



HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD
ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

STAFF REPORT

TO: Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)

FROM: Lorin Farris, Historic Preservation Principal Planner
Mical Tawney, Historic Preservation Associate Planner

DATE: March 12, 2025

SUBJECT: Barcroft Apartments RA2 Section 3 (Rehabilitation; Buildings 27-29), Section 4 (Rehabilitation; Buildings 30-31)

Background Information

Barcroft Apartments (Barcroft) is a 1,334-unit garden apartment community located along the Columbia Pike corridor between South George Mason Drive and South Four Mile Run Drive. Constructed between 1943-1944 by architect William H. Harris, Section 3 includes Buildings 27-29 and Section 4 includes Buildings 30-31. Both Sections 3 and 4 are located towards the southern tip of the Barcroft Apartments along S. Four Mile Run Drive. Barcroft is identified in the Columbia Pike Neighborhoods Area Plan (or Form Based Code) (N-FBC), which was adopted by the County Board in 2013. The N-FBC is an alternative zoning district that applies to multi-family residential areas along Columbia Pike that surround its commercial centers. When projects utilize the FBC, they first are required to receive a Use Permit from the County Board. Barcroft is one of three multi-family residential areas identified as a Conservation Area in the N-FBC. In the case of Barcroft, the applicant is required to follow specific standards for Conservation Areas as identified in [Part 7, Conservation Area Standards](#) (scroll to page 7.1, or page 38 within the hyperlinked PDF). The HALRB reviewed rehabilitation plans for Section 3 for Buildings 24-26 in May and June 2023 and Section 4 for Buildings 32-34 in September and October 2023.

On February 25, 2025, the County Board approved changes to Part 7, Conservation Area Standards of the N-FBC, such as allowing new exhaust penetrations that are minimum in size and/or frequency with covers that match the color of the adjacent brick and mortar, expanding basement windows to meet egress requirements, and allowing canopies above accessible entrances to meet Virginia Housing Minimum Design and Construction Requirements (MDCR) (waivers request are required). This staff report has been updated to reflect that these changes now comply with Part 7, Conservation Area Standards of the N-FBC and therefore, no longer need a Conservation Area standard modification.

Proposal

The Jair Lynch project team is proposing to rehabilitate Buildings 27-29 in Section 3, Buildings 30-31 in Section 4. The following is a summary of the scope of work:

- Repair of exterior masonry (including brick and cast stone). Repoint deteriorated mortar where necessary matching the existing size, shape, color, and texture. Repaint previously painted brick as necessary.
- Gently clean and wash all existing brick facades with low- to medium-pressure adhering to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.
- Replacement of basement-level steel-sash windows with aluminum windows matching the original configuration.
- Installation of interior storm windows at existing wood windows.
- Replacing the wood windows with aluminum-clad windows where necessary for egress (If the mechanics of the storm windows at the existing wood windows could not be possible, the project team would only then propose replacing the wood windows with an aluminum-clad window).
- Removal and replacement of existing mechanical systems including existing through-wall mechanical system openings. Patch exterior wall to match surrounding brick.
- Addition of new exhaust penetrations.
- Removal and replacement of non-original light fixtures with new compatible fixtures.
- Repair slate roofs as necessary.
- Repair and paint existing metal railings.
- Repair and paint existing non-original shutters.
- Repair and paint building entry doors and frames.
- Repair and paint all steel lintels.
- Repair and paint existing wood fascia and trim.
- Replace damaged louvered attic vents in-kind and paint wood louvers.
- Addition of outdoor amenity spaces and landscape improvements within courtyards adjacent to Buildings 27, 28, 29, and 31.

Design Review Committee (DRC) Review

The Jair Lynch project team attended the March 5, 2025, hybrid DRC meeting to discuss the project scope. Ms. Lauren Riley of Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley & Walsh presented the scope for Sections 3 and 4 along with the larger project team. Although the project scope is similar to ones that the DRC/HALRB has reviewed in the past, this scope does not include any accessible units because some of the buildings are located in a Resource Protection Area (RPA) due to a floodway/floodplain. The County is doing additional studies to determine if recommendations are needed in terms of stormwater management and mitigation of these buildings because they are located in an RPA. Although the project team does not have a final recommendation from the County, they are moving forward with the renovation use permit assuming that there could be about six units in the basement areas that may need to be unoccupied because they could be affected by the floodway/floodplain. Again, the scope does not include accessible units, there are also no changes to the façades to create new entrances. Mr. Jeff Kreps, Director of Landscape Architecture at VIKA Columbia, also presented on the improvements to the small amenity areas for the residents. Mr. Omari Davis asked about the location of the RPA and the project team explained that the RPA is showing the widest point with the floodplain and floodway being inside that area. Mr. Kreps further explained the current stormwater channel located in Sections 3 and 4,

that it is open to the sky and was channelized with concrete walls. There were no further questions from the DRC and that concluded the presentation and discussion.

Recommendations

The HPP staff supports most of the work identified in Sections 3 and 4. The scope follows the guidance of both Part 7 of the Conservation Area Standards in the N-FBC, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties*, specifically standards #1, #2, and #9:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
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.

The replacement of wood windows with aluminum-clad windows where necessary for egress would require a Conservation Area standard modification. The HPP staff acknowledges that the original window configuration and fenestration pattern is important to retain, which the applicant is proposing. However, the HPP staff has questions about the necessity of this material change and is also unsure how the proposal for interior storm windows at existing wood windows is a viable solution. The HPP staff suggests that the HALRB discuss the proposed material change to the existing wood windows during the March 19, 2025, hybrid HALRB meeting.