



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

Neighborhood Services Division

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APPROVED

TRANSCRIPT OF THE HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD

**Wednesday, November 30, 2016
5800 Washington Boulevard
Swanson Middle School Auditorium**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Craig
Gerry Laporte
Joan Lawrence, Chairman
Charles Matta, Vice Chairman
Tova Solo
Sara Steinberger
Andrew Wenchel
Richard Woodruff
Mitchell Zink

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Robert Dudka
Carmela Hamm
John Peck
Mark Turnbull
Kevin Vincent

STAFF: Cynthia Liccese-Torres, Historic Preservation Coordinator
Rebeccah Ballo, Historic Preservation Planner
John Liebertz, Historic Preservation Planner

TRANSCRIPT OF NOVEMBER 30, 2016, HALRB HEARING

Joan Lawrence: [00:00:00] This hearing is being held pursuant to a request to designate the portion of Westover listed on the National Register of Historic Places, referred to as the Westover Study Area, as a local historic district. This hearing represents the first step in a process outlined in the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance. Tonight, the Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board will hear from the County Historic Preservation Program staff, public comments, and determine whether there's a reason to believe that at least 2 of 11 criteria for local historic designation listed in the zoning ordinance are met by the Westover Study Area. And we'll determine whether the historic significance of the Westover Study Area should be studied. Many changes have occurred in Westover since the national register nomination was prepared over 10 years ago. Tonight's meeting will not decide whether the Westover Study Area should be designated a local Arlington historic district. And additional hearings will be held to determine whether the HALRB will recommend legislation after a designation report and design guidelines have been prepared. Many of you have already expressed your opinions on the designation through petitions, surveys, and by individual communications. These opinions are all on record. Our time is limited by the availability of this site until 9:30 p.m. As a result, public comment will be taken until no later than 9

o'clock p.m., earlier if the number of people does not increase. And at this time--after that, the matter will be with the HALRB for discussion. I'm asking you to limit your comments to 2 minutes for individuals, and 4 minutes if you are representing a group such as the civic association so that as many speakers can be accommodated as possible within the time we have. Please do not repeat what you've already said in your written communications. We've all read them, and you know, we--they are part of the record. If you have something further to add, please do, but what you've--assume that what you've already sent in in writing has been read by the board, which it has. If somebody else has said what you planned to say, please don't repeat it, just simply indicate that you're in agreement, and indicate whether you support statements opposing or supporting the designation, and that will keep things moving. I would like to call on the historic preservation staff to make their presentation.

John Liebertz: [00:02:56] First, first just for the record, could we do the roll call, please? We're going to do the roll call for the board members? Dick Woodruff? Dick Woodruff?

Richard Woodruff: [00:03:09] Here.

John Liebertz: [00:03:10] Joan Lawrence?

Joan Lawrence: [00:03:11] Here.

John Liebertz: [00:03:12] Charles Matta?

Charles Matta: [00:03:13] Here.

John Liebertz: [00:03:04] Charles Craig?

Charles Craig: [00:03:15] Here.

John Liebertz: [00:03:15] Mark Turnbull is absent. Sara Steinberger?

Sara Steinberger: [00:03:18] Here.

John Liebertz: [00:03:19] Mitchell Zink?

Mitchell Zink: [00:03:20] Here.

John Liebertz: [00:03:20] Tova Solo?

Tova Solo: [00:03:21] Here.

John Liebertz: [00:03:22] Carmela Hamm is absent. Andrew Wenchel?

Andrew Wenchel: [00:03:23] Here.

John Liebertz: [00:03:24] John Peck is absent. Gerry Laporte?

Gerald Laporte: [00:03:26] Here.

John Liebertz: [00:03:27] Kevin Vincent is absent, and Robert Dudka's absent. And we have a quorum.

Joan Lawrence: [00:03:33] Okay, thank you.

Cynthia Liccese-Torres: **[00:03:37]** So, I wanted to thank the community for coming out this evening. We're excited to see members of the community here. We wanted to remind members of HALRB that, at your seats, you do have packets that include all of the written correspondence that have been received to date, so those are for your perusal. We also wanted to let you know that there are two copies on the table of the petitions that have been received from the community. One petition is in favor of the designation, the other is in opposition, so there's copies of those available for you to review on the stage. I also wanted to direct you to the staff memo that was not only on the website, but there are copies available for you as well that highlight the background of the designation request, and summarize a little bit of the history of the neighborhood. And this is in relation to the national register historic district. And for those members of the community who may have just arrived, if you have not filled out a speaker slip at the front table outside the doors, if you would like to speak, we do have speaker slips here, so feel free to come up at any time if you like to fill one out. And if you have written comments that you are planning to read, and you would like us to have a copy for the record, we are happy to take those from you this evening as well.

Joan Lawrence: **[00:05:05]** Are you planning to make any comments about the staff memo? Okay, thank you. We will start on the public comments then. John, will you explain the procedure, please?

John Liebertz: **[00:05:18]** Sure. There's a microphone at the end [inaudible]. I'll call three public speakers at a time. Line up and be prepared to speak after when your name is called. The first public speaker is Tom Dickinson, followed by Kirit, excuse me if I say any of these names incorrectly, Kirit Mookerjee, and then followed by Tom Gallagher for the first three public speakers.

Tom Dickinson: **[00:05:48]** Good evening, my name is Tom Dickinson. I'd like to thank the HALRB for conducting this hearing tonight. I am here to speak in favor of local historic district designation for the Westover area. Why? Because of three reasons. Number one, for purposes of historic preservation of small residential properties and garden apartments in the neighborhood, unique to the neighborhood, and increasingly rare in Arlington. Number two, to preserve affordable housing for overall community benefit. And number three, for environmental health, to slow down or stop demolition which harms the environment through destruction of tree canopy, green space, promotes landfill expansion, loss and waste of materials usually not recycled. The greenest building is one that's already built. I'm very much in favor of this local historic district designation, and for another personal reason, that is because I try to collect artifacts from these buildings as they're demolished. This is a window that came from the incinerator shed and utility room in the section that was demolished this past year. My backyard is getting full of these kinds of items. My wife will not tolerate me bringing any more of these into the backyard, and I'm running out of space. So, historic district designation would help preserve these buildings and keep them from being demolished. Thank you very much.

Joan Lawrence: **[00:07:04]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[00:07:10]** Tom Gallagher, then Terry Randall.

Kirit Mookerjee: **[00:07:15]** Good evening. Thank you very much for this opportunity. I am a commissioner to the county. I'm also a Westover resident. I have two very brief points for you, one as a commissioner who represents tenants. I urge you to take--to give full value to the viewpoint of this not-so-silent majority of residents in Westover who are tenants, who have come together since this process started in May and in--and come forward and made it clear that they are legitimate stakeholders in this process. Regarding your decision tonight, I believe the petition easily meets two criteria. I urge the HALRB to move the process forward. Very simply, I believe that the positive is that, as I understand it, it will allow the community and all the stakeholders in the community, the owners, the tenants, and everyone in the community to form a blueprint for what they want the future of Westover to be. Thank you very much.

Joan Lawrence: [00:08:25] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:08:29] The next speaker is Tom Gallagher, followed by Terry Randall, and Patrick Woods.

Tom Gallagher: [00:08:34] Hi, my name is Tom Gallagher. My wife and I moved here in 2006, been here about 10 years. When we moved here, we had this little sign that we found online, we put it up on our wall. It's a photo of Westover Hills as it initially was when it was first built. There's two home models that they had, the five room model and the four room model, list their mortgages at \$3250 and \$3850. That I'd like to preserve. I don't think that's possible. The reason we have this on our wall on our house, we framed it, hung it up because these houses don't exist. These basic architectural designs, they're just brick boxes basically. There's not a lot fancy about the design, they're utilitarian. But we have these pictures up because that's the place you see these. If you walk around this neighborhood, you're not going to find these homes. They have been renovated already, they've been bumped out, bumped up. I looked at my block earlier today, and there are zero homes that look like this. Next block over, I'm at North Kennesaw Street, North Kentucky, there's one. So, between roughly over 20 homes, you've got 1 that looks like 2 of these 2, 1 that would be historic, historic preservation. You know, unless you've got a DeLorean and a flux capacitor, you're not going to be able to preserve these homes. So basically, you know, I know I looked--I know Maywood is the example that a lot of people use. That's one that has been historically designated. Once again, if you look at the design, what are our homes here? I love my home, it's a brick box. It's been bumped out, like most it's been bumped out, bumped up. In Maywood, you've got early 1900s homes. There, many of the homes were on order from Sears-Roebuck, from their catalogue. The styles range from Queen Anne to Colonial to Tudor. I'm not sure what you call our design. I certainly wouldn't call it historic. It's utilitarian, like I said, it's great, but I don't know how you can call it historic. Even the ones that have been expanded, they're still just a box. That's pretty much what I have to say. Thank you, have a good night.

Joan Lawrence: [00:10:31] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:10:35] The next speaker is Terry Randall, followed by Patrick Woods.

Terry Randall: [00:10:42] Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to address the board this evening. I am a homeowner. I own one of the single family homes about three blocks from here. I've lived in Westover for about 10 years, and I love my neighborhood. And I just--I'm urging you, please don't impose a historic district on homeowners in this community. We love our homes, but if you were to impose this upon us, it would increase the complication, the cost, and the time that it would take to make improvements to our home. We are devastated by the loss of the affordable housing in our neighborhood, but there are other ways to address that. The historic district designation is not a good way to address that, and it comes along with consequences to those of us who live and own homes in the neighborhood. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:11:32] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:11:37] Hold on one second. Next speaker is Terry Randall, followed by--I'm sorry, Patrick Woods, followed by Jeremy West.

Patrick Woods: [00:11:44] Thank you for the opportunity for the comments. I'm also a resident of Westover, been here for 10 years. We live in one of the little utilitarian boxes that I absolutely love. But I think, looking at keeping the historicalness of these brick boxes that are basically almost everywhere in Arlington in various designations, one has a door in the middle, one has a door in the side, some have two bedrooms, and a walk-in--you know, effectively a large walk-in closet, some like ours have two bedrooms and no effective walk-in closet. They're all over the place, they're part of the character of Arlington. But at

this point, like the previous speaker said, none of them are intact. And I think that trying to focus on the outer visibility of these houses doesn't look at what makes Westover such a thriving community, which is families and walkability and the local stores that are here. And it's not the fact that there are these 1940s brick, non-fancy designated boxes. I think looking at this in terms of preserving, a historic district to preserve tenant rights in the apartments is a bad way to look at it. It doesn't give any designations in terms of improvements. And what needs to happen for these tenants to have good apartments, all they have to do is just stay historic, and that could mean asbestos, that could mean there's a bunch of asbestos in my house that I can't deal with. These are not things that are necessarily, like, in the best interest of tenants, or landowners, or landlords. Ideally, we should be able to move on with these current structures, but keep them in the spirit of what this community originally was, and I don't think a historic designation is what that--what achieves that goal. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[00:13:25]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[00:13:26]** The next speaker is Jeremy West, followed by Michelle West.

Jeremy West: **[00:13:33]** All right. I'm a homeowner here to speak in opposition of the designation. Basically, I don't see this deriving a lot of value to the community from two perspectives. One, if our goal is to make it historic and make this a district that'll stand out and have character, et cetera, I think the boundaries are way too small. I think we'll just become this isolated little pocket of undeveloped houses, surrounded by brand new, knocked down, come up in a modern style, and be really indistinguishable other than if you stand in the very center and look outward. If the purpose is really, from a renter perspective, to protect the low-income housing, et cetera, and we're looking more at the apartments, the garden style apartments, we've made these boundaries way too big. You can constrain the historical district to those garden style apartments that we're interested in protecting, and leave the predominantly already modified and knocked down houses off the list. That's my--thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[00:14:32]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[00:14:34]** The next speaker is Michelle West, followed by Lisa Garcia.

Michelle West: **[00:14:38]** Good evening, my name is Michelle West. I'm a homeowner here in Westover. I've lived here for 10 years, and I am on 10th Street, which is in a little dog-eared section that juts off from the larger group. When we bought our house here, it was with the intention of either one day, after grad school and student loans being paid off, that we would massively add to it because we have a rather large lot for the area, or we would knock it down and start all over. If there is a historic district in place, that makes that process extremely difficult, much more expensive from what I've understood about Maywood and what it costs to do things there. And if I ultimately decide that I don't want to live within the restrictions of a historic district, and I'll tell you, if I had to choose that today, I would not, I'm going to have trouble selling that home to someone else, when literally halfway down my street, you can buy a house that looks just like mine with no restrictions on it whatsoever. That constitutes a taking. The Westover residents, based on the survey, the historic--or excuse me, based on the survey that the Westover Civic Association has done, we by a majority do not want this. We do not want these restrictions; we don't need it. Part of the reason our neighborhood is so charming right now is that we've been allowed to expand without having those restrictions. Ultimately, the homeowners are paying into the tax base significantly. And if the goal is to preserve these garden style apartments for renters, they do not have the same kind of financial interest in this community. And it seems very wrong to me to penalize the people who are paying into the tax base significantly to assist a very small group of people that can be assisted in other ways. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:16:22] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:16:24] The next speaker is Lisa Garcia, followed by Ben Garcia.

Lisa Garcia: [00:16:30] Hello. My name is Miss Lisa Garcia, I'm a resident of Westover Village. My husband Ben and I have already spoken and written to the HALRB and county boards with our views against local historic designation for Westover. We have also spent much time and effort to make sure that all of our neighbors are aware of the implications and limitations of a local historic designation. And we've worked with our neighbors and business owners to collect over 300 signatures against historic designation. These have already been delivered to you, the HALRB board, and all of the county board members. I'm also a residential architect who practices out of my home, and I work with families throughout Arlington, helping many of them solve challenges to be found in our post-war homes. I have a strong background in traditional architecture, and a history of working on projects in historic districts in the DC area, but also in restoration projects for the National Historic Register, and on new construction sympathetic to the traditional vernacular in other areas of the country. I say all of this because while I am greatly supportive of historic designation and the importance of authentic and thoughtful architecture appropriate to its place and use, I am greatly concerned about how this process has been approached for Westover. First, there has been little to no support for local historic designation based on the architectural merit of the buildings. The original petitioner, Mr. Reeder, has been vocal in his view that it can be used as a way to protect use, not to protect architectural character or vernacular of a particular period. In addition, he was able to begin this process without any outreach to the immediate community. And when given an opportunity to speak at a civic association meeting focused solely on this topic, he chose not to attend, and did not send anyone else to explain or defend his actions. I find it concerning that this process, given the size of Westover's area and the various building types involved, can even get to this stage with so little support from the community.

Joan Lawrence: [00:18:17] Thank you. Could you wrap up your comments? I think you're beyond 2 minutes. Thank you.

Lisa Garcia: [00:18:23] Secondly--I have spent weeks of my life on this. Please give me another minute. Secondly, Westover as a local historic district is simply a bad example for the rest of Arlington. The architectural history of Westover is not unique to Arlington. Mace Property developed over 4,000 units in Arlington as a whole, and Westover is not one of the original developments, and it is not particularly unique in its architecture or planning. Its architectural types are quite basic, and I would even argue bad examples of colonial arrival style. Mostly are badly proportioned and adorned with very little unique architectural detail. And if I would have designed the facade like the one on my unaltered 1948 home while I was in studio, I would have failed. Just because something is old does not mean it is good or that it should be protected. And that is the perception I believe will have to be addressed if you decide to move forward in support of this measure. It is not lost on me or others in our community that those bemoaning developers and changes to our neighborhood have failed to recognize that the original 1940 development was nothing more than cookie-cutter subdivisions which have only grown into the diverse and interesting neighborhood it is today because we have been allowed to change it without guidelines or regulations over the past 70 years. The not in my backyard sentiments I have heard from some people against lot coverage and scale of new additions or construction are really zoning issues. And according to the HALRB's own website, these design concerns cannot be limited to a historic designation. In fact, in particular instances, I think historic designation could make lot coverages worse in how guidelines could dictate how property owners alter their properties. Which leads to my last point of concern. If the HALRB is not willing to immediately halt this process, as I believe you should given the lack of support from those directly affected by it in our neighborhood, you must define and allow the community to see the guidelines as they would affect Westover. I recognize that the process alone would take significant time for everyone, and cost to the county and its residents, but I don't see any other way in good faith to make a recommendation in support of it to the county board without knowing how it would affect the

neighborhood. I think it's also important to point out how any guidelines enacted would put an undue burden on the Westover residents. I'm aware of studies touting the economic value of historic districts, but I do not believe this argument applies in areas such as ours. Every surrounding neighborhood has much the same architectural relevance, and we're already in an area of extreme per square foot cost of construction and real estate. There is no question that, if enacted, a local historic district would most impact the young families such as my own that have sought out smaller properties with every hope that we could grow and shape our homes as we see fit, just as so many other families have been able to do in Westover in the past 70 years. I appreciate your time this evening, and I hope you will take all of our concerns in due account as you consider whether the study should move forward. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[00:21:22]** Thank you very much. I would like to ask, I did request that you limit your remarks to 2 minutes if you are an individual, and 4 if you are speaking on behalf of an organization. I will assume you are speaking on behalf of an organization. Please, watch the length of your comments so we can get through everybody's. Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[00:21:41]** The next public speaker after Mr. Garcia is Mary Simmonds.

Ben Garcia: **[00:21:45]** Good evening, members of the Historic Affairs and Landmark Review Board, and Arlington County staff members. My name is Ben Garcia. My wife and I have owned property in Westover for the past 8 years, just this past year moving up from one of the side by side single family homes along Washington Boulevard into a freestanding, single family home just inside the edge of Westover. I know the HALRB and county staff are aware a majority of Westover property owners has already voiced their opposition to continuing the study designating Westover as locally historic. While I fully expect that Arlington County board ultimately respect the wishes of the Westover residents and property owners in denying the local historic status, I ask that the HALRB also respect the position of Westover residents and halt this process as soon as possible. Stopping this now will halt unnecessary time, effort, and cost that will be borne by the residents and the county in continuing a study that has very little support within the affected community, and actually a great deal of opposition. Those opposed with the study and designation include some tenants, the majority of homeowners, nearly all of the apartment owners, and all of the commercial retail property owners. We in Westover appreciate the flexibility we have to modify our homes under present building codes and zoning, as reflected in the fact that over 70% of Westover homes have already been modified over the last 70 years. If the HALRB does continue moving forward, I fully expect that the rest of Arlington's residents and property owners will be made aware of the threat under which they are, the threat that if they live in an old house or in a neighborhood with other old houses, it takes just one person to subject them to months, potentially years of uncertainty, as the county studies their properties against their wishes. While I recognize this is not a popularity contest, I fully expect that HALRB and county board will respect the wishes of the majority of affected property owners, and halt this effort to study and impose what is effectively a county-sponsored HOA on those who chose to buy and live in a neighborhood originally free from these burdens. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[00:23:47]** Thank you. Next speakers, please.

John Liebertz: **[00:23:48]** The next speaker is Mary Simmonds, followed by Bob Condit, and then Wendy Boone.

Mary Simmonds: **[00:23:54]** Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak before your board. My name is Mary Simmonds, and I have owned and managed an apartment building here in Westover for the past 35 years. I've been a hands-on owner, getting to know many of the tenants, and providing affordable housing in the neighborhood for many years. I'm proud to be a small business owner in this community. I do not intend to sell my building to anywhere--anyone. And down the road, I plan on my children inheriting this building and continuing our family business. I firmly oppose the designation of the Westover community as a local historic district for the following reasons. Commercial and

residential property owners have a right to develop their property within the existing zoning laws, which will enhance property values and bring more tax dollars to the county. Commercial and residential property owners have a right to sell their property. The proposed designation will lower property values, making selling a property more difficult. Also will make maintaining the property more difficult, time-consuming, and expensive. The Westover community already has tax incentives for remodeling through the Westover National Register. Adding a local historic designation will not provide any additional tax benefits. It's my understanding that historic designation is intended to preserve the historic integrity of the Westover community, but also to preserve affordable housing for lower income Arlington residents. As for the affordable housing issue, it is a fact that Arlington is now in the process of controlling the affordable housing in Westover by purchasing through Arlington partnership for affordable housing well over 30 apartment buildings to be renovated and rented at below market rates. In closing, I see no benefit to the Westover community for being designated a local historic district. It is government overreach, adding more regulations, taxes, and control. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:25:52] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:25:56] The next speaker is Bob Condit, followed by Wendy Boone, and then John Reeder.

Bob Condit: [00:26:02] My name is Bob Condit with a real estate partner for 20-plus years. We have owned two properties, two small buildings in Westover. And we join the vast, vast majority of owners strongly opposing what you are proposing to do. We do not see the buildings in Westover as architecturally significant any more so than any of the same era buildings that are throughout Arlington County. They're all over the place. Here, they're perhaps a little bit more concentrated, but they certainly are not historic. To bring in the visual aid of a window, you may love that window, but it is not historic. If that was in one of our buildings, we would replace it because it's deteriorating. And I'm sure that if you took it to an antique shop and said, "Isn't this historic?" they would say, "No, it is not historic." The big question to us is sort of why this is going on in the first place. There is--from what we understand, no one in the Westover area came up with this idea, that it was somebody outside the Westover area, a non-homeowner, who proposed this idea. In a way, it's like any of us could come into any of your neighborhoods and start a petition to say, "Your neighborhood should be historically designated, and it would restrict what you're able to do to the property." And again, we do not want that--to see that happen. In the historic preservation fact sheet that was available outside, there are some guidelines and things. And one of the things that just struck me is if this is done, it said there will be a design review process that helps guide and manage. It will not guide. It will manage, but it will not guide. It will tell you what you can do and what you can't do. And if you start with a board that is up for listening to people and working with people, that might be fine. But if you do this designation, it is for all time. It will be there for all of our lives, and that board membership is going to change many, many times over the years. And you can't predict what it's going to be, and what these regulations will be and won't be in the 10 years, 20 years, 30 years from now. It's, from our standpoint, a very, very bad idea, and we hope that it will be squashed. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:28:40] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:28:46] The next public speaker is Wendy Boone, followed by John Reeder.

Wendy Boone: [00:28:50] Good evening, everyone. I'm Wendy, and I live in Westover. I am opposed to historic district. The residents of Westover have made it clear in prior meetings that we do not want a historic district. This is reflected in the Westover Village Civic Association survey, which determined 84% of Westover residents opposed to it. Following this survey, the Westover Village Civil Association wrote a letter to you September 25, strongly encouraging you to end the process for defining the Westover area as a local historic district as quickly as possible. The people who live here have come to an

overwhelming majority decision that we do not want a historic district. My husband and I purchased our house here just over a year ago. We bought a moderate sized house, knowing that we will have to put an addition to it in the future in order to accommodate more children. I am expecting another children, so we are already running out of space. After much research and reading the Maywood historic guidelines, I know that a local historic designation would make it impossible for us to add an addition that we want. If we know Westover--if we knew Westover would be under consideration for local historic district, we never would even consider any houses in Westover. I know that many young couples, many millennials like me, will bypass Westover too should it become a local historic district, which can have a negative effect on home values. This entire process was started by a single person who doesn't even live in Westover making a request to you. That was confirmed by Arlington County officials at the September 7 meeting. Arlington County should not be forcing the entire community to go through extensive efforts to fight off a proposal that is made by a person who's not even impacted by the proposal himself. If John Reeder believes historic districts are such wonderful things, why doesn't he propose a historic district for his own neighborhood? If, as the head of the Green Party in Arlington, he was looking for a way to make people hate the Green Party, I believe he has succeeded.

Joan Lawrence: [00:31:13] Please come to order.

Wendy Boone: [00:31:15] As previous Westover meetings concluded, a local historic designation will hurt homeowners, renters, and apartment owners. No one will benefit from it. As a result, we must immediately terminate the effort to make Westover historic. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:31:32] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:31:37] The next speaker is John Reeder, followed by Steve Davis, and Roy Relph.

John Reeder: [00:31:47] I've given you copies of my speech. My name is John Reeder. I'm one of the over 160 petitioners to the HALRB for local historic designation of the village. I'm an Arlington resident. I've lived just outside the boundaries of Westover Village for 36 years. I'm here tonight to support historic designation. I would like to thank you for your service. Our rich Arlington history includes remarkable garden apartments like Colonial Village, Buckingham, and Westover Village. If you've not already done so, I encourage you to walk around our wonderful urban village. Much--it exists today much as it did when it was built in the 1930s and 40s. It is my understanding that the purpose of this hearing is for you to establish if there are at least 2 of the 11 qualifying criteria that are present. Ordinance Section 11.3.4 that you shall--indicates you shall base your decision only upon studies, documentation, or research. We the petitioners expect you to follow the ordinance strictly. There's no mention in the ordinance or Virginia law that property owners must approve or accept designation. And in fact, owners often, for illogical reasons, reject it. In 2006, the National Park Service and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources listed Westover Village on the national and Virginia register of historic places. Arlington prepared a 161-page report, which hopefully you all have read. There's no need for the HALRB or the county staff to do significant research beyond using the 2006 National Park report. Westover Village already meets the first criteria among the 11 and the ordinance, namely it is on the list of national historic places. Your task, then, is to decide if there's a second criteria. If you'll look at the NPS report, they identified the areas of significance where architecture, and community planning and development, and the period of significance was 1939 to 1948. If you apply, in my opinion, the criteria the National Park Service indicated in its report, you will find there are likely seven criteria in Westover Village. Criteria B, the property has character, or value is part of a development, or cultural characteristics of the county. Criteria E, the property embodies characteristics of architectural style valuable for the study of a period. Criteria F, property is identified as a work of a master builder or architect. Criteria G, the property embodies elements of design, craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant. Criteria H, the property has a distinctive location that makes it an established or familiar visual feature. We've been here since 1940. Criteria I, the property is a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure, representing a

period or style in the commercial development of the county, with a high level of historic integrity or architectural significance. Finally, Criteria K, the property is suitable for preservation or restoration. In summary, Westover Village meets at least the two minimum criteria for a full historic report to be prepared, and for you to proceed to your final determination on local historic designation. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[00:35:48]** Thank you. All right, enough of that. There will be no applause, and no boos from now on just because you don't agree. I realize that civil discourse has gotten very difficult lately. I expect you to be respectful of everybody's opinions, whether you agree with them or not. Thank you for observing that.

John Liebertz: **[00:36:13]** The next speaker is Steve Davis, followed by, I'm sorry, Roy Relph, followed by Nathan Risdal.

Steve Davis: **[00:36:22]** Good evening. My name is Steve Davis, and I live in nearby Tara-Leeway Heights, a part of the greater Westover area. Tonight, you've heard or will hear several parties in support and in opposition to the petition to designate the Westover historic district as a locally historically designated district. As you know, the petition was a result of recent demolition of several garden apartment buildings in the Westover area. Supporters of historic designation will argue that preservation of these Westover apartment buildings is justified both on the grounds of historic significance and saving the dwindling stock of Arlington's affordable market rate housing. Opponents, primarily single family detached homeowners of Westover, will argue that the proposed designation will unfairly restrict their rights to modify structures on their properties. Also among those here tonight are the apartment building owners, who will contend that the proposed designation will diminish the future values of their properties, and limit their capabilities to sell their properties in the future. Despite all these conflicting interests, there is a way forward which maximizes the benefits and minimizes the cost for the greatest number of affected parties. Under this course of action, the HALRB, and later confirmed by the county board, would provide local historic designation only for the garden apartments currently in the Westover national historic district. All other properties in the national historic district would not be covered by the local historic designation. Clearly, this option does not address the concerns raised by apartment owners, but to give priority to their interests in making your decision would be a case of the tail wagging the dog. Many, if not most of the apartment owners do not reside in Westover, and there's no compelling rationale that their interests should be given greater weight than those of other Westover stakeholders in your decision-making process. Certainly, pertinent ordinance does not require that greater consideration be given to the views of property owners in reaching local historic designation decisions. This is simply a policy direction the HALRB may or may not follow. Moreover, there's little or no evidence that local historic designation will in fact diminish future growth and property values in the affected areas. As Miss Lawrence has noted in previous meetings, local historic designation is more likely to enhance future property values, as evidenced by Maywood Colonial Village, Buckingham Village, and Cambridge Court. I will allow others to address the historic significance of Westover's garden apartments, but certainly Westover's local historic designation would advance the goals of Arlington's affordable housing master plan. A key goal of this plan is to preserve the disappearing stock of market-rate affordable housing, such as Westover's garden apartments. In fact, local designation is viewed as a tool for preserving Arlington's affordable housing. For all the above reasons, I urge the HALRB recommend local historic designation for the garden apartments now in the Westover national historic district.

Joan Lawrence: **[00:39:36]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[00:39:37]** The next public speaker--

Joan Lawrence: [00:39:38] I'm going to ask everyone to, if I hear any more applause or other indications, I'm going to cut off public comment. Please respect and--I mean, we know you've, if you've already spoken in particular, if you support, that's fine, do it quietly. I don't want to hear any outbreaks. Otherwise, we'll cut off the public comment.

John Liebertz: [00:39:58] The next public speaker is Roy Relph, followed by Nathan Risdal.

Roy Relph: [00:40:03] Good evening. I've been a homeowner in Westover for 32 years. Arlington is a distinct location. I'm just wondering why every 1940s house in Arlington hasn't been included in this petition, or 1930s houses for that matter. I'm wondering if, 5 years from now, we'll be talking about the Crescent Hills subdivision, early 1950s houses, maybe it's time for that. The last--the--I agree with many of the comments that have been made in opposition of designating the houses, in particular Miss Garcia's comments. The credibility of the whole designation process to me is even challenged, if you will, by including the Westover Shopping Center. I don't know the Westover Shopping Center owner, never spoken to her, but the charm of Westover Shopping Center is its scale, not its architectural façade. That's controlled by the zoning ordinance and master plan, shouldn't be controlled by the--any kind of potential architectural regulations. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:41:13] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:41:15] The next public speaker is Nathan Risdal, followed by Aaron Margosis.

Nathan Risdal: [00:41:21] Hello. I just wanted to say that most of what I'm going to say has already been said by the majority of the homeowners, apartment building owners, and from what I know, the business owners in Westover. We are very much against the local historic designation because it puts an undue burden on the homeowners and the business owners for added costs for renovations, added time for those renovations to be approved by the board. Also, as one of the other homeowners mentioned, it's essentially making an HOA for this neighborhood. One of the reasons I moved here is because there was no HOA. And my wife is an architect. We do everything that's--that makes it still look like it--like it should have been in the first place, but I know that costs a lot of money to make it look that way. And not everyone is willing to spend three times the price on replacement windows just to make them look like they should have been in the 1940s. Also, note that the majority of people that are opposed to this actually live here and are property owners. A lot of the people that are for it are not property owners, and/or don't live in the Westover area, and I urge you to take that into consideration. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:42:53] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:42:55] The next public speaker is Aaron Margosis, followed by Audrey Clement.

Aaron Margosis: [00:43:00] I'd like to thank the board for coming, and Mr. Reeder for speaking, made some very eloquent points. Miss Garcia made some excellent points as well. I cannot read anybody's mind. My impression of what got us to this point is not that anybody looked at buildings in this area and said, "That is spectacular, we have to preserve it just like that," other than the building we're in, which is a historic building and has been designated that way. My belief is the reason we're here is because I think there is a very broad consensus that we want to preserve the character of the neighborhood, not necessarily the architecture, but the mixed income levels. We don't--I don't think there's anybody here--I've never heard anyone get up here and speak desiring to see this place turn into a millionaire's club. The problem with the historic designation as a tool for doing that is it's the wrong tool, and it's counterproductive, and it will not stop the kinds of things we don't want to see. It's only concerned with the exteriors of buildings. And if you keep the garden apartments exactly as they are, someone can come in, gut the insides, replace everything with solid gold, and sell it for a million and up. So, that's not going to help. We want to preserve the character. This is a diversion from those efforts, and I think for that

reason, we ought to close it up and move on to actually achieving what we want in our neighborhood. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:44:40] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:44:42] The next speaker is Audrey Clement, followed by Ralph Johnson.

Audrey Clement: [00:44:47] Yes, my name is Audrey Clement. I'm a Westover resident since 2004. I first want to associate myself with Mr. Steve Davis. I believe there is a compromise here, it's a very reasonable one. But my issue is one of equity. Westover single family homeowners oppose local historic designation because they will require approval from the county to make changes to the exterior of their homes, including, quote, "demolishing it to build a new dream home," end of quote. I know that renovations and additions are often an asset to the neighborhood, but one person's dream home is sometimes another person's nightmare. Consider, for example, the garish, oversized, barn-like McMansions that recently replaced one of the county's few remaining wooded areas at the intersection of Washington Boulevard and George Mason Drive. These by-right monstrosities, built cheek by jowl on what was once a rustic wooded lot have destroyed shade, and a carbon sink, induced runoff, deprived others of quiet enjoyment, and diminished Arlington's suburban character. Incidentally, this eyesore development on Washington Boulevard was constructed by Evergreen Homes, the same outfit that tore down the first set of garden apartment buildings in Westover Village in 2014 and replaced them with luxury townhomes. Nevertheless, I agree with Westover homeowners that argue that if developers have the right to deface some neighborhoods with McMansions, other neighborhoods should expect the same. What I disagree with is the proposition that such outsized developments are beneficial to anyone but the developer, who makes a killing on the sale, and the county, who reaps the additional real estate tax revenue. No, I don't dispute by-right ownership. However, I insist that with rights come responsibilities. In 2006, Westover Village was designated both a state and national historic place, entitling all property owners, including landlords, to major tax credits of up to 45% on the cost of renovations. Westover Village property owners don't complain about the tax advantages they've reaped with historic designation, but they challenge the notion that with rights come responsibilities, namely the need to preserve the character of their neighborhood, and the means to compel preservation. I take issue with their self-serving arguments as contrary to the fundamental concept of fair play, and I urge the review board to dismiss them in considering local historic designation for Westover Village. And finally, I have a question to ask the landlords, who argue that there is nothing historical about the apartment buildings in Westover. If that is the case, then how come each and every one of them is entitled to historic tax credits? Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:47:33] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:47:35] The next public speaker is Ralph Johnson, followed by Suzanne Napper.

Ralph Johnson: [00:47:43] I am one of those landowners. And we have a compact with the county. We have property rights, and you are trying to take them away. And this is clearly a taking. There is nobody here, other than the person who's knocked down those houses to build townhouses, most of the people have been doing a great job there, and providing a great service, and you're--because of what one person has done, you're deciding to take away their property rights. I have nothing against preservation. I have preserved an apartment. Two of them, in fact. But that was my choice. If this is the purpose of what Arlington County is trying to do to preserve low-income housing, affordable housing, and this is the taking that they're going to do, it's going to give people like me an idea that this is going to be done throughout Arlington County. And even though I love old garden apartments, it'll be my thought, "You know, I better knock these down right now and build something now before they take away my rights." And so, when you're saying this is going to cost preservation of these houses, it's actually, in the long run, going to destroy these old market rate affordable housing. And everyone who knows me says I--knows I love these old garden apartments. But this is what's going to happen. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:49:18] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:49:19] The next speaker is Suzanne Napper, followed by Robert Tramonte.

Suzanne Napper: [00:49:24] Hi. I'm in opposition of the historical district. I'm also--I don't know what everyone else thinks, but it seems like people are trying to hijack the historical designation to further other personal, housing, environmental, or other policy agendas that have nothing to do with our community besides what we choose to do as a community to further, you know, green spaces and community activism. The houses, I've lived here since 1992, they seem not the least bit historical as far as how many of them have been improved upon, bumped out, bumped up. I live in one of the very few unimproved homes, though we have waited a very long time to improve our home. I was really hoping at some point to be able to do that without having extreme overreaching oversight of a board that hasn't imposed these restrictions on others in my neighborhood. I think that about covers it. I think everyone else has already covered the other points that I was going to make. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [00:50:37] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:50:40] The next speaker is Robert Tramonte, followed by Renata Vogel.

Robert Tramonte: [00:50:48] Yes. I'm Robert Tramonte, and I'm the owner of the Italian store at Westover, as well as Lyon Village. We did significant investment--I guess I represent some of the commercial interests of the shopping center. We made an investment there. And if we had known about the historical designation, I don't think we would have invested in the shopping center. Going back to 1980, when we opened the Lyon Village Shopping Center, it was--we were kind of there by default. The other places that we thought were better locations were all full. And when we started out there, a lot of people said, "Well, good idea, but bad location." The high store that was there had been had been--they had been for rent for over 2 years. So, we got some free rent, and we got some cheap rent, which doesn't exist anymore. But what happened was some things that seemed to me very similar to Westover, which is why I came to Westover, a Metro was opened within a mile. Some of the--they built some new townhouses. Younger people started moving in. Some of the fixed-income became condominiums. And now people say, "Well, you couldn't miss, it's a great location." I mean, Starbucks is there, we're there. The stores are pretty vibrant, they're all doing well. And I think we've created something there that maybe a lot of people are trying to make now. They're talking about green space at Tysons Corner for, you know, goodness' sake. But there's places for people to congregate, Grandpa, college people, et cetera, Starbucks, on the sidewalk, all of that there. So, we saw Westover, and we thought this same thing could happen. And albeit the stores at Westover are very quaint. Everybody loves Air's, everybody loves Toby's, Beer Garden's great. I think, I mean, I see a lot of these people at lunch every day, and I think that all of us could use an uptick in sales. I think by doing the historic preservation, I think it would kind of stunt the natural growth. And you know, some of the tenants there, they even talk about the fact that, you know, if they don't see more sales, it's going to be rough on them because we're faced with a lot of online shopping. Everybody is doing their Christmas shopping online these days. Nobody goes to hardware stores very much anymore, they go to Home Depot. So, we're fighting the big box centers. And you know, I think it's a great little shopping center. And in conclusion, some people asked me what has surprised me the most opening this new store, which you know, we get almost 500 customers a day. Sometimes on the weekends, we get more than that. But the biggest surprise to me at the shopping center was how many people come up to me at the store, and they want to give me a hug and thank me, and I'm saying, "What are you thanking me for?" And they said, "We're thanking you for making our neighborhood better." So, thank you for your time.

Joan Lawrence: [00:54:24] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:54:26] The next speaker is Renata Vogel, followed by Bill Braswell.

Renata Vogel: [00:54:42] Good evening, madam chair, and members of the HALRB. I'm Renata Vogel, a 30-year-old--a 30-year property owner of 2 pieces of property in the affected area of Westover. I fully support the Westover letter dated October 12, 2016, addressed to members of the Arlington County board, with a copy to the HALRB, and signed by 8 local property owners. The letter included the consolidated petition results of an overwhelming number of local Westover property owners. All signers, including me, are opposed to Westover becoming a local historic district. Since the majority of Westover property owners do not want Westover to become a local historic district, I ask you to consider this fact, and let it be the basis for deciding against any more county efforts opposing the desire of all these local citizens. There does not appear to be any form of procedures whereby a community like Westover can directly stop the proposed actions offered up by a single individual not living in the area. But I, along with all signers of the petition, ask you tonight to consider the heartfelt convictions of hundreds of Westover property owners, and that--excuse me, and let the cumulative signatures be the basis to terminate any further action, including any costly studies to make Westover a local historic district. Thank you very much.

Joan Lawrence: [00:56:33] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [00:56:35] The next speaker is Bill Braswell, followed by Michael Tramonte.

Bill Braswell: [00:56:44] I guess you heard I'm Bill Braswell. Let me give you a little history. My mother grew up in a house that was built in the late 1700s. My father grew up in a house that was built in the early 1900s. I grew up in a house--in a house that was built in the early 1900s. I was the slave labor, with my father, for keeping those three houses up to snuff. Folks, it's hard, it is expensive, and dog my britches, what did I go do? I went and bought this fantastic old house in Arlington. It had to be renovated, it had to be expanded, and I was going to keep it historically correct. Not because I had to, because I wanted to. Well, I went out and got bids. The bids were triple to keep it historically correct if we could even find the materials. So, I'm a little worried that we are building ourselves a big problem here. Then there's the example of the Swanson School that we designated as locally historic, and they needed to replace some windows not too long ago, and found out that they couldn't find the historically correct windows, or they'd cost an arm and a leg. And so, they went to the county board and got permission to kind of get around the rules. There's some other examples. We have a development called Queen's Court, which is locally significant, and it is now being considered to be torn down and built up. Because they are filling a local need, they will be able to do that, and probably just their proposal is just to put a little plaque up that says this was here before. But in some cases, what would I have to do if I lived in Westover would be a whole lot more, as I believe y'all have to do in Maywood. The other thought is that John Reeder, and it says there 160 people that want this historic designation, I think we must first look at each of those people's homes, and show them how expensive it would be to change and make them historic before they try to impose it on these folks. We have a terrible problem here in Arlington, where especially our restaurants, our small businesses these days are going out of business real fast. And if there is anything, we need to do everything we can and wipe all impediments that we can to keep small businesses, to help them grow, to help them be vibrant, and make them middle businesses. Then we've had this discussion about missing middle homes. And if all you rich and famous people here in Arlington don't recognize it, young people can't find a home in Arlington to buy, to move up, unless you've got a very significant two-person income. If we make this historically significant, are we chasing some of these young folks out of Westover, out of Arlington, and whatever? And then also, let's talk about those apartments. I know some of the people that own those apartments in Arlington, in Westover. They work like the dickens to have a good quality product for folks who are in need of market-rate affordable homes. Are we going to chase these people out of business, or raise the rent where folks can't afford it if we change this historic designation? Now I--and Miss Clement keeps talking about that dadgum little block at Washington and George Mason. We did that by right. And if you pull the string, and you know the

developers of Evergreen and the one that came before, the reason they did it by right was that the county wouldn't let them. We wouldn't be flexible with them about building something that could be more affordable for folks like maybe townhouses, or something, or whatever, and so they said, "I'm just going to go and do it by right." And so finally, folks, let's think about what we're doing. What is going to be the expense for the county, what is going to be the expense for the owners, what is it for the apartment owners, and for the apartment renters? And I really think we need to do a lot of thinking before we jump and make this historic.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:01:59]** Thank you. How many more speakers do we have?

John Liebertz: **[01:02:04]** We--we have approximately 16 more speakers.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:02:10]** Okay, I'm going to ask you to please try to observe the 2-minute limit. Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:02:16]** The next speaker is Michael Tramonte, followed by Bo Conner.

Michael Tramonte: **[01:02:2]** Okay. I don't live in the area, but I work at the Italian store for my dad. A lot of people have probably seen me there. But I just wanted to give my two cents, and that we came here, and we started to build out the Westover Italian store. It was--it was quite an undertaking, like it was--like, they're doing that--college was pretty simple, but building out a location to that extent, and making sure that we did it the right way, which is the Arlington way, which I really was glad to get to learn, and it was tough, but I think it's the right way to do things, was much harder than, like, anything that I learned. Or a lot I learned the concepts in classes. But I think we are better for it. But to think that we had--like part of the reason my dad said, we wouldn't possibly have picked this location had we known that we couldn't expand. That was because there are certain things that we want to expand, like for example making the common spaces, like out front, maybe a rooftop. And to have more limits on the property just seems like not a fair thing to add to it. I understand that the historic designation could do good things in that if it could kind of cap the property values, it would definitely--the rents would be able to stay and, like, lower level rents. But I think it's not worth it to take the property rights of the people that are here and trying to, like, build their properties. I don't think it's worth doing that. Yeah, that's about it.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:04:00]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:04:01]** The next speaker is Bo Conner, followed by Aleksandr Belinsky.

Bo Conner: **[01:04:08]** Good evening, folks. I was born here. This is my community. This is my junior high school. I saw many a play where you're sitting, and got excoriated by many a teacher and principal from that position. Anyway, I've served on the community development citizen advisors' committee, and advised the county board, I did that for 20 years. I was actually born here virtually. My father was a soldier, so I was born at Walter Reed. Now, that's historic. What has happened here with the apartment purchase of five buildings is the purchasers have run the price up, which means the taxes are going to go up. I own three buildings, so I know that they're going to go up. And I didn't know that I'd get a tax relief because we have a historic designation. But my point is maybe it's off a little bit, but when they bid the price up, it's going to run the taxes up, but also the non-profits come in, spend \$10,000, \$20,000 per unit, rent them for more than they're renting now, and put utilities in where the tenant pays everything. He pays his own heat, and all utilities, all electricity. So, they're shooting themselves in the foot by doing this. And I'm strongly opposed to it. And I urge you to not make it a historic designation. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:05:58]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:05:59] The next speaker is Alexander Belinsky, followed by Jack Grey.

Aleksandr Belinsky: [01:06:05] Excuse me, does everybody have a handout? My name is Aleksandr Belinsky, and I'm a resident living in [inaudible] Garden Apartments. And I live directly in front of a construction site. And it's a vivid memory for me, this apartment, which was in front of--which was before, 7 months ago. I value this place not only because they give an affordable place, but because of the history of this place, because it's related to the World War II, it's important for country I grew up in former Soviet Union. But I want to bring attention, and I've not signed a petition, but if you need it, I will second it because I consider that local historic designation is a regulatory tool to slow development [inaudible] the county for a long time. And here are the documents which I'll show to the commissioner so they know. I could not show slides. It was presented to county board on the day when the petition was filed on June 21 in considering historic preservation. It's page two, the second page. It's one tool which the county should consider. Apparently, this is not the best tool. I would say it's a last resort to stop demolition. I don't see many advantages, as [inaudible] pointed out, to community to have local designation for these reasons. I want to present two more documents, which seem forgotten by the community and known to commissions. First is information that the civic association in December 17, 2012, made a conservation plan, which included, supported initial historic designation. And so, people who were opposed at that time were given a chance to raise an objection. The second document, it's a final report of architectural survey update published in 2013. And it summarizes [inaudible] page two made in neighborhood in 2004, it's a phase 4. And it stated that all historical properties constructed prior to 1955 were included in the survey unless the property owner objected. On my [inaudible] of current property owners was at that time, and 100 new property owners came. And apparently, those who came should be aware that historical district, they may expect that it'll somehow be enforced. And the final document is well-known to the commission. It's a decision--it's a county manager recommendation regarding the proposed local historical designation for Fort Meyer High School, which commission supported, but county denied. In conclusion, county wrote, "Consideration of property for local historical designation is not based solely on historical and architectural merits of the historical resource. And in regards to local designation, it should bear the [inaudible] into account." For me, it sounds like a dictator or a Supreme Court decision. However, I call commissioner to consider the decision solely on the consideration of historical and architectural merits today, leaving to county board to align all other conflicting interests in this case. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [01:10:15] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:10:17] The next speaker is Jack Grey, followed by Glen Satchel. The next speaker is Glen Satchel.

Glen Satchel: [01:10:42] Hello, neighbors and friends. My name is Glen Satchel. We are so lucky to live in Westover Village, or in the Westover Village area. About 28 and a half years ago, my wife and I bought a house at Highland Park over Lee Knowles, about a third of a mile from here, and we bought it because this is a beautiful neighborhood. And the--and I really believe it is, it is historic. And frankly, Westover Village shopping area is the last part of Arlington that still has the small town, Southern feeling. It's like being in Fredericksburg. Right now, I happen to be a tenant in Westover Village. I'm not going to get into the different reasons why, but I specifically picked Westover Village to get a garden apartment because I was already involved in saving historic Westover. And it's both a historical issue and an affordable-housing issue. And I really think we want to keep the historic nature of the area. And if we get stronger protection from the Arlington County board, that will certainly help because anything--without that, anything can happen to this neighborhood over the next 5 or 10 years. In the mid-1980s, I started a tenant association in New York City because a wealthy developer wanted to get rid of our 26th tenement building complex on the Upper East Side. We did everything we could to save the building, 2,000 people lived there. We ended up getting landmarked by the New York City Landmark Commission. Once that happened, the developer couldn't change the exterior of the buildings. He sold it to a rental company. The

buildings still look beautiful. At the time, a lot of people did not think that a 26th tenement building complex was historic either, but it was. It was the last--it was the largest tenement complex existing in New York City, and it was done to maintain--for sanitary living conditions. So, and what ended up happening, and could happen here also, is that when the landlord renovated the interiors of the apartments, he could charge--he could charge a higher rent. It was capped in New York City. Here, it would not be capped. There are different options that need to be considered, including just preserving the garden apartment buildings. I don't think anyone is going to lose money. I think there are advantages and disadvantages to making the whole area a historic district. I think it's up to HALRB to explain the advantages and the disadvantages to the homeowner. They may get higher tax credits. Also, it is very important that if anyone wants to make a renovation to their building, house, apartment complex, that HALRB expedite the process. I know that currently, the five county board members do want to expedite the approval processes. So, here we have an area that is basically intact. Most of the houses that already have additions, it was very tastefully done. And we just have to work with the homeowners, the apartment owners. Everyone understands there are advantages to doing this, maybe there are some disadvantages, but we have to make sure that if someone wants to make an adjustment, alteration to their building, that it be done pretty--the process be very--be done very rapidly. And it's having this area that was built for government workers, soldiers living in the Washington DC area during the World War II era, I think it's very important, and I also think we want our children, grandchildren, whatever, to get a feeling of how this area is, and its historic nature. Thank you so much.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:15:22]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:15:24]** The next three speakers are Amanda Holmberg, John McVay, and Rob Vigfusson. Sorry if I said any of those incorrectly.

Amanda Holmberg: **[01:15:45]** Good evening, I will try and be brief. I am a homeowner here in Westover within the sort of danger zone. Our property backs up to the Baptist church. Just want to echo the sentiments of most of the folks we've heard already that are really strongly opposed to this designation. I will not go through the same points because I would make all the same ones you've heard. The one other thing I'd like to say is I am strongly in favor of preserving the character of the neighborhood and the diverse community we have. I am strongly in favor of preserving the affordability of the garden apartments, and keeping the neighborhood in that way. I do not think this is the avenue to do that. By profession, I'm a policy professional, albeit in health policy, but I think this is a bad policy decision. We are trying to fix something through the wrong means. I would much rather see the resources of our community and, you know, our county tax dollars spent addressing that problem directly rather than indirectly. So, I really strongly oppose this. I think, looking at my street, I was lucky we bought a house in 2012 that already was bumped out, had a nice addition. We wouldn't be able to do the things that are already done to our home. There's not a single house on my block that hasn't been improved in some way. This would disadvantage folks that have original houses in a way that won't affect those of us whose houses have already been improved. I think it's a broad brushstroke that is unfair to folks, and I don't think it ultimately helps the rental residents either. So, I just wanted to underscore that. Thank you for the time.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:17:21]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:17:22]** The next speaker is John McVay, followed by Rob Vigfusson. Sorry about that I couldn't read the last names.

John McVay: **[01:17:43]** Hi there. Yeah, I moved to the community about 6 years ago, and kind of fell into a rental here in Westover. I didn't really know what I was getting into, but I discovered that this is really a fantastic place to live in, pretty unique amongst Arlington. It's a place that has this small village feel, it's not quite the suburbs, but it's also urban. It's close to where I work. I work at a non-profit in Ballston, so I can just get my bike, take the bike trail, get to work, whilst my colleagues are taking the

subway from the city for an hour, or coming in from the suburbs for an hour and a half, 2 hours. And I just really fell in love with the character of the community. It's unique, like I said. With the garden style apartments, I think that they're really valuable as a whole. You know, the fact that they're this unit just kind of makes them what they are. And the reason why I showed up is those poor apartment buildings that were demolished near Westover Park, it's dramatic, you know? I mean, you can't really go back there, and think that the character of the neighborhood is being changed, of those--that those historic buildings are being changed. So, I think this is a very valid tool to protect the character of the neighborhood. And I'm just kind of seeing kind of similar things to where I grew up in upstate New York. I grew up in Victor, New York, which has been one of the most rapidly developing towns in the state for many years. It's kind of on the outskirts of Rochester, formerly rural. And most people move there for its rural character. And as it became more and more developed, the reason why people moved there in the first place kind of disappeared. You know, you can really love a place to death. And that's kind of what I see whenever I see another building that's bulldozed, replaced by one of these new multimillion-dollar homes. It just--it's degrading the character of the community, which I imagine everyone, on some level, whether they realize it or not, values. So, I think that this is a fantastic use of a historic district. And also, I just wanted to add I've known folks that lived in all three of the communities that are already historic districts, the garden style apartments, and they're fantastic. I would encourage people to visit them if they haven't already. And also, I've known many people, co-workers and friends that have lived in the community renting because, as someone in the mid-30s working at a non-profit, it's hard to find somewhere else with a comparable character. You know, you're either living in a gigantic apartment block, or in the city. And you know, I grew up in the suburbs. I enjoy having the opportunity to live in kind of a village atmosphere, in a place that doesn't take me hours to get to my workplace. So, I really, really enjoy the character of this community, and I think it will be fantastic to have a historic district. It seems like, you know, developers always have more money. You know, they're always going to develop more than we can possibly save, but small things like this can, you know, give you some protection in the other direction. So, I think it's a fantastic idea. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [01:20:59] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:21:01] The next public speaker is Rob Vigfusson, and Christie Vigfusson, I'm sorry if I said that incorrectly.

Rob Vigfusson: [01:21:06] Oh, no worries. Hi, I'm Rob Vigfusson. I live in the neighborhood. I own a house we bought in 2009. You know, much of it was built in 1948, but then there was a bunch extra added in the 60s. And yeah, I'm opposed to the--to this--to this historical district rule. And I think part of the thing is because you got to think about, well, it's the character of the neighborhood that people want to preserve. And you've got to admit that the character of this neighborhood and why it was originally built in the first place was for growth. It was for young people for--to start new homes, start new families. And I think that this, you know, preventing additional development is against that spirit of the character of the neighborhood. You know, we've heard about all the townhomes are, you know, are unappealing and all this. I don't live in one of those. I have a house, as I said. But you know, that is growth. That is a bunch of new, young families that can live there. And I think that the--that I think we've got to keep that in mind. You know, these houses, when they were built, you know, they were dismissed like the ticky-tack houses of poetry fame. And I think that is the--you know, that this, in the same way, the new construction is in line with the spirit of actually what the neighborhood is about, which is a place where families can live and grow. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [01:22:31] Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:22:32]** The next speaker is Christie Vigfusson, followed by Patrick McDonald, then Donna Gavin.

Christie Vigfusson: **[01:22:38]** Hi, thanks very much for taking the time to hear us all out. My name is Christie Vigfusson. I am here in opposition to the historic designation. I am a homeowner on Fairfax Drive in the Bluemont Civic Association section of the district study area. You know, in the 7 years that we've lived in our home, we've seen the neighborhood evolve. And I feel like it's been evolving in a very positive direction. I would like to see the homeowners continue to be able to choose how they want to develop and update their homes without having to go through review and approval process by the HALRB. You know, I've heard some concerns about the luxury townhomes very close to our home. But I personally believe that they represent a modernization and an updating of the neighborhood, and think that that kind of new development can enhance the neighborhood. Personally, being in the Bluemont Civic Association section of the study area, I request that you do not move forward with the designation overall, but at a minimum consider removing the BCA, Bluemont Civic Association, section from designation. I'd like to have my neighbors and my family be able to update our homes and our properties as we like. And thanks again for taking the time to, to be here. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:24:21]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:24:23]** The next speaker is Patrick McDonald, followed by Donna Gavin, and then Nicholas James.

Patrick McDonald: **[01:24:36]** Good evening. I'm Pat McDonald, I'm a local homeowner with my wife Allie, who would be here except for she's taking care of our two small children. We live on Fairfax Drive, abutting some of these garden apartment buildings. We very much enjoy the entire community. We are one of the houses that has been spoken of tonight that doesn't have a bump-out or a build-out yet. If you take a look around, I think what you see is most people who have renovated their homes have done so tastefully. They have done so to preserve the neighborhood. They haven't been tear-downs in Westover, they've been additions. And these local homes have been preserved anyway, so we don't really gain anything in terms of preserving the character of these single family homes. You've heard a lot tonight about all the reasons why this a bad idea, and I agree with those. It doesn't solve the affordable housing issue. It prevents homeowners from doing what they'd like to do. And for me, I look forward to living here for a long time, and having my kids walk right to this building to go to middle school. And you know, we're going to need more space, and I'd like to be able to do that free and clear of having a delayed process of having my home approved, or having the right siding approved, or something of that nature, the right window if we haven't replaced an original window from the 1940s. In response to Mr. Reeder's concerns about, you know, what the purpose is, you know, I think if the board was here to look at the 2006 documentation, then there wouldn't be all these other factors you would look at. You would look at the 2006 document, say, "Oh, that's enough, it's a historical designation." But if you look around the neighborhood, what are these other factors? Where are--where is the historical significance as related to, say, other counties or other neighborhoods in Arlington? My home is extremely similar, if not identical to homes in Dominion Hills, or Tara-Leeway, other neighborhoods nearby. There's nothing distinctive about these single family homes in the area. There's no reason to place an extra burden on the homeowners for that reason. And I'd like to take just a moment to respond to Miss Clement's comments about fairness. Fairness in this situation would be not imposing a burden on local homeowners who--and business owners who came here with an expectation of what they'd be able to do with their homes, and all of a sudden flipping the script and, as many people have said, putting into effect an HOA, when we bought here with the expectation that we wouldn't have one. So, thank you very much for your time.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:27:07]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:27:08] The next speaker is Donna Gavin, followed by Nicholas James, and then Matthew R. Nagle. Donna Gavin? Next speaker is Nicholas James.

Nicholas James: [01:27:33] I've lived in Arlington for 35 years. I grew up in the area. I went to school here. I now own a home here. And I saw the sign, and it made me think about the area. I love the area, I love how it is. I didn't really want much to change, and then I thought about growing up, and my best friend lived over in the garden style apartments. And I remember hanging out there, and thinking about having my kid raised in this area. I thought about all the horrible, negative things that I experienced in these areas. I mean, I saw numerous acts of violence and robbery, and things I wouldn't want my child to experience. And I think as an adult, you really don't see or hear about a lot of this. And I know I didn't tell a lot of people about a lot of the things I saw. I mean, I remember the times where I was surrounded and patted down, and all my pockets were emptied. I remember being in one of the apartments, and having the door kicked in and being pistol-whipped in the face, and having a MAC-10 put to my face, and telling me that they were going to kill me. And they robbed everyone there, and had us lie down, face down on the couch when they were leaving. I thought I was going to be sprayed with bullets, and I'm in eighth grade, going to school here, and it's happening right across the street. And it just made me think, you know, is that something I really want preserved? Do I want that history, you know, preserved? Do I want that here, raising a family? And I don't think I do, but you know, at the same time, I love the stores down there, I love the way they look. I don't--I don't want the store scene to change, I don't want a lot to change. But you know, hearing about all the garden style apartments, you know, I'd love to see them go. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [01:29:10] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:29:12] The next speaker is Matthew R. Nagle, followed by Ben Adams, and then Howard Bubel.

Matthew R. Nagle: [01:29:30] My name's Matt, I've lived in Arlington for about 8 years, and I probably shouldn't be here. I'm not sure why I am because I live on Fairfax Drive across from the Custis Trail. Even though I'm not part of Westover, somehow I got lumped into this whole scam, so I have to spend the night talking about this stuff. This isn't about history. This isn't about anything other than affordable housing. We know this, right? So, one of the first speakers I heard when I came in was that these efforts are usually voted down by ideologues. This effort is nothing but an ideological effort. It has nothing to do with history, has everything to do with affordable housing. So, why don't we just agree on that and move forward about how to address that problem? We know that this isn't about history because there's nothing historical about these structures. I live in a house that was built in 1948. It was built at a time after the war when they were trying to crank out quick housing for people coming home from the war, which was the case for the people that owned the house before me. There's nothing of any significant historical value. That was the intent, to make it affordable at the time. So, here we are talking about historical value in something that was designed to not have historical value. So, this effort is about affordable housing. I had a special needs brother, who's since passed away. I have a mother who's battling cancer, who lives by herself. I have a nephew who has autism. I understand special needs. I understand fixed incomes. This historical thing is a stretch, all right? We're not addressing the problems that the people who are behind us are really trying to champion, all right? So, and doing so, as with all ideological efforts, we're not thinking past stage one, and we're inviting all kinds of unintended or perhaps intended consequences. In my mind, it's a war against the wealthy, which I am not. I'm a government worker. I spent 15 years saving for this house, going overseas in Afghanistan and Iraq, so I could live here, live next to a highway. And now, I'm being lumped into this whole thing, where it will directly affect my only asset, my family's only asset, right? So, here's some history. The house I bought was from the LaPlant family. The LaPlant--Mr. and Mrs. LaPlant, they met in the early 1940s. Mr. LaPlant went off to the war, and he told his wife, or soon to be wife, "If you wait for me, we'll get married." She waited 6 years. He came back, she was waiting at the train station. They got married. They had five kids on his army salary, and a three-bedroom house with a galley kitchen and one bathroom. All right, you couldn't tell me that if they hit the lottery, they

wouldn't have burned that house down to build something better, all right? So, what are we talking about here? Preserving history? The original owners I'm quite sure would have been happy to have the money to rebuild, and that's what I'm looking for. This is an investment. That's what attracts people to Arlington. That's what attracts people to this zip code, not to be brought in and then have the rug pulled out from under them, and being told that you have to, you know, be subjected to historical things. You know, this isn't even about history anyway. Thanks.

Joan Lawrence: [01:32:41] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:32:42] The next speaker is Ben Adams, followed by Howard Bubel, and then--Bubel. Then Debbie Crabtree.

Ben Adams: [01:32:56] Good evening, everybody. I won't rehash everything that's been said by most of the homeowners tonight. Just want to just contribute our story as well. I think my wife and I are quintessential Westover owner. We moved here 5 years ago with one 6-month-old daughter. We now have three daughters. We are that couple that is saving to expand our home. We have grand ideas of what our sort of dream colonial home with some bump-outs and additions may look like. And coming before, you know, an unelected, unaccountable group of up to 15 individuals that don't share our story and our vision for our family is a pretty--is a pretty scary thought. So, we are also sort of opposed to the historic district. Thanks.

Joan Lawrence: [01:33:48] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:33:51] The next speaker is Howard Bubel, followed by Debbie Crabtree, and then Megan Whiteside.

Joan Lawrence: [01:34:00] How many more speakers do we have?

John Liebertz: [01:34:05] Eight.

Joan Lawrence: [01:34:09] Is there anybody else who wants to speak? Okay. That's it. Sorry, I didn't look far enough. Do you have a speaker slip? Okay, please do. You're the last one, thanks.

Howard Bubel: [01:34:33] Good evening, madam chair, and members of the HALRB. I'm Howard Bubel, a 30-year property owner of 2 pieces of property here in the affected area of Westover, and also a member of a group that pulled together the petitions and the opinions of the neighborhood with regard to it becoming a historic district. And part of that--and as a result of that group's efforts, the summary of all the petitions pulled together have been made available to the Arlington County board members, as well as to the chair. And I hope you all have had an opportunity to take a look at it. This represents an overwhelming majority of the home and all property owners here in Westover. Matter of fact, 55% of the homeowners, 93% of the apartment--private apartment owners, and 100% of all commercial property owners. And I think I would speak on part of the community in that regard that we would hope that you would look at the results of this position as overwhelming, and in terms of causing you to think of the direction that the community absolutely does not want to go, which is be designated as a historic district, a local historic district, in the future. As the homeowners go, so does the rest of the property go. So, it's very important, I think, for the board to listen to those homeowners that have been here tonight. And in fact, if there is an imposition of a local historic district being designated on this community, the homeowners themselves would suffer the greatest, primarily being restricted in terms of being able to add anything more to their homes. Yes, some people have already, you know, included structures on the outside, bulging out, et cetera. But there are some in the community that are actually putting up dream homes. And within a block or so, going west, going north, and going east from Westover proper, you have homes that are basically dream homes being built, and in large numbers as people are converting the old structures. And Westover, if it's limited, you know, in the sense, it's going to wind up basically being

restricted to smaller homes. And I know or I recognize that Arlington County kind of looks at Westover as being an affordable housing area generally. And why? Well, the reason is they have smaller homes. Well, I don't think that's totally fair to the property owners here. Most property owners, if they're not-- don't want bigger homes themselves right now, may in the future, or whoever they sell to may want to develop their homes and make them larger. And that, of course, would be forbidden, and for the most part, especially the raising of homes and rebuilding. So, I would ask you to consider the impact on the community in that regard, and clearly weigh in the fact that so many people have already taken the time to fill out that petition with their name, phone number, address, and email. The fact that one individual, John Reeder by name, was able to submit a petition to Arlington County and have this board come together and act as they have on this matter, and leading up to this public meeting tonight, is really shocking in light of the fact that the community itself was only first brought to its attention July 21, where there was a public meeting by Arlington County. And the historic district was in fact discussed at that point in time. And in the middle of October or thereabouts, the community did vote, and did provide you with their opinion that they should not be brought together as or designated as a local historic district.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:39:41]** Thank you. Could you wrap it up, please?

Howard Bubel: **[01:39:43]** Okay. I think I have basically got across most of the points I wanted to get across. Thank you very much.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:39:51]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:39:53]** The next speaker is Debbie Crabtree, followed by Megan Whiteside, and then Steve McGinnis.

Debbie Crabtree: **[01:40:04]** I'm Debbie Crabtree. I am a daughter of the family who owns some apartments in Westover. And I wanted to tell you that the Westover area has already been nationally and state recognized as a historic area, and so I'm not sure why we need to be designated as a local historic area. I echo the sentiments of the previous speakers. And seeing that I don't see any advantage to property owners, business owners, or renters in the Westover area. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:40:44]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:40:45]** The next speaker is Megan Whiteside, followed by Steve McGinnis, and then Matthew Furbush.

Megan Whiteside: **[01:40:52]** Good evening. My name is Megan Whiteside, and my husband and I moved to Westover just under a year ago into one of the new townhomes built in Westover Village. We moved here because of the character of the neighborhood, because of the schools, and we're excited to start our family here in Westover. I and my husband are strongly opposed to the petition for local historic designation. And I won't rehash what has already been said. This board has heard a lot about public policy concerns with regards to this petition, for and against. And I think that's what much of tonight has been about, the public policy concerns. But I recognize that, as a board, you're evaluating whether this petition and whether local historic designation is appropriate based on 11 criteria. So really, when looking at the criteria here, and in looking at the historic preservation program staff memo, there are 7 of the 11 criteria identified in that memo that may or may not apply to Westover. So, looking specifically at the last six criteria on the last page of that memo, at those specific six criteria, anyone who's a proponent of local historic designation has failed to establish or provide any specific factual evidence to those last six criteria. So, where do we find the two criteria for you board members to move forward with this petition? Looking specifically at criteria B, the property has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation. What is the character that makes Westover Village significant? Utilitarian, largely modified structures, many of which are the same or

similar to other structures in Arlington? What makes those significant? No one in favor of this petition has been able to identify that to you tonight. Looking at point D, the property is associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the county, state, or nation. Who are those person or persons? No one here tonight has identified anyone to you. No one can--in support of the petition has come up with arguments that this specific person or persons makes Westover Village significant, this person significantly contributed to our neighborhood. Just because there was an original developer doesn't mean that that person significantly contributed to the development of this community, or added any special value. Point E, the property embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, or method of construction. Well, what's so valuable? No proponent has come forward with anything to that effect to you tonight. No one has identified the different styles of homes in this community, the modified homes in this community, anything that makes those homes, our homes, valuable. Point F, the property is identified as the work of a master builder, architect, or landscape architect. Again, who might that be? No one in favor of local historic designation can come to you or has come to you tonight identifying a master builder, architect, or landscape architect. Point G, the property embodies elements of design, detailing, materials, or craftsmanship that render it structurally or architecturally significant. No one has identified what is structurally or architecturally significant to you tonight. Point K, the property is suitable for preservation or restoration. What here in homes that have largely been modified, or homes like mine that are less than a year old, what is suitable for preservation or restoration? So, I urge you tonight, as Mr. Reeder did, to look at the specific criteria that you're judging our neighborhood by. And look to the fact that there is scant evidence, and little to no argument, that 2 of these 11 criteria have been met. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:45:09]** Thank you, please hold your applause. That'll put a stop to the public speakers, as I indicated earlier.

John Liebertz: **[01:45:16]** The next speaker is Steve McGinnis, followed by Matthew Furbush and Glen Taylor.

Steve McGinnis: **[01:45:25]** Hello, I'm Steve McGinnis. I actually bought here in December of 2013. This past year, we put in an addition and renovated our house on Kentucky Street. I've got to say that had this been place--had they put in place a historic district before we bought, we would not have bought here. We would not have invested our money here, and we would not have further invested in renovating here. It would have just been too cost-prohibitive for us. With regard to the garden apartments, I actually some directly abutting my property. And you know, some of them actually do have a lot of, like, walkability and character, but my experience from the ones directly behind me is I get trash thrown over my fence. I have rats come over from the dumpsters. And you know, we all suffer from mosquitos from all of the blacktop. So, there are real externalities from kind of that garden style and living right behind it. I'm actually troubled by this entire process. It seems ripe for abuse. One could, for example, submit every single individual house in Arlington without having to submit any type of petition to a larger group of homeowners. And my understanding is the board would have to review each and every individual submission without any type of check or balance. Like, it would just be meaningless work. I'm a little concerned by that. Like, historical review and having a historic district should be a process that is detailed, and is predicated upon some actual historic value, as opposed to what this seems to be about, which is preserving affordable housing of some sort, market rate or, you know, true affordable housing. And if that is the case, I would--you know, I would ask the county to actually directly address that, as opposed to trying to indirectly do it through a historical district. I understand the intent; I understand the reason. I actually sympathize with it. It is very expensive to rent in Arlington. I've rented in Arlington before. My wife has rented in Arlington before. It's a very real need in our community. But trying to prevent growth, trying to prevent development by using a historic district, and trying to preserve affordable housing that way does not seem to be the way to go about things, in particular when we have needs for school construction. And my understanding is property taxes fund the vast majority of that.

Stunting that is not appropriate in my view, in particular for a need that is not specifically being addressed by a historic district. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [01:48:03] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:48:05] The next speaker is Matthew Furbush, followed by Glenn Taylor, then Ana Cornejo.

Matthew Furbush: [01:48:13] Hello, hi. I was talking to the private owner of three multiple family tenant buildings here today, and I would just strongly urge the board to strongly consider the sort of personal interests of the preservationists. I'm here as a single family home owner. And really, when I look through this, I see it as more punishment and restriction than advantage really. Anyone with significant powers of observation would be able to see that in our neighborhoods, which are nice neighborhoods, there isn't a consistent style that really meets the criteria of preserving. It isn't like walking through Maywood. I'm sure everyone up at the table has done that before. And again, and the crime issue is very, very apparent. We have a rental house next to us, and the son, high school son, same as my son's age, was telling us about a shooting that occurred down here just this past winter in the multiple family unit dwellings. And I was very concerned with that. And just within the past 2 weeks, I've had a bicycle stolen and two sort of designer outdoor furniture items disappear out of our backyard, actually. So, crime is an issue with us also. And again, I thank the board for taking these issues into consideration.

Joan Lawrence: [01:49:37] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:49:38] The next speaker is Glenn Taylor, followed by Ana Cornejo.

Glenn Taylor: [01:49:45] Good evening, my name is Glenn Taylor, resident for 16 years, property owner. Just wanted to list off a few communities in Arlington that are also national historic districts. Fairlington, Lyon Village, Cherrydale, Lyon Park, Waverly Hills, Penrose, Claremont, Glencarlyn, Aurora Highlands, Highland Park, and Overlee Knolls. All these communities are surrounding communities, arguably have a greater significance with a historic value. This board has an opportunity to stop this tonight. Because so goes Westover, so goes these neighborhoods. What is the criteria that you're going to--what is the gold standard? Overwhelmingly, the homeowners are against this. And I can assure you that the homeowners in these communities would be against it. But if you ignore the homeowners in Westover, are you going to ignore the homeowners in those communities as well? Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [01:50:47] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:50:48] The next public speaker is Ana Cornejo, followed by Sara Hutchison, and then Aqneieska Kupia.

Ana Cornejo: [01:50:55] Hi, good evening. My name is Ana Cornejo, and I've been working in the Westover area for several years, more than--it's about 25 years that I kind of been in the area. And I'm an owner of one of the buildings on 57--here on Washington Boulevard. I think we hear a lot, and we know exactly what's the purpose of this. But I just wanted to tell the board that you are here that I'm opposed to accept the historic thing that, you know, the county is planning. As you know, as you already hear, this is going to be affecting us in so many ways. So, I'm not agreeing to continue with the historic thing. Okay, thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [01:51:58] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:51:59] The next speaker is Sara Hutchison, followed by Aqneieska Kupia.

Sara Hutchison: **[01:52:07]** Good evening. Thank you all for being here and allowing us an opportunity to express our opinions to you. I've been a homeowner in Westover for 39 years. That practically makes me historic, I think. The house I live in now has been deemed non-contributing in the 2006 survey that was done, but not because I did anything to it. It had an addition that was built in 1950, so this historic district designation is something that's not just applying to the past few years. 1950? I support everything that Miss Garcia said in her 4-minute statement. I do not support what Mr. Reeder said in his 4-minute statement. Please do not move forward with the local historic district designation. It's the wrong tool to preserve affordable housing here in Westover. And finally, I would just like to say thank you to the Tramonte family, are you still here, for making Westover so vibrant.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:53:13]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:53:15]** The next speaker is Aqneieska Kupia, followed by Mark Singer.

Aqneieska Kupia: **[01:53:25]** Good evening. Thank you for coming. I would like to also share my story. And I'm joining the stronger position to petition. I grew up in Poland, and we moved, my husband. And I grew up around the historical buildings. And when we moved here and tried to look for a house, we're looking to Arlington because we're looking for the old house with old charm, with plaster, with wooden floor. And we want to live in further down with the drywall and artificial plastic house. And we're happy until this June, when we heard this petition. And just it's like someone said before, it's ideological, indirect way to achieve other goals. For me to impose on my freedom some of the rules which are going to be, again, bureaucratic board how I can improve my house, it makes me feel kind of not feel good. And that's for also the Arlington character, which brings the people moving in who have young people, moving in from Washington DC, millennials. They want to live there, they want to improve their house. They don't want to destroy the character, but they want to improve. We need to improve surrounding. We cannot stay in 1940 houses when the whole world is moving ahead. Thanks a lot.

Joan Lawrence: **[01:54:58]** Thank you.

John Liebertz: **[01:54:59]** The next speaker is Mark Singer, followed by Michael Youngblood.

Mark Singer: **[01:55:06]** Good evening, my name is Mark Singer. I'm a homeowner over on North Kentucky Street, so just a couple blocks down, next door to Steve. So, I also abut one of the garden apartments. My wife and I have lived in Arlington for 6 years for me, I think about 10 years for her. We met in Arlington. We were both homeowners in condos before moving to Westover about a year ago. If this historic district was in place a year ago, we would not have bought that home. This isn't about history, as many of the speakers have said. I think it's ridiculous that this process has moved along to this point. My wife and I appreciate the need and importance for affordable housing. We appreciate the importance of our new daughter growing up in a diverse community as two individuals that were able to attend college based on scholarships, academic for her and military for me. You know, I think we really came to appreciate the importance of, you know, experiences in life that surround you with people different from your own, different from yourself. As a military police officer and army combat veteran, I learned the difference between the letter of the law and the spirit of the law. The public and the county have tools to address affordable housing, to address diversity. And this district is not using the spirit of the law for its intended purpose. This is going only to the letter of the law. I think it's shameful that this process has gotten to this point. And you know, it's sort of a tragedy because, as the community has gathered to address this issue and consider some of these topics, the amount of energy that has been expended, if it had actually gone towards affordable housing, would have been far more productive. I don't support the historic designation. And you know, I think this is misguided. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [01:56:59] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:57:00] The next speaker is Michael Youngblood.

Michael Youngblood: [01:57:06] Good evening, and thank you for this opportunity. My name is Michael Youngblood. I'm the pastor of Westover Baptist Church, which is across the street from this building. Our church has been a part of this community for over 76 years, and so I would like to express my concerns or wishes that this not move forward for 2 reasons, or several reasons. One, as I understand it, to make modifications to our buildings, to be able to do things would, as I see it, create an, excuse me, an administrative and financial burden on our church and our members who support the ongoings of our building and our operations as a church. Second concern is we are supporting the community in many ways, and we look for opportunities. Some of those opportunities require modifications to our facilities. And if the cost is prohibitive, you know, or administratively is prohibitive to us, that's going to limit and affect our ability to support the community. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [01:58:13] Thank you.

John Liebertz: [01:58:15] Final call for Jack Grey or Donna Gavin. That's the final public speaker.

Joan Lawrence: [01:58:22] Thank you, the matter is now with the board. I have a couple of comments to start with. I want to thank everybody who commented and made your views known. And I appreciate the improvement in civility as the meeting progressed. Westover presents unique and more complex considerations not present in local historic districts designated to date. There are over 400 property owners and more different types of buildings, single family homes, commercial buildings, garden apartments, and duplexes that are not found in some of our other districts in total. Within Westover are building--however, there are buildings, primarily garden apartments, that have been studied and identified as important and notable, and listed on the county historic resources inventory that the county board adopted in 2011. In adopting the Historic Resources Inventory, a stated goal was to promote historic preservation as a viable and continuing community benefit. And I quote, "The county will be strategic in balancing historic preservation with other valuable county initiatives, including affordable housing, sustainability, transportation, and open space planning, among others." And additional stated goals are to promote the preservation of buildings listed in the HRI. Specifically, and I quote, "The county will strive to protect and promote reuse of properties listed on the Historic Resources Inventory." These goals support those stated in Arlington's historic preservation master plan, which was adopted by the county board prior to the adoption of the Historic Resources Inventory. The county is currently working on several different proposals to preserve market rate affordable housing in the county, including in Westover. I want to note that one of the zoning criteria, criteria A, is already met. The properties are listed on the National Register for Historic Preservation. To start the discussion, I have a motion that I would like to propose, and I have copies of it for the board members here. If there's an extra, pass it back. I'm not sure I have enough. Okay. Okay. To start the discussion, I would like to propose the following motion. Given the memorandum reported by staff, the testimony heard this evening, and the adoption by the county board of the Historic Resources Inventory, the HALRB has reason to believe that the proposed Westover study area meets at least two criteria, namely criteria A and criteria B, listed in section 11.3, point 4, point A, point 4 of the zoning ordinance for establishment of an historic district. The zoning ordinance states that at least 2 of the 11 criteria must be met. Therefore, I move the HALRB to direct the Historic Preservation Program staff to study the historic significance of only the garden apartment buildings in the Westover study area, including those listed on the Historic Resources Inventory. The study by Historic Preservation staff should be done in conjunction with the study being undertaken by other county staff that is assessing the creation of zoning tools and proposals for the preservation of market rate affordable housing. I open the board to discussion.

John Liebertz: [02:02:33] Excuse me, Tova Solo, can you please speak into the microphone?

Joan Lawrence: [02:02:38] Can you get a microphone?

Tova Solo: [02:02:40] My question to the chairman is the proposal [inaudible]. If this means that the proposal is to reduce the historic district under consideration to those garden apartments in the Westover Study Area and those listed on the Historical Resources Inventory?

Joan Lawrence: [02:03:01] Yes.

Tova Solo: [02:03:02] Is that understood?

Joan Lawrence: [02:03:04] Yes, that's correct.

Tova Solo: [02:03:06] Interesting proposal. I'll second it.

Joan Lawrence: [02:03:08] Okay. Yes. Push it until the green light goes on.

Richard Woodruff: [02:03:18] Thank you. And I want to also thank everyone for coming out and speaking tonight. And Joan, I mean madam chairman, I think this is probably a good solution, and it makes sense to me. I don't--I've lived in Maywood for--myself for--since 1990 I bought my house, which was shortly after the historic district was made. And I don't really believe that we should, as a board, impose on other homeowners historic districts when it's clear that the majority of them don't want them. So, I'm glad that this really deals with what I view are the most historic buildings, which are the apartment buildings. But before I finish, I want to correct the record. There's a lot of misinformation that was communicated tonight, a lot of it about historic districts, and Maywood in particular. For instance, we heard that property values go down in a historic district. Not true. That generally results in homeowners having to have--or spend a lot more money in expensive repairs and all of that. That's not really true either. That it's impossible to add additions that we want. That's not true either. In fact, if you go to Maywood, you'll see that nearly every house has an addition. And all of those additions have been built really since I moved there in 1990. It's a process that homeowners deal with and work with the county staff, and it works. And when it works and when--and when people do build additions, you do get a tax credit, and it's substantial. I wound up not paying Virginia taxes for 4 years after building my addition. So, you know, there is some economic value to it. We've heard that someone said that a bid cost three times the price. I would challenge that. That it would inhibit the natural growth, or inhibit people from coming in. There are more young people and more kids in Maywood today than there were when I moved in. It's an incredibly vibrant neighborhood. So, you know, I think it's fine that if you all don't want to protect your neighborhood with an historic district, that's your right and your privilege. But another thing that I would like to tell you and communicate to you, that since I've lived in Maywood, I'm not aware of a single teardown in that neighborhood. That's one thing that the historic district does. It prevents developers from coming in, and people from flipping their houses, and you winding up with a McMansion next to your house. So, you know, you might want to look into it a little more closely, again, the next time this comes, if it ever does come before you again. You might find that it does provide some advantage to you as a neighborhood. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: [02:06:31] Other comments?

Tova Solo: [02:06:40] Again [inaudible] myself more to the public, which I think has been very vibrant and very valuable with your input and your comments. As Dick said, and I'm also a fellow resident of Maywood, there are advantages to being in a historic district. However, I would like just to address myself to those who are focused on the affordability, housing affordability issue. And for those whose intent I think is very laudable, the historic district is not a particular viable method for what you're trying to achieve. I speak to not only looking at Maywood, where property values, gentrification is happening,

but I've been working particularly with the community of Halls Hill, your neighbors up the street on Lee Highway, who have been considering also, how do we maintain our neighborhood as a welcoming district, an affordable area which was once an all-black community, which is now welcoming to Latinos, how can we keep the mix? Since there are developers moving in, and knocking houses down, and selling others for one and a half million. They explored the historical district as well, and realized that that was not going to help them. What we have been looking at, and I would suggest seriously you do look at, is the community land trust. There was a very interesting letter written by one of your members proposing a similar method, but informal, not a formal land trust. Land trust--the land trust, those who agree to affordability scale forever, this is not like the APH solution, which goes--which disappears, which evaporates after one generation. This is forever. There is also a nice benefit, which is no property taxes. On the other hand, the historic district, the property tax reduction is only for that addition that you would have paid for a property--for property improvements. But there are--so, there are built-in advantages to the historical--the community land trust which the historical designation doesn't offer. And honestly, historical designation is for history and architectural conservation, not for affordable housing necessarily. But if anybody would like to talk to me after the meeting about community land trusts, I've done a certain amount of research on it for Halls Hill, and I've been to Richmond and consulted with the people there, and I'd be happy to share my information.

Joan Lawrence: [02:09:16] Thank you. As I indicated, the county is looking at many different ways to improve--am I in now? Okay. As I indicated, the county is looking at many different ways to approve different types of market rate affordable housing and other affordable housing. I was a member of the affordable housing working group, and there are many tools that are being looked at. The land trust is one, but there are others that may be even more suitable in certain areas. But they are available, and the county is looking into them. Are there any other comments?

Sara Steinberger: [02:09:58] Hi, I would just like to say I am very encouraged by--that's very loud. I'm encouraged by sort of the active civic engagement that we got to see here this evening from the community of Westover, both kind of for and against any possible historic designation. And I would encourage the community here to kind of continue some of these discussions because, as many people have noted in their comments tonight, the issue of affordable housing is not one that's going to go away. And that's something that the county is still looking at. And that's something that there's going to be kind of decisions being made and a lot of different things being talked about. I think that you've all in some ways had a crash course in what it looks like to discuss issues and concerns involving your community and your neighborhood, and what your--many people mentioned the kind of character of Westover, and what they want to kind of maintain in keeping that intact. And those are conversations that probably do need to continue to be had, whatever happens with historic designation of the entire community, or a portion of the community, or none at all. So, I would encourage you all to kind of stay with that level of civic engagement. And I just wanted to say thank you for all of your comments and your thoughtfulness this evening.

Gerry Laporte: [02:11:21] Is this working? Okay. Yeah, I'd like to associate myself with Dick Woodruff's comments about misinformation that was out there. Oh. Is this working? Okay, this one works fine. I'd also--I'd like to also thank everybody who spoke tonight. One of the things that surprised me was the amount of agreement among both the proponents and the opponents of this designation. A lot of the people were--you know, we had people saying, "Well, I'm against historic designation because I want people to stay here and be able to stay here." And we had people saying, "I'm in favor of it because I want people to stay here." People said, "I want to retain the character, therefore I'm in favor of historic designation." People said, "I want to retain the character, therefore I'm against historic designation." So it really--but so, I think that there's a lot of agreement among the neighborhood about people like it here. And I think there's a whole conversation that can take place. I'd like to associate myself with Sara also about where does the neighborhood want to go in trying to maintain its historic character. And people

moved here because they like it the way it is, so try to retain that character. I'm interested in the proposal that the chairwoman has put forward. If we were to vote on the historic designation of the entire area, I don't think I could support it because I agreed very much with the woman who was like maybe the fourth from the end, who went through the seven criteria and said that where's the evidence that these criteria have been met? And I don't think the evidence has been in front of us. And it is a very--what was proposed is extremely broad. That doesn't mean that a narrower proposal wouldn't be able to pass muster if the appropriate evidence of the seven criteria were in front of us tonight, but all we had was people, you know, repeating the criteria. It's historic because it's historic. And we need more evidence, I think, before we can make a decision that the criteria--two of the criteria have been met. The one criteria obviously that it's on the national register of historic places is a given. It is on--that's a factual. But the rest of the facts really need to be put before us. And with that in mind, I'd like to try to understand a little bit better why the chairman thinks the criteria have been met for the garden apartment buildings in the Westover study area. You said it's including those included on the Historic Resources Inventory. Are you citing the information in the Historic Resources Study as the reason why two of the criteria have been met? Or I'd just like to understand what your--

Joan Lawrence: **[02:14:30]** That's part of it. I think that I proposed B. I think that K also, these buildings are suitable for preservation or restoration is also a possibility. I put forth the two criteria for discussion.

Gerry Laporte: **[02:14:51]** So, are we making a finding that it meets two of these, or are we proposing that it be studied to see if it meets these criteria?

Joan Lawrence: **[02:15:00]** We're doing both. According to the zoning ordinance, we are required--the first part of the motion, we have to find that we have reason to believe that the--that at least two criteria are met before we can request additional study.

Gerry Laporte: **[02:15:26]** And so, on what basis are you--which criteria do you think that the garden apartment buildings in the study area have met other than A?

Joan Lawrence: **[02:15:39]** I just--I just said B and K.

Gerry Laporte: **[02:15:47]** And what's the--what's the evidence that they've met B and K?

Joan Lawrence: **[02:15:55]** These buildings were studied architecturally both for the Historic Resources Inventory and also for the national register nomination, the Virginia landmarks register nomination. So, there is sufficient architectural character to satisfy that criteria. And if--they also satisfy K. They're suitable for preservation or restoration.

Gerry Laporte: **[02:16:29]** I think that I would need more evidence that this is true because, you know, we heard from some of the owners of the apartment buildings tonight that are against it, and I think we need more than just bold statements that they're in the--I mean, some of them are in the Historic Resources Inventory. Not all of them are in the national register district. But so is everything in the national register district. So, you can't--I don't think you can separate out the apartment buildings from the rest on the basis that they're--because they're all in the national historic district.

Joan Lawrence: **[02:17:14]** While you're thinking about it, Charles had a comment.

Charles Matta: **[02:17:20]** Oh, and I echo my colleagues' appreciation for everybody coming in tonight. There are a lot of passionate comments that were developed. Obviously, there are many people here that recognize that there is an impact whenever you have historic preservation, local historic designation. That impact, you know, by some has been seen as positive, by some others has been seen as negative, which is expected. I think that, Joan, with your motion, if we were to approve that motion tonight, since many--you know, there is a wide audience that came that has never been to a meeting like this, it might be

beneficial for all concerned to hear from the staff what this motion, if it passes, what it means for the homeowners, what it means for the people that are in the area of the study that is proposed, the garden apartments, and those that are in the Historic Resource Inventory. I think we need some clarity for the individuals here to state what that really means. Does it exclude some for awhile? You know, what does it really mean if we approve that motion? Can I ask the staff to touch on that?

Cynthia Liccese-Torres: [02:18:44] Sure. Just wanted to make sure the microphone is working. To answer your question, Commissioner Matta, the short answer would be that if the motion that's proposed is what is passed by the HALRB, then that would give clear direction to staff to begin study of only the garden apartments within the Westover Study Area. We would need to do an architectural analysis. We would need to do an evaluation of integrity of materials of historic importance. And then we would need to prepare a written report of findings regarding the garden apartment buildings. And we would, at some point in that process, also need to be working with those property owners of the garden apartments on an individual basis to explain the designation process more thoroughly, and to be able to work with them to perhaps develop appropriate historic district design guidelines that would be presented along with the designation report. I would estimate that that process, if it's only for the garden apartments, could take anywhere from 6 months up to a year to complete given our existing programmatic obligations. And keep in mind too that once the architectural analysis, once the outreach, and once the designation report is crafted, that would then also need to come back to the HALRB for you all to review, and to decide whether or not to continue to send the designation forward to the planning commission and the county board for final decision.

Joan Lawrence: [02:20:25] There's also the added part of the motion that requests that you work in conjunction with the other county staff who is looking at the market rate affordable housing preservation portion of it.

Cynthia Liccese-Torres: [02:20:42] That's correct. And our staff has been involved in some of those initial discussions. And those meetings and those discussions are continuing. The timeline for when actual strategies and proposals to be brought forward to the county leadership is forthcoming, I can't give you a certainty when exactly that will be. But if you can rest assured that our staff is very involved in those efforts, and would be able to continue to be so.

Joan Lawrence: [02:21:10] Thank you.

Sara Steinberger: [02:21:14] I had a comment with regards to the earlier question about what--where there was grounds for distinguishing or potentially distinguishing between the garden apartments versus the single family homes. To me, I think there is grounds for that distinction because, based on some of the testimony that I've heard tonight, the number of single family homes that have already been significantly modified does seem to me to be high. And so, it does not sound that external modification has happened with the garden apartments. So, if we're talking about that kind of a difference, I do think there is a potential grounds there for that distinction. That was how I interpreted it.

Joan Lawrence: [02:21:56] Other comments? Do members of the board feel that other criteria, while A is met clearly, but criteria other than perhaps B or K are met?

Sara Steinberger: [02:22:19] I would say maybe E as well.

Charles Craig: [02:22:38] Madam chair, I might add that G is one of the ones that I had circled. I know, you all live in properties that have character. They're also very well-constructed. If you--I think many of the houses being constructed today will not last long term. They will be--the siding have to be replaced in 20 years. That's the usual warranty. Roofs are 20 years. Windows are 20 years. And so, if you have an old house, the best thing you can do is maintain it. Don't replace things, don't replace windows, unless you

absolutely have to. Much of the wood that is used in new windows is raised on tree farms, and it rots very quickly. I know this is not what you came here to hear, but you're lucky, you live in old houses. The new ones are not nearly as well-built. I think there are many things about this that are unfortunate. We usually have people who want us to designate properties as opposed to people, many of whom do not want us to designate a property. Cambridge Court, which is on Arlington Boulevard, near Fillmore Street, came to us and they wanted to be designated, because as you go from Rosslyn west, you can see the march of high-rises, and this is a two-story Garden Apartment Complex, brick, colonial, and I think they were concerned that some of them would suddenly decide that the builder could buy out everybody in one building, and get the county to rezone it, and put up a high-rise. I don't think that's the case in--I don't think that's the case where you live. I think the thing that's unfortunate is that, this whole process wasn't looked at a long time ago, because you live in a truly beautiful community. Much of it is very walkable, something that many people don't realize until they move there. I live in Clarendon and we have neighbors who moved into big new houses, and they didn't realize that, oh, they could come home and park the car, and that was it. So, there are many reasons to support historic preservation. I think we're probably here because someone decided, who does not live in the neighborhood, that we should take a look at it. But this is a county process. This is not a process that we necessarily have created, but is a process that we do have to go through.

Audience Member: [2:25:43] I'm sorry, we came here tonight assuming that you were here with open minds to listen to us. We are overwhelmingly told you that we do not want this. You're now making it seem like you're actually came in really deciding that you wanted to do this, despite what we've all said. We don't have any idea why you want it--

Audience Member: [2:26:02] Part of the discussion is--

Joan Lawrence: [2:26:06] Excuse me, sir, sir, the motion was proposed for purposes of discussion. The motion directs the staff, finds preliminary when--according to the process in the zoning ordinance. If the HALRB finds that at least two of the criteria are met, then the staff is instructed to engage in further study. This is not the imposition as, some have said, of an historic district. This is a study to look at the historic significance of the Garden Apartments, and that's a process.

Audience Member: [2:26:55] [inaudible]

Joan Lawrence: [2:27:00] The Garden Apartments are for the most part listed on historic resources inventory. And the historic resources inventory was determined by the County Board in 2011, to all those Garden Apartments, who are determined to have historic significance.

Audience Member: [2:27:20] [inaudible]

Joan Lawrence: [2:27:27] Well, we're not considering the Virginia Square neighborhood.

Audience Member: [2:27:32] You're only considering part of this neighborhood.

Joan Lawrence: [2:27:35] Right.

Audience Member: [2:27:37] I have a question, though, that I don't really understand. Aren't the affordable housing partnership here--it is buying up more than half of the apartment building in Arlington. So, that would be owned by a private organization eventually. Yeah, I know it's controlled by Arlington County. But those of us who own apartment buildings, privately owned, you are now restricting us by this historic designation. Are you gonna to that to the others as well?

Joan Lawrence: [2:28:03] This is not--they would all be treated equally, should this--

Audience Member: [2:28:07] When Arlington County basically owns the others. There are our competition.

Joan Lawrence: [2:28:12] Currently, the Arlington Partnership For Affordable Housing and the Arlington Housing Corporation own historic buildings, and they come before the HALRB same as anybody else. I want to emphasize, this is not an historic designation tonight. This is the initiation of an investigation into, whether these buildings have historic significance. That's a question to be answered, whether they have historic significance, and whether, in conjunction with the rest of the county efforts that are being undertaken at this point, the process should go forward.

Audience Member: [2:28:56] But you're putting an unfair burden on property owners.

Joan Lawrence: [2:29:00] There's no unfair burden being put on anybody tonight.

Audience Member: [2:29:03] It's an investment on our part.

Joan Lawrence: [2:29:05] Okay--

Audience Member: [2:29:07] But we didn't buy into this. We owned these properties many, many years. Now, you're gonna make it more expensive for us to own this property and try to--

Joan Lawrence: [2:29:13] Excuse me, the County Board makes the ultimate decision on designation. We are not proposing designation tonight.

Audience Member: [2:29:26] But you have a lot of influence on the County Board. We're just a few people.

Joan Lawrence: [2:29:29] Well, no, I beg to differ with you. The County Board does not follow our recommendations.

John Liebertz: [2:29:35] Excuse me. Sorry for interrupting, Chairman Lawrence. Just to reiterate again, this is a discussion with the HALRB right now. This is not a public discussion right now.

Joan Lawrence: [2:29:44] We're happy to answer questions afterward. I just wanna emphasize again, this is not imposing anything on anybody right now. This is simply a very preliminary finding, that at least two criteria are met, and that it's an instruction, we move the staff-- we instruct our staff. If this motion passes, we're instructing the staff to conduct a study in conjunction with what's being done in the county of only the Garden Apartments.

Audience Member: [2:30:18] How will affordable housing considerations be factored in this study?

Joan Lawrence: [2:30:23] There are interactions between the county staff members. I can't answer that right now. No more questions in the audience. The discussion is with the board.

Audience Member: [2:30:36] You're saying, we won't do anything right now? But, then you're gonna decide, and then it will happen, is what you're basically are saying.

[crosstalk]

Joan Lawrence: [2:30:45] Excuse me. Excuse me, sir. We have a--there is a process outlined in the zoning ordinance. Sir, there is a process outlined in the zoning ordinance. This hearing was never meant to determine designation. This hearing is a very preliminary step. This happens with designations that requests that we receive. Are there other comments from the board? Okay, one additional comment I might make here is that, after studying further these Garden Apartments, particularly those that are--have

already been determined by the County Board to be a part of the historic resources in Arlington, concurrently with the county's consideration of tools for preserving market rate, affordable housing, then a determination might be made whether these buildings, which contribute more than historic value to the community, should be recommended. There are many processes going on right now. This is only one step, a very preliminary step. Is there any additional discussion from the board?

Andrew Wenchel: [2:32:27] I guess, I just like to say that I think that the charm, if you will, of Westover is the mix of the single-family housing, the duplexes, the duplexes, the Garden Apartments, the commercial area, I think if you fracture the area up, it loses a great deal of its appeal. I think, the whole idea of the affordable housing initiative is fine, but, and admirable thought, but what makes Westover Westover is not just the Garden Apartments, and I think that, not looking at the rest of the district, or the rest of the area, as was looked at originally in the National Registry, is a mistake. I think that if the predominance of owners, of the both, the single-family homes and the Garden Apartments, and so forth, are opposed to this, that's something to County Board will have to deal with in their decision making. But I think it really makes the district less appealing if you just carve out the Garden Apartments. I think that's--the real charm of this area is mixed, and the commercial area, the Garden Apartments, the single-family houses will make part of that area that makes this actually a very walkable, visually interesting area, and I think that if you lose that, or don't include the whole package, then the Garden Apartments are diminished by that.

Joan Lawrence: [2:34:49] Thank you. Are there other comments on the motion? Hearing none, I'm gonna call for a vote on the motion. All in favor. Opposed. Any abstentions? The motion carries. What were the counts there? I couldn't tell.

Cynthia Liccese-Torres: [2:35:43] So, there were six members in favor of the motion, two opposed, and one abstention.

Joan Lawrence: [2:35:50] Okay. Thank you. The motion carries then. Just want to make some concluding remarks. This is a step in a process that might or might not result in designation of a Westover Historic District. The HALRB will make a determination on a designation only after a designation report is reviewed, and that takes into account the additional study. The planning commission will weigh in, and the ultimate decision will be made by the County Board. Under the zoning ordinance, the charge to the HALRB is the preservation and protection of Arlington's historic resources. We take these responsibilities seriously while we do our best to take a range of factors into account. The HRI-listed Garden Apartments, in Westover, do provide much needed market rate and committed affordable housing. Preserving historic buildings and providing affordable housing are not mutually exclusive goals. Studying the Garden Apartments, those listed on the HRI and any others, is a step toward possible receiving--potentially achieving a result that works for everybody. As my colleagues have mentioned, there is much information, I'm sorry, misinformation about what designation as a local historic district actually means. And we on the HALRB, we clearly have more education and outreach to do. It's unfortunate that the benefits of historic preservation and the value of the designation of local historic districts do to not appear to be appreciated for their role in retaining, what many have referred to during the discussion of Westover, as the character of the neighborhood. We're hopeful that with more information and education, this will change, particularly if Arlington is to retain the portion of its character that's rooted in the past. Does anyone else on the board have any comments?

Richard Woodruff: [2:37:55] I just have a question. Where does this leave the status of the commercial buildings in Westover? They're not--are they a part of the national district?

Joan Lawrence: [2:38:09] Yes.

Cynthia Liccese-Torres: [2:38:10] Some of them.

Richard Woodruff: **[2:38:14]** What about the main strip along Washington Boulevard?

Joan Lawrence: **[2:38:16]** Yeah, those are all a part of the national register.

Richard Woodruff: **[2:38:19]** They are?

Cynthia Liccese-Torres: **[2:38:22]** Only the commercial buildings that are on the north side of Washington Boulevard are within the Westover National Register Historic District.

Joan Lawrence: **[2:38:30]** Thank you for clarifying that. For everybody who owns properties and buildings that are not listed on the historic resources inventory, I wanna remind you that you are the owners of properties in an area that's listed on the national and Virginia registers. So, you do have the possibility of tax credits which was mentioned already. Any additional comments?

Sara Steinberger: **[2:39:04]** Just piggy-backing off of what Joan indicated about the possible tax credits and resource development with that is--the county officers may get mad at me for this, but if people have questions with regards to that process, are you guys the right people to talk to? Great. So, wave if you have questions, talk to them as well, 'cause that's good starting point for some information. Thank you.

Joan Lawrence: **[2:39:29]** I wanna thank everybody who came and participated tonight. I think this process started out in a way that was unfortunate. I think it's important for people to understand what historic district designation is and isn't, and to the extent that we can allay your fears and answer questions. It's--people have conjured up all sorts of imaginary horrors. I too live in Maywood, and for the past 25 or so years, the neighborhood has been operating pretty well under it, and doesn't have to cost more or take longer. So, anyway, thank you very much.