



STAFF REPORT

TO: HALRB
FROM: Rebecca Ballo, Historic Preservation Planner
DATE: November 13, 2015
SUBJECT: Stratford School Designation and Updated Design Guidelines

The Historic District Designation of the Stratford School was requested by four former students in March 2015. Historic Preservation Program staff followed through on that request and brought forward a proposed Historic District Designation Report and Design Guidelines for the HALRB to review. At the June 17, 2015 HALRB meeting, the Review Board voted unanimously as part of the public hearing to send the Historic District Designation of the Stratford School, and its associated Draft Design Guidelines, forward to the School Board for their consideration. Since that time, the School Board has heard the designation request as an Informational Item only, and has not schedule it as an Action Item. Under the terms of the MOU between the HALRB, APS, and the County Manager, the School Board has the opportunity to either recommend designation, recommend designation with conditions, or not recommend designation. After the School Board makes a recommendation, the item should come back to the HALRB to consider the School Board comments. After such consideration, the HALRB can then vote on a report to send to the County Board. Another path exists for historic district designation requests and that is set out in the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance Section 11.3.4. The course of potential action described in the Zoning Ordinance allows the HALRB to send a request for a Historic District Designation forward to the County Board directly. The Historic District Designation request should include Design Guidelines in most cases.

This month, the HALRB is hearing the Historic District Designation request under the terms of the Zoning Ordinance Section 11.3.4 as the School Board has not made a final recommendation on the case since the HALRB's June 2015 hearing.

The facts of the historic significance of the property have not changed since the June 2015 hearing. Staff finds that the proposed Stratford School Historic District meets 8 of 11 Designation Criteria that are listed in Section 11.3.4A of the Zoning Ordinance, specifically:

- Criterion A: The property is listed or is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places
- Criterion B: The property has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the country, state, or nation.
- Criterion C: The property was the site of a significant local, state, or national event.
- Criterion D: The property is associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the county, state, or nation.

- Criterion E: The property embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, or method of construction.
- Criterion G: The property embodies the elements of design, detailing, materials, or craftsmanship that renders it structurally or architecturally significant.
- Criterion H: The property has a distinctive location, or singular physical characteristic that makes it an established or familiar visual feature.
- Criterion K: The property is suitable for preservation or restoration.

The Draft Design Guidelines have been significantly altered and updated since the June HALRB hearing. HPP Staff met with APS Staff and their consultants from Quinn Evans Architects three times to discuss changes to the Design Guidelines so that the document would better reflect the needs and concerns of APS. To that end, HPP staff altered the types of changes that would require HALRB approval and moved a number of items to require HPP staff review through the ACoA process only. Other changes include the removal of any CoA review for the placement or removal of relocatable classrooms (consistent with the Swanson School Design Guidelines), the removal of any review for trees, and replacing images with more text to explain more accurately the intent and the focus of design review. All changes presented to the HALRB at this point were reviewed by APS staff in October.

Should the HALRB vote to send this designation request forward to the County Board, Draft Design Guidelines will need to be sent as well. After the HALRB recommendation, the item may be scheduled for a Request to Advertise, followed by a hearing at the Planning Commission and a final hearing at the County Board.