she would be taking roll at the end of each HALRB meeting to determine if quorum could be met for the next meeting; this would help staff determine if regular HALRB business would be possible or whether staff would need to warn applicants that their items would be deferred for an additional four weeks.

The Chair asked for clarification on the virtual attendance policy. Ms. Bolliger explained that the commissioners could attend 25% (therefore 3) of the HALRB meetings virtually (but not consecutively) in any calendar year and remain in good standing, but beyond that they would technically be non-voting members at any virtual meeting.

Ms. Bolliger called the roll and confirmed that there would be an in-person quorum for the September HALRB hearing.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:09 pm.