

HOUSING COMMISSION
KELLEN MACBETH, CHAIR

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June 10, 2026

Hon. Matt de Ferranti, Chair
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Melwood LHD Designation

Dear Mr. de Ferranti:

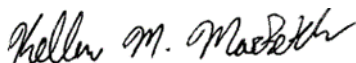
At its May 7, 2026, hybrid public meeting, the Housing Commission discussed the potential Melwood Local Historic District (LHD) designation. The Commission strongly believes that adding 105 new Committed Affordable Units (CAFs) on-site is in the best interest of our community and far outweighs any potential benefit of preserving a portion of the Nelly Custis School structure. The Commission urges the County Board to reject the LHD designation for any portion of the Nelly Custis School and instead prioritize the people of Arlington and their needs over physical structures by allowing for the 100% affordable housing project to continue to move towards completion.

The Commission also noted that following a lengthy study, county staff's recommendation is to not designate the site as historic. While historic preservation recommendations are not a core part of the Housing Commission's purview, the Housing Commission is charged with developing "clearly-stated, equity-focused, community representing County housing policy" recommendations to the County Board. On this policy question, we believe the best course of action for our community is clear: developing affordable housing in a transit proximate location clearly outweighs historical preservation desires for the site.

The Commission voted unanimously, 7-0, to recommend approval of the site plan.

Thank you for your consideration and support of affordable housing in Arlington.

Sincerely,



Kellen MacBeth
Chair