



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT
Neighborhood Services Division

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DRAFT
MINUTES OF THE HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD
Wednesday, May 16, 2018
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Lobby Rooms Cherry and Dogwood

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Craig
Robert Dudka
Sarah Garner
Gerry Laporte
Joan Lawrence, Chairman
Sara Steinberger
Mark Turnbull
Andrew Wenchel
Richard Woodruff, Vice Chairman

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Carmela Hamm

STAFF: Cynthia Liccese-Torres, Historic Preservation Coordinator
John Liebertz, Historic Preservation Planner
Serena Bolliger, Historic Preservation Specialist
Kyle Fisher, Historic Preservation Management Intern

ROLL CALL & CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Mr. Liebertz called the roll and determined there was a quorum.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 18, 2018, MEETING MINUTES

The Chairman called for any changes to the April 18, 2018, draft meeting minutes. Mr. Laporte proposed amendments at the top of page 8, which discussed tabletop markers versus aluminum pole markers. Ms. Garner requested that in her comment about historic marker design on page 8, the word "uniform" be substituted for the word "consistent." Mr. Laporte moved to approve the draft minutes as amended. Ms. Garner seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0-2, with the Chairman and Mr. Woodruff abstaining (Mr. Dudka had not yet arrived).

EXPLANATION OF PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

The Chairman explained the procedures for public hearings. She asked all individuals who desired to speak to complete a speaker's slip and present to staff at the table before the item is called.

HISTORIC MARKER REVIEW: NAUCK TOWN SQUARE INTERPRETIVE PANELS

Ms. Liccese-Torres re-introduced the Nauck Town Square historic marker project. The purpose of the project is to replace the five existing banner-style signs in the Nauck Town Square with more traditional County historic markers with updated content. The new markers will be sited between the Nauck Town Square and Drew School. The HALRB review will proceed marker by marker.

Panel 1: Origins of Nauck

Mr. Laporte stated he had e-mailed comments to the board. One of the comments corrects a factual error. The draft panel says that "The community has long been associated with the name Green Valley, referencing the area's pre-twentieth century landscape and the Green Valley Manor." The author Eleanor Templeman, however, says the area was named for John Green. The panel implies it was called Green Valley because of its geographic features. The designers need to confirm the origins of the name "Green Valley."

Mr. Liebertz said staff could not corroborate Templeman's statement, so it did not advise the designer to follow it. Staff is aware of Civil War-era letters describing the area as "Green Valley."

Ms. Liccese-Torres said that the Nauck Civic Association and Dr. Alfred Taylor have reviewed the draft markers and did not comment on the origins of the name.

Mr. Laporte stated that the marker as it is written seems to imply the area was named for its green scenery, while this is uncertain.

Mr. Liebertz said there are pre-20th century sources calling the area "Green Valley," but staff would find it acceptable to delete the reference to the landscape.

Ms. Steinberger asked what size the panels will be. Ms. Liccese-Torres replied they will be 24 by 36 inches.

The Chairman called a member of the public Cassandra Goode to speak. Ms. Goode stated the language about the relationship between Freedman's Village and Nauck was unclear in the marker. Mr. Laporte agreed.

Ms. Garner commented that Anthony Fraser's full name is provided but only Presha Lee's first and maiden names are provided. Presha Lee's last name should be given as well. Mr. Laporte agreed.

The Chairman called for additional comments. There were none.

Panel 2: Community Businesses

The Chairman commented that there is an odd symbol that appears in the third line of the caption at the bottom right of the panel. She also said a period should be placed after the word “counter” and a new sentence begun.

Mr. Laporte commented that there were references to current businesses; to place them in their historic context, the year 2018 should be included to indicate when the markers were created.

Panel 3: Places of Worship

The Chairman said that the caption in the upper right contains a misplaced modifier.

Ms. Steinberger commented that she found the bold lettering of the names of the churches distracting (particularly in the middle of the captions). Mr. Laporte agreed. It was decided the lettering could remain since not all of the captions began with the name of each church.

The Chairman called for additional comments. There were none.

Panel 4: Recreation

The Chairman commented that the word “pastime” is not spelled correctly in the lower right caption.

The Chairman called for additional comments. There were none.

Panel 5: Living and Learning

Ms. Steinberger suggested adding the current year’s date in the caption about Drew Elementary School. Mr. Laporte agreed.

Ms. Liccese-Torres said all comments will be shared with the sign designer to edit the drafts. She then asked if the board wanted to see the revised markers. The board responded it did not. Staff offered to share the revised versions via e-mail for any final comments.

The Chairman called for additional comments or questions. There were none.

PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS (CoAs)

CONSENT AGENDA:

The Chairman stated that there were two items on the consent agenda.

1. Jarrod & Alison Tsukada
2330 North Jackson Street
CoA 18-04B (HP1800015)
Maywood Historic District
Request to enclose the rear porch and other minor alterations to the house.
2. David Abramowitz & Linda Staheli
3402 21st Avenue North

CoA 18-07 (HP1800017)
Maywood Historic District
Request to replace and remove a section of the existing driveway and other minor alterations to the site.

The Chairman called for comments on the consent agenda. There were none.

Mr. Turnbull made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Steinberger seconded. The motion passed 8-0-0 (Mr. Dudka had not yet arrived).

ADMINISTRATIVE CoAs:

The Chairman stated that there were five Administrative CoAs that had been approved.

1. Lydia Schurman
3215 22nd Street North
ACoA 18-04 (HP1800010)
Maywood Historic District
Request to remove a 15-diameter locust tree.
2. Brad Reese
3415 21st Avenue North
ACoA 18-05 (HP1800014)
Maywood Historic District
Request to remove a 30-inch diameter oak tree.
3. Trevor Jacka & Polina Lyamsteva
1753 North Rhodes Street, #327
ACoA 18-06 (HP1800017)
Colonial Village Historic District
Request to install nine new replacement windows.
4. Robert Midler
1813 North Rhodes Street, #254
ACoA 18-07 (HP1800018)
Colonial Village Historic District
Request to install eleven new replacement windows.
5. Scott Pietan
2911 22nd Street North
ACoA 18-08 (HP1800019)
Maywood Historic District
Request to remove a 30-inch diameter ash tree.

The Chairman called for comments or questions.

Mr. Woodruff asked how Arlington County assesses whether or not to remove a tree on an historic property.

Mr. Liebertz responded that when staff receives an ACoA application for a tree, they contact the County forester, who assesses the health of the tree, makes a recommendation on whether it should be removed, and may recommend planting a replacement tree.

Mr. Woodruff inquired whether replacements are required for each tree that is removed on an historic property. Mr. Liebertz responded that it depends on the health of the removed tree. Dead trees are not required to have a replacement. This is based on the Arlington County tree replacement formula.

REPORTS OF THE CHAIRMAN, STANDING COMMITTEES, AND STAFF

The Chairman stated that the agenda was progressing more quickly than anticipated, so the Reports of the Chairman, Standing Committees and Staff would be presented next [7:24 pm].

Chairman's Report:

The Lee Highway Alliance will host a forum on the commemoration of the Stratford School at 9:30 am this Saturday, May 19. On Saturday, June 9, at 10:30 a.m., the Cherrydale Citizens Association will celebrate the 125th anniversary of Cherrydale. The anniversary of the sit-ins at the former Drug Fair on Lee Highway also will be commemorated that day with an unveiling of a plaque. The event will begin at the Hair Vogue salon and continue at the Cherrydale Library.

Committee Reports:

Site Plan/Development Review: Red Cross/Trenton Street site plan update

Mr. Liebertz stated that the County Board recently approved the Red Cross/Trenton Street site plan. The historic preservation easement for the Whitefield Commons garden apartment complex must be recorded prior to the issuance of any demolition permits.

Staff and Other Reports:

WWI Task Force update

Ms. Steinberger explained that the World War I Task Force has been very active. On Thursday, May 24, a panel will discuss the history and present-day realities of PTSD and its connection to WWI “shell shock”. On the evening of Thursday, June 28, a fundraising event will be held at the Navy League Building to raise money for the Clarendon War Memorial grant project. The Task Force also anticipates hosting a World War I mobile bus with exhibits and artifacts at the Arlington County Fair this summer [August]. Ms. Steinberger anticipates seeking HALRB volunteers to help with Task Force activities at the County Fair.

[7:28 PM: Robert Dudka arrived]

Fire Station 8 Heritage Working Group update

Mr. Wenchel provided the update. The working group has had a number of meetings and produced a draft report which will be finalized before the end of May. He said that Mr. Liebertz has attended the meetings and made important contributions, especially regarding researching the African American history of Arlington. The County will demolish the existing fire station on the site. Mr. Wenchel discussed preserving some materials on the inside of the fire station, such as terra cotta tiles. He also has suggested designing a place for artwork on the exterior of the

building. The working group is undecided on the type of artwork, but favors placing interpretive artwork on the exterior of the building and salvaged materials on the interior. The working group also favors leaving as much greenspace as possible on the corner of the lot. The community has been positive about celebrating the legacy of Fire Station 8.

The Chairman inquired about a timeline for the rest of the project.

Mr. Wenchel replied that the working group will likely have its last meeting on May 17.

The Chairman reminded the public that any interested speakers must complete a speaker slip and present it to staff.

Ms. Liccese-Torres reminded the board about the need for additional members to fill vacancies on the HALRB. She said that staff recently notified the local Virginia chapter of the AIA and already has gotten some interest.

Ms. Liccese-Torres also updated the board on the status of the CoA-related work at the Reevesland Local Historic District. On May 11, contractors completed the demolition of the concrete block garage on the property. Ms. Bolliger has visited the site to meet with County Parks staff who have also been monitoring the activity.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION: GARDEN APARTMENTS IN WESTOVER

The Chairman again called for speaker slips. There were no additional submittals.

On behalf of the HALRB, the Chairman welcomed all those in attendance to comment on the Westover Garden Apartments proposed historic district designation. She stated that the board had received several comments submitted by email and that those comments are part of the record. She reminded attendees that anyone wishing to speak must submit a speaker slip. The Chairman gave a final call for speaker slips. Another speaker slip was presented to the staff.

The Chairman explained the public hearing procedures. Staff will provide a presentation on the proposed local historic district designation. Next, members of the public who had submitted speaker slips will be called forward to speak. She asked speakers to identify themselves and where they lived, as well as not to repeat what another speaker had said. Those representing themselves would be allowed two minutes to speak; those representing a group would be allowed up to five minutes to speak. Lastly, the board will discuss the matter. At that time, no additional comments from the public will be heard.

Historic Preservation Staff Presentation

Ms. Liccese-Torres introduced the item. She stated that in June 2016, the HALRB received a request to study the Westover neighborhood as a local historic district [hereafter LHD]. The HALRB held its first public hearing on the matter in November 2016. At that time, the HALRB found that the proposed Westover study area met at least two of the eleven criteria for LHD

designation in the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance (ACZO). The HALRB also directed staff to consider only the garden apartments within Westover for designation and to undertake its study concurrently with the ongoing Countywide study to preserve affordable housing.

Since that time, Ms. Liccese-Torres explained that historic preservation staff has: 1) completed a reconnaissance level architectural survey to update existing building information; 2) prepared background information analyzing the development of Westover’s garden apartments; and 3) assisted colleagues in the County’s Housing and Planning divisions with developing the implementation of the Housing Conservation District (HCD) study. Staff anticipates the HCD study will be completed by the end of the calendar year. The main purpose of the HCD is to encourage the retention of housing affordability and physical protection of historic buildings through a range of development options, including renovations, new additions, new infill, and/or partial or full redevelopment, all in exchange for dedicated affordable housing units. The HALRB has been involved in the HCD process through participating in monthly meetings of the HCD advisory group. For this evening’s meeting, only a partial staff report is available. The creation of a full LHD designation report, as well as draft design guidelines, have been postponed until staff receives further guidance from the HALRB. The purpose of this evening’s meeting is to get that additional guidance.

Ms. Liccese-Torres reviewed the historic development of garden apartments as a building form in Arlington. In the 1930s, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) developed design standards for the creation of attractive and efficient housing for individuals of low to moderate means. Arlington was the testing ground for many FHA projects, beginning with Colonial Village in 1934, the first FHA-insured large-scale rental housing project in the nation. Between 1938 and 1950, there were 122 garden apartments, apartment houses, and/or complexes built in Arlington.

Mr. Liebertz then presented on the history of the Westover neighborhood specifically. Westover was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2006. Such designation, however, does not guarantee protection for the buildings. The garden apartments in Westover are also eligible for inclusion on the National Register as part of the multiple resource listing for Arlington garden apartments that was approved by the National Park Service in 2003 and amended in 2012. All garden apartments in Westover also have been identified in Phase 1 of the County’s Historic Resources Inventory (HRI); the garden apartments in Westover rank as “Important” and “Notable” in the HRI.

Mr. Liebertz explained that Westover’s garden apartments are examples of such buildings that were influenced by the FHA and national housing reform during and after the Great Depression. They are multi-family apartments influenced by the design principles of the FHA and reflect the federal government’s desire to create affordable apartment housing for individuals of low to moderate means. The apartments were the result of a massive need for worker housing due to a growing population in Arlington and the region. The garden apartments follow the FHA’s design guidelines with their Colonial Revival architecture with minimal ornamentation. They reflect the common multi-family building design of that time, including: concrete block construction veneered in brick; a variety of roof types; main entrances to public stairs and individual doors to

private units; and connection between interiors and exterior landscaped courtyards. Pathways separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Mr Liebertz summarized the staff’s recommendation. For their contributions to the history of housing development, their architectural form, and their significance as a building type, staff finds that the garden apartments in Westover potentially meet six of the eleven criteria for LHD designation specified in the ACZO (and provided in the staff memorandum). Staff recommends that the HALRB accept Option 3 – deferral of the designation request until completion of the HCD study. This option would allow the HALRB to consider any potential zoning tools and/or other incentives derived from the study that could benefit the preservation of garden apartments within the study area, in addition to or separate from LHD zoning overlays.

Mr. Liebertz stated that staff will be happy to answer any questions from the board at the appropriate time.

Public Comment

(NOTE: See Addendum for public comments emailed to Historic Preservation staff by individuals who were unable to attend the public hearing).

The Chairman thanked the staff for its presentation. The Chairman next called each of the 13 public speakers in the order in which staff received the requests. She then thanked each speaker individually after their remarks.

Speaker #1: Audrey Clement, 1530 North Longfellow Street

“I am speaking on my own behalf as a Westover resident and one of at least two dozen tenants who were recently evicted from two garden apartments on 10th Road to make way for more luxury townhouse development. I urge AHALRB [sic] to approve the petition designating Westover garden apartments local historic [sic] but I am not optimistic. Unlike their peers throughout the Commonwealth and across the river in DC, most Arlingtonians are indifferent to historic preservation. While historic Jamestown thrives as a national tourist destination and historic Charlottesville is a watering hole for upscale Virginians, Arlington’s historic footprint has all but disappeared. In Georgetown and DC whole neighborhoods are off limits to redevelopment. Even Donald Trump got into the act, undertaking a masterful renovation of the historic Old Postal Pavilion in 2016. Not so Arlington. In 2017 Arlington Public Schools (APS) demolished the Wilson School in Rosslyn, one of two 100-year-old school buildings designed by prominent Virginia architect Charles M. Robinson. In April 2018, APS approved the demolition of the historically preserved Reed School, which restoration was done by one of Washington’s premier architecture firms – cox, graae + spack – in 2009. The working group that recommended demolition reported a unanimous decision. At a previous public hearing on November 30, 2016, an angry crowd of Westover home and business owners denounced the petition before you, outraged that they weren’t consulted by the author. They also made it very clear that they do not want to preserve the garden apartments from demolition. In anticipation of this, County staff have presented you with four options: 1) preserve a remnant of the neighborhood consisting of the Westover apartment complex; 2) preserve the whole neighborhood; 3) defer the decision, pending further study of how the Housing Conservation District (HCD) zoning overlay of which

Westover is now a part will work; or 4) deny the petition altogether. I reject Option 4, support Option 2, and don't see the utility of Option 3, since the rezoning of Westover doesn't require landlords to preserve buildings. It simply requires them to jump through more hoops. I do see the rationale for Option 1, which is to provide the County with cover once it abdicates to the Demolition Derby. The County will then argue that it salvaged something – even though the owner, AHC, is already contractually bound to preserve Westover Apartments. Meanwhile the tenants of the remaining market rate affordable units in Westover cannot speak out in favor of preservation without risking eviction. They are Westover's Silent Majority.”

The Chairman reminded speakers that if they are speaking on behalf of themselves, they have two minutes to speak.

Speaker #2: Glenn Schatell, 1400 North Kenilworth Street, representing the residents who live in Westover and the [Arlington] Green Party

“My name is Glenn Schatell. I have been a resident of Arlington for the last 29 years. First I want to thank HALRB for considering the garden apartments for historic protection. In September 2016, I moved from a house in north Arlington to an apartment. I deliberately decided to move to Westover Village because I had already been involved in preserving historic Westover. I think I attended virtually all of the meetings. The first meeting at Westover Library had so many people that people could hardly get in; so it's an important issue for the community. The buildings I think are absolutely beautiful, and they are certainly very historic. They are Colonial Village design. The whole area was designed starting in 1939 as a planned community. I understand why the houses and the business area are not being considered right now – almost all of the houses have been remodeled. However, the apartment buildings have not changed at all since they were built. Right now, the people who have bought apartments buildings and torn them down to build townhouses – right now, they are all by Route 66 in Westover Park. Basically the area by Washington Boulevard has not been touched. Also, I think, this is the largest amount of garden apartments in Arlington, and perhaps even the state. What can we do to be fair to the property owners? I read this entire [staff] memorandum. On page 2 it says the County will encourage owners of important properties (which I believe includes the garden apartment buildings) to take advantage of available financial discussions (e.g. federal and state rehabilitation tax credits, preservation easements, County real estate tax exemption for rehabilitation). I take this to mean, if I am correct, that if garden apartments get stronger protection, it will be a benefit for the property owners. Also, many of these property owners bought these buildings years ago to be landlords. They did not expect developers to be buying buildings and tearing them down. I think it is very important that the buildings be preserved. The buildings were built to be affordable housing. They continue to be affordable housing. A lot of young people move in and start their adult lives in these apartments. I think these buildings should have stronger historic protection. And if we could do something to help the property owners that would also be good. Thank you so much for your consideration.”

Speaker #3: Tom Dickinson, 5303 10th Street North, representing Vanishing Arlington and the Arlington Green Party

“For those of you who don’t know me, I am a past president of the Arlington Historical Society and a current member of the [AHS] Board of Directors. I served on the board of the Arlington Heritage Alliance for ten years. I was a director of Preservation Arlington and I have my own historic preservation advocacy organization called Vanishing Arlington. I’ve lived in Arlington for 40 years and I’ve been involved with history and historic preservation for that entire time.

The life of an historic preservation advocate in Arlington is marked by loneliness. There are only a handful of us unpaid volunteers out there every day on the ramparts trying to secure visible, tangible evidence of preservation, and also marked by a pervasive sense of futility – an endless list of lost structures – Lustrons, Certigrade homes, Sears homes, whole commercial areas, the Wilson School, and a long list of residential properties. This is the current list [held it up to show] of demolition permits, applications, and active demolition permits for the last 30 days in Arlington. There are 28 residential structures (single family homes) on this list. This is pretty much continuous. Therefore, that is why tonight I ask for your help, and I urge the HALRB to approve and adopt Option 2 from the Staff Report for local historic district designation for all garden apartments within the Westover study area. Here is a very rare opportunity for the HALRB to take a firm, visible, public stand in support of historic preservation in Arlington, which will not impede owner flexibility or authority. I commend the staff for its thorough descriptions of the historic significance of both the Westover neighborhood and the garden apartments contained therein. I urge the HALRB to adopt and approve Option 2 from the staff report based on the increasing rarity of this type of dwelling in Arlington, and the continuing disappearance of such historically significant buildings in Westover. Option 2 captures all of the historically significant garden apartments within the Westover Nation Register Historic District, but it excludes the surrounding residential community of single family dwellings, commercial, civic, and religious buildings that comprise the planned neighborhood. Garden apartments, however, are critical to the understanding of Arlington County’s built environment from the early to mid-twentieth century, are individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (under Multiple Property Documentation Garden Apartments, Apartment Houses and Apartment Complexes in Arlington County, Virginia from 1934-1954), and remain threatened by development pressures (particularly in Westover). I urge adoption and approval of Option 2 in the staff report. Thank you very much.”

Speaker #4: Michelle Winters, 5575 16th Street North, representing the Alliance for Housing Solutions

“My name is Michelle Winters. I am the Executive Director of the Alliance for Housing Solutions, which is an Arlington-based organization that focuses on increasing the supply of affordable housing in Arlington and surrounding communities. I’m also a resident. I live in Tara-Leeway, a stone’s throw from the edge of Westover. I’m a previous president of Tara-Leeway Civic Association. I’ve got lots of local connections and I’m an affordable housing advocate. I want to be really clear. First of all, we strongly support any tools that the county can create to help preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing. Note that our mission is about increasing the supply of affordable housing. We are constantly losing supply for market reasons

so we need to increase the supply as much as we can. All we're doing is essentially treading water, preventing ourselves from declining on the affordable housing front.

So, with all that as background, generally, my organization and myself personally do not support [local] historic districts for the purpose of preserving affordable housing. There's many reasons for that. We completely understand the desire to put a tool like a historic district on a neighborhood like Westover, with all the demolitions and all the displacement, but I believe that in the long run a tool that is generally as strict as an historic district creates an administrative burden on the housing stock in that neighborhood. This essentially makes it harder to keep the housing affordable. And there is no specificity within an historic district, as far as I'm aware of, that specifies the affordability level of the housing that is there. So you may be able to preserve it, and the units exist, and they don't necessarily change, and they follow your design guidelines, but that does not dictate how much granite can be put inside for the kitchens, how much upgrading happens in order to get the higher rents needed to afford owning and maintaining a property in an historic district. So we don't believe that historic districts are a good tool for maintaining affordable housing.

I'm also – I forgot to mention – a member of the advisory group for the housing conservation districts. I do think – it remains to be seen, because we don't know what the tools available in the housing conservation districts will be – but I think that the housing conservation district will, in the long run, be a better tool for what needs to happen in this neighborhood. The housing conservation district in concept will allow existing properties to evolve, whether that's through allowing them to do renovations that they aren't allowed to do right now because they are non-conforming, allowing additions and infill, or appropriate redevelopment, in exchange for a commitment of affordability of those properties. One of the tools that the HCD group is looking at, and that in general we need to look at more, and that my organization recently did a study on, is transfer of development rights. We need a much better system for transfer of development rights in Arlington that would benefit both affordable housing and historic preservation. The current system we are using is not working. It needs to be improved. So we need to work on tools like that, not using tools like historic districts alone. And finally, I want to mention – and Audrey [Clement] mentioned this as well – that the Westover apartments that are in, I think it is Option 1 that are the partial designation, like she mentioned, those are already owned by AHC. They are committed affordable housing, either in whole or in part – I know it's a mixed income property. It's owned by a long term committed owner of affordable housing. Those units are not going anywhere. For the purpose of what was triggered here, for the purpose of preserving affordable housing, it's already achieved. But putting an historic district on that property could prevent some potential evolution of that property in the long run if the organization, for instance, chose to take advantage of some of the tools of the housing conservation district which allows some of that limited amount of additional infill or renovation or redevelopment. I'm not speaking on behalf of AHC, but I don't think that designation of that property is necessary to achieve what everybody is trying to achieve here. Thank you."

Speaker #5: Robert Condit, 3238 Fox Mill Road in Oakton, representing Oakwood Properties [Westover property owner]

“Good evening. My real estate partner and I stand totally opposed to this consideration of historic designation for Westover. It has been clear from your past public meetings that no one who owns property in Westover wants this historic designation. It is totally disingenuous to allow people who only temporarily live in the community as tenants – or who don’t live in Westover – to control the decision, over those of us who have invested our time, our money, and our energy in this community. At a 2017 [sic] meeting at the Swanson School, someone in the audience stood up and asked a filled auditorium how many people were in favor of this idea, and only two people raised their hands, neither of whom I believe live or own property in Westover. When asked how many people opposed the idea, everyone else in the room raised their hands. My question would be why you would even consider doing this over almost unanimous objection of the owners of these properties? After you heard strong opposition from single-family home owners and the shop owners, you eliminated these properties from consideration, as you mentioned this evening. These older homes and shops were designed and built by the same people who built the small multi-family buildings, and these buildings are no more historic than the older homes and shops. Nor are they any more historic than the hundreds of other 1940s and 1950s era red brick buildings throughout Arlington that are not viewed as historic. None of them are special, endearing, or designed to be lasting. I am older than almost all of these buildings, and I certainly don’t see myself getting close to being historic in designation for my age. I hear this historic designation is possibly a ruse to maintain affordable rents in Westover. And I feel this is certainly not a valid approach to that end. Our current rents – my real estate partner and I – are generally lower than rents being charged by the APAH-owned buildings. Our rents range from \$960 to a high of \$1,250, including heat, gas, and hot water, and their rents are higher than that. We don’t have plans to raise those rents unless something like what you’re proposing occurs. If this designation does go through we, in fact, will raise our rents to begin to compensate for what we see as hassle and extra costs that we’ll be subjected to because we will be forced to go before county committees for approval to get anything done that we want to repair or improve. The earlier agenda of tonight’s meeting attests to this: owners are forced to ask for approval to remove a tree, repair a driveway, replace a window. This is a nightmare for owners, I am sure. Imagine if each of you needed to go through this rigmarole if you wanted to make a change to your home – to repaint a front door, add a feature over your deck, and so on. If the County really wants to maintain affordable rents in the Westover community – if that’s really what you want to do – then the County should offer an incentive for us as owners not to sell or redevelop our properties. Most of us have no plans to do that anyway, but there should be an incentive. And most logically, this would be in the form of reduced property taxes for owners who will continue their ownership and will maintain affordable rents, a very simple thing to do. The action you’re proposing we feel will only lead to owner frustration in the county and higher costs that we will be passing on to tenants in the form of higher rents. Thank you.”

Speaker #6: John Reeder, 1812 North Huntington Street, representing the Arlington Green Party

“Good evening, members of the HALRB. I wish to thank you for your community service on this review board to preserve and honor our historic legacy. My name is John Reeder. I’m a long

time resident of Arlington. I've been here over 40 years. I am here tonight as the lead petitioner who started this historic designation process back nearly two years ago, along with nearly 160 other Arlington supporters, concerned about the demolition and destruction of one of the great neighborhoods in our County. I urge you to adopt Option 2 in the staff report that provides for local designation of all of the apartments in Westover. These apartments meet at least two of the eleven [designation] criteria and are already listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and as the staff report describes, 5 other criteria. I also urge you to recommend to the County Board that this historic district be approved without design guidelines since there is a substantial risk that historic resources would be damaged or destroyed, taking the time to develop such guidelines. Such an action is provided in the [zoning] ordinance. Nine buildings [in Westover] have been razed already, and two more will be razed shortly. I urge you not to bring extraneous considerations into your decision about historic designation. These extraneous factors are the housing conservation district and the opposition of some, but not all the owners, to historic designation. The HCD is not a responsibility of your board. It is not in the ordinance; it is not in the state law. It would be a violation of state law that governs historic review boards across the state to bring in HCDs. Furthermore, neither state law nor our county ordinance allows owner opposition to veto historic designation. If you were to deny historic designation solely because of owners' opposition, this would be a direct violation of state law. In 1978, [a portion of] the Colonial Village Apartments was designated as a local historic district over the opposition of its owner Mobil Land Development Corporation. I know this because my wife and I were residents and tenants there who initiated the petition. Colonial Village was the first neighborhood in Arlington designated as a local historic district."

Thank you for your service on this important board, and for your support to keep historic sites and buildings in our community.

Speaker #7: Stephen Davis, 1913 North Jefferson Street

"Good evening. My name is Stephen Davis, and I have lived in Arlington County for over 40 years. I'm here tonight to address the issue of the designation of Westover as a local historic district. First, a little history is in order. In September 2015 the County Board adopted the Affordable Housing Master Plan (AHMP). After decades of affordable housing loss in Arlington, among other things this much-lauded blueprint was supposed to provide a set of "tools" to preserve Arlington's dwindling stock of affordable housing. The goal of the Plan was not simply to save Arlington's endangered affordable housing, but rather to restore the affordable housing stock to 2005 levels. Special emphasis was to be given to preserving the market rate affordable housing such as existed in the Westover garden apartments, and among the AHMP's affordable housing preservation tools was listed "historic district designation." In the summer of 2016 the danger to Westover's affordable housing became apparent as a large demolition and replacement project took place in the heart of Westover's garden apartment development. Concerned citizens discovered that, shockingly, the County government was in effect powerless to deny or even delay the demolition permits. Further, none of the promising AHMP tools could effectively halt the impending demolition of the Westover apartments except local historic designation. There have also been other developments. For example, on December 16, the County Board adopted Housing Conservation Districts (HCDs) in twelve neighborhoods including Westover. With the HCDs, the devil will be in the details. HCDs would seem to provide some additional affordable

housing protection. However, the County Board’s adoption of HCDs does not supersede the request for local historic designation for Westover’s garden apartments. In the case of Westover, HCDs would clearly provide less protection than local historic designation. Without local historic designation, Westover’s garden apartments could be razed and replaced with townhouses at the discretion of County staff. For these reasons we recommend that the HALRB adopt Option 2 as described in the Historic Preservation Program staff’s memorandum of May 8, 2018. Thank you.”

Speaker #8: Miles Gallagher, 1131 North Kensington Street

“Hi, I’m Miles Gallagher. I’ve lived in Arlington my whole life. I actually grew up north of Lee Highway in the “badlands” where there’s no zoning, but I moved into a house with multiple people after that on North Roosevelt Street just north of Westover, and then I moved into Westover in November of 2014. When I got there the townhouses on the end of my street, Kensington Street, were just being finished, and I didn’t know what was there before, so I wasn’t worried. I know that the one thing I love about Westover is the sense of community, and it is something special when – you can’t find this everywhere in Arlington – when you’ve got a bunch of back to back-to-back – not too small, not too big – homes that people live in, and they come out and they talk to each other. We know each other. I watched the people across the street who started by washing cars and fixing cars and then they bought a food truck. And so watching the different families and really feeling a part of the community is important for me. It’s not just about affordable housing. When I first saw the [construction] fences go up across the street from me, I didn’t know what was going to happen. And then they got kicked out. And suddenly the view I had from the top of my building and the stairs – that window with light you guys are talking about – when they first made them, the light would come in. I had a perfect view of the steeple. There were garden apartments on each side, it was beautiful, and now it’s gone. And now whenever I see a fence go around a building I have a mini panic attack, because I feel like there is going to be another piece of our community torn down. I saw it go up right over Westover Park, and we have a lot of asbestos removal and stuff, so I’ve had a lot of mini panic attacks that haven’t resulted in anything, but it is worrisome because – and this goes to the main point I think in this meeting you’re talking about – where everyone raised their hand and were opposed. The people who live in those apartments aren’t part of that decision. I’ve been trying for a long time to find the Westover Civic Association. I see all the evidence; I couldn’t find mine. And I found it was in the advertisement for this meeting, and I saw the person outside my apartment sticking a sign in the ground saying there was going to be a meeting. And I said, “Is there a civic association?” And they said, “Yeah, but it’s mostly people who live in the houses, and they’re opposed to the historic district.” I was uncertain about the historic district, because it can be hard to maintain (it’s got a lot of requirements), but I don’t see anything else that will save our neighborhood at this point. If there’s only one thing that works, why focus on the fact that it’s not perfect? I think you need to use what you’ve got and also think about what you should make for people that could be an alternative. But we don’t have one right now. And to me the fact that we are not a part of the association, there’s no – again, we are a community, but we aren’t organized in that way. The houses are, apparently, but we aren’t. And in addition to that, in my area, the Westover Park area, everything is owned by one person, so that brings even less organization. So no matter how unified the people might be in their wanting to keep the neighborhood, it just takes one person to say, “I don’t want this anymore,” and when you have

15 different people owning 15 different houses, there's bound to be someone who is going to say, "I don't want this anymore." I'm going to settle. And I think we should protect our neighborhood."

Mr. Schatell interjected to tell Mr. Gallagher that he could be part of the civic association as a tenant.

Speaker #9: Howard Bubel, 1530 North Lancaster Street [Westover property owner]

"Good evening. I'm Howard Bubel, and I speak on behalf of my wife and I. We've owned a couple of buildings in Arlington for over 30 years now – apartment buildings. We were one of the folks behind the gathering of the information from all of the other apartment owners when we surveyed the community. And over 90 percent of the owners agreed that designation of an historic area should not be made at that time, and that was just about a year ago. Over half of the buildings are owned by either a corporation or partnership working directly with Arlington County providing subsidized housing at the present time. Less than half of the apartments are actually owned by private owners. And this is in contrast with the prior ownership of residential structures throughout Arlington. The continued restrictions on private property rights is not in line with encouraging private property ownership. In respect to the recent passed vote and outspoken views of Westover apartment property owners, I would strongly recommend Option 4, the denial of the designation request to the Arlington County Board. I agree with Mr. Condit's presentation and his recommendation as well, that Westover not be designated as a local historic district. Thank you."

Speaker #10: John McVay, 5741 Washington Boulevard

"My name is John McVay. I moved to the [Westover] community a few years ago. I've been in the same apartment building for eight years. I think that this designation – if I understand it appropriately – is kind of preserving a vanishing way of life in Arlington. It's mostly two-story homes. You can be a single young professional like myself and have a one-bedroom apartment, instead of participating in renting a group house or something. It's really great. I love living there. And I also bike to work every day and so I've gotten to see the progress of the demolitions of the apartment buildings. Of course I can kind of read the writing on the wall so I'm concerned. I definitely prefer Option 2. Even though I am a renter I've been here for eight years and consider this place my home. And the way things seem to be going, there is affordable housing and homes which I can't afford to own, so there's kind of a hole in here for people who don't qualify for affordable housing but can't afford home ownership. I've heard that this designation wouldn't guarantee the rents would be affordable, but I would argue that perhaps you haven't seen the apartments themselves. They're ideal for a single person like myself, but I have granite countertops, and they're just a bit too small for someone that's willing to shell out the rent that you would for a luxury apartment. So their configuration alone guarantees that they would be affordable. I think we really have to do something now since the County didn't have the foresight to do anything before the apartments were demolished. Two years have passed since this whole process has started and I've seen more and more houses get leveled. And the one in your project area that has been gutted I assume is going to be leveled as well (but that isn't in the

cut out [shown on the map]). I really think something needs to be done now to make people like me like Westover, but if the apartments go, I don't see how that's possible. Thank you."

Speaker #11: Aleksandr Belinskiy, 5714 11th Street North

"My name is Aleksandr Belinskiy. I have lived in Westover for over ten years. I support this process. I did not sign the [designation] petition. I want to remind you that the history of historic designation of garden apartments was initiated under [audio recording unclear]. And in my first slide is the Westover apartments from the MARKS Study. I tried to enlarge apartments with the name "Westover Place," (eleven, nine, three, etc.). They belong to one owner. This owner, according to my research related to the top business group came to the Virginia Housing Development Authority in the late 1990s and said, "My goal is to create a company for low-income people to buy houses." And the issue in Westover is not a Housing Conservation District, it's a focus on revenue for owners. It gives them the incentive to keep their apartments. There is a very smart developer who works for one of the top consultants in the country. He partnered with the largest construction company in Virginia, and it's no problem for them to get a site plan. So even what's enabled – this is a zoning ordinance issue. A site plan would not stop that particular developer. This is the issue. On my third slide you can see that demolition, to me, essentially, was issued today. This is the real process. And you know about the capital gain tax? This is one of the reasons why ones sold by owners do not sell because if they die their children could get rid of this tax. And many of them are old – my [building's] owner is 95 years old and I don't know what the plan for his child is. So I see this as an emergency, an emergency which was in Colonial Village and Buckingham. And I'm reluctant to ask you to do that, but I'll point out to you that this is what you need to consider. And the last point, on the last slide, I make a quote from your [meeting] minutes, when we discussed the difference between "Notable" and "Essential" and "Important" [in the HRI]. And what counts as "Essential" for you is Option 1 or 3 [in the staff report]. When you use "Important" it somehow precludes your decision. You do not support redevelopment. And if you choose only "Important" it essentially will be only your decision without discussion that you allow redevelopment for others. So I ask you to be cautious when approving options. Because it could be an opportunity for county developers to develop this and it will be an additional threat. Thank you very much."

Speaker #12: Richard Coleman, 2554 Columbia Pike

"Hi, I'm Richard Coleman. I have a construction background in the state of Michigan. I came to Washington, D.C. because I like it here. I like Rosslyn. I like some of the tradition of the city, some of the old sites and some of the new sites. From the construction background, you all make that decision; you're the County. But I'm saying from what I know in piping and construction and making houses, some of the old buildings have to be modernized to be up to code for OSHA standards and compliance with federal rules and regulations as far as water pipes. Because copper gives off lead. So I'm just saying that – you all make the decision – but I'm just saying, from construction.... The last job I did, it was in Miami, and we had these new pipes put in. And I don't make that decision. You should let the people vote. I believe in the Declaration of Independence for the people, by the people. So I'm just saying – there's not enough people in the room – but put it on the ballot. Let the folks vote on this regardless of economic status. I'm asking for it to be fair and not rigged, so that everybody has a fair chance to say something. The

people not in this room – these people are working right now. Some of these people are making low wages. They're not making salary like some of you people sitting here. And they deserve the chance to be heard, so I'm just asking for this to be put on the ballot so they can vote on this. Because, if you don't get up to code, some lead can get into the water. You've got the water filter, sprinkler system, under your faucet. So I'm just saying, from my résumé, I'm going to leave it with you. But even the hotels have to be modernized. The pipes will wear out eventually. So I'm just saying, think. Because if you do build the complexes, and.... Some people haven't been fair with me. I'm low income. So I got denied housing, and I was told to file for an appeal. I don't want to keep begging and begging and begging somebody. When my mother starved me I didn't beg her to feed me. I went out and got a job. I'm going to get it myself. I'm not a lazy person. I'm asking you all, don't look at the big money. You've got the health requirements. Because nobody's perfect. Everybody's at a different economic level – I'm talking about for economics, okay? If you don't go to school, if you don't learn a trade, you're going to be there where you are at. I'm at a place where I don't want to be, but I have to put up with some people who snore. And I just have to deal with it, and keep trying until I get a job. I specialize in security. And the name of my company is called APS – Alert Place Security. And I was told that the Arlington police are seventy percent. So I want to help out on these historic sites to patrol them to make sure they won't be vandalized, okay? That's my goal. I have a police/law enforcement background, and I'd be honored to keep these historic sites so people know the history of Arlington. I like Rosslyn because it's a working part of the city. People like to work. But I'm saying, be fair to me and the people who want to work. I don't like being on disability, okay, I don't like it. I'm going to end up paying for the rest of my life. My sixth grade teacher in Michigan, he intentionally ran over me with the football team, and now I have a curvature of the spine. I'm not saying this to get sympathy from anybody in here. But what he did – I could have been quarterback – this was in middle school – he did it intentionally, so that I could have killed him, okay? So I have no respect for him. And if it was up to me, it would never be a live person representing Michigan in the U.S. Marines for what he did, okay? I'm letting you know that, I risked my life for people in a little city in Michigan. The mayor and the deputy mayor and the city council president knew there were drugs in the city. I had to call the former mayor of Michigan. We had to put people down to save people's lives.”

The Chairman informed Mr. Coleman he had only a few seconds left to speak.

Mr. Coleman continued, “I'm just saying we have to modernize to be up to code, because I'm just saying I'm trying to put something in for New York City, and that could cost millions of dollars. So I'm just saying, be fair to people. Be fair to me. Don't look at me from the past, don't look at 'he did this, he did that.' No. People entrap people. Don't do that. I'm just saying to be fair to me, okay. Because I don't want to be in a criminal element. I'm just saying, modernize, but do it with OSHA compliant standards, okay? Thank you.”

Speaker #13: Robin Strub, 1101 North Kensington Street

“Thank you very much. I just wanted to say that my family has been living in this area for 50 years, and in terms of affordable housing, I have a pretty good sense that there is absolutely no way I could afford a house in Falls Church where my grandparents live. I've also seen decades of gentrification. And I'm one of the tenants of the bad guy who is knocking down a lot of houses

in that picture [pointed to the slide]. Basically, I'm on North Kensington. He is also one of the few providers of affordable housing, and in terms of what that means, it's to pay perhaps a thousand dollars for rent, because anything else really starts to eat into our take-home pay. And it's true – once these buildings are gone, they can't be replaced. And I have a background in historic preservation as well, so I know what it means to take care of an historic property. And there are challenges with such an endeavor. But I live in this area and this is the most I've heard of it, even though my sister has been living in Westover for several years. And as the gentleman said – I'm still learning about it, so there may have been more community outreach – but this is the first that I've heard of anything this active. I'm interested in doing what I can to take part for both reasons: For the owners of property who don't necessarily want to see a lot of restrictions or burdens on taking caring of property within an historic area, and in terms of real affordable housing to continue for those of us who are residents and for people who have low paying jobs and would love to live in this area but can't afford it. So that's it. Thanks for your time.”

HALRB Discussion

The Chairman thanked the public for coming and speaking.

The Chairman expressed concern regarding some of the misunderstandings about what historic preservation means. She stated that the property owners on tonight's Consent Agenda and that were referred to in public comments have been through a very streamlined approval process. One is not hamstrung in what changes one wants to make to a property's exterior, but there is some give and take that is necessary. The County Board makes decisions on which Local Historic Districts are implemented; the HALRB makes only recommendations on designations. There are design guidelines created through the collaboration of the property owners and Historic Preservation staff. There are some misunderstandings about what historic preservation does and does not do. Additionally, properties in local historic districts may be demolished according to the Virginia Code. The HALRB could delay this process, but cannot prevent demolition. There are many benefits to local historic district designation. The matter is now with the HALRB.

The Chairman provided some opening comments to the HALRB prior to discussion:

Tonight we are considering whether we as the HALRB have reason to believe that the garden apartments in Westover meet at least 2 of 11 criteria for local historic district designation and should be recommended to the County Board for designation as a local historic district within Section 11.3.4 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance. We heard staff's presentation outlining possible options for proceeding with this matter. We have received written comments and we have heard speakers presenting their positions both in support of and in opposition to recommending designation of the Westover Study Area garden apartments to be a local historic district.

The Chairman reminded those present that the County Board makes decisions about local historic district designation for any property in Arlington County. The HALRB can make recommendations only.

The Chairman reviewed the four options staff had presented to the board:

- Option 1: Recommend designation of only the Westover Apartments complex;
- Option 2: Recommend designation of all the garden apartments in the Westover Study Area;
- Option 3: Recommend deferral of the designation request until conclusion of Phase 2 of the HCD study; and
- Option 4: Recommend denial of the designation request to the County Board.

The Chairman opened the discussion to the board.

Mr. Craig said that while the HALRB gladly works with HCDs and affordable housing, he did not understand the divide between HCDs and historic preservation. Money that was initially invested in historic apartment buildings has long since been spent, and this helps to keep current housing costs low. It is necessary for a property owner to realize the value in a building. Once demolition occurs, a builder is constructing in today's dollars, rather than yesterday's dollars. Much of the housing cost in Arlington is driven by the cost of the land. Mr. Craig stated he preferred to allow staff to continue to work with the Phase 2 HCD study and supported Option 3.

Ms. Steinberger thanked all members of the public in attendance. The public involvement in this process has spoken to interest in the question of what kind of community the people of Arlington want to be. Land use is certainly a controversial subject in Arlington. At this point, it would be ineffective to separate historic preservation from affordable housing in Westover. The HALRB needs more information from the HCD study with which to make a decision. Choosing any option other than Option 3 may invalidate what the HCD is trying to accomplish. Ms. Steinberger said she supported Option 3, with the understanding that, in the future, the HALRB will have to make some difficult decisions. Ms. Steinberger expressed hope that Arlingtonians would find enough in common to accept those decisions.

Mr. Woodruff said he agreed with the Chairman's remarks about some of the common misunderstandings about historic preservation. He said that the *Maywood Design Guidelines* have prevented some demolitions and are made in consultation with the community. Owners of many houses have completed additions or renovations and received tax credits from Virginia. Mr. Woodruff said he did not believe there was an inherent conflict between historic preservation and affordable housing. He commented that he was on the HCD Working Group. He was not opposed to Option 3, but was curious why the HALRB should be compelled to wait for the HCD study to be complete before making a decision about the LHD. His impression was the working group does not seem to have much interest in historic preservation and is still in its early stages of decision making. Mr. Woodruff asked staff why they included Option 3 among the available options.

Ms. Liccese-Torres responded that there were two reasons why staff included Option 3. The first was due to the original guidance the HALRB had given to staff back in November 2016 [to conduct the designation study concurrently with the Countywide housing study]. The second reason is that the HCD study is very important to the County, and both the HALRB and historic preservation staff have been asked to participate in the process. The HCD advisory group is comprised of representatives of various commissions and special interest groups who are stakeholders in the process. Staff from Historic Preservation, Planning, and Housing are

discussing the HCDs for Westover and eleven other neighborhoods in tandem with the working group. The HCD study is still in its infancy and the coming months will yield more information.

Mr. Woodruff expressed appreciation for more clarity about the process.

Mr. Dudka stated that the HALRB's main purpose as an historic preservation board is historic preservation, rather than housing. The board's task is to evaluate whether the buildings under consideration are worthy of preservation based on their merits. Mr. Dudka agreed with Mr. Woodruff that there is no real contradiction between historic preservation and affordable housing. He pointed out that historic districts exist all over the nation, which contributes to better communities because places of value are being saved. He also agreed with Mr. Woodruff that the HALRB does not make it onerous to make changes within a local historic district. Mr. Dudka cited the example of Buckingham Village, where the HALRB approved additions to some units to accommodate contemporary living needs while also preserving the buildings' historic value. Mr. Dudka reiterated that the HALRB's task is to focus on historic preservation.

Mr. Turnbull stated he agreed with Mr. Dudka that the HALRB's focus should be historic preservation. He explained how Westover has a strong sense of place and community that is hard to find elsewhere in the County. He stated that the garden apartments in Westover merit designation as a local historic district. Mr. Turnbull said that the HCD will not achieve this objective. Whether all of the garden apartments in Westover should be included in the LHD is something else to consider, but a large majority of them should be included. Mr. Turnbull supported Option 2.

Ms. Garner agreed with Mr. Turnbull's comments. The HALRB should only be considering historic preservation. Ms. Garner said she did not see a need to wait until the HCD study was completed before going forward with the designation process. She favored Option 2.

Mr. Wenchel said that while the apartments in Westover are likely eligible for a LHD. He agreed with other board members who stated that the HALRB's task is about historic preservation. He believed the HALRB has enough information already to make a decision. The Westover apartment examples with courtyards are more in keeping with the original garden city planning concept than those along the streets. The HALRB should at least pursue Option 1, but considered Option 2 more appropriate.

Mr. Laporte first asked staff if the County Board has designated any local historic districts without owner consent. Mr. Liebertz responded that the most recent example was the Buckingham Commercial Area in the mid-1990s.

Mr. Laporte next asked staff if it is correct that the owner of the [individual] Westover Apartments complex does not object to the creation of the district. Mr. Liebertz responded that AHC, Inc., the owner of that particular complex [across from Swanson Middle School], has not yet commented on the designation request. Mr. Liebertz explained that to date, there has not been communication about the designation proposal between staff and AHC. However, AHC has received historic preservation tax credits in the past, which is likely what was referred to in the public comments.

Mr. Laporte asked if staff has heard from any Westover owners. Mr. Liebertz replied that to date no property owners have contacted staff in support of the designation. Ms. Liccese-Torres said staff has received three pieces of correspondence the past two days, which she e-mailed to HALRB members upon receipt and distributed at the beginning of the hearing. One was from a property owner who objected to the designation; another from a Westover resident who supported the designation; and the third was from a County resident who objected to the designation.

Mr. Laporte said the HALRB has an obligation to reach out to the owners of apartments in Westover to get their feedback before making a recommendation. A strong case has been made that some of the apartments merit designation, while others not necessarily. Further, he stated that Arlington cannot designate all of its garden apartments as local historic districts simply because they are garden apartments; only those that are truly architecturally and historically significant should be designated. Mr. Laporte expressed the need to prioritize how County resources are being spent and determine what's important to save. He said he voted against a recommendation for designation in the initial vote [in November 2016] specifically because the owners had not been contacted.

Mr. Liebertz explained the typical notification procedures for potential local historic districts. He said that staff mails letters to all property owners. All of the Westover garden apartment owners were notified via letter that this hearing is taking place. Staff also typically posts placards in the neighborhood around the property or properties in question to announce the HALRB public hearings. Whether or not owners comment [or participate] is beyond staff or the board's control, but the owners have been notified.

Mr. Woodruff asked why the area in the upper left of the study area map [the Westover Apartments complex owned by AHC, Inc.] had been suggested as a stand-alone designation option. Mr. Liebertz responded that staff considered that individual complex due to the architectural and historical significance of that apartment. He explained how this complex illustrates a cohesive campus-like feel with internal courtyards, defined parking areas, and pedestrian pathways connecting the buildings. In contrast, the other garden apartment buildings in Westover are different in that they are interspersed and line the streets rather than being organized in a campus-like design. Further, Mr. Liebertz noted that this individual complex had been ranked in the top one-third of the "Important" category in the County's Historic Resources Inventory (HRI), while the others in the neighborhood were ranked "Important" or "Notable."

Ms. Liccese-Torres also pointed out that this particular complex was the very first section of the overall Westover neighborhood to be constructed. This was the first portion of Westover designed and built by Thelander and Mace, [respectively].

Ms. Steinberger asked if there were other buildings in Westover designed and built by Thelander and Mace. Mr. Liebertz showed [on a map] the other garden apartments that Mace had built in Westover. A separate developer [E.R. Keene] built other areas of Westover.

Mr. Woodruff asked if the HALRB had considered the commercial buildings [in Westover] as well. The Chairman replied the board had considered them [in November 2016].

Ms. Liccese-Torres explained that the original designation request proposed the entire Westover neighborhood for study.

Mr. Woodruff asked why the commercial buildings were not being considered now. Mr. Liebertz responded that the HALRB directed staff in November 2016 to study only the garden apartments. He further explained that owners' objections and the perceived threats to the other garden apartments were the major factors at that time in that decision.

Mr. Woodruff asked if there were any HRI buildings in Westover's commercial area. Ms. Liccese-Torres said most of these commercial buildings were captured in the HRI.

Mr. Liebertz further added that all of the garden apartment buildings in the study area are all contributing to the Westover National Register Historic District, as well as all potentially [individually] eligible under the National Register multiple property documentation of Arlington's garden apartments, last amended in 2012.

The Chairman asked if there were any other questions for staff. There were none.

The Chairman said she served on the County's Affordable Housing working group for three years because she believes there is no conflict between historic preservation and affordable housing. This designation request is different than the typical request for LHD designation, however. The HALRB [in November 2016] initially deferred making a recommendation in part because of the ongoing study of market rate affordable housing, which the garden apartments help provide. The HALRB directed Historic Preservation staff to work with other County staff to study the preservation of garden apartments. Last December, the County Board approved the HCDs, and now their implementation is being discussed. The HALRB's focus is the preservation of historic buildings, and does not focus on the uses of the built environment as much. However, the board needs to work collaboratively, especially in this case. The Chairman continued, expressing concern that if the HALRB recommended designation before the HCD working group defines what options [incentives] would be available to property owners, there may be challenges to owners taking advantage of HCD tools. The Chairman stated she favors deferral of the LHD request, but not unlimited deferral. It is important to collaborate because the HCD also will consider altering historic buildings. The HALRB should not pre-empt what might emerge from the HCD study that may benefit historic preservation.

Mr. Woodruff added that significant changes to or even complete redevelopment of historic properties could be possible based on the HCD working group discussions so far. Mr. Woodruff said that if a building is declared historic, design guidelines would have to be developed that are compatible with the HCD. Design guidelines could always be written at a later time in conjunction with the HCD process.

Mr. Laporte said he was uncertain how any of the "tools" proposed in the HCD study might negatively affect a local historic district if one were put in place. He added that the HALRB could always amend design guidelines that collaborate with the HCD study.

Ms. Steinberger said that the HALRB has a responsibility to collaborate and cooperate with the HCD working group. Thus, the HALRB should not take an action now that may be seen as out of step with what other members of the HCD working group desire.

Mr. Woodruff said that what staff has shared with the HCD working group thus far appears to be just minor zoning changes. He expressed that working group members do not seem to think that such changes will provide sufficient incentive for property owners to modify historic buildings in a way that makes them more suitable for affordable housing (i.e., adding more units, etc.). He said the County needs to make more incentives for the HCD process to be successful, perhaps through using Transfer of Development Rights (TDR).

Mr. Craig said one of the reasons why he supports Option 3 is that it is much easier to make changes during a process rather than after the fact.

Mr. Dudka said he agreed with Ms. Steinberger and Mr. Craig. From an historic preservation point of view, he said the [individual] Westover Apartments complex from 1939 and the Westover commercial district should be the priorities. The rest of the buildings [in the study area] require further discussion and consideration. Mr. Dudka supported Option 3; he said the HALRB needs more information as the HCD process evolves.

Mr. Turnbull asked if Westover was the only HCD the County was considering. Ms. Liccese-Torres responded that Westover is one of 12 HCD areas.

Ms. Steinberger asked about the timeline for the completion of the HCD process. Ms. Liccese-Torres responded that staff anticipates the HCD study will end by December. There will be another check-in with the HALRB before that point once the tools and incentives have been determined.

The Chairman proposed a motion: “The HALRB will defer the decision on the local historic designation of the garden apartments in the Westover Study Area while the HCD Phase 2 study is pending, and that the HALRB will reopen the [local] designation request for further hearing and action before the completion of the HCD Phase 2 Study if necessitated by a threat to the historic integrity of the buildings proposed for designation.”

Ms. Steinberger seconded the motion.

The Chairman called for questions on the motion.

Mr. Woodruff said he supported the motion. He inquired if the HALRB could reintroduce consideration of the Westover commercial buildings. Ms. Liccese-Torres responded that such a consideration must be separate from the proposed motion and that the HALRB must request that staff add the commercial buildings back into the Westover Study Area.

The Chairman added that the HALRB and the County Board could request designation of the Westover commercial area.

Mr. Wenchel said he was not opposed to Option 3. He stated that the [individual] Westover Apartments complex likely could stand on its own as an historic district, and that the commercial area should be included as well. He believed one of the commercial owners had expressed interest in historic designation [back in 2016]. He asked to learn more about the commercial area and thought other garden apartments in Westover also could be included. He said that the HALRB needs to strongly state a finding that there is historic merit to this individual complex. Mr. Wenchel thought that before designation, there ought to be more discussion with property owners.

The Chairman asked Mr. Wenchel if he wanted to amend the motion. Mr. Wenchel said yes, then allowed Mr. Laporte to propose an amendment.

Mr. Laporte suggested that an amended motion include language to allow for the HALRB to consider designation of the [individual] Westover Apartments complex following an effort to get feedback from the property owners. If the owners do not object to designation, the HALRB should proceed with a request for designation because this particular complex is most representative of the Garden City movement, they are the oldest part of Westover, and they are “Important” on the HRI. The [remainder of the] apartments in Westover should be set aside as a separate category and reconsidered when the HALRB has the opportunity.

Ms. Steinberger said she would like to amend Mr. Laporte’s suggested changes. She proposed that the motion state that “The board sees significant reason for a finding of historic designation for the Westover Apartments complex such that the board seeks more information from the current property owners to begin findings for a historic designation process.” She said she would like to withhold a decision on designation until the HCD process is complete. Ms. Steinberger asked how much longer the designation process would take.

Ms. Liccese-Torres said likely six to eight months.

Ms. Steinberger said it is important to have greater uniformity about the recommendation to designate. Getting to the final stage of the HCD process would bring more information that HALRB members could use to make a better decision.

The Chairman reminded Ms. Steinberger that the motion left open whether we arrive at the final stage of the HCD process.

Ms. Liccese-Torres asked for clarification regarding next steps for staff.

Ms. Steinberger requested making a second motion.

The Chairman agreed and said the HALRB needs a finding regarding the [individual] Westover Apartments complex. She said that if the motion is passed, the board ought to defer it, except that the HALRB should instruct the staff to take further action regarding the Westover Apartments complex.

The Chairman asked if the board wanted to hear a finding regarding the Westover Apartments complex before the end of the HCD process.

Mr. Laporte said that Ms. Steinberger’s proposed motion seemed to negate his proposed motion. He said it had been his impression that the development of the HCD “tools” would take a couple of more years. Ms. Liccese-Torres clarified that then end of 2018 is what has been projected.

Ms. Winters [Speaker #4 from the audience] asked if, as a member of the HCD working group, she could add information about the HCD timeline. The Chairman agreed. Ms. Winters said that the HCD advisory committee (she added that this is the correct name of the body) is supposed to have recommendations in the next few months with County Board approval scheduled to occur before the end of the year. There will be an ability to engage on the advisory committee’s recommendations before the end of the year.

Mr. Woodruff asked if it was true that there would be additional HCD tools that come to fruition. Ms. Winters said she hoped that there would be more tools.

Ms. Garner asked the Chairman to re-read her motion. The Chairman re-read her motion.

Mr. Laporte asked the Chairman if she was open to asking the HALRB to direct [historic preservation] staff to contact the owners of the Westover Apartments complex.

The Chairman affirmed that the HALRB needs to give staff more guidance.

Mr. Wenchel reiterated his belief that the Westover Apartments complex is historically significant.

Mr. Woodruff said staff and/or the HALRB should discuss the pros and cons of [local] designation with the owners of the Westover Apartments complex.

The Chairman withdrew her proposed original motion. She asked Ms. Steinberger if she would withdraw her amended motion. Ms. Steinberger agreed.

The Chairman proposed a new motion: “I move the HALRB defer a decision on the local historic designation of the garden apartments in the Westover Study Area while the HCD Phase 2 study is pending.”

Ms. Steinberger seconded the motion.

Mr. Craig asked if the board could vote on the motion. The Chairman agreed.

The motion passed 8-1-0, with Mr. Turnbull opposed.

The Chairman asked if the board wanted to defer making another motion about outreach to Westover property owners and inclusion of the Westover Apartments complex for consideration as a local historic district.

Ms. Steinberger proposed a new second motion: “The HALRB finds that it is appropriate to initiate outreach to the owners of the garden apartments in the Westover Study Area, with a priority on the [individual] Westover Apartments complex.”

Mr. Laporte seconded the motion.

Ms. Garner asked what staff had already done to reach out to property owners.

Ms. Liccese-Torres said staff sent out individual letters to each of the owners of the garden apartments in Westover. Only one of those owners contacted staff with comments and a few others attended this hearing. She explained that the Westover project page on the County website has been updated with current information. For future outreach, she suggested that staff could either meet individually with property owners or as a group.

Mr. Liebertz said such an opportunity with owners also could be used to discuss design guidelines and educate owners about the design review process.

Mr. Woodruff suggested a collective meeting that included owners of properties of other [locally-designated] garden apartment complexes [in Arlington] who had been through the design review process.

Ms. Liccese-Torres asked for clarification about the timeline for Historic Preservation staff to conduct outreach with owners and what areas to prioritize.

Ms. Steinberger said she thought staff should prioritize the [individual] Westover Apartments complex. She asked if sixty days for outreach was reasonable. Ms. Liccese-Torres responded it was not.

The Chairman said that the outreach process at least should be initiated before the HCD Phase 2 study is complete. Ms. Steinberger agreed.

Ms. Steinberger proposed an amended second motion: “The HALRB finds that it is appropriate for staff, in coordination with the HALRB, to initiate outreach to the owners of the garden properties in the Westover Study Area, with a priority outreach to the owners of the Westover Apartments complex; and that this process be initiated at least before the HCD Phase 2 study is completed.”

Mr. Laporte seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9-0-0.

Ms. Liccese-Torres asked for clarification that the study of the Westover commercial area was not included in the motions just passed.

The Chairman stated it was not.

Mr. Woodruff asked if further discussion about the study of the Westover commercial area for local historic designation could be included on next month's agenda. The Chairman replied that it could be included.

The Chairman summarized the HALRB's approved motions. She then thanked all members of the public who attended. She also thanked attendees for their comments.

The hearing adjourned at 10:10 PM.

ADDENDUM: PUBLIC COMMENTS E-MAILED TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF BY INDIVIDUALS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE PUBLIC HEARING

Dean and Mary Simonds, 1400 N. Kenilworth Street

May 16, 2018

Dear Ms. Liccese-Torres,

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to present my views to the Historic Affairs and Landmark Review Board. My name is Mary Simonds and my husband, Dean, and I have owned a garden apartment building at 1400 N. Kenilworth Street for 46 years. We have been hands on owners getting to know many of our tenants and providing affordable housing in the neighborhood. We are proud to be small business owners in the Arlington community. We do not intend to sell our building to anyone and, down the road, we plan on our children inheriting this building and continuing the business.

Both my husband and I firmly oppose designating the garden apartment buildings in the Westover community as a local historic district for the following reasons:

1. Commercial 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.
2. Commercial property owners have a right to sell their property to any qualified buyer.
3. The proposed designation will lower property values making selling the property more difficult.
4. The proposed designation will make maintaining the property more difficult, time consuming and expensive.
5. 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 is my understanding the historic designation is intended to preserve the historic integrity of the Westover community and 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. Basically this organization is taking our tax dollars and getting financing breaks, all the while becoming competition for our family business. Westover is not losing affordable housing.

It is also my understanding the HALRB is initiating this historic district designation policy to prevent garden apartment building owners from selling their property to private developers. This is anti-business and anti-growth.

In closing, I see absolutely no benefit to the Westover community being designated a local historic district. It is government over reach adding more regulation, taxes and control. I ask that the HALRB disapprove the proposal of the creation of a Westover local historic designation. Sincerely,

Mary and Dean Simonds

Kirit Mookerjee, 1201 N. Kensington St.

May 16, 2018

Commissioners,

As a Westover resident, please accept the following brief comment on Local Historic District Designation-Garden Apartments in Westover. Due to a family event, I cannot attend in person.

Upon review of the staff report, I strongly support Option 2. These buildings have clear architectural and cultural significance and are worthy of historic preservation designation. The 1940's saw the development of these small buildings set-back from the street, with grass lawns and a distinctive character as a group.

Regarding Option 1, I don't believe the contiguous layout of the Westover Apts. is justification for their sole inclusion and not the other garden apartments.

As a member of the Housing Conservation District working group, I don't understand Option 3. When this process started in 2016 there was no HCD policy. The incentives of Phase 2 are currently being debated and furthermore this policy is not the same as historic preservation.

Thanks,

Kirit Mookerjee
1201 Kensington St.

William Barratt, 5713 6th Street North

May 10, 2018

Dear Members of the Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board,

I strongly urge you to reject proposals to recommend designating garden apartments in Westover as “historic.” I hope it is plain to you that these proposals are primarily motivated by a desire to

preserve affordable housing by making it difficult to redevelop the apartments. This would be a misuse of the Zoning Ordinance.

Although the garden apartments in Westover are relics of an important period in Arlington's history, there is nothing architecturally or culturally valuable about them that can only be preserved by means of a historic designation. The recent report presented to you by the HPP staff was painfully thin on characteristics that met the historic district designation criteria.

Preserving photographs and architectural drawings of the apartments would be sufficient to record their place in local history. I would be shocked to hear anyone lament the loss of the Westover apartments for their aesthetics or historic significance. As an Arlington taxpayer, I am unhappy about the amount of County staff time that has been spent studying this issue for the HALRB.

Kind regards,
William Barratt