



HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD

Courthouse Plaza One 2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 700 Arlington, VA 22201
TEL 703.228.3830 FAX 703.228.3834 www.arlingtonva.us

April 18, 2022

Honorable Katie Cristol, Chair
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Clarendon Sector Plan Update – Treatment of Joyce Motors building

Dear Ms. Cristol and Members of the County Board

I am writing again to say that the Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board strongly supports the sequential motions passed by the Planning Commission recommending full-frontage preservation in situ for Joyce Motors in the Clarendon Sector Plan Update. As you know this building is ranked as Essential in the county's Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) – one of only ten such buildings.

We were extremely disheartened to learn that county staff, for a second time now, chose to ignore the Planning Commission's recommendation. As I said in my previous letter to you, the Joyce Motors building, built in 1949, is the lone surviving example of the once common porcelain-enameled service station buildings in Arlington County.

Also in my earlier letter, I enumerated the HRI Goals and Policy Objectives which the County Board adopted on October 18, 2011, in which the county committed to work with property owners to preserve and protect Essential historic buildings like Joyce Motors. These were the words adopted by the Board – the county would take steps to:

“...preserve the buildings' historical and material integrity to the maximum extent possible...actively promote TDR's in exchange for building preservation... weigh the impact on Essential properties when awarding bonus density to development proposals...encourage owners of essential properties to take advantage of available zoning tools (e.g. site plans and use permits, TDR, local historic district designation)...”

None of that due diligence has been done in this case. No regard has been given to any alternatives that might protect the integrity of this historic building. Instead it will be demolished and some of the porcelain enameled panels will be placed on the new building planned for the corner of 10th Street and North Irving.

This is not what historic preservation is. At best, it's a sad memorial to a lost opportunity to update and reuse a building that the neighborhood might actually enjoy and feel some connection to.

There is potential in this old building to be the center of a small gathering spot in the neighborhood. In the context of the larger new development, it would connect the new building to the community in a way that's both interesting and useful to the people who live in Clarendon

As you know, the Planning Commission adopted a second resolution unanimously directing the County Manager to begin a process of reviewing the HRI inventory to provide clear options available to the county for ensuring preservation in-situ for all remaining undeveloped Essential properties in the commercial inventory. This is something that needs to happen. HALRB strongly supports that review and urges you to follow through with the Manager.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,
Dick Woodruff
Chairman, Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board

Cc: Mark Schwartz
Brett Wallace
Cynthia Liccesse-Torres
Lorin Farris