



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

Neighborhood Services Division

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DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD

**Wednesday, April 20, 2016
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Lobby Rooms Cherry and Dogwood**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Charles Craig
Robert Dudka
Carmela Hamm
Gerry Laporte
Joan Lawrence, Chairman
Charles Matta, Vice Chairman
John Peck
Tova Solo
Sara Steinberg
Kevin Vincent
Andrew Wenchel
Richard Woodruff
Mitchell Zink

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Greg Holcomb
Mark Turnbull

STAFF:

Cynthia Liccese-Torres, Historic Preservation Coordinator
Rebecca Ballo, Historic Preservation Planner
John Liebertz, Historic 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.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW HALRB MEMBERS

The Chairman welcomed Sara Steinberg to the HALRB. She asked that Ms. Steinberg introduce herself to the board at the end of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 16, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

The Chairman asked for any changes or corrections to the March 16, 2016, meeting minutes. Mr. Matta moved to approve the draft meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Zink seconded the motion and it passed 7-0-5 (Mr. Craig, Mr. Dudka, Mr. Woodruff, Mr. Vincent, and Ms. Steinberg abstained; Ms. Hamm had not yet arrived).

PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS (CoAs)

The Chairman reviewed the public hearing procedures regarding speaker slips. She stated there was one item on the consent agenda and called for a motion. Mr. Craig moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Woodruff seconded the motion and it passed unanimously (12-0; Ms. Hamm had not yet arrived).

- CONSENT AGENDA:**
- 1) David & Linda Toepel
2206 North Kenmore Street
Maywood Historic District
HALRB Case 15-22A (HP1500039)
Request to remove the existing asbestos siding on the historic dwelling, partial demolition of the rear addition, construction of a one-story addition with an exposed basement, and that the HALRB direct the Zoning Administrator to grant a side-yard setback modification (the new rear addition will be located 6” from the property line).
 - 2) Carol Rickard-Brideau & Scott E. Brideau
3210 23rd Street North
Maywood Historic District
HALRB Case 14-06A (HP1600013)
Request to reauthorize expired CoA 14-06 and that the HALRB direct the Zoning Administrator to grant a side-yard setback modification (the new rear addition will be located 6’6” from the property line).
 - 3) Arlington County Public Schools
5800 Washington Boulevard
Swanson Middle School Historic District
HALRB Case 14-09A (HP1600011)
Request to reauthorize CoA 14-09 in order to remove and replace six arched windows.

The Chairman asked staff to briefly discuss the ACoA. Mr. Liebertz stated that the approved window was the Paradigm single-hung hybrid window reviewed by the HALRB at its previous hearing. He reminded the members that the Colonial Village Window Design Guidelines would be returning to the board for additional review.

ADMINISTRATIVE COA: 1) 1805 North Rhodes Street #248
Sita Farrell
Colonial Village Historic District
ACoA 16-05
Request to replace the existing windows.

DISCUSSION ITEM #1: JANE GILMER WILHELM PLAQUE, CHESTNUT PARK

On behalf of the applicant, Mr. Liebertz briefly reviewed the biography of Jane Gilmer Wilhelm and the proposed application. He stated that staff supports the installation of a bronze plaque on an existing bench at Chestnut Hills Park. For the benefit of the new HALRB members, the Chairman reviewed the general naming policy and stated that the HALRB often examines such applications. The Chairman moved to approve a plaque at Chestnut Hills Park memorializing Jane Gilmer Wilhelm. The motion unanimously passed 13-0; Ms. Hamm had arrived by this time.

DISCUSSION ITEM #2: DEMOLITION OF 2322 NORTH FILLMORE STREET, COA 15-01

The Chairman introduced the procedure for this item. She noted that while this is not a public hearing (as there will be no item voted on at the end of this discussion), the board is extending the courtesy of receiving public testimony. This will be a discussion primarily among the HALRB.

Mr. Liebertz provided a PowerPoint presentation that outlined the following: 1) the legal governing authority for historic preservation in Arlington County; 2) the establishment of the Maywood Neighborhood Local Historic District and the Maywood National Register Historic District; 3) the language in the original and updated *Maywood Design Guidelines* in reference to non-contributing resources; 4) precedent Certificate of Appropriateness cases in Maywood (2305 North Kenmore Street and 2821 23rd Street North); and 5) description and evaluation of 2322 North Fillmore Street. Mr. Liebertz reviewed the key differences between listing on the National Register of Historic Places and designation as an Arlington County Local Historic District. Regarding the National Register of Historic Places, he explained the definition of contributing /non-contributing buildings and period of significance, and how these terms are applied.

Mr. Barry Seymour, the owner of the property, briefly addressed the board. He reviewed the outcome of the meetings at the Design Review Committee (DRC) in February 2015 and April 2016. The DRC originally requested additional documentation of the site and a study of architectural alternatives. Mr. Seymour noted the various site constraints (slope, sewer easement, etc.). After studying the project for a year with architects and engineers, he returned to the DRC in April 2016 with additional documentation in order to demolish the house. He added that the new construction will meet the standards set forth in the *Maywood Design Guidelines*. Mr. Seymour contended that the house at 2322 North Fillmore Streets falls outside of the period of significance for Maywood and demolition should be allowed. He suggested that the HALRB reconsider drafting demolition criteria similar to other jurisdictions.

The Chairman requested that any public speakers submit speaker slips. She called the first speaker, Ann Kelly. Ms. Kelly said she has lived in Maywood since 1974. She discussed the term “non-contributing.” She contended that the 1950s houses are beautiful in their own way, proportioned to the site, and add to the character of the neighborhood. She dismissed the idea that the houses are non-contributing resources. Ms. Kelly added that the 1950s houses are congruent in scale with the modesty and overall fabric of Maywood.

This proposed demolition, the first known to have occurred, will set a precedent for developers to flip these 1950s homes into larger homes. She added that the houses constructed on vacant lots appear more grandiose and incongruent with the surrounding neighborhood.

The Chairman called the second speaker, Joseph DeBor. Mr. DeBor stated that he appreciates why Maywood has been historically designated since he is an owner of one of the older residences in the neighborhood. He added that owners of Maywood houses give up a number of individual rights for the greater good. This developer purchased the property knowing that the 65-year-old house was sited within a historic district. Mr. DeBor asked the board to reference his letter and recommended that the HALRB deny the application for demolition. He suggested that the developer explore tear down opportunities in non-historic neighborhoods.

The Chairman called the final speaker, David Toepel. Mr. Toepel stated that he has lived in Arlington County since 2003 and in Maywood neighborhood since 2012. From his perspective, the owners in the neighborhood have tried to follow the established rules. He added that this particular house does not qualify as a contributing building and any recommendations beyond that become a subjective matter based on personal biases. The fact of the matter is that this particular house doesn't fit within the historical period. Mr. Toepel suggested that the community would be better served if a number of these [non-historic] houses were redeveloped. A complete ban of demolitions is not in the best interest of Maywood.

The Chairman thanked the public speakers and opened the matter to the HALRB for comments. Mr. Vincent stated that the applicant makes a number of good points about the demolition of non-contributing buildings. He discussed how it is problematic to refuse the tear down of a non-contributing building as it does not add to the period of significance of the neighborhood. He added, however, that tearing down the house and replacing it with a park/open space would return the land to its setting during the period of significance. He asked Mr. Liebertz if that property was open space prior to the construction of this home. Mr. Liebertz responded that records indicate that the property was likely laid out as a building lot but construction of a residence had not occurred until the 1950s. Mr. Vincent responded that the historic setting is then open space, but we are discussing the eventual construction of a new building on the site. He stated concerns about the HALRB approving the tear down of the house without knowing what will be built in its place. He sympathizes with the neighborhood's concern regarding the massing/size of houses/additions recently approved in the community. Any replacement house should not be pushing the maximum envelope of what can fit on the lot, but should be more respectful of the size of the existing and neighboring buildings. Mr. Vincent said he would not object to replacing a small house with a small house built to Maywood standards.

The Chairman noted that the HALRB has only approved two new dwellings in the neighborhood. Other infill within Maywood was completed prior to the designation of the local historic district. Many of the houses of concern were not approved by the HALRB.

Ms. Solo discussed the DRC's recommendation that demolition be conditionally approved but contingent on an accepted new house design. The Chairman asked the DRC Chairman to provide a brief overview of the most recent discussion at DRC. Mr. Dudka replied that the discussion was framed around staff's recommendation that demolition would not occur until a replacement house had been approved by the HALRB. The two approvals would go hand in hand. Another item discussed at DRC was the difficulty of the site in terms of placing an addition on the existing house. The DRC would not recommend demolition without a known outcome. The other aspect discussed at DRC is the idea that the *Maywood Design Guidelines* be improved to better address demolitions and non-contributing buildings. The Chairman added that the HALRB has limited authority to halt demolitions in respect to the Virginia State Code and the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Solo discussed the HALRB's limited options regarding this case. The Chairman stated that the HALRB's options are numerous, including: 1) approval; 2) demolition; and 3) demolition contingent upon a new design for a house.

Mr. Laporte confirmed that any new dwelling would require a Certificate of Appropriateness. He added that the HALRB does not lose control over review of the property with the demolition of this dwelling. The Chairman confirmed that all exterior alterations at that property will be required to go through the design review process. Mr. Laporte asked about the particulars of the two new dwellings within Maywood. The Chairman answered that one of the properties was a vacant lot and another a subdivision of a larger property. Mr. Craig provided additional background information about these two cases. He stated that the design review process for the new dwelling took almost one year to approve and that the DRC has recommended denial of applications that fail to meet the design guidelines.

Mr. Dudka asked that the HALRB give direction to the DRC regarding what is appropriate for this site. He asked the question if the new house should be a more modern/contemporary building or a farmhouse vernacular dwelling.

Mr. Woodruff remarked that he has lived in Maywood since 1990. He stated that these 1950s houses are part of the fabric of the neighborhood. He is concerned about the precedent of allowing these non-contributing buildings to be demolished. At some point, the neighborhood's historic bungalows and four squares will have new and modern dwellings abutting them. This will remove the basic fabric of the historic district. The home owners in the neighborhood work very hard to maintain the integrity of their houses. He discussed the incongruity of a person purchasing a house with the express purpose of tearing it down and never living there. He added that he would rather the HALRB not begin discussing design options for a potential new house until we decide that the existing dwelling should be removed.

Mr. Seymour objected to the previous statement made by Mr. Woodruff. He stated that he has the legal right to purchase property anywhere within Arlington County and will follow the Code of Virginia, Arlington County Zoning Ordinance, and *Maywood Design Guidelines*. There is no legal requirement to live within the neighborhood. The Chairman discussed that it would be nice if everyone who purchased property within the neighborhood lived there, but often that is not the case. Mr. Woodruff responded that it is the individuals who live in the neighborhood who are affected by the result. The Chairman agreed.

Ms. Solo concurred with Mr. Woodruff's comments and suggested that the *Maywood Design Guidelines* be revisited. She asked that the HALRB put this on the agenda since 15 years have passed since the definition of a contributing house was established. The Chairman clarified that the *Maywood Design Guidelines* do not define contributing and non-contributing resources; the National Register nomination designates properties as such. Ms. Solo asked who had input into what buildings were considered contributing or non-contributing buildings.

Mr. Liebertz replied that the Arlington County Historic Preservation Program hired EHT Tracerics, Inc., a historic preservation consulting firm in business for over 30 years, to survey the neighborhood and complete the National Register nomination form. The National Register designation was sought to increase educational awareness and to allow property owners to apply for the federal and state historic preservation tax credits for renovations. EHT Tracerics determined the historic significance of Maywood, the period of significance, classified resources as either contributing or non-contributing, and submitted the National Register documentation. The Maywood National Register nomination was accepted by the Arlington County Historic Preservation Program staff, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and the National Park Service.

Ms. Solo asked if the National Register nomination could be revisited. Mr. Liebertz stated that the National Register nomination and its period of significance could be revisited, but staff did not recommend such an action. All parties involved agreed upon the historic significance and associated period of significance for the Maywood National Register Historic District. The post-1941 dwellings were evaluated and purposefully categorized as non-contributing buildings. No events have occurred that would alter the nomination to include such resources. He added that a new nomination could examine the historic significance of these later resources; however, there is no supporting evidence to create a new historic district. The majority of these mid-twentieth century dwellings no longer have intact historic integrity due to numerous alterations over time. The Chairman reminded the board that not all resources over 50 years old have historic significance. In addition, there are buildings that are less than 50 years old that can qualify for the National Register of Historic Places. The age of the building is important, but not the deciding factor. Other components need to be considered as well.

Ms. Solo briefly discussed demolition guidelines in historic districts from a number of the neighboring jurisdictions. She noted that there have been additions built in Maywood on dwellings with difficult topography. Ms. Solo expressed concerns about the applicant's proposal for a front loading two-car garage. She added that residents understand that living in Maywood could require additional expense, architects, etc. as part of the project design phase.

Mr. Woodruff stated that he does not believe that the design guidelines need to be altered. The existing design guidelines do not distinguish between contributing and non-contributing buildings. The HALRB has the same authority over both resources. The Chairman stated that this is correct. She reiterated that the terms contributing and non-contributing are part of the National Register nomination. The *Maywood Design Guidelines* do not make that distinction for the purposes of demolition.

Mr. Vincent believed that there were references within the *Maywood Design Guidelines* about the period of architectural significance. Mr. Liebertz confirmed that the terms contributing and non-contributing are used when referencing siding, etc. The Chairman stated that there is a history section in the design guidelines, but not a specific delineation regarding the period of significance.

The Chairman stated that the ideal situation is for the restoration of the property. While the challenges with the property are not insurmountable, there are a number of difficulties regarding the site. She confirmed that Mr. Seymour examined the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the property. Mr. Seymour responded that he looked at numerous options for restoring/adding onto the property. In addition, he stated that he has the legal authority to demolish a non-contributing building that falls outside of the period of significance. He will try to design a building that meets the *Maywood Design Guidelines*. The Chairman sympathized with the concerns of the neighborhood and the equities at stake.

The HALRB discussed the steps for demolition of a protected resource if the HALRB and County Board deny the application.

The HALRB explored potential language for a straw poll of the board regarding the demolition of the house. The Vice-Chairman recommended that the motion to demolish not be contingent on the construction of a dwelling. The end result could be a garden, park, etc. Regarding precedent, the DRC reluctantly accepted the idea of retaining the character of the building (independent of the historic period of Maywood) due to the limitations of the site. The Chairman reiterated that any approval would be written for a particular site-specific case. She is not asking for a blanket demolition of non-contributing properties.

Mr. Woodruff commented that the tree discussed by the applicant is at the rear of the lot. In regards to the sewer easement, he questioned how that prevents an applicant from building on the front, side, rear, up, etc. He does not believe that the house cannot be saved.

Ms. Solo asked that the discussion continue to evaluate the historic characterization of the neighborhood. The modesty of the neighborhood and the historic period of significance should be reconsidered. The Chairman stated that the issue will not be part of this motion.

The Chairman moved that the HALRB preliminarily recommend that the demolition of 2322 North Fillmore Street be contingent upon a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new house that conforms to the *Maywood Design Guidelines*. The demolition will not be approved until a house that comports to the design guidelines is approved. She reminded the HALRB that this is not a formal approval of the application, but a straw poll to give the applicant appropriate direction moving forward.

Mr. Seymour asked what assurance he has in relation to the straw poll that the discussion regarding demolition will not be rehashed at future meetings (post-design of a new house). Mr. Woodruff responded that each member has the right to vote on the item and discuss the appropriateness of each application at future meetings.

The Vice-Chairman suggested the following straw poll language:

Any demolition approval is contingent upon an alternate site development being a park, or addition, or a new house that conforms to the *Maywood Design Guidelines*.

The HALRB supported the proposed question (8-3-2). Mr. Woodruff, Ms. Solo, and Mr. Laporte voted against the poll; Mr. Vincent and Ms. Steinberg abstained.

Mr. Seymour thanked the HALRB for their consideration.

REPORTS OF CHAIRMAN, STAFF AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Regarding Maywood, the Chairman stated that staff is considering the feasibility of hiring consultants to reexamine the *Maywood Design Guidelines*. Mr. Dudka discussed that the neighborhood's period of significance should not be a sliding scale. There are significant differences between the buildings historically associated with Maywood from the first quarter of the twentieth century and later built ca. 1975 homes. The HALRB should confront these differences and create more elaborate guidelines discussing the treatment of each. Mr. Vincent asked about the original documentation that designated Maywood as a local historic district. Mr. Liebertz responded that attached to the designation form was a map denoting properties built between 1906 and 1939 as "Historic Period Properties" and later construction as "Post-Historic Period Properties." Mr. Vincent said the survey committee from the designation examined and determined the period of significance for the neighborhood. This period was accepted by the HALRB and the County Board. Mr. Woodruff, however, contended that there is an argument to be made that it is not specific houses that make the historic district, but all the buildings as a whole.

Mr. Tom Dickinson updated the board regarding the forthcoming demolition of a Lustron Home at 2915 7th Street South. John Richardson, the former President of the Arlington Historical Society, notified Mr. Dickinson last year that a developer had purchased the home and was willing to give the building to any interested party. The situation is very similar to the donation and disassembly of the Krowne Lustron Home ten years ago that has since been donated to and reconstructed in Ohio. He is at the board to raise awareness regarding the demolition of the building. This is the fourth to last remaining Lustron house in Arlington. The developer may be willing to assist in funding the removal of the house. Ms. Liccese-Torres had several conversations with the developer regarding the dwelling. The owner listened to the ideas of local historic district designation and rehabilitation tax credits, but desired to pursue demolition of the house. She added that the current political and economic state likely prohibits the County from undertaking another effort to disassemble and store the building.

Mr. Dudka suggested that the demolition budget could be applied to disassemble and relocate the building. The Chairman stated that Second Chance may be interested in utilizing the building parts. Ms. Liccese-Torres responded that such organizations would likely utilize the building materials for recycling and not reuse. Mr. Dudka stated that these salvage companies strip items from homes that they can sell based on their inventory.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Dickinson for raising awareness on this item.

The Chairman briefly discussed reinstating a number of standing HALRB committees that have not been meeting such as the Survey Committee, Education/Outreach Committee, and Guidelines Committee. More details will be forthcoming.

The Chairman stated that the School Board will be hearing the local historic district designation for Stratford School tomorrow evening. She will be speaking on behalf of the HALRB. Ms. Ballo added that the School Board will hear the designation as an action item on May 5, 2016. The School Board is currently in support of the local historic district designation and the proposed design guidelines. The local historic district designation will go to the County Board as a Request to Advertise on May 14, 2016. The Planning Commission will hear the item on June 6, 2016; a Long Range Planning Committee meeting likely will be held prior to the full Commission hearing. The County Board will consider the designation on June 18 or 21, 2016, on the discussion agenda. After designation, the Use Permit approval and CoA approval by the County Board is anticipated in the Fall of 2016. Prior to all the upcoming actions at the County Board, presentations will be made on the subject items for HALRB comments.

Ms. Ballo discussed the presentation for the Wilson School interpretation and historic preservation mitigation. The architects proposed to build three different models under glass and preserve/display some exterior building elements as part of a museum display. The proposal will be refined as part of the Use Permit submission. Mr. Peck asked if the architects located the corner stone at the Wilson School. He recommended a corner stone explaining the evolution of the site (similar to Langston School). Mr. Dudka stated that the architects did not consider anything elaborate on the exterior of the building, but we need to have some type of indication of the interior program on the exterior. This way, people can understand the significance of the site. The HALRB discussed the naming of the Wilson School.

Ms. Liccese-Torres discussed the updated plans for the Public Shoe Store building in Clarendon. Preservation staff retrieved several building signs that were to be thrown away. The current plans for the building include the removal of the display cases and the terrazzo entry. This will be a flat concrete entry, but we are requesting that the applicant remove the terrazzo in pieces and donate the items to the Center for Local History. Ms. Ballo discussed the design and appropriateness of the proposed blade signage.

Ms. Liccese-Torres reminded the HALRB that the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) is offering certified training for members of local review boards at a number of nearby locations. The next closest training will be offered in Alexandria on June 15, 2016, from 10 AM to 4 PM.

Ms. Liccese-Torres informed the HALRB about the recent archeological report completed at Dawson Terrace. Staff will be evaluating the best way to interpret the artifacts including ceramics, munitions, inkwells, and glass. Upon the request of the HALRB, Mr. Liebertz provided a brief history of the building.

New HALRB member Sara Steinberg introduced herself to the board.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM.