



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

Neighborhood Services Division

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

*APPROVED*

**MINUTES OF THE HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD**

**Wednesday, January 21, 2015  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Lobby Conference Rooms Cherry & Dogwood**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Joan Lawrence, Chairman  
Charles Matta, Vice Chairman  
Charles Craig  
Robert Dudka  
Greg Holcomb  
Gerry Laporte  
Mark Turnbull  
Kevin Vincent  
Nathan Uldricks  
Andy Wenchel  
Richard Woodruff

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Erin May  
Tova Solo

**STAFF:** Cynthia Liccese-Torres, Program Coordinator  
Rebecca Ballo, Preservation Planner  
John Liebertz, Preservation Planner

**ROLL CALL & CALL TO ORDER**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm. Mr. Liebertz called the roll and determined there was a quorum.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 17, 2014, HALRB MEETING**

The Chairman called for a motion or comments on the December meeting minutes. Mr. Matta moved to approve the December meeting minutes. Mr. Craig seconded the motion and it passed 8-0-3 (Mr. Turnbull, Mr. Vincent, and Mr. Holcomb abstained).

**PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS (CoAs)**

The Chairman stated that she would readdress the public hearing procedures prior to the discussion items. She requested that any attendees that wish to make public testimony fill-out speaker slips.

The Chairman announced that there were two cases on the Consent Agenda. She stated that CoA 14-17 would be pulled from the consent agenda since there is a public speaker on that item. The Chairman called for a motion on the second item (CoA 14-12A) of the consent agenda. Mr. Vincent moved to approve the second item of the consent agenda. Mr. Laporte seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- CONSENT AGENDA (CoAs):**
- 1) 1050 North Highland Street  
Ruth M. Van Landingham on behalf of the Trimark Corporation  
Arlington Post Office Historic District  
HALRB Case 14-17 (HP1400027)  
Request to install a 14' x 30" sign with channel letters that reads "NACAC."
  
  - 2) 1005 South Quinn Street  
Cameron & Catherine Saadat  
Harry W. Gray Historic District  
HALRB Case 14-12A (HP1400061)  
Request to amend CoA 14-12 in order to change the dimensions of the second-story deck.

**PULLED CONSENT AGENDA ITEM #1: 1050 NORTH HIGHLAND STREET, COA 14-17**

The Chairman welcomed the representative of the applicant, Ruth Van Landingham of Service Neon Signs. Ms. Landingham briefly discussed the project and the application. Joan Burdette, Director of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), provided background information and mission regarding NACAC. She noted the organization's purchase of the 4<sup>th</sup> floor (top floor) at The Phoenix Condominium, 1050 North Highland Street, in 2008, provided background information regarding the Comprehensive Sign Plan approved as part of Site Plan #333 for the building, and previous attempts by NACAC to acquire signage. She added that visitors have great difficulty finding the location of the office due to irregular street numbering; directions are often given with visual landmarks (restaurants, etc.).

The Chairman welcomed Kevin McGarry, representative of US Wheat Associates, another commercial business that owns a single floor within The Phoenix Condominium. He stated that he is also on the board of the Phoenix Condominium, but is speaking solely on behalf of US Wheat. He noted that NACAC owns less than five percent of the entire building and suggested that placing the NACAC sign on the upper story suggests ownership of the building. He further questioned the need for NACAC to have such signage as it is not a business catering to customers off the street. He added that while US Wheat controls a single floor of the condominium building, they would never suggest installing a sign similar to the one proposed by NACAC.

The Chairman opened the discussion to the HALRB and asked for the Design Review Committee's (DRC) report. Mr. Dudka stated that the DRC focused on the design of the signage. The committee requested numerous alterations including but not limited to: 1) the reduction of the height of the signage; 2) the

placement of the signage in relation to the windows; 3) the spacing of the letterings; 4) the font of the signage (to match the font shown on the NACAC’s website); and 5) the use of LEDs to decrease its thickness.

Mr. Laporte asked for clarification regarding the “applicant,” specifically the role of Trimark. Ms. Van Landingham stated that they were the owners of the building.

Mr. Liebertz provided some additional background regarding the application. He stated that the HALRB is reviewing the signage application due to its location within the Arlington Post Office Historic District. When NACAC first applied for signage in 2008, the Phoenix Condominium had a Comprehensive Sign Plan as part of Site Plan #333, but there were no sign design guidelines for the Arlington Post Office and Dan Kain Historic Districts. In response to the application, the HALRB approved *Guidelines for Signage in the Arlington Post Office and Dan Kain Building Historic Districts*. The guidelines directed the HALRB to review channel letter signage on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Liebertz noted that Morgan Lerner, the general manager (on behalf of the Trimark Property Management Corporation) of the Phoenix Condominium, stated [via e-mail] that:

The “right” to apply for a sign was given to those who both purchased an entire floor in the 1050 building and formally applied to the County within six months of closing on the space. Only NACAC meets both requirements.

Mr. Laporte confirmed that Trimark is the property management company and the applicant first approached Trimark regarding the signage application.

The Chairman called for a motion on this item. Mr. Craig moved that the HALRB approve the first item (CoA 14-17) of the consent agenda. Mr. Vincent seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

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| <b>ADMINISTRATIVE (CoAs)</b> | 1) | 3550 Wilson Boulevard<br>Arlington County Arts Center (Owner: Arlington County)<br>Clarendon School Historic District<br>ACoA 15-01 (HP1400062)<br>Request to install a temporary art exhibit titled the “The Wormhole.” |
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The Chairman stated that discussion of the Administrative CoA would be heard towards the end of the meeting. [Due to the length of the meeting, the item was not discussed and will be presented by staff at the February 18, 2015, HALRB meeting.]

**HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION REQUEST: WILSON SCHOOL**

The Chairman introduced the local historic district designation request concerning the Wilson School located at 1601 Wilson Boulevard. She noted that a request was made by a group of citizens and neighbors that the HALRB consider the Wilson School for local historic designation. The Chairman stated that Arlington Public Schools (APS), the owner of the property, would present first, followed by the Historic Preservation Program staff, public speakers, and then the item will be discussed by the board. The Chairman briefly discussed the requirements for historic designation as outlined in Section 11.3.4.A.4 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance.

John Chadwick (Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations, Arlington Public Schools) and Bill Marzella (EHT Tracerics, Historic Preservation Consultant) presented on behalf of APS. Mr. Chadwick introduced the School Board's recently approved actions at the Wilson School site. On December 18, 2014, the School Board voted to relocate the HB-Woodlawn Program from the current Stratford Building to a new facility at 1601 Wilson Boulevard. This new facility will have a total of 775 seats and be completed by September 2019. The school board also approved the creation of a new middle school by means of an addition at the Stratford School (current home of the HB-Woodlawn Program) for a total of 1,000 seats to be completed by September 2019. He noted that the Stratford Building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Chadwick stated that APS is committed to historic preservation and is seeking to work with Historic Preservation Staff to be able to request local historic designation for the Stratford building.

Mr. Marzella noted EHT Tracerics' work within Arlington County and stated that he will speak in response to the staff report that recommended that the Wilson/Fort Myer Heights school be designated a local historic district. He provided a summary of the evolution of the building and discussed the existing conditions [photographic views of the original school and its additions from numerous viewpoints were shared with the board via a PowerPoint presentation]. He called into question the integrity of the original 1910 building as the 1957 addition resulted in the comprehensive rehabilitation of the exterior and interior. He added that such changes to the 1910 building included, but were not limited to the: 1) reorientation of the main entrance/access; 2) removal of the portico, main entryway, and door surround; 3) replacement of the windows; 4) and alterations to the interior. He contended that these comprehensive changes altered the feeling and character of the school. Mr. Marzella added that the staff report noted that certain limited interior details remain such as the tin ceilings, but the current interior is more reflective of a late-twentieth century educational facility.

Mr. Marzella discussed the evolution of the site in respect to the surrounding neighborhood. He displayed a 1943 map and noted the change in the area from the early-20<sup>th</sup> century. He analyzed the replacement of the primary small, single-family, detached frame houses with large-scale, mixed-use commercial development. Mr. Marzella stated that the school property can no longer be properly interpreted in its historic setting.

Mr. Marzella requested that the HALRB dismiss the designation for the following reasons. First, the property fails to rise to the necessary level of significance and does not meet the minimum of two criteria required for designation. Second, the property exhibits a major loss of historic integrity and does not present a compelling argument of integrity to any one period of significance. Third, EHT Tracerics questions the feasibility of a restoration given the extensive loss of historic fabric and comprehensive historic documentation. Lastly, the Wilson School property does not share the historic significance or integrity of other designated school sites throughout Arlington County.

Mr. Marzella stated that the first criterion under which the property is recommended for designation is Criterion B. The designation form states that the property is representative of the development of an early-twentieth century educational facility in the County. Mr. Marzella contended that the loss of physical integrity is so extensive that the building has limited ability to convey that significance or even its appearance as an early-twentieth century academic building. As stated by the designation form itself, the school's integrity of setting, design, and workmanship has been dramatically compromised to the point where it is no longer discernible as an early-twentieth century educational building in either style or form. He added that while the property retains its integrity of location, this alone cannot illustrate its historic significance or its context within the growth of the Fort Myer Heights/Rosslyn area.

Mr. Marzella stated that the second designation criterion under which the property is recommended for designation is Criterion K, the property is suitable for preservation or restoration. The designation form states that the property is suited for a preservation treatment that would restore the many features of the 1910 building that have been lost over time. These lost, character-defining architectural features that contributed to its original sense of elegance and grandeur include the cupola, windows, projecting portico and pediment, main entryway (doors and surround), brick chimneys, and the entire interior. Mr. Marzella continued to contend that the designation form also suggests that the property's impaired integrity limits its ability to be restored. The staff report suggests that restoration is not an ideal treatment for this building, but that it was chosen because the loss of integrity was so great that neither preservation nor rehabilitation treatments would yield sufficient results. EHT Traceries questions the viability and suitability of a restoration treatment from a preservation perspective and as a practical alternative for the future use of this site.

Mr. Marzella examined the context of the Wilson School in respect to three other similar educational facilities (Clarendon School, Swanson School, and Hume School) that have been successfully designated as local historic districts by Arlington County. In particular, he noted that Clarendon School was designed by Charles Robinson, built the same year as the Wilson School, and retains ample architectural character to represent an early-twentieth century educational building. He briefly discussed Swanson School and Hume School. Within this context, while the Wilson School displays certain aspects of architectural character and evolution as an educational property, it does not adequately convey any sufficient character or integrity to a particular period that merits designation.

In summary, Mr. Marzella recommended against the designation of the Wilson School property as a local historic district due to its failure to meet the designation criteria and its loss of integrity that does not allow it to convey its historic use as an early-twentieth century educational property. The history of education, however, is important, and he recommends that the sense of history embodied in the Wilson School site be continued in a new school building by means of its continued use as an educational institution, and memorialization and interpretation that celebrates the development of the site.

Mr. Chadwick discussed specific concerns that APS has regarding the retention of the Wilson School. He noted that APS has unprecedented student enrollment growth. In addition, due to the County's desire to maintain its AAA bonding capacity, funding for new construction is severely limited. The School Board is under tremendous pressure to deliver as many seats as possible within its bonding capacity. Therefore, restoration would mean the replacement of many removed features and renovation of the interior to meet current educational standards, which would reduce the funds to construct seats for additional students.

Mr. Chadwick stated that there has been a lot of work completed with the ongoing WRAPS [Western Rosslyn Area Planning Study] initiative. A major principle of the study is to create open space for the community and students. Given the programmatic requirements of the new building and configuration of the site, the retention of the original building would reduce the amount of open space for athletic and other amenities.

The Chairman thanked the applicant and asked Ms. Liccese-Torres to present the staff historic designation report. Ms. Liccese-Torres noted that Richard Tucker, a colleague in the Planning Division, could address any questions regarding WRAPS. She provided the following background information:

The current request to consider the Wilson School for local historic district designation was received by County preservation staff on 11/17/14. The request was submitted by 12 Arlington residents.

This is actually the second time that the Wilson School is being considered for local designation. The first request was received in February 2007 from the Radnor/Fort Myer Heights Civic Association and the North Rosslyn Civic Association. At that time, the County's Historic Preservation (HP) staff completed extensive historic research and a designation report, which was presented to both the Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board in December 2008 and to the School Board in March 2009. While the HALRB at the time recommended designation of the whole property and sent the designation request forward, the School Board voted against it and the request went no further.

Ms. Liccese-Torres shared the historical highlights of the property as detailed in the designation report that was updated in January 2015. She stated that the Wilson School is the second-oldest extant school building in Arlington County. Originally named the Fort Myer Heights School, it officially opened to students on April 4, 1910. The building was designed in the Neoclassical style by Richmond architect Charles Morrison Robinson. The original 1910 T-shaped section of the building still fronts Wilson Boulevard and was renamed Wilson School in 1926 in honor of Woodrow Wilson. There were 2 additions built, the first in 1925 and the second in 1957. The building remained in active use as an elementary school for 58 years. A century later, it is still used as an educational and community facility.

Ms. Liccese-Torres noted that in order for a resource to be considered for local historic district designation, it must meet at least two of the eleven designation criteria listed in Section 11.3.4.A.4 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance. The Historic Preservation staff finds that the original 1910 section of the building known as the Fort Myer Heights School meets Criteria B and K. Criterion B states that a property has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation. Ms. Liccese-Torres contended that the 1910 Fort Myer Heights School is significant for its historical association with the development of public education in Arlington County and the growth of the Fort Myer Heights/Rosslyn area in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century. She stated that it is the second-oldest extant school building in the County and was used continuously as an elementary school for 58 years. Presently, it is still used for educational and community functions.

Ms. Liccese-Torres added that Criterion K states that a property is suitable for preservation or restoration. When evaluating property for preservation or restoration under the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance, staff is guided by the standards of the National Park Service. Staff often also considers the rehabilitation of historic properties as part of the evaluation process. Ms. Liccese-Torres read the definitions as outlined by the National Park Service:

- **Preservation** is defined as the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time;
- **Rehabilitation** acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining its historic character; and
- **Restoration**, which depicts a property at a particular period of time in its history, while removing evidence of other periods.

Ms. Liccese-Torres recognized that physical integrity is also a factor to be considered when assessing historic properties for local historic district designation. Historic integrity allows a resource to convey

significant aspects of its past and to illustrate a sense of past time and place. She summarized the assessment of integrity as detailed in the designation form:

Designed by Charles Morrison Robinson, the original 1910 section of the Fort Myer Heights School building has limited integrity of design, workmanship, and materials. The 1957 remodeling compromised most of the character-defining features of the original building by: 1) removing the front entrance portico, pediment, cupola and chimneys; 2) changing the original front entrance; and 3) removing the arched basement windows and the nine-over-nine double-hung wood-sash windows.

However, there are still some remaining physical elements of the original 1910 school that are discernable from the later additions and are also representative of early-20<sup>th</sup> century school architecture. These remaining physical features of the 1910 school include its: 1) massing; 2) concrete and brick on the exterior and stamped tin ceilings on the interior; 3) alternating arrangement of the five symmetrical bays of window openings and brick on the front; 4) wide frieze; 5) decorative modillions in the cornice; and 6) low-pitched hipped roof.

Overall, the original 1910 section of the school has limited remaining physical integrity to express its period of significance given that many of its character-defining architectural features have been removed. Its impaired integrity of design, materials, and workmanship suggest restoration as the appropriate treatment for the historic building, rather than preservation or rehabilitation, as defined previously. That said, however, how practical or cost-effective it would be to restore the building to that appearance and to reflect that period of significance is debatable.

The Chairman asked Mr. Liebertz to call the public speakers. Mr. Liebertz noted that there were six public speakers and first called forth Stan Carson. Mr. Carson stated that he is President of the Radnor/Ft. Myer Civic Association and one of the twelve signers of the letter requesting historic designation. He praised the HALRB for their collective commitment to preserving Arlington's history and architecture, and contended that Wilson School is one of the great historic assets of our community.

Mr. Carson presented a PowerPoint. He displayed photographs of the Maury (Clarendon) School and Wilson School. He stated that both schools were designed by Charles Robinson and completed in 1910. Mr. Carson discussed the history of the school in relation to President Wilson. In 1919, President Wilson suffered a stroke, and Edith Wilson, the president's wife, assumed stewardship of the presidency and his rehabilitation program. As part of the rehabilitation, Ms. Wilson accompanied the President on daily drives throughout Arlington and waived to school children in front of the Fort Myer Heights School (now Wilson School). He discussed a copy of a 1926 letter sent from a trustee of the school board to Edith Wilson. The letter noted that the children of that school had come to recognize her and the late President, and the announcement to rename the school after the former President was received with enthusiastic applause. Via letter, Ms. Wilson conveyed her gratification. Mr. Carson argued that this part of the building's history is significant in accordance with National Park Service standards.

In summary, Mr. Carson noted that the Wilson School is important to the civic association, residents, children, and important for all of Arlington County. He noted that while there may be powerful voices that do not want to see preservation, the HALRB needs to recognize the importance of designating this critical piece of Arlington history.

Mr. Liebertz called Joseph DeBor. Mr. DeBor reviewed a number of slides from Mr. Carson's PowerPoint. He stated that Clarendon School and Wilson School represent the early history of Arlington's education. He argued that there is ample photographic records to consider restoration of the original Wilson school. The NPS provides excellent materials for the reconstruction of buildings. He noted the various missing elements outlined previously, but added that these are just parts, and that the building itself remains largely intact. As an example, Mr. DeBor said there are detailed federal guidance for the replacement of the columns. He contended the building should be returned to its 1920-1926 appearance. This coincides with President Wilson's rehabilitation program and the renaming of the school in his honor. He stated that Ms. Wilson writes in *My Memoirs* about President Wilson waving to Fort Myer Heights children on a regular basis. He suggested that Wilson School is politically and historically significant, and therefore, worthy of preservation.

Mr. Liebertz called Stuart Stein. Mr. Stein requested the HARLB recommend historic designation for the Wilson School. He contended that one of the problems over the last couple of years is that the historic nature of Wilson School has been all too easily dismissed. The reason it was omitted from the county inventory is due to a policy decision, not because those involved considered it unimportant. He believed that it would have been listed in the essential category would it have been allowed to be considered. He added that the designation report helped to place Wilson School in its historic context and reminds us of its almost continuous use for educational purposes. Mr. Stein recognized Wilson School as an essential part of his community. Civic associations have utilized the school as early as the 1920s. He argued that the concerns about Wilson School's integrity of setting should not dissuade us due to the context of smaller-scale historic buildings that exist in metropolitan centers such as New York and Chicago. While the original building may not meet the programmatic needs of the entire site, there is no reason a creative architect could not incorporate the historic building into a modern school. He added that there needs to be a detailed cost analysis before any decisions are made. The significance of Wilson School, however, needs to be recognized by all parties. He stated that if the significance is not recognized, the mere nod to the history that Wilson School stands for will end up being no more than a nod to the wrecking ball. It is easier to tear down and may be less expensive, but if that is the path we always took, what would be left. Mr. Stein added that the 1910 structure would heighted the character of the new school building and that its demolition would be a great loss to the community and the county as a whole.

Mr. Liebertz called Ms. Munguntsetseg Frankosky, founder of the Mongolian School of the National Capital Area (MSNCA). Established in 2006, the MSNCA is a 501(C)3 organization is located at the Wilson School building. The MSNCA have valued and are happy to offer services within the historic school building. Since the opening of the school, the MSNCA has served more than 700 children. The mission is to educate Mongolian immigrants and children on their heritage and history, teach English as a second language, and learn from Arlington County (the host community). She stated that the potential demolition of the Wilson Building reminds her of the history of Mongolia. She added that Mongolia has no architectural evidence from the twelfth-century relating to Genghis Khan, but that historically significant buildings remain in places such as Paris, France, well before that period. It is a shame to lose your history and destroy buildings, particularly the educational facilities that deprive future generations.

Ms. Frankosky noted that the MSNCA is helpful to many organizations, including federal employees studying the culture and learning the language who come to the school for guidance. In addition, the MSNCA welcomes middle and high school students throughout the county who are learning about Mongolian history. She stated that the students are very interested in learning about history. Preserving the history of the Wilson School, is more important than saying it fails to fit in today's lifestyle. She requested the board consider the preservation of the Wilson School on behalf of the MSNCA staff and the Mongolian community.

Mr. Liebertz called Mr. Paul Mulligan. Mr. Mulligan provided a written copy of his testimony:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I am Paul Mulligan. I live in Rosslyn adjacent to the Wilson property. I have been an advocate for the playing field, playing court, and tot lot on or adjacent to the Wilson property for nine years.

Arlington Public Schools has not sold the property. Thank you, Arlington Public Schools.

Now, Arlington Public Schools have a historic increase in students who need facilities. H-B Woodlawn needs a new home. The new home should be the best it can be that includes a solar orientation. Solar orientation increased students' performance by 30%. Locating the school on the south side of the property will decrease open space and decrease green space. Therefore, I am for building the school on the best possible location, for the best possible solar orientation, for the best possible amount of green space.

The playing field and students on the field will enjoy the benefit of the sun.

The Arlington Public Schools should build a school on the Wilson property conducive to learning and study.

The schools system is looking forward and building so that Arlington students continue to receive the best education possible. I agree with this decision. The H-B Woodlawn students deserve the best possible school.

Mr. Liebertz called Dennis Gerrity. Mr. Gerrity stated the he is a resident of Colonial Village III, a local historic district, and requested the HALRB approve this application. He argued that there is a lot of solutions still available for the site. He added that there is a potential for the creation of a larger historic district/corridor including the Wilson School, Colonial Village Shopping Center, Colonial Village, and the commercial businesses on Wilson Boulevard near its intersection with North Courthouse Road. Mr. Gerrity suggested that if Dan Kain Building can be designated a local historic district, there is the potential to designate the more historically significant Wilson School. He reiterated that there are still preservation solutions to be investigated and recommended that the HALRB send the historic designation request forward.

The Chairman read a letter from Eric Dobson, Preservation Arlington, into the record.

Dear Chairman Lawrence:

Preservation Arlington supports the request to designate Wilson School as a historic district. We highlighted the Wilson School on our 2014 Arlington's Most Endangered Sites List. It is an important part of our history. We also feel the county should lead by example when it comes to preserving our past.

The Chairman stated that the matter was with the HALRB. She noted the guidance provided to the HALRB as outlined in the ACZO. She briefly discussed the previous recommendation of the HARLB in 2008. She noted that while the school board voted not to support the designation in 2009, a part of that motion directed the superintendent to:

...see that staff work with the resources of the HALRB, to recognize and respect the history of the Wilson School, and its contributions to the architecture of the community as APS and Arlington County consider potential improvements to the Wilson School fire station site...

The Chairman stated that the group of citizens concerned with the Wilson School has asked the HALRB to consider if the school today meets criteria for historic designation. She recommended that the HALRB consider the comment of the former Alexandria County Superintendent of Schools who when reviewing plans for Wilson School in 1908 that he found to be unacceptable: "We are building a school house not for a day, or a year, but one that will be permanent."

The Chairman stated that the report prepared by Historic Preservation Staff recommended that Wilson School meets two of the eleven criteria for historic designation. She read the eleven criteria for the record. She stated that if the HALRB finds two or more of these criteria are satisfied, the board will have to recommend a historic district boundary.

Before the HALRB starts discussion of the topic, Ms. Liccese-Torres requested that an electronic copy of a letter from President Wilson House, a site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, be read for the record. The letter from Robert A. Enholm, Executive Director of the President Wilson House, stated the following:

I write to support the pending historic designation of the Woodrow Wilson School site by the Arlington County Historic Affairs and Landmark Review Board. I ask that you please convey my sentiments to the members of the Board.

The President Woodrow Wilson House is a site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, DC. This home was completed in 1916 and occupied by President and Mrs. Edith Wilson when they left the White House in 1921. President Wilson died in 1924. Edith Wilson lived here until 1961, leaving the home to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The House been a historic house museum and monument to President Wilson for over 50 years.

Let me address two issues specifically: The value of historic preservation and the legacy of President Woodrow Wilson. "Historic preservation," as you know, embraces a range of uses and adaptive reuses of properties in order to enrich and preserve the character and nature of a community. The Woodrow Wilson School was built about a century ago and has achieved a cherished place in the history of Arlington and the memories of its residents. As a historic place, the Woodrow Wilson School is a unique landmark and community focus. It provides open space and relief from the sometimes relentless march of modern architecture.

Woodrow Wilson was one of the U.S. Presidents born in the Commonwealth of Virginia. President Wilson enjoyed "motoring" in his automobiles, and it is touching that Arlington school children would recognize and excitedly greet him when he would be driven through their community during and following his time in office. At the end of World War I, President Wilson imagined the world at peace and proposed the League of Nations to achieve that vision. This is a legacy that the citizens of Arlington, and especially the school children there, can value. This is history worth preserving.

The Chairman opened the discussion to the HALRB for comments. Mr. Turnbull stated that the HALRB should recommend designation of the Wilson School as a historic site as it meets four of the designation criteria. First, Wilson School meets Criterion B (the property has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation) due to: 1) its age as one of the oldest public buildings, 2) its representation of the period when the county first started to evolve from its rural setting to a true community of Washington, D.C.; and 3) its location as the bookend to Maury School at the other end of Wilson Boulevard, a major thoroughfare and key transportation route in the county's history (automobile and orange line of the Metro). Wilson School also meets Criterion D (the property is associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the county, state, or nation) due to its association with President Wilson. Mr. Turnbull listed President Wilson's many achievements (last Virginian to be President, concepts of self-determination, etc.) and the fact that he drove up and down Wilson Boulevard in his retirement. He stated that the Wilson School is a fitting memorial to the former President. Mr. Turnbull explained that the Wilson School meets Criterion F (the property is identified as the work of a master builder, architect, or landscape architect) as well. He contended that Charles Robinson is an incredibly important architect of educational facilities in the history of Virginia. Mr. Turnbull stated Robinson designed the well-known dormitory at William & Mary, but that the architect is also widely known for his elementary and secondary education buildings. He argued that the Wilson School, as altered as it may be, it still retains its symmetry, distinctive red brick and the cream concrete, and is unmistakably Robinsonian. He added that the in comparison with other Robinsonian schools (such as the Bennett School in Fairfax, Virginia), the design of the Wilson School is still easily discernible as one of his buildings. He suggested that the Wilson School is an important link to this master builder of schools. Lastly, Wilson School meets Criterion K (the property is suitable for preservation or restoration). For the reasons above, he contended that the school has the ability to be preserved and rehabilitated for use as a school or any other function. While APS's argument concern regarding the need for additional seats is valid, there are many ways to incorporate the historic school into a larger structure and meet programmatic needs. Mr. Turnbull also noted that he disliked the dismissal of historically significant buildings due to poor planning and decision making. He added that the demolition would set a bad example in a locality where we want to advocate for the preservation of our historic resources and reduce our carbon footprint. The teardown of historic structures is not the most carbon efficient approach. He recommended that the better path forward would be to designate it as historic and consider alternate funding for its restoration.

Mr. Matta stated that the 1910 section of the Wilson School suffered from unsympathetic alterations and neglect. He added that the school had at least 58 generations of students. The path followed in 1957 should not be followed or continued moving forward. He stated that the community displayed its appreciation of the building and noted that APS is a steward of the property and should recognize the school building as part of its history. He suggested that many aspects of the historic building, including its floor heights, the day light, and the sense of place it has created over the last century, will not be matched by new construction no matter how successful a design. He added that he supports the preservation of only the 1910 section of the building. Mr. Matta noted that the building meets four criteria: A, B, G, and K. Regarding Criterion K, he stated that a similar historic middle school in Alexandria, Virginia (now home of the Washington Alexandria Center for Architecture) has been successfully restored.

Mr. Woodruff stated that there are a number of ironies regarding this discussion. Arlington County faced the same issue of increasing enrollment in 1910. Farsighted leadership recognized the need for a monumental building that has stood for over 100 years, a significant feat. This building suffered from less visionary approaches, particularly the 1950s addition. Mr. Woodruff noted that the Wilson School meets

Criteria B and K, and that the HALRB should advocate for its restoration. He added that Arlington County should follow the example set forth by the District of Columbia who have adaptively restored and value their historic school buildings. He suggested that the Wilson School is probably one of the oldest remaining public buildings in Arlington County.

Mr. Craig supported the nomination and stated that the Wilson School meets Criteria B, D, F, and K. He added that while Arlington County values LEED ratings and numbers, there is nothing greener than historic preservation.

Mr. Dudka stated that the Wilson School is very important to Arlington for a number of different reasons. First, he reminded everyone that Wilson School is an opportunity, not a liability. Architects are clever and have the ability to incorporate a building of such high-character into a new complex. He suggested that the 1910 section of Wilson School would add to, not detract from, the complex. In addition, the original Wilson School orientated itself to Wilson Boulevard, while any new construction would face the side streets. The relationship between the school and Wilson Boulevard is paramount, and an easy way to preserve this is to retain the historic school. Mr. Dudka stated that the spaces within the historic school, including its 12-foot ceilings, create wonderful environments that are often no longer constructed due to a lack of perceived necessity. He referred to the successful preservation of the School Without Walls in the District of Columbia that incorporated the historic Grant School “in the round.” He advocated that APS start thinking more about urban development schemes rather than suburban ones.

Mr. Dudka added that the reconstruction of historic buildings to a period of significance is a common practice in historic preservation (i.e., Montpelier and the University of Virginia). In the 1950s, APS tried to make Wilson School a Modern-styled building by removing the cupola, portico, and windows. These aspects, however, are easy to replace since the core fabric of the building remains. The overall massing has not been chopped up. Mr. Dudka stated that he sees no reason why the County would not take this opportunity to preserve the building.

Mr. Dudka continued, stating that the Wilson School meets eight criteria, but five to a greater degree, including B, D, F, I, and K. Mr. Dudka agreed with Mr. Turnbull’s earlier assessment that the relationship between the two Charles Robinson designed schools is critical on either end of Wilson Boulevard. He suggested that the Wilson School is a very good example of a utilitarian structure. APS built a successful school that added to the community.

Mr. Vincent concurred with all the comments stated by the HALRB. Listening to the testimony and discussion of the HALRB, an argument can be made that the Wilson School site meets almost all but one of the eleven criteria. He addressed the broader issue of whether this is something Arlington County should be preserving, and argued that it should be preserved. Mr. Vincent stated that while he tends to favor property owners’ rights to use their property as desired, this is not a private developer/owner. In this case, the property owner is Arlington County and the citizens of Arlington County. APS is a steward of the building. The HALRB is an advisory board for the citizens of Arlington. Therefore, Mr. Vincent suggested that this case is different than the HALRB substituting their opinion for the opinion of a private property owner. He stated that tearing down the property would be a misuse of the site due to its historical value to the children and citizens of Arlington. The school building should be part of the educational program. Different eras of history are represent by this building. He appreciated the comments from the Mongolian School representative who stated that the school can be used itself as an educational tool. In the interest of the County and school programs, this building should be preserved.

Mr. Vincent reiterated that he is not advocating for preservation of the entire building, but restoration of the original section of the school. He stated that losing the remaining elements of the historic building that exist presently would be shameful. He noted that it is not just an architectural issue as Wilson Boulevard is one of the oldest roads in Arlington County. Wilson Boulevard was first a Native American trail, then became a Colonial Road, and later utilized by President Wilson. The road is the main street of Arlington County. Sited on the roadway, Wilson School was part of and witnessed many historical events since its construction. He added that due to its association with President Wilson, the school has national historic significance beyond its architectural merits and local importance. This history needs to be preserved.

Mr. Vincent agreed with other members' comments that historic preservation is the environmentally conscious approach. He added that teaching our children to reuse materials and buildings is an important lesson.

Mr. Vincent suggested that the comments by the HALRB will likely have no effect on the outcome of the project, but recommended the board continue to pursue designation of the building to the greatest possible extent. He stated that he is hopeful that APS will wake up and realize the building can be preserved, that it can be an element of the school design that will be placed on that site, and that they will not throw away an important part of Arlington's history and the nation's history.

Mr. Laporte discussed the historic district boundary and asked how the board will procedurally continue. The Chairman asked Mr. Laporte to limit current comments to the designation criteria. Mr. Laporte stated that his comments are limited to the 1910 portion of the school as this is the only section that warrants preservation. He suggested that no other proposed historic districts have met the same number of criteria as this particular school building, stating it may meet eight or nine of the designation criteria. He added that Wilson School is one of the most important resources within Arlington County and is one of possibly five historic public buildings.

Mr. Laporte noted that one of the school board members stated at a WRAPS meeting that the School Board assumed preservation of the Wilson School would cost too much money, but added that there are no known studies completed regarding historic preservation. He requested that any motion set forth by the HALRB contain language that directs the School Board to look at the question and study the actual cost of historic preservation. He stated that the 1910 building meets the following Designation Criteria: A, B, D, E, F, G, and K. He added that he is in favor of only restoration and not the preservation of the existing structure. He requested to associate himself with Mr. Vincent's comments regarding usual deference to private property owners. He agreed that APS is not a private entity, but must answer to all of the citizens of Arlington County. He noted that historic preservation is an important lesson for students, particularly as an environmentally conscious approach.

Mr. Laporte discussed the success of the local designation of Swanson Middle School. He relayed a story about the pride an individual felt that Arlington County designated the school he attended and that the County deemed it locally significant. Mr. Laporte suggested that historic preservation facilitates an attitude that we have a rich history, fosters community development, and brings elements of the community together.

Mr. Laporte stated that he attended the 2014 Preservation Virginia Conference in Norfolk, Virginia. The conference had a panel on the preservation of historic school buildings, which Preservation Virginia designated as one of the state's most threatened resources. Mr. Laporte added that he also attended a

meeting of the Arlington Historical Society the previous evening. While the historical society did not vote on the Wilson School issue, there was widespread support for its designation by the trustees.

Mr. Laporte suggested that any person who believes restoration is not conceivable should travel to Grant Elementary School in Washington, D.C. That 1888 building was preserved, but includes modern systems and facilities.

Mr. Wenchel stated that he is a historic architect and worked on a number of Washington, D.C. school buildings. He noted that the difference between the Washington, D.C. school buildings and the Wilson School is the lack of historic integrity and the loss of fabric on the Wilson School. The portico and cupola is just one piece, but the removal of the arched entry on Wilson Boulevard truly disservices the building. Any restoration to this building must reestablish this entrance. The loss of historic fabric is severe as the cupola and chimney provided character. He added that even the original Flemish bond brick has been painted over. As a result, he suggested that the remaining elements are compromised. The loss of the windows has completely altered the character of the building; it appears now as a 1960s building. However, the fenestration of the windows would provide significant daylight to any classes within the school.

Mr. Wenchel suggested that if the County designated the building, it needs to make a commitment to restoration. He added that the building is an insult to Wilson Boulevard as it stands. All of the modern high-rise office buildings address the street. The Wilson School turns its back on the street in a very non-civic way. He continued, that said, the building still has a great deal of merit as stated by my colleagues. Mr. Wenchel noted that it meets Designation Criteria: B and D. The building, however, has a serious loss of character-defining features and does not believe it would meet Criterion A as it fails to meet National Register standards. He stated that there is such a loss of architectural elements that he has mixed emotions about the designation.

Mr. Wenchel conveyed that the building has embodied energy as part of its construction and it would be a shame to disregard the structure. On the other hand, the historic photographs are rather shocking when looking at the current building. He suggested that most of the buildings preserved in Washington, D.C., and Arlington County have modern additions on the back, but are not drastically altered on the front facade. He stated that buildings such as McKinley High School were allowed to deteriorate, but the elements were intact. He added that the present Wilson School is not an attractive building on Wilson Boulevard, and in many respects, is an eye sore in comparison to its historic design. He stated that the exterior of the building must be restored and the interior rehabilitated as part of any designation plan. He added that the amount of daylight permitted by the windows would allow for interesting interior spaces.

Mr. Wenchel concluded by noting that the Wilson School meets the minimum two criteria, but without restoration, the building would continue to be an eye sore.

Mr. Holcomb echoed a number of Mr. Wenchel's concerns. He noted that the historic integrity of the building seemed compromised. Mr. Holcomb believed the building meets the minimum requirements, but simply designating the building will not mean that restoration will occur the way the HALRB wants it. Mr. Holcomb held up a watercolor picture of the original Wilson School design [as presented by public speaker Joseph DeBor] and noted that this is what the HALRB envisions, but the picture will not automatically occur upon designation. He stated that the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines recommend that any additions made to historic buildings are considered part of the building's history. Such an analysis would include the 1927 and 1957 additions. Mr. Holcomb suggested that he could argue that both additions meet the designation criteria since Arlington County at the time was under rapid expansion and needed additional

space to accommodate growth. He added that federal guidelines recommend that any contiguous new development consider the scale of the historic building. He stated that APS released a feasibility study earlier in 2014 for the Wilson School site. If APS constructed a building similar to the model shown in the feasibility study, the historic aspects of Wilson School would be completely lost due to the size of the proposed massing.

Mr. Holcomb concluded that he does believe that the Wilson School meets the minimum of two criteria, but has concerns about the final outcome if designation occurs. He added that the story with President Wilson contributes greatly to its significance.

Mr. Uldricks added that his colleagues covered the majority of points, but stated that the Wilson School meets the following designation criteria: B, D, F, and K.

The Chairman stated that historic preservation of the Wilson School is not only environmentally sound, but the correct approach in this case. The building should be restored. The Chairman recognized that historic preservation is not the easiest of paths forward. Preservation will take considerable effort and education, but it is an opportunity for Arlington to avoid the demolition of its historic resources and the proliferation of historic markers. Markers are a sad substitute to what already exists.

Mr. Matta presented a motion for consideration:

The HALRB finds, based on information presented to it in the Historic District Designation Report of January 20, 2015, as well as the public testimony presented, that the Wilson School meets at least Designation Criteria B, D, E, F, G, and K of the criteria for inclusion within a Local Historic District as required by Section 11.3.4.A.4 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance and recommends designation of a Local Historic District that includes the original 1910 Wilson School footprint and recommends restoration and rehabilitation of a Wilson Boulevard entrance as part of the new development on site.

Mr. Vincent seconded the motion.

Mr. Dudka offered an amendment given the number of school buildings preserved “in the round” in the region. He proposed that the historic district boundary include the building footprint and extend on the front to the Wilson Boulevard right-of-way, 25’ to the east and west sides of the 1910 building, and to the rear elevation of the 1925 addition. He added that designation of this property would not preclude construction within this boundary, but that it would require review by the HALRB for it to be appropriate to the original historic building.

Mr. Wenchel suggested that the boundary on the east side should extend to the property boundary (abutting the park) as it is more than 25’. Mr. Dudka did not object to the greater eastern boundary, but wanted to simply preserve the 1910 building in the round with the minimum possible boundary. This historic district boundary leaves open the possibility of open space around the building. Mr. Dudka reiterated that the board would be open to new construction within the historic district boundary as long as it respected the historic building. The intent is to preserve the entire 1910 structure, not just a facade.

The Chairman clarified the amendment proposed by Mr. Dudka. Mr. Matta amended his motion that any construction within the extended boundary as outlined above must be reviewed by the DRC/HALRB for articulation between the new and preserved structure. Mr. Laporte stated that such a review is typical per

a Certificate of Appropriateness and to achieve this outcome the board must simply include the property within the historic district boundary. Mr. Matta agreed with the intent of the discussion, but wanted to make sure to include all design solutions and innovative additions. Mr. Dudka agreed and noted that his intent is simply to require review within the 25' boundary and not to preclude demolition of any additions. He stated that his amendment could include language that the 25' boundary does not preclude new additions, but believes it is implicit in the legal definition of a historic district boundary.

At the request of the Chairman, Mr. Dudka reread his amendment: include the 1910 building footprint and extend on the south to the Wilson Boulevard right-of-way, 25' to the east and west side of the 1910 building, and to the rear (north) elevation of the 1925 addition. Mr. Turnbull seconded the proposed amended motion.

The Chairman asked for discussion on the amended motion. Mr. Vincent opposed the amended motion. He stated that HALRB is unlikely to prevail in regards to this designation, but to achieve the greatest chance for success, the HALRB should limit the number of constraints on APS. The associated costs for restoration are not likely to occur, but the preservation of the core of the building should be considered for educational purposes. Mr. Vincent stated that APS should include just the 1910 building footprint in the historic district boundary and hope for a sympathetically designed addition. He reiterated that requiring the additional 25' clearance will diminish the chance of the designation succeeding.

Mr. Woodruff stated that all of the HALRB members expressed that the Wilson School met the required criteria for designation. He urged the board to have a unanimous vote as that will be the best means of sending a message to the County Board and the School Board that the 1910 building should be protected. The Chairman asked for a vote on the motion. Members of the HALRB asked for clarification of the motion. Mr. Matta reread the original motion:

The HALRB finds, based on information presented to it in the Historic District Designation Report of January 20, 2015, as well as the public testimony presented, that the Wilson School meets at least Designation Criteria B, D, E, F, G, and K for inclusion within a Local Historic District as required by Section 11.3.4.A.4 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance and recommends designation of a Local Historic District that includes the original 1910 Wilson School footprint and recommends restoration and rehabilitation of a Wilson Boulevard entrance as part of the new development on site.

Mr. Wenchel discussed the preservation of particular elements of the façade. He reiterated that the face of the building is an eye-sore and needs to be addressed, particularly the arched entrance. He requested the amendment include language to include the arched central entry be reestablished on Wilson Boulevard. The Chairman noted that these are details that are not typical to historic district designation. Mr. Craig suggested that all aspects of the original design are included in the word "restoration" and calling out individual elements is unnecessary. Mr. Wenchel responded that he sought to establish minimum requirements that reoriented the building back towards Wilson Boulevard. The Chairman agreed, but requested more precise language that the board could vote on. Mr. Laporte added that the current argument is better suited for a future Certificate of Appropriateness if the Wilson School is listed as a local historic district. He recommended voting on the motion as read by Mr. Matta.

Mr. Dudka noted that he is open to other approaches than his previous amendment. The Chairman stated that the majority of the board is in favor of preserving the 1910 portion of the school. She added that this is incorporated in the original motion. Mr. Dudka agreed to withdraw his amendment in order to have the

full consensus of the board unless other members object. Mr. Laporte stated that he supported Mr. Dudka's amendment and requested that the front yard be included as part of the original motion. Mr. Vincent agreed that the views of the Wilson School from Wilson Boulevard need to be protected.

Mr. Craig suggested that even a 10' buffer would allow the original massing to remain intact. He added that if the HALRB preserves only the footprint of the building, there is the possibility that a new six-story building could directly abut any of the elevations. He recommends the inclusion of a buffer around the north, east, and west sides of the building, and agrees with his colleagues regarding the inclusion of the yard between the front (south) elevation and Wilson Boulevard. Mr. Vincent suggested that the HALRB show some flexibility and agreed with Mr. Woodruff that the designation of the property be unanimous. He stated that it is important that the school board realize that designation does not preclude new construction within the historic district boundary.

The Chairman divided the motion. The first motion will convey designation of the property and define boundaries. The second motion will include any recommendations. Mr. Matta read the first motion:

The HALRB finds, based on information presented to it in the Historic District Designation Report of January 20, 2015, as well as the public testimony presented, that the Wilson School meets at least Designation Criteria B, D, E, F, G, and K for inclusion within a Local Historic District as required by Section 11.3.4.A.4 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance and recommends designation of a Local Historic District that includes the original 1910 Wilson School footprint.

The Chairman stated that the consensus of the board is to extend the boundary to Wilson Boulevard. She recommended the motion include the 1910 building footprint and an extension of the boundary to Wilson Boulevard on the south side including the front yard.

Mr. Matta amended his motion:

The HALRB finds, based on information presented to it in the Historic District Designation Report of January 20, 2015, as well as the public testimony presented, that the Wilson School meets at least Designation Criteria B, D, E, F, G, and K for inclusion within a Local Historic District as required by Section 11.3.4.A.4 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance and recommends designation of a Local Historic District that includes the original 1910 Wilson School footprint and preserves the front yard (from the south elevation of the 1910 building to Wilson Boulevard).

Mr. Laporte seconded the motion and it passed unanimously (11-0).

Mr. Laporte requested that the emails regarding the photographs of the Grant School be included as part of the official record (Attachment A).

The Chairman requested the second motion in regards to the entrance of Wilson Boulevard. Mr. Matta stated the following motion:

That the HALRB recommends restoration and rehabilitation of a Wilson Boulevard entrance as part of the new development on site.

Mr. Wenchel seconded the motion. Mr. Dudka offered an amended motion:

That the HALRB recommends restoration and rehabilitation of a Wilson Boulevard entrance and cupola as part of the new development on site.

Mr. Dudka shared concerns that the original motion may inadvertently exclude the cupola that is not technically part of the entrance. Mr. Wenchel reiterated that how the building addresses the street is paramount and that the civic building should present a front to the street. He suggested the arched opening is a minimum, but that other aspects (cupola, chimneys, etc.) would be nice. Mr. Dudka responded that this motion is only a recommendation. The Chairman recommended simplifying the motion to restoring the original school building to its 1910 appearance. Mr. Dudka accepted the Chairman's recommendation.

The original motion and second were withdrawn. The Chairman proposed a new motion:

That the HALRB recommend that the Wilson School be restored to the appearance of the 1910 school building.

The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Mr. Vincent requested a motion that APS consult with the HALRB on any building that will be constructed on the property as not to affect the district. He believes that a consultation would be in order even if not approval. Mr. Craig expressed concerns that consultation will fail to produce tangible results. The purpose of one of the earlier amendments (requiring a buffer) would have given the HALRB oversight on the direct surroundings of the historic building. The Chairman stated that the HALRB has recommended the designation of the property and outlined boundaries. She expressed hope that the school board will take into considerations the recommendations and the community's desire to preserve the structure.

The Chairman thanked everyone for participating.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEM: GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER HOMES FORM BASED CODE USE PERMIT**

The Chairman welcomed the applicants. Ms. Ballo provided background information on the property located within the Columbia Pike Neighborhood Form Based Code Area. She noted that the George Washington Carver Homes is listed as an Important building in the Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) and previously considered for and deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The proposal calls for the demolition of all the existing buildings and construction of 50 four-story townhomes. As required by the County's HRI inventory policies regarding Important properties, the HALRB has the opportunity to comment on the proposed development prior to the use permit hearing by the County Board. Ms. Ballo discussed the history of the property and read excerpts of the defunct National Register nomination for the record. She noted the construction of the apartments by the Federal government for residents displaced by the construction of the Pentagon, the design of the George Washington Carver Homes by prominent African-American architect Albert Cassel, and the architectural merits of the property.

Ms. Ballo discussed the Columbia Pike Neighborhood Form Based Code that categorized the property as an area for redevelopment. Throughout the entire planning process, the HALRB recommended that the George Washington Carver Homes be set aside as a conservation area. This recommendation was not adopted by the County Board as part of the final plan. However, since the complex is listed as Important on the HRI, there are still numerous goals and polices that the HRI recommends the County take into

consideration. She stated, therefore, for the use permit, staff proposed a number of conditions for the applicant including:

- basic archaeology in the case that artifacts are found during demolition or construction;
- recordation of the Carver Homes with HABS photographs and drawings;
- salvage, donation, or the re-use of building materials
- creation of two new historic markers to be installed on site; and
- facilitation by the applicant of the communication between the residents and the Arlington County library staff who will conduct oral histories.

Staff recommends that one marker be dedicated to the history, lineage, and story of the residents of the Carver Homes and the second marker be devoted to Albert Cassel (the architect).

Matt Mattauszek, Arlington County Planning Department, provided additional background information. The Carver Homes residents approached the county in hopes of redevelopment in the early 2000s. Several options were explored and staff concluded that redevelopment prior to the establishment of the form based code was not feasible since the parcel is currently over built per zoning regulations. Due to this restriction, the site could not be redeveloped. He added that the occupants stated that the units were in very poor shape. County housing staff explored different expensive renovation scenarios, but reached no desirable solutions. Since this time, Arlington County adopted the Neighborhood Form Based Code that envisioned the redevelopment of the site. He added that the current application is consistent with the adopted policies that have come after the HRI document.

Matthew Allman, Walsh Callucci Lubley & Walsh, briefly discussed the project. He stated that all eight existing residential buildings would be removed and redevelopment with 73 total units (40 stacked town units and 33 townhouses). Mr. Allman called attention to a landscape elements, interior street network, and a small triangular mini-park at the northeastern portion of the site. The mini-park is a designated component of the Neighborhood Form Based Code Plan and included decorative elements (such as a water-feature, historic marker, etc.) required to satisfy the conditions of the proposals. Regarding the design of the complex, the architect strived for buildings that would be sensitive to and compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

Mr. Allman noted that the property is listed as Important on the HRI. The applicant agreed to the following condition: basic archaeological protections, a photographic record of the site, to facilitate contact with the existing Carver residents, and install one historic marker at the dog-leg of the mini-park. Mr. Allman stated that the applicant believes both topics could be covered in a single historic marker. Two markers is not feasible due to the limited amount of space on the site.

The Chairman requested comments from the HALRB members. Mr. Craig asked the applicant about the location of the historic marker and the perceived lack of exposure of the historic marker. Mr. Mattauszek responded that there will be a new interior road (13<sup>th</sup> Road South) intersecting the site. The park will face this new public road and the proposed location for the historic marker will be at its turn (near the proposed fountain). Mr. Craig suggested that the location for the historic marker may be better suited towards the exterior limits of the property. The interior location may only be viewed by the residents and users of the mini-park. The Chairman agreed with Mr. Craig's comments and suggested a more visible location. The marker is extremely important because the history of the community will be completely lost with the redevelopment. Mr. Allman confirmed that the mini-park will be a public park and not limited to the

residents of this new community. The Chairman added that the public at large may not typically access this park.

Mr. Vincent stated that the Carver Homes is a historically significant neighborhood and the redevelopment is a loss for the county. He noted that the project would have benefited from saving a singular residential unit to keep the history of the site partially intact in lieu of more modern, cookie-cutter homes. He added that the African American History of the County is disappearing and recommended saving a tangible piece of this development.

Mr. Vincent agreed that the historic marker on the street is critical, but the walkability/traffic flow near the historic marker is critical. If foot traffic is utilizing this street to access the school, than the proposed location of the historic marker may be appropriate.

Mr. Turnbull stated that the loss of African American history (development of complex and the design of the building) requires the installation of two markers. He contended that combining the two on a single marker diminishes their overall importance. The location of these markers, one in the pocket park and one in the street, is feasible, but the installation of two markers is needed.

The Chairman recommended reusing the building materials from the residences in the historic markers. She agreed with Mr. Turnbull that two historic markers are appropriate and do not need to be in the same location.

Mr. Laporte stated that a single historic marker could be adequate. He worried about potential historic markers/signage pollution on the site. Mr. Laporte believed that the proposed location in the park pocket would be appropriate. He hoped that the marker would have a historic photograph of the development from the vantage point of the marker. Ms. Ballo added that staff recommended two markers for the site due to the plethora of wonderful photographs of the community. There are images prior to construction of Carver Homes showing residents living in temporary trailers. In addition, there are plenty of images on the works of Albert Cassel. Staff desired to have the photographs and historic record shown to the greatest possible extent.

Mr. Woodruff asked if there is a topic to be voted on. If so, he stated that he would vote against the project on the basis of the uniqueness of the buildings and its history. He acknowledged that it is great that we are receiving a marker, but that it is a tragedy that the complex is demolished. The Chairman agreed.

Mr. Vincent requested the HALRB stress archaeology due to the three vacant areas on the site. Prior to the construction of the community, there are potential remains for the development of the African American community in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Due to a lack of general records, archeology has been an extremely helpful component in research efforts for the African American history. The Chairman asked Mr. Allman if a plan is in place to conduct archeology. Mr. Allman stated that no formal plan has been decided upon.

Ms. Ballo stated that staff is aware of the potential nineteenth-century artifacts and suggested a more comprehensive archeological investigation may be appropriate prior to demolition. The current condition is the standard site plan condition that stipulates that work halts and HPP staff assess any potential uncovered artifacts. Mr. Vincent suggested that the HALRB recommend a more complete archeological (Phase One) survey on the undisturbed areas. Ms. Ballo stated that the HALRB can recommend such investigations which have been approved in other similar circumstances.

Mr. Matta asked the applicant if a park can be located catty-corner to the school. He suggested that this would be an optimal location for a historic marker due to its proximity to heavy pedestrian traffic. Mr. Matta made other suggestions regarding the site layout. Mr. Mattauszek responded that a number of the restrictions in the Form Based Code discuss the location of the building frontages and limit the ability to place parks in certain locations.

Mr. Holcomb stated that he is in support of the two marker concept. He suggested that a marker be placed on the decorative wall near the school since it is highly visible. He added that this could be an appropriate location to reuse materials.

Mr. Vincent supported two markers since adequate visual materials are available. Mr. Laporte stated that he is open to a second marker if there is adequate material.

The Chairman confirmed that the HALRB recommended two historic markers and the staff's recommendation regarding content. Mr. Matta added that the architecture of the new development is dark (in comparison to the historic buildings) and recommended rethinking the overall design. Mr. Vincent stated that the HALRB should recommend a Phase One archeological report. The Chairman agreed and stated that she will write a letter on behalf of the HALRB.

#### **REPORTS OF CHAIRMAN, STAFF AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

- A) Chairman's Report: The Chairman welcomed Greg Holcomb, a newly appointed member of the HALRB. Mr. Holcomb shared his historic preservation experience and background.
- B) Survey: Mr. Liebertz noted that research on the Cambridge Courts Local Historic District is ongoing.
- C) Site Plan Review: Ms. Ballo noted that the preservation easements for Wakefield Manor and Courthouse Manor under Site Plan 435 (2025 Clarendon Boulevard) are under review in the attorney's office.
- D) Staff and Other Reports: Ms. Liccese-Torres discussed the upcoming first meeting for the Arlington History Task Force at the end of January. She stated that Mr. Turnbull will serve as the HALRB representative.

Ms. Liccese-Torres noted that staff is working with Arlington Lodge #58 in Nauck on the creation of a new historic marker that discusses the history of the organization and its importance within the County's African American community.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 pm.