

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT

TO: HALRB

FROM: Serena Bolliger, Historic Preservation Planner

DATE: October 11, 2021

SUBJECT: 1961 North Culpeper St., CoA 21-24, Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery Historic District

Background Information

Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery is one of two church-affiliated, historic African American cemeteries in the Hall's Hill/High View Park neighborhood. It has been maintained continuously by the trustees of the affiliated church, Mount Salvation Baptist, since the congregation built its first church building on the property in 1892. The cemetery contains at least 89 burials ranging in dates from 1916 to 1974 (although it is likely burials began shortly after the congregation purchased the property in the late-19th century). There are at least 43 burials without grave markers, but it is unknown if any pre-date the 1916 burial.

The cemetery was designated as a Local Historic District in February 2021 at the request of the Mount Salvation Baptist Church Trustees. Although several new headstones were added to the cemetery just prior to the designation approval, this CoA application is for the first replacement headstone under the approved design guidelines. The design guidelines state:

“Any new or replacement markers should be similar in material, dimension, and design to existing historic headstones in the cemetery but should be clearly marked with the year of their installation so that they may be distinguished from original historic fabric.”

Proposal

The applicant is requesting to install a replacement headstone for her parents William and Elsie Spriggs. The headstone will be made of Georgia gray granite, with a serpentine top tablet measuring 1'8" x 6"x2' on a polished flat top base measuring 2'4" x 1'x6". The headstone will be manufactured by Kline Memorials and installed in the approximate location of the applicant's parents' grave in the southeast of the cemetery near the smaller parking lot.

DRC Review

The Design Review Committee (DRC) reviewed this application at its October 6, 2021, virtual meeting and found that the headstone was appropriate for the property. The DRC recommended that this application be placed on the consent agenda for the October 20, 2021, HALRB hearing.

Recommendation

The Historic Preservation Program staff recommends approval of the application as the proposed headstone meets the design guidelines language and adds to the official record of on-site burials. There are similar, but not identical, markers in the cemetery (e.g., Naomi Best and Charles R. Brown). The year of installation will be carved on the rear of the stone to indicate that it is a new marker and differentiate it from historic grave markers within the cemetery.

Additionally, the proposal meets the intent of Standards #9 and #10 of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*:

Standard #9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Standard #10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.