

DCCA is a volunteer, nonprofit organization,  
founded in 1922 to promote and protect the  
Dupont Circle neighborhood.



9 Dupont Circle, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
[www.dupont-circle.org](http://www.dupont-circle.org)

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**2019 – 2020  
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**Date:** September 18, 2019  
**To:** Historic Preservation Review Board  
**From:** Dupont Circle Citizens Association  
**Re:** Historic Landmark Case No. 19-497

Please find attached comments from the Board of Directors of the Dupont Circle Citizens Association regarding the above-referenced matter, which is scheduled for consideration by the HPRB on September 26<sup>th</sup> or October 3, 2019.



September 18, 2019

**BY ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY**

Marnique Heath, Chair  
Historic Preservation Review Board  
1100 4th Street, SW, Suite E650  
Washington, DC 20024  
E-mail: historic.preservation@dc.gov

**Re: Historic Landmark Case No. 19-497  
Scottish Rite Temple subdivision**

Dupont Circle Citizens Association (“DCCA”) submits these comments regarding the above-referenced subdivision of the lot upon which the historic landmarked Scottish Rite Temple, 1733 16th Street, NW, is situated. The proposed subdivision would roughly divide the existing legal record lot in half and exclude a significant portion of the individually landmarked site itself from landmark protections. **And it would do so without the Mayor’s Agent’s Hearing, which the Preservation Act of 1978 requires.**

DCCA strongly supports retaining and enhancing historic landmark protection for the temple. It is therefore dismayed that the Historic Preservation Office (“HPO”) has recommended in this case that the Board accept the lot subdivision and essentially adopt a boundary decrease for the landmarked site by removing from the historic site property that it had deemed as belonging to the landmarked site in its own April 2019 report. HPO’s recommendations are fundamentally inconsistent with the declared purposes of the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978, as amended (the “Act”), which include retaining and enhancing historic landmarks. *See* D.C. Code § 6-1101(b)(2)(A). DCCA therefore urges the Board to reject HPO’s recommendations and to deny the legal lot’s subdivision.

By way of background, HPO previously issued two reports related to the boundary of the landmarked site; specifically, it issued a report with recommendation in April 2019 (the “Original Report”), and then a revised report with recommendation in May 2019 (the “Revised Report”). These reports fundamentally differ with respect to what should be considered the existing boundary. The Original Report and the Revised Report are attached as Exhibits 1 and 2, respectively.

In the Original Report (pp. 1-2), HPO correctly delineated the existing boundary of the historic landmark site as including a very large area behind the temple. This area includes a substantial portion of the location of a proposed project involving new construction of a massive, five-story apartment building (four stories plus penthouse level).

Marnique Heath, Chair  
Historic Preservation Review Board  
May 17, 2019

Relying on the Original Report, various members of the community pointed out to HPO that the public had not received prior notice that the Proposed Project would be built, in part, on the historic landmark site. They also communicated their expectation that the Mayor's Agent for Historic Preservation would comply with applicable law by holding a formal public hearing regarding the Proposed Project because, based on the boundary delineated in the Original Report, the Proposed Project would necessarily involve a subdivision that removes land from an historic landmark site. *See* D.C. Code § 6-1106(c); 10 DCMR C403.1(b).

Astonishingly, shortly after members of the community expressed these views, HPO issued its Revised Report recommending that the Board “clarify and confirm” the existing boundary in such a way that would not include the location of the Proposed Project. The Revised Report does not explain why HPO suddenly changed its position. **DCCA is therefore rightly concerned that HPO may have changed its position not because of any factual misunderstanding about the existing boundary but rather because of a desire to avoid the need for additional public notice or a hearing by the Mayor's Agent concerning the Proposed Project.**

The Board should reject HPO's recommendation to allow subdivision of the existing record lot because the Original Report correctly identifies the existing boundary of the landmarked site. Therefore, a substantial portion of the landmarked site would fall outside the new subdivided record lot being retained by the Temple Building and exclude from historic preservation protections a substantial part of the landmarked site, AND do so without the required Mayor's Agent's Hearing, where the applicant would need to prove that removing property from a historic landmarked site both ‘retains and enhances the individual landmark.’ The Original Report (p. 1) correctly states that, “[u]nder the D.C. Preservation Law [i.e., the Act] adopted in 1978, the new legal protections for a historic landmark extend to the building and its site, commonly interpreted as the lot where the building is situated.” The Original Report (pp. 1-2) further correctly identifies the lot and corresponding boundary by reference to a map taken from authoritative historical records.

Additionally, the existing eastern edge of the site unquestionably coincides with the eastern edge of the 16th Street Historic District. This conclusion was explicitly made in the Original Report (p. 2), and it is consistent with any reasonable interpretation of the boundaries of the 16th Street Historic District. The historic district's nomination documents establish that only properties that front 16th Street, NW, were included in the nomination. As one of the properties fronting 16th Street, NW, the temple was included in the nomination, and its site was appropriately determined at that time as having the eastern boundary shown in the Original Report (p. 2). To be clear, if the rear of the temple had not been deemed part of the temple's site, there would not have been any logical reason to include it in the historic district because, by design, the historic district only includes properties that front 16th Street, NW. The Office of Planning's map of the 16th Street Historic District, as well as its map of the 14th Street Historic District, clearly show this boundary. The maps are attached as Exhibit 3.

The Revised Report (p. 5) attempts to justify the boundary decrease by arguing that the site should be delineated by “considering the extent of the temple property at the time of its construction in 1915 and at the time of its identification as a historic landmark in 1964.”

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However, the issue is not presented to the Board on a clean slate. The site has for decades been delineated on its eastern edge by the boundary of the 16th Street Historic District. Furthermore, the relevant time period is not, as stated in the Revised Report (p. 1), when the temple was included “in the city’s first list of landmarks, issued by the Joint Committee of Landmarks in 1964,” but rather when it achieved historic landmark status under the Act, which was in 1978. By that time, as reflected in the map of the 16th Street Historic District, the site included a very substantial area located behind the temple.

It is important to emphasize that referring to the 1964 listing to determine the protected site boundary makes no sense. In 1964, no historic preservation protections came with a listing. A listed property merely received a bronze plaque for display. Many listed properties have been razed, including some of our finest historical churches. As *The Washington Post* wryly observed in 1973, a “little bronze plaque is as easily bulldozed as granite columns or marble entablatures.” (A Brake on the Bulldozers, Wash. Post, Sep. 24, 1973, p. A26). Conversely, historic landmark designations resulting from the Act (adopted in 1978) came with legal protections for the designated landmark’s site. And, as HPO itself stated in the Original Report (p. 1), a historic landmark’s site is commonly understood to mean its lot.

It is therefore apparent that HPO, in advocating for the lot subdivision, is in fact requesting the Board to substantially reduce the extent of the landmarked site’s boundary behind the Temple building. HPO’s request is extraordinarily improper. The request has resulted in many in the community questioning the integrity, transparency, and adequacy of the historic preservation review process because the request appears to be motivated by the desire to avoid additional public notice and a hearing by the Mayor’s Agent concerning the lot subdivision. HPO’s recommendation is fundamentally inconsistent with the declared statutory purpose of retaining and enhancing historic landmarks. See D.C. Code § 6-1101(b)(2)(A). And acting on its recommendation would usurp the Mayor’s Agent’s statutory and regulatory role in reviewing any proposed subdivision that would remove land from an historic landmark site. See *id.* § 6-1106(c); 10 DCMR C403.1(b).

The Board should do more, however, than merely reject HPO’s recommended boundary decrease by way of the record lot subdivision. It should recognize that the existing boundary is correctly delineated in the Original Report. The Historic Preservation Act states that removing property from a landmarked site can be effected only if that removal results in ‘retaining and enhancing’ the landmarked site. The proposed record lot subdivision does not ‘retain and enhance’ but instead removes the view of the entire rear façade of this landmarked building from the public realm and accomplishes the opposite of what the Historic Preservation Act is meant to ensure. Additionally, it does so by preempting the procedural requirement and protections afforded in the Act where this matter should first be going to the Mayor’s Agent.

In our comments above, we have noted that the Historic Preservation Office (“HPO”), has essentially recommended adoption of a historic landmark boundary decrease. HPO’s April 2019 initial report correctly delineated the existing landmark boundary of the historic landmark site as including a very large area behind the temple, even though some of the eastern extent of this parcel was acquired after the 1915 period of significance, based on the intent of the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978.

Unfortunately, because the Scottish Rite Temple was a DC Landmark Category III, it was never submitted for registration in the National Historic Register, and therefore there are no official records of its site. However, we have found at least two examples of DC Historic Landmarks that were submitted to the National Register, which illustrate the principle that the site of an historic landmark is to include property acquired after the period of significance, if such inclusion contributes to retaining and enhancing the historic landmark. The entries from the DC Inventory of Historic Sites for these two properties are:

**White-Meyer House**

1624 Crescent Place, NW

Built 1912-13 (John Russell Pope, architect); *DC listing November 8, 1964, NR listing January 20, 1988*

**Babcock-Macomb House**

3415 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Built 1912 (Arthur B. Heaton, architect); *DC designation February 1, 1989, NR listing February 10, 1995*

The registration forms for listing in the National Register (“NR”) are attached (Exhibits 4 and 5) with relevant information highlighted. Briefly, the White-Meyer house was originally built on a lot on Meridian Hill in 1910. After 1927, John White who had inherited the house, “purchased additional lots extending the property to 16<sup>th</sup> Street between Belmont Street and Crescent Place.” The current boundaries of this historic site include both Lots 806 and 808 in Square 2568, as shown in Exhibit 4.

The case of the Babcock-Macomb House is particularly relevant to the current requested lot subdivision. The house was built in 1912, with the period of significance listed as 1912-1917, on the original Lots 21 and 22 of Square 1939, which were subsequently designated as Lot 34. In 1935, Philip Macomb “purchased Lots 23 and 24 adjacent to the family home, creating the parcel that exists today.” In 1988, Lots 34, 23 and 24 were combined and designated Lot 40. When the Babcock-Macomb House was submitted to the NR, this entire parcel was designated as the site boundary. Plat maps of the lots discussed here and in the next paragraph are attached in Exhibit 6.

In 2004, the Embassy of Cape Verde, the owner of the Babcock-Macomb House, requested that the lot be subdivided to raise funds to repair and preserve the building. The proposed subdivision was reviewed by HPRB and referred to the Mayor’s Agent. The decision by the Mayor’s Agent is attached (Exhibit 7). The Mayor’s Agent approved the subdivision of existing Lot 40 into two new lots, which are now designated Lots 42 and 43. Significantly, however, the Decision and Order states that “The proposed new lot line would be located slightly to the west of the original line between Lots 34 and 23, thus creating a slightly larger lot for the landmark Babcock-Macomb House than the one on which it was originally built.” And further that **“the Applicant proposes to create a no build zone, the restrictions of which will be appropriately recorded among the land records of the District of Columbia. By placing any new construction farther from the east lot line than would be required by the zoning regulations, this no-build zone will maintain sufficient open space between the landmark**

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**and any proposed new construction so that such new construction will not overwhelm or overshadow the landmark.”**

There are undoubtedly other examples of historic landmarked sites in DC where the designated site of the landmark is larger than the lot on which a building originally stood. However, these two examples serve to bolster our contention that the proper eastern boundary of the site of the Scottish Rite Temple Historic Landmark should be those in the initial, April 2019 recommendation from HPO, which coincide with the eastern border of the 16<sup>th</sup> St. Historic District map, and not the extent of the temple property at the time of its construction, as stated in the May 2019 HPO report. That is, the boundaries of the current landmarked site should include the substantial area to the east of the original temple lot, and any subdivision of this site should be referred to the Mayor’s Agent for a formal public hearing, as was conducted for the subdivision of the Babcock-Macomb Historic Landmark.

Once construction of the Proposed Project is underway, the opportunity to retain, much less enhance, the temple will be forever lost. It is therefore imperative that the Board proceed cautiously, and with due consideration of all the relevant issues in full accord with the Act.

Respectfully submitted,



Glenn Engelmann, President  
Dupont Circle Citizens Association



– and – Lance Salonia, Regulatory Chair  
Dupont Circle Citizens Association

Attachments:

- Exhibit 1 – Original HPO Report
- Exhibit 2 – Revised HPO Report
- Exhibit 3 – Office of Planning Maps
- Exhibit 4 – NR Registration Form, White-Meyer House
- Exhibit 5 – NR Registration Form, Babcock-Macomb House
- Exhibit 6 – Plat maps of Babcock-Macomb House properties
- Exhibit 7 – Mayor’s Agent Decision re subdivision of Babcock-Macomb House lot

# Exhibit 1

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**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD**  
Historic Landmark Case No. 19-06  
Scottish Rite Temple Amendment (boundary increase)  
1733 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Square 192 Lot 808

Meeting Date: May 23, 2019  
Applicant: Dupont East Civic Action Association  
Affected ANC: 2B

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**Preservation Background**

The Scottish Rite Temple is listed in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites as a Historic Landmark and is also a contributing resource in the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District. The property was included in the city’s first list of landmarks, issued by the Joint Committee of Landmarks in 1964, and the predecessor to the current D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites created when the city enacted the D.C. Preservation Law in 1978. The Joint Committee’s list was organized into categories of significance, with the temple listed in Category III. In 1968, following the establishment of the National Preservation Act of 1966, the Joint Committee began preparing and forwarding nominations to the National Register of Historic Places for the properties in categories I and II only, and thus a nomination for the temple was not prepared.

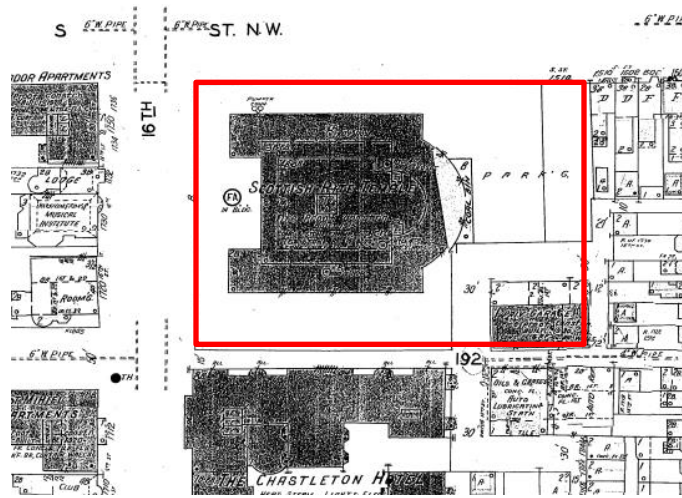
The Sixteenth Street Historic District was identified on the Joint Committee’s 1964 list as a notable area in Category III. In 1977, acting on a proposed expansion of the Category III Dupont Circle area, the Joint Committee designated both Sixteenth Street and Dupont Circle as separate Category II historic districts, eligible for nomination to the National Register. Both were listed in the Register in 1978, and those nominations required clear boundaries for what had been sketchily defined “areas.” The Scottish Rite Temple is called out in that nomination as “one of the most unusual buildings in the Historic District” and is credited with having been voted “the fifth most beautiful building in the world by a group of members of the Association of American Architects.”

**Boundaries**

Under the D.C. Preservation Law adopted in 1978, the new legal protections for a historic landmark extend to the building and its site, commonly interpreted as the lot where the building is situated. At the time of its designation, the temple sat on the lot shown in red outline below. The landmark boundaries of the Scottish Rite Temple include approximately 2/3 of present-day Lot 108 in Square 192. Lot 108, which extends from 16<sup>th</sup> Street east to 15<sup>th</sup> Street on the northern half of the square, is the result of a 2013 subdivision by the Supreme Council combining a series of old lots in Square 192 into a single lot. Extending from 16<sup>th</sup> Street easterly to a point that is in



line with an alleyway that ran north-south through part of the northern half of the square, the landmark boundaries comprised the Scottish Rite Temple building itself; a carriage house/garage complex located at the southeast (rear) of the property (Old Lot 808); and open space to the east (in part historically occupied by rowhouses).



1959 Sanborn Map showing landmark boundary overlay

These boundaries included the original lots which the Scottish Rite purchased in 1910 to build its temple, as well as additional adjacent lots it purchased in the decades after completion of the temple (1915) until the time that boundaries were established for the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District (1977).

The landmark boundary follows the eastern edge of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District.

The amended application proposes to extend the landmark boundary eastward to encompass the entirety of Lot 108 bringing the eastern edge to 15<sup>th</sup> Street. The eastern 1/3 of Lot 108 is presently included within the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District. While the application proposes this boundary increase, it does not address or specifically cite which D.C. and National Register designation criteria it might meet.

### **Proposed Boundary Increase Rationale**

The application proposes to amend the eastern edge of the landmark for the following reasons:

- 1) The Scottish Rite Temple was built on a site approximately one-mile north of the White House that was identified as open space on the L'Enfant Plan. The development of this open space, both historically and currently, conflicts with the L'Enfant Plan. Protecting this site as "open" would uphold the vision of the L'Enfant Plan and should be embraced. Further, the D.C. Parks and Recreation Master Plan suggests acquiring land for under-

parked neighborhoods. Retaining this open space would help to fulfill that Department of Recreation Master Plan recommendation.

- 2) John Russell Pope insisted on open sightlines for his projects. The amendment notes that Pope expressed this opinion in his design for the Lincoln Memorial, proposed for Meridian Hill Park, just north of the Scottish Rite Temple site, or the Old Soldiers' Home north of the city. Of these sites, Pope wrote that both "possess unhampered expression of purpose...by reason of their independence of surrounding important architectural dictates, consideration or comparisons."
- 3) In 1910, the Masons purchased a series of lots upon which they constructed the temple building, completed in 1915. Beginning in 1920, and continuing for many decades, they acquired numerous lots on S Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Street in the northern half of Square 192. After acquiring the properties, the Masons systematically demolished the rowhouses on those lots, many of which were home to African Americans. This act of demolition contributed to historic preservation efforts that ultimately resulted in the designation of the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District.

## **Evaluation**

Based upon a review of the application, HPO has the following comments on the three assertions made in the application:

From the outset, the Plan of the City, as designed by Peter L'Enfant in incomplete concept form in 1791, was modified and adjusted in the process of laying out the city. The refinement of the plan completed by Andrew Ellicott in 1792 after L'Enfant's dismissal, already included many changes to the original printed version of the L'Enfant Plan. One such change, of note here, includes the elimination of the open space centered on 16<sup>th</sup> Street from S to T Streets, the block just north of 16<sup>th</sup> and S Streets, NW—the site of the Scottish Rite Temple. The temple site would be adjacent to the southeast corner of this contemplated square.

Later nineteenth and twentieth-century alterations to the 1791 and 1792 Plans involved the elimination of streets, the introduction of others, and the re-organization of reservations, circles and other open spaces. Some of these developments, such as the introduction of minor streets, and implementation of the McMillan Commission Plan (1901) which re-envisioned the city's monumental core and imposed new order on the historic plan, have great significance in the city's urban planning history and are considered contributing features of the plan. Much academic research and scholarship has been devoted to the L'Enfant Plan and subsequent plans, and as the city continues to develop, urban planning efforts consider an appropriate re-shaping of the city, in accordance with its historic plans. City circles and Reservations have been re-configured and L'Enfant Plan streets that had been closed are being re-opened.

The 1997 designation of the Plan of the City in the D.C. Inventory emphasizes that the historic landmark is the plan as it has evolved, during the National Register period of significance from 1790 to 1942. The D.C. designation states:

*“The designated plan is neither the archived historical map of the city (which exists in several versions including the original), nor an idealized diagram of the urban layout depicted on those maps. It is the layout of the city in its implemented form, including the streets, parks and other public spaces of the city as they evolved historically and exist in reality.”* [italics original]

Features such as the never-realized plaza on upper 16<sup>th</sup> Street are not part of the L’Enfant Plan historic landmark. There is no historic argument for or planning rationale for a deliberate re-creation of such conjectural elements in isolation of existing or historic conditions. The proposed amendment to the Scottish Rite Temple calls for “protecting” an open space that never existed on paper beyond the original 1791 Plan and was never created as part of the city plan. During the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, when the area was first developed, the site was divided into squares and lots in accordance with the 1792 Plan. It was developed during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with rowhouses and then, in 1910-1915, with the Scottish Rite Temple.

*Expanding the boundaries to include the open space behind the temple building will not contribute to the “restoration” of L’Enfant’s vision for open space on the site. The site was never officially set aside for public space and never developed as such. A “restoration” of open space as envisioned by L’Enfant would further engender the removal of the temple building and surrounding blocks and would be totally conjectural.*

John Russell Pope is a nationally known architect for his many residential, civic, religious, and institutional building designs, including, notably, the National Gallery of Art, the Jefferson Memorial, and the National City Christian Church in D.C. Pope’s work has been the focus of several books and articles, and many buildings designed by him are listed in the National Register.

The amended application notes that Pope wanted “unhampered” views and open sightlines for his designed buildings. This assessment appears to be based upon a single source--Pope’s written comments on a design proposal for a Lincoln Memorial on either Meridian Hill or the Old Soldiers’ Home. No additional background on Pope and his work is provided. Lacking any historical background on Pope and his buildings, it is not possible to conjecture about what Pope wanted for the Scottish Rite site. What is known is that Pope designed the building on its site hemmed in by both the street and rowhouses on lots at the rear of the temple. He presumably

designed the building within those constraints and not with the expectation that those buildings would be removed in the future to enhance views to the temple building.

*The argument to expand the boundaries to allow for an “unhampered expression” of the building according to Pope is purely conjectural. The open space was developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with rowhouses, the last of which remained in the 1980s, and cannot be classified as a significant historic, cultural or designed landscape.*

The application notes that the boundaries should be expanded to include the site of the rowhouses along both S and 15<sup>th</sup> Street which were demolished by the Supreme Council. The argument is that the demolition of these historic rowhouses galvanized the community and encouraged the rise of historic preservation in the neighborhood. That community effort culminated in the designation of the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District.

*The site of the demolished rowhouses was included in the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District so that the boundary would align with that of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District, leaving no gap between them. The purchase and demolition of the rowhouses by the Supreme Council in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century is not relevant to the significance of the Scottish Rite site itself. The National Register notes that boundaries should “encompass an appropriate setting” but should exclude “peripheral areas that do not directly contribute to the property’s significance.” (National Register Bulletin, Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties, p.2).*

### **Designation Criteria**

This nomination was prepared as an amendment to a landmark that has no written nomination associated with it. Although the amended application does not address the designation criteria, it makes sense to look at them as they relate to the existing landmark, and in assessing the proposed amendment. Based on the site’s known history and documentation, it is reasonable to determine that the Scottish Rite Temple meets D.C. Designation Criteria B (History), D (Architecture and Urbanism), E (Artistry), and (F) Creative Masters and the equivalent National Register Criterion A and C, and that the Period of Significance should be established as 1915 when the temple was completed on its present site.

The Scottish Rite Temple meets Criterion B for its association with social movements, groups, institutions, patterns of growth and change in the District. The Scottish Rite Temple is associated with the establishment of the Scottish Rite and the formation of the headquarters of the Supreme Council in the District of Columbia. The land that makes up the expanded boundaries has not been shown to have played a significant role in the history or events tied to the temple. In addition, the land was acquired after 1915, and thus falls outside the likely Period of Significance for the temple.

The Scottish Rite Temple meets Criterion D, E, and F as it embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a building type and style; is an expression of architecture and urban planning; possess high artistic value; and is the work of a master architect. The proposed expanded boundaries do not contribute to the significance of the Scottish Rite Temple under these criteria. The open space is not notable as a designed or cultural landscape. In addition, acquisition of the land by the Supreme Council falls outside of the Period of Significance of 1915.

The property has not been evaluated under Criterion G (Archaeology), and it is possible that the site (existing and expanded) may yield information significant to an understanding of historic or prehistoric events of the District. In particular, the proposed expanded area—the site of demolished 19<sup>th</sup>-century rowhouses—may provide information on the lives of the African American, working-class residents who lived there. However, should the site provide such information, its significance would be related to the broader neighborhood history, and not associated with the Scottish Rite Temple and the significance for which it has been designated a historic landmark.

### **Recommendation**

*HPO recommends that the Board deny this amendment to the Scottish Rite Temple designation. While a new submission for a well-researched, fully documented National Register nomination for the Temple would be welcome, existing information provides a sufficient understanding of the landmark to allow the Board to determine that the boundaries should not be expanded as proposed.*

# Exhibit 2

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**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD  
FINAL STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Historic Landmark Case No. 19-06

**Scottish Rite Temple amendment** (boundary increase)

1733 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW

Square 192 Lot 108

Meeting Date: May 23, 2019  
Applicant: Dupont East Civic Action Association  
Affected ANC: 2B

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The Scottish Rite Temple is listed in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites as a historic landmark and is also a resource contributing to the character of the Sixteenth Street Historic District. The property was included in the city's first list of landmarks, issued by the Joint Committee of Landmarks in 1964. The Sixteenth Street Historic District was also identified on the Joint Committee's 1964 list as a notable area, but it was not designated as a historic district until 1977 and listed in the National Register in 1978. The Scottish Rite Temple is called out in the Sixteenth Street nomination as "one of the most unusual buildings in the Historic District," and it is credited with having been voted "the fifth most beautiful building in the world by a group of members of the Association of American Architects." While there is no National Register nomination for the temple, the Commission of Fine Arts publication *Sixteenth Street Architecture Volume 1* includes a generously illustrated 33-page discussion of the temple, its construction history, and character-defining features.<sup>1</sup>

### **Proposed Boundary Increase**

The amendment application proposes to extend the historic landmark boundary eastward to include the entirety of Lot 108, reaching to 15<sup>th</sup> Street, within the Fourteenth Street Historic District and including all the property that the Supreme Council currently owns, portions of which were acquired in the decades after completion of the temple.

The present application does not cite designation criteria under which the additional area may be evaluated. It proposes to extend the area for the following reasons:

- 1) The Scottish Rite Temple was built on a site approximately one-mile north of the White House that was identified as open space on the published 1791 L'Enfant Plan. Therefore, it is argued, the development of this open space, both historically and currently, conflicts with the L'Enfant Plan. Protecting this end of the site as open would uphold the vision of the L'Enfant Plan and should be embraced. The D.C. Parks and Recreation master plan recommends acquiring land for under-parked neighborhoods. Retaining this open space would help to fulfill that Department of Recreation Master Plan recommendation.

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<sup>1</sup> The temple is also described in standard reference works on Washington Architecture, including *Buildings of the District of Columbia* (Pamela Scott and Antoinette Lee, 1993), and many others.

- 2) John Russell Pope desired open sightlines to his projects. The amendment notes that Pope stressed this in his design for a Lincoln Memorial proposed for Meridian Hill Park or the Old Soldiers' Home, which both "possess[ed] unhampered expression of purpose... by reason of their independence of surrounding important architectural dictates, consideration or comparisons."
- 3) In 1910, the Masons purchased a series of lots upon which they constructed the temple building, completed in 1915. Beginning in 1920, and continuing for many decades, they acquired numerous lots on S Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Street in the northern half of Square 192. The Masons systematically demolished the rowhouses, many of which had become home to African Americans. This act of demolition contributed to historic preservation efforts that ultimately resulted in the designation of the Fourteenth Street Historic District.

### **Evaluation**

1) Pierre L'Enfant's concept plan of 1791 was modified and adjusted in the process of laying out the city. Andrew Ellicott's refinements of 1792 already included many changes to the original printed version of the L'Enfant Plan. One such change was the elimination of an open space centered on 16<sup>th</sup> Street from S to T Streets, the block north of the eventual temple (the temple would have been adjacent to the southeast corner of this contemplated square). Later alterations to the 1791 and 1792 Plans involved the elimination of streets, the introduction of others, and the re-organization of reservations, circles and other open spaces. Some of these developments, such as the introduction of minor streets and implementation of the McMillan Commission Plan have great significance in the city's urban planning history and are considered contributing realized features of the plan.

Much academic research and scholarship has been devoted to the L'Enfant Plan and subsequent planning, and as the city continues to develop, urban planning efforts consider an appropriate re-shaping of the city, in accordance with its historic plans. City circles and Reservations have been re-configured and L'Enfant Plan streets that had been closed are being re-opened. The 1997 designation of the Plan of the City in the D.C. Inventory emphasizes that the historic landmark is the plan as it was built and has evolved, during a period of significance from 1790 to 1942. The D.C. designation states:

*The designated plan is neither the archived historical map of the city (which exists in several versions including the original), nor an idealized diagram of the urban layout depicted on those maps. It is the layout of the city in its implemented form, including the streets, parks and other public spaces of the city as they evolved historically and exist in reality.*

Features such as the never-realized open space on upper 16<sup>th</sup> Street are not part of the L'Enfant Plan historic landmark. During the mid-nineteenth century, when the subject area was first developed, this site was divided into squares and lots in accordance with the 1792 Plan. It was partially developed during the late nineteenth century with rowhouses around the Scottish Rite site. There is no historical argument or planning rationale for re-creation of such conjectural elements in isolation of existing or historic conditions. The proposed landmark amendment calls



for “protecting” an open space that never existed except on the paper of the 1791 Plan, and for recreating it at a different location that is not on the 16<sup>th</sup> Street axis.

*Expanding the boundaries to include the open space behind the temple building will not contribute to a restoration of L’Enfant’s vision. The anticipated nearby square was never officially set aside for public space and never developed as such. The present open space is not in the same location. A “restoration” of that version of the plan is entirely conjectural and would require the demolition of numerous historic buildings.*

2) John Russell Pope is nationally known for his many residential, civic, religious, and institutional building designs, including Washington’s National Gallery of Art, the Jefferson Memorial, and the National City Christian Church. Pope’s work has been the focus of several books and articles, and many buildings designed by him are listed in the National Register.

The amended application notes that Pope wanted “unhampered” views and open sightlines for his designed buildings. This assessment appears to be based upon a single source—Pope’s comments on a design proposal for a Lincoln Memorial on either Meridian Hill or the Old Soldiers’ Home. The nomination offers no support for the idea’s application to the Scottish Rite Temple, and no background on Pope and his work is provided. Lacking direct evidence, it is impossible to conjecture about what Pope wished for the Scottish Rite site. What is known is that he designed the building on a site hemmed in by rowhouses and streets. Whatever his preferences, he presumably designed the building within those constraints and not with the expectation that those buildings would be removed in the future to enhance views.

*The argument to expand the boundaries to allow for an “unhampered expression” of the building according to Pope is purely conjectural. The present open space was densely developed in the late nineteenth century, was occupied by rowhouses and alley buildings when the temple building was constructed between 1910-1915, and remained at least partially occupied by rowhouses through the 1980s.*

3) The application notes that the boundaries should be expanded to include the site of the rowhouses along both S and 15<sup>th</sup> Street which were demolished by the Supreme Council. The argument is that the demolition of these historic rowhouses galvanized the community and encouraged the rise of historic preservation in the neighborhood and led to the community effort that culminated in the designation of the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District. The nomination includes two articles about preservation protests following demolition in the 1980s, but this does not necessarily support a connection with the designation of the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District in 1994. Half of the rowhouses along S Street were demolished by the Supreme Council by the mid-1950s, well before the rise of historic preservation in the neighborhood.

Also, the historic and visual qualities of the parking lot and green space on the east end of Lot 108 are not such that the area can be classified as a significant historic or cultural landscape. The lawn originated as a small patch at mid-century, expanding in the 1970s as more rowhouses were demolished, and completed in the early 1990s, after the last houses were razed. It is a flat, grassy area, with established hedges in the older, western section, a couple of ornamental trees, some shrubs, flower beds and foundation planting. Its notable, yet relatively recent feature is a bust of

George Washington. The southeastern section of the lot hosted a community garden from 1990 to 2011, before being graveled. A parking lot serving the temple had a similar history, begun immediately behind the apse in the 1950s and expanded some over the years, including replacing the community garden. Their recent vintage, changing extent, and lack of exemplary design or significant elements make the lawn and parking lot—although latterly associated with the temple—insufficiently important to reflect the values for which the 1915 temple is deemed significant. Instead, they are appropriately included within the existing historic districts.

*The purchase and demolition of the rowhouses by the Supreme Council in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century is not relevant to the significance of the Scottish Rite Temple itself. The National Register notes that boundaries should “encompass an appropriate setting” but should exclude “peripheral areas that do not directly contribute to the property’s significance.” (National Register Bulletin, Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties, page 2). The site of some demolished rowhouses was included within in the Sixteenth Street Historic District when it was created in 1977, following the boundary of what was then the Temple’s lot. When the Fourteenth Street Historic District was designated in 1994, its boundary was drawn to align with that of the Sixteenth Street Historic District, encompassing the remaining site of the rowhouses and leaving no gap between the districts.*

### **Designation Criteria**

This nomination was prepared as an amendment to a landmark that has no written nomination associated with it. Although the amended application does not address the designation criteria, it makes sense to look at them as they relate to the existing landmark, and in assessing the proposed amendment. Based on the site’s known history and documentation, including the information in the CFA 16<sup>th</sup> Street publication and other sources, it is reasonable to determine that the Scottish Rite Temple meets D.C. Designation Criteria B (History), D (Architecture and Urbanism), E (Artistry), and (F) Creative Masters and the equivalent National Register Criteria A and C, and that its period of significance should be established as 1915, the date construction was complete.

The Scottish Rite Temple meets Criterion B for its association with social movements, groups, institutions, patterns of growth and change in the District. The temple is associated with the establishment of the Scottish Rite and the formation of the headquarters of the Supreme Council in the District of Columbia. The land that makes up the expanded boundaries has not been shown to have played a significant role in the history or events tied to the temple. Acquisition of the land by the Supreme Council falls outside of the temple’s period of significance.

The Scottish Rite Temple meets Criteria D, E and F, as it embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a building type and style; is an expression of architecture and urban planning; possesses high artistic value; and is the work of a master architect. The landscape within the proposed extended boundary does not add to the significance or understanding of the Scottish Rite Temple under these criteria. The open space is not notable as a designed or cultural landscape.

The property has not been evaluated under Criterion G (Archaeology), and it is possible that its site (existing or expanded) may yield information significant to an understanding of historic or

prehistoric events of the District. The proposed expanded area—the site of demolished nineteenth-century rowhouses—may provide information on the lives of the African American, working-class residents who lived there. Should the site provide such information, its significance would be related to the Fourteenth Street or Sixteenth Street historic districts in which the properties are already located, and not associated with the Scottish Rite Temple and the significance for which it has been designated a historic landmark.

### **Boundary Confirmation**

Having established that the rowhouse sites do not contribute to the significance of the Scottish Rite Temple, the Board should take the opportunity provided by this application to clarify and confirm the boundary of the historic landmark. The Board should apply the standard historic preservation methodology for such determinations, considering the extent of the temple property at the time of its construction in 1915 and the time of its identification as a historic landmark in 1964.

The Scottish Rite Temple was included in *Landmarks of the National Capital: Preliminary List*, the city's first provisional list of landmarks, issued by the Joint Committee on Landmarks in 1964. This list was the predecessor of the current D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites created when the city enacted the D.C. Preservation Law in 1978; the Inventory incorporated the already designated landmarks and districts. The Joint Committee's list was organized into categories of significance, with the temple listed in Category III. The Sixteenth Street Historic District was also identified on the Joint Committee's 1964 list as a notable area of Category III significance.

The Joint Committee did not designate properties as we do now; it merely put them on a list by name and address. Site boundaries were of little importance because designation then conferred no protections. In 1968, two years after the establishment of the National Preservation Act, a D.C. State Historic Preservation Review Board was established, and through it, the Joint Committee, acting as state review board, began forwarding nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. Stated landmark lots or boundaries became necessary for this purpose. But the Joint Committee prioritized nominations for the properties in categories I and II only, so a nomination for the temple was never prepared. When the designation listing was incorporated into the DC Inventory, it remained with no boundary specified.

Logically, boundaries should reflect the extent of the property at the time of the Temple's completion in 1915, which was Assessment and Taxation Lot 800. Lots 40-42 (purchased 1920), 105 (1921), 106 (1952), 28 (1954) and 29 (1963) were acquired by the Scottish Rite in later years, as noted. As the 1965 Baist real estate atlas indicates, these eastern lots had not been formally consolidated with the temple by subdivision, or even informally, by the creation of an A&T lot.

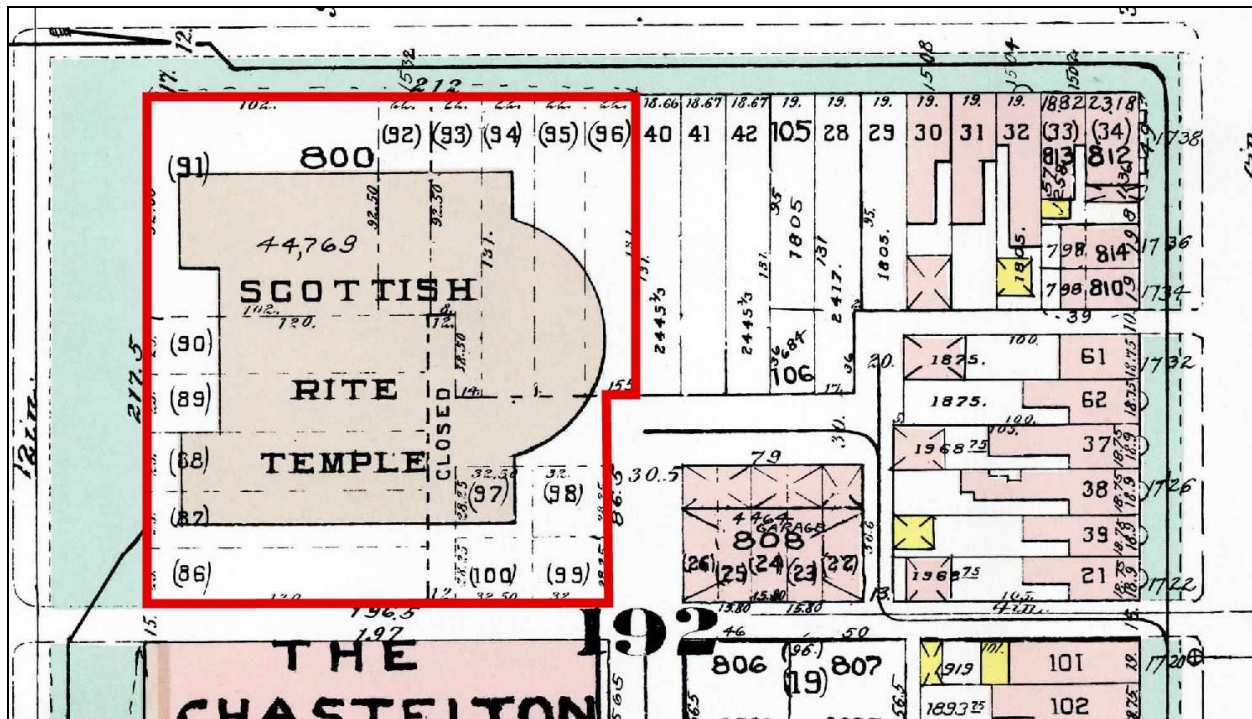
Sixteenth Street was designated in 1977 as a Category II historic district. The district was listed in the National Register in 1978, with clearly delineated boundaries for what had previously been a sketchily defined area. The Sixteenth Street boundary behind the temple was established along the line of an Assessment and Taxation (A&T) Lot 820 which, in 1976, was newly superimposed on the several lots the Masons had acquired by then, including the alley/stable garage complex on Lot 808, purchased in 1969.

Then or now, the rear yard and parking lot are not character-defining features of the landmark, nor are they reasons for which it was designated. The property's significance is in the design and construction of Pope's temple, completed in 1915 and situated then on Lot 800. Neither the ancillary uses nor the design qualities of the rear of the property define or augment the significance of the landmark. When the temple was first identified as a landmark in 1964, it was still situated on Lot 800. With the year 1915 considered the property's appropriate period of significance, it is consistent that Lot 800 be considered the extent of the site of the landmark.

**Recommendation**

*HPO recommends that the Board deny this amendment to the Scottish Rite Temple designation as proposed. While a new submission for a well-researched, fully documented National Register nomination for the Temple is welcome, existing information provides a sufficient understanding of the landmark to allow the Board to determine that the boundaries should not be expanded as proposed.*

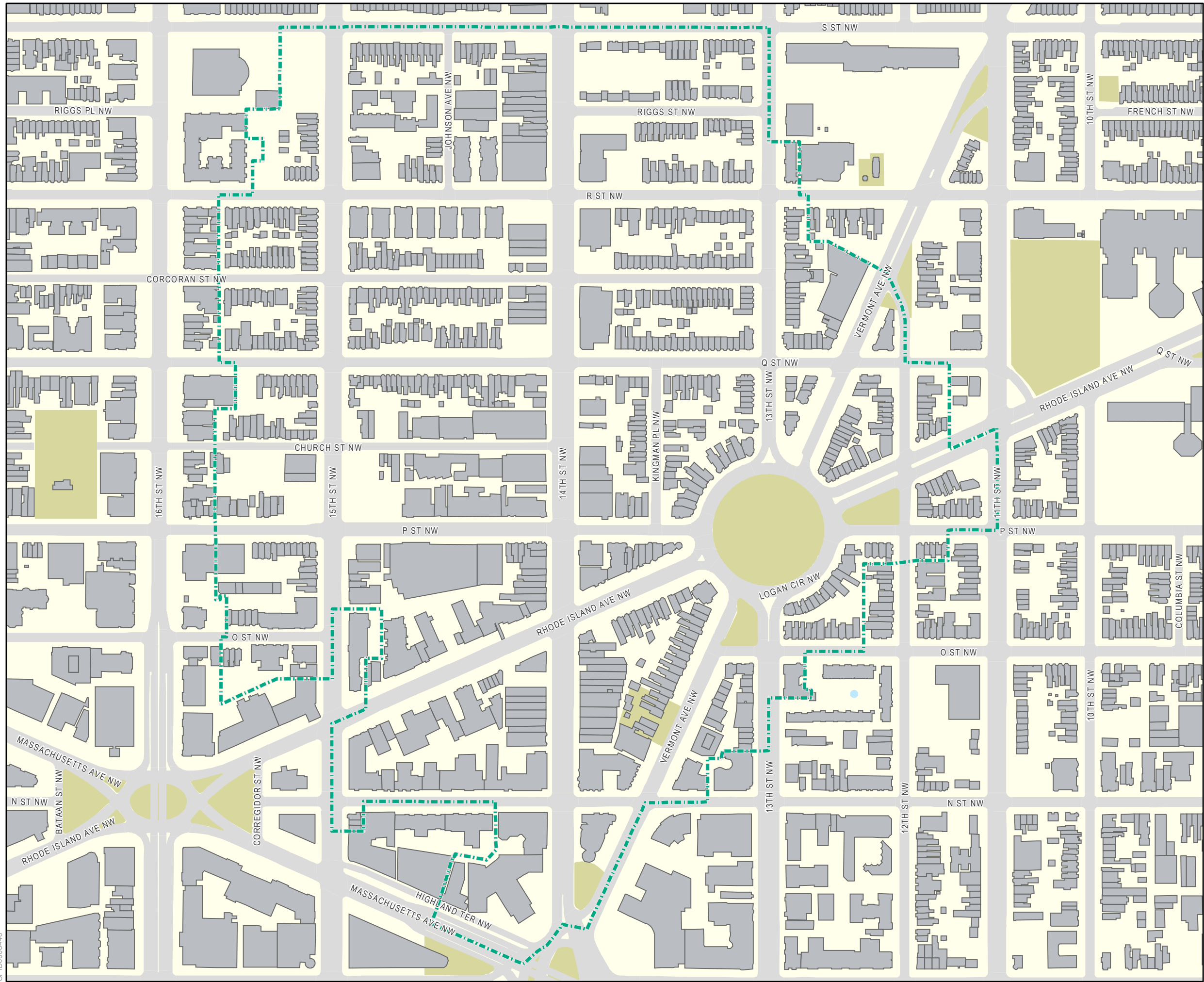
*Based upon additional research, HPO requests that the Board resolve the ambiguity of the landmark's present boundary by confirming it as the extent of former Assessment & Taxation Lot 800 upon which the temple stood when completed in 1915. This lot is outlined in red on the 1965 map below.*





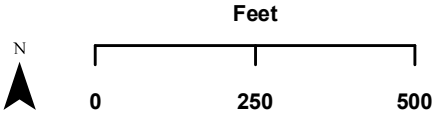
*Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Washington, District of Columbia, Vol. 1, Plan 19, (1965), with lot 800 delineated in red.*

# Exhibit 3

# Greater 14th Street Historic District



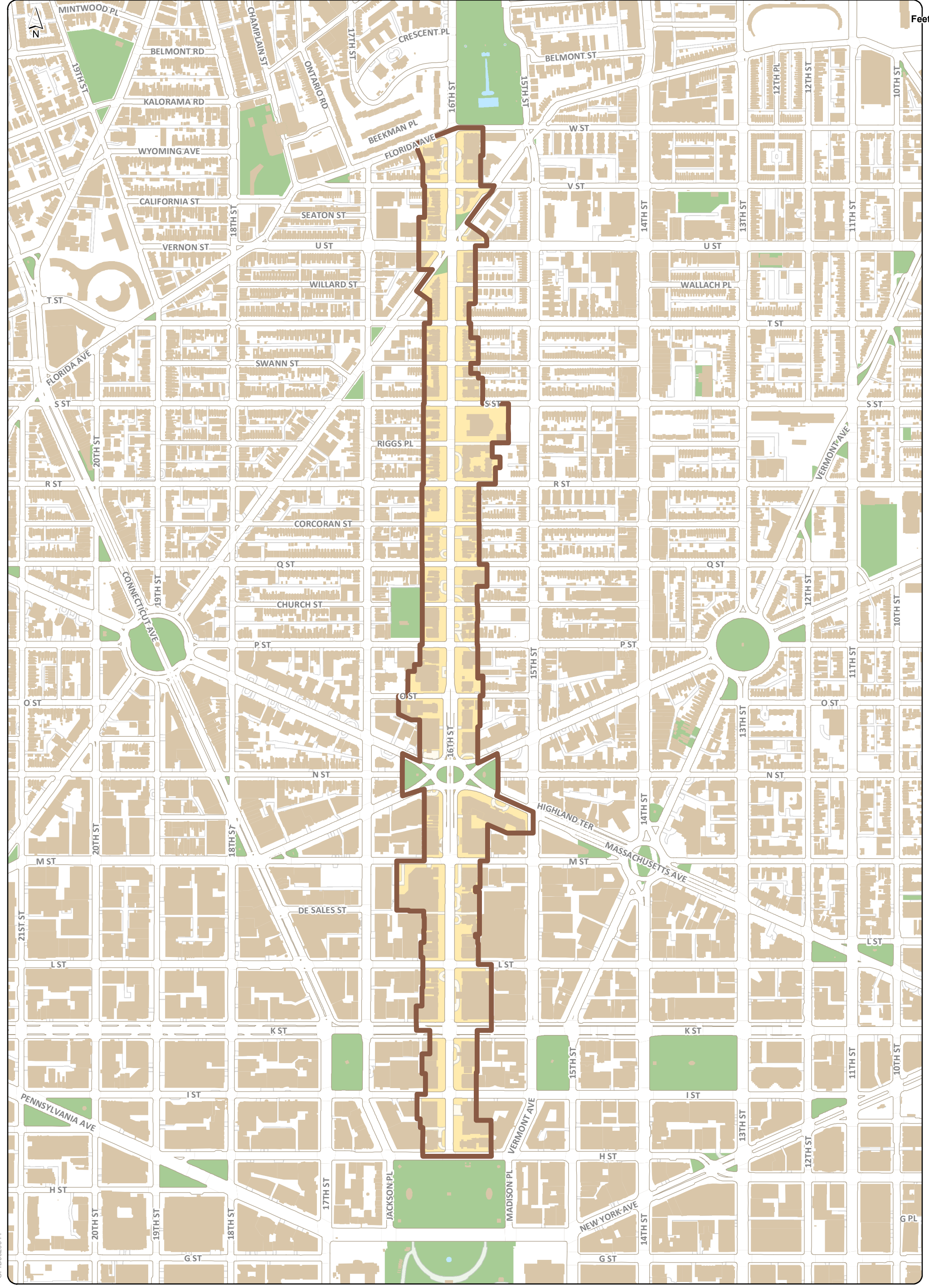
-  Historic District
-  Buildings



\*\*\* Government of the District of Columbia  
**Adrian M. Fenty, Mayor**

Office of Planning ~ February 13, 2008

This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate.



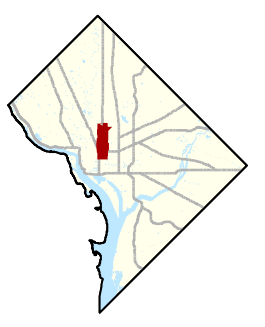
OPI0029044

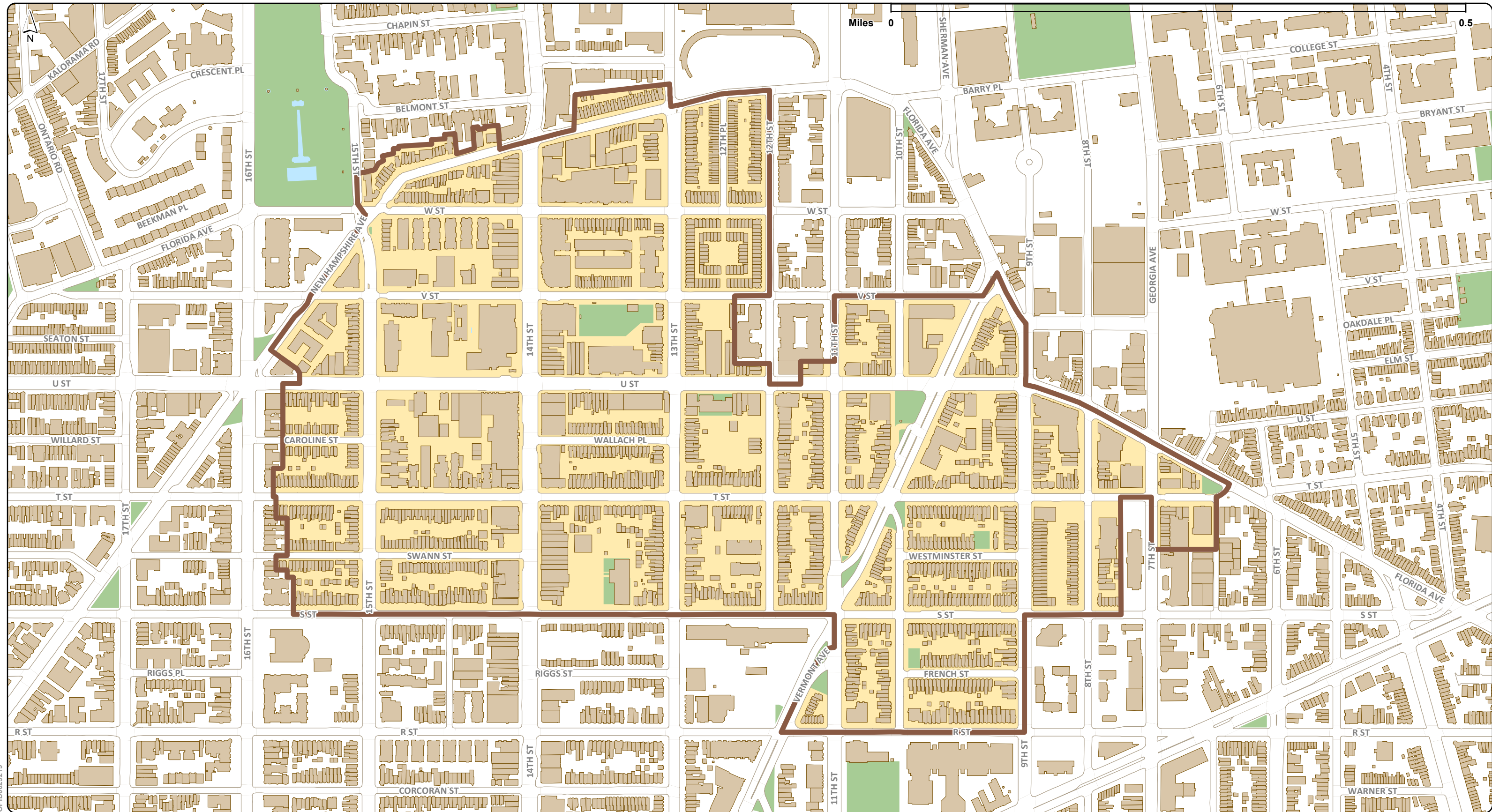


**Office of Planning ~ June 8, 2018**  
**Government of the District of Columbia**

This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate.

## Sixteenth Street Historic District





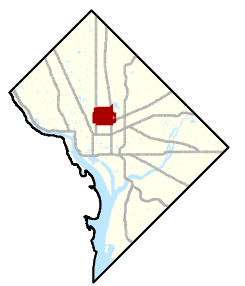
OPI0029219



**Office of Planning ~ June 8, 2018**  
**Government of the District of Columbia**

This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate.

## Greater U Street Historic District





# Exhibit 4

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

DEC 11 1987

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name White-Meyer House  
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1624 Crescent Place, N.W.  not for publication N/A  
city, town Washington  vicinity N/A  
state District of Columbia code D.C. county N/A code 001 zip code 20009

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Carol P. Thompson 3 December 1987  
Signature of certifying official State Historic Preservation Officer Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Patrick W. Adams 1/20/88  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

---

**6. Function or Use**

---

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

---

---

---

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Organizational

---

---

---

---

**7. Description**

---

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals

---

---

---

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concretewalls Brick

---

roof Steelother Limestone

---

---

---

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The White-Meyer residence at 1624 Crescent Place is situated on approximately one and one-half acres atop Meridian Hill. It is a large-scaled forty room brick mansion that is surrounded by landscaped grounds. The building is three stories in height, seven bays wide and its third floor is recessed behind a brick and limestone parapet. A rectangular porte cochere on the principal facade (north) adds to the boldly defined and symmetrical appearance.

The house occupies lots 806 and 808 within square 2568 and is bordered by Crescent Place on the north, Sixteenth Street on the east, Belmont Street on the south, and Meridian House on the west. The lot shape is an irregular rectangle (437'10" on the south, 170'2" on the east, 484'2" on the north and 180' on the west) that has been ordered and formalized by a continuous brick retaining wall, which provides a heightened level landscaped setting. The east garden which borders 16th Street is separated from the house with brick stairs, retaining walls and a wrought iron gazebo with copper roof. A variety of plantings including hemlock, English ivy, magnolia, locust, maple and oak can be found throughout the garden.

At the entrance to the property on Crescent Place, the enclosure walls are accented by limestone Tuscan Doric pylons which support wrought iron gates approximately 11' high. A lion mask fountain above a sarcophagus basin, both of limestone and set in a retaining wall and balustrade, greet each visitor to 1624 Crescent Place. The upper portion of the house can be seen from the entranceway and provides a magnificent sight of the imposing scale of the property. The five limestone capped brick chimneys accentuate the horizontal structure.

The approach to the house features a concrete elliptical driveway with limestone curbing. This leads to a central pavilion and porte cochere flanked by eight paired and pedestalled columns supporting full entablature and balustrade. Five limestone risers lead from the porte cochere to the vestibule. The parapet balusters, cornice, porte cochere, loggia and decorative trim are all limestone.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1910-1929  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1910  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

White, Henry  
Meyer, Eugene and Agnes E.

Architect/Builder

Pope, John Russell  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The White-Meyer house is an important element along Washington's famous Sixteenth Street, and is significant for its association with its occupants and the excellent revivalist architecture of the noted American architect John Russell Pope. The house attained landmark status in 1964 when it was listed on the District of Columbia's Inventory of Historic Places.

The wide boulevard stretching for seven miles from the White House to the border of Maryland, is known as Sixteenth Street. This street is the geographic meridian of the City of Washington as it was originally laid out by Pierre L'Enfant. Sixteenth Street was briefly called The Avenue of the Presidents by an Act of Congress in 1913, at the urging of Mary Foote Henderson, the great Sixteenth Street/Meridian Hill advocate; but when she was out of town in July, 1914, Congress returned the street to its original name.

The section of 16th Street which covers Meridian Hill lies between Florida Avenue and Columbia Road. The site of an important farm in the early 1800's, the area remained rural farmland until the late 1880's and wasn't even paved until 1900. During the Civil War, Meridian Hill housed the Massachusetts Brigade and the New York 77th Regiment. One of the more colorful individuals who lived on Meridian Hill was Joaquin Miller, known as the Poet of the Sierras. He was a "free spirit" of the old West having been a horse thief, journalist, lawyer, judge, world traveler and poet. The cabin he built near the present juncture of Crescent Place and Belmont Street in 1883 was moved to Rock Creek Park in 1912.

The first important residence on Meridian Hill was built by Senator John B. Henderson in 1888 at 16th Street and Florida Avenue. Known as Boundary Castle (the earlier name of Florida Avenue was Boundary Avenue), it became home to the Senator and his

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Commission of Fine Arts, Sixteenth Street Architecture, Vol. I. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1978.

Conroy, Sarah Booth, "Sweet Sixteenth", The Washington Post, Washington, D.C., August 28, 1987, Weekend Section, pp.52-54.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Specify repository:

D.C. Historic Preservation Office

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property One and one-half acres

UTM References

A 

1	8	3	2	3	2	9	0	4	3	0	9	6	0	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Begin at the southwest corner of 16th Street and Crescent Place, N.W., proceed west on Crescent Place to Meridian House, south along the boundary with Meridian House to Belmont Street, east along Belmont Street to 16th Street, and north along 16th Street to the point of origin at the southwest corner of 16th Street and Crescent Place, N.W. The nominated property is marked with a heavy black line on the sketch map of the site.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The White-Meyer House and its grounds occupy all of lots 806 and 808 within square 2568 in Northwest Washington.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Marilyn Zuckerman, Development Officer

organization Meridian House International

date October 23, 1987

street & number 1630 Crescent Place, N.W.

telephone (202) 667-6800

city or town Washington

state D.C.

zip code 20009

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

WHITE-MEYER HOUSE  
Washington, D.C.

Section number 7 Page 2

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Wrought iron balcony railings with brass knobs and center estucheon enhance the six 12 over 12 double hung windows on the first floor. The window architraves have overtablet flanked by scrolls to support cornices.

The south facade, set approximately 20 feet above Belmont Street, consists of a loggia with paired columns leading to a terrace which overlooks the city. Its quarry tile floor, portrait plaques and stone niches for pedestals are among the ornamental details which characterize this elegant mansion. Above the loggia, a balcony with an exceptional view of downtown Washington is reached from a tripartite entrance from the master bath.

The original interiors were mostly Georgian in style. Several fine mantels, likely English originals, were installed. The first floor includes floor-length windows or French doors, oak parquet floors and high mahogany doors (11'4") which separate the chambers from the hall.

The half circle shaped vestibule is entered from the port cochere through black enameled Adamesque cast iron grill work doors backed by glass panels. The vestibule, which is more like an enclosed porch than an interior space, leads through a paneled wood double door into the entrance hall. This hall is one of the two largest spaces in the house. Its high mahogany doors lead to the dining room, library and sitting room. A cased opening and false doorway on the west wall provide the symmetry for which John Russell Pope was known. The floor is composed of cast stone squares laid diagonally and connected by black slate squares. An inner border of black slate within a cast stone outer border and black slate baseboard, creates a most attractive effect.

The sitting room, which opens into the drawing room, was considerably remodeled in 1934. Originally, it reflected the era of George I and II. It was used to handle secondary circulation between the hall, drawing room and library.

The largest room in the house is the drawing room. It has floor length windows on three sides, and its exposure is generally eastern. It is an ideal place for gatherings with its light and airy quality and large size.

The library, with its walnut panels and bookcases inspires

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

WHITE-MEYER HOUSE  
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thoughts of study and reflection. It is one of two rooms opening onto the loggia and terrace with its view of Meridian Hill Park and Belmont Street.

The dining room and stair hall complete the public rooms of first floor. The dining room also opens to the terrace, and in fact makes use of this southwest exposure by seeming to incorporate the outdoor space into the room. The stair hall consists of a dramatic semi-octagonal stairway modelled on early 19th century English prototypes.

A small office and pantry are also located on the first floor. The office is paneled similarly to the library and is an intimate room suitable for private discussion.

The second floor consists of bedrooms used by the White family, a small sitting room, a guest room, a servant's room, a linen room, two baths, and a dressing room which opens onto one of the house's more unusual features, a second floor loggia and terrace. This terrace provides a magnificent view of the city including the Capitol, Washington Monument, Meridian Hill Park and downtown skyline. Large windows with multiple exposures in many of the rooms give a light open feel to the space. Fireplaces with marble chimneypieces and detailed plaster work on walls and ceilings carry the elegance of the downstairs public rooms to the family quarters. Servant quarters were located on the third floor.

The White-Meyer House is similar in scale, craftsmanship, and style to that of the neighboring buildings along the Sixteenth Street corridor that form a distinct international community comprised of embassies, chanceries and diplomatic organizations. Despite changes in ownership and usage over the years, the house retains much of its original detail and ornament and has its architectural integrity intact.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

White Meyer House

Washington, D.C.

Section number 7 Page 4

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Integrity Clarification

On December 18, 1987, a fire consumed all of the woodwork in the first floor library of the White-Meyer house. The loss consisted of destroyed bookcases, broken windows and smoke damage.

The restoration of the library was near completion when the fire occurred. Substantial documentation, in the form of photographs and drawings, as well as actual sections of the cabinetwork survive. The library will be completely replicated employing materials and craftsmanship that will result in an identical reproduction of the original.

The White-Meyer House was nominated to the National Register by the D.C. State Historic Preservation officer on December 3, 1987. When the library is completely replicated, the architectural and historical integrity of the White-Meyer House will be substantially intact. Presently, the property meets the National Register criteria for which it was nominated by the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

WHITE-MEYER HOUSE  
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wife, Mary Foote Henderson, who crusaded for the development of the area. Mrs. Henderson wanted the area to become the most fashionable in town and toward this end she purchased blocks of real estate, built residences to sell as embassies, and promoted the construction of Meridian Hill Park.

Other projects Mrs. Henderson envisioned for Meridian Hill which did not materialize were the creation of a new, grand scale Presidential Mansion; location of the Lincoln Memorial as designed by John Russell Pope; and location of the Jefferson Memorial. Although she did not succeed in all her endeavors, Mrs. Henderson created great interest in the neighborhood. Many churches and embassies did locate here and magnificent residences for some of Washington's most prominent citizens, such as the Laughlin and White residences, were constructed. Meridian Hill Park is a beautiful Italianate garden known for its poured concrete sculpture.

The land at 1624 Crescent Place was purchased by Henry White in 1910 from Richard and Ellen Dubois who had owned and lived on the property from approximately 1875 until it was sold in 1910. Mr. White was concluding a 30 year diplomatic career and was retiring as U.S. Ambassador to France. He secured the services of architect John Russell Pope to design a residence for himself and his wife, Margaret Rutherford White.

Mr. and Mrs. White moved into the house in 1912. Although Henry White had retired from the diplomatic service, he was still involved in affairs of state. His career included service in Vienna, London, Italy and France. After retirement, he represented the United States at the signing of treaties, settlement of international disputes and at important international conferences. He was influential in activities during World War I and in fact in 1917 lent his house to the mission from France, headed by Marshall Joffre and M. Viviani. Here, military and naval cooperation between the U.S., France and Britain was established; the plans made at 1624 Crescent Place were later implemented on the battlefields of Europe. These events bespeak the historic importance of the building.

After Mrs. White's death, Henry White leased the house in 1918 to Senator Peter Goelet Gerry of Rhode Island. Senator Gerry was the great grandson of Elbridge Gerry, a signer of the Declaration of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

WHITE-MEYER HOUSE  
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Independence, governor of Massachusetts and Vice President under Madison.

In 1920 Henry White married Emily Vanderbilt Sloane and returned to 1624 Crescent Place. The house once again became the scene of diplomatic and political entertaining. President Warren Harding often dined there; Clemenceau was a house guest in 1922; and Lord Robert Cecil stayed in 1923 and 1925. Henry White died in 1927, leaving the house to his son, John Campbell White, also a diplomat.

John White purchased additional lots extending the property to 16th Street between Belmont Street and Crescent Place. He leased the house in 1929 to Eugene Meyer, who was then head of the Federal Farm Labor Board. In 1934, Mr. Meyer purchased the house and had it remodeled by Charles A. Platt, architect of the Freer Gallery. At this time Mr. Meyer, who had been a financier with interests in railroads, copper, oil and automobiles, was publisher and editor of The Washington Post.

Eugene Meyer died in 1959, but both before his death and after, the Crescent Place house was a gathering site for the political elite of Washington. His wife Agnes, a newspaper correspondent, art collector and social reformer continued the Meyer involvement with Washington society. Among guests who frequented the house were Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and Senators Robert and Edward Kennedy. Eleanor Roosevelt spent many nights there and Adlai Stevenson and Mayor Walter Washington were also guests of the Meyers.

Upon Agnes Meyers' death in 1970 the house became the property of the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation. It was leased to the Antioch School of Law in 1972 and was purchased in 1987 by Meridian House International (MHI), a non-profit educational and cultural institution promoting international and cross-cultural understanding. Since 1960, MHI has occupied 1630 Crescent Place, the former Laughlin residence which is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places. MHI plans a major renovation and restoration project for 1624 Crescent Place which will be joined with its current property to form an intercultural campus offering cross-cultural training, exhibitions, lectures, community activities and office space for the many programs of MHI.

The White-Meyer House remains an excellent example of early 20th

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Century revivalist architecture. The high surrounding walls allow the house to capitalize on its dramatic site, and add to its overscaled nature. The large brick residence, with its formal and symmetrical facades is stylistically within the realm of Georgian revival while it displays a range of elements that refer to the Italian Renaissance, such as the Tuscan Doric detail of the loggia. The White-Meyer House, together with Meridian House to its west, forms an entire city block of Meridian Hill with a unique Pope-designed entity.

The architect for 1624 Crescent Place was John Russell Pope (1874--1937). Mr. Pope obtained his architecture degree from Columbia University and was responsible for the design of many prominent buildings in Washington, D.C. and elsewhere. In addition to the White-Meyer house, Mr. Pope designed the Laughlin House, now Meridian House International right next door on Crescent Place. He was instrumental to Washington's reputation as a city of monuments, designing the Jefferson Memorial, the National Gallery of Art, the National Archives and the Scottish Rite Temple, among other buildings. The Temple was a major component of the development of Sixteenth Street.

Mr. Pope achieved prominence throughout the United States having designed residences, buildings and monuments in Virginia, New York, New Jersey, Kentucky, Maryland and elsewhere. He was awarded the Medal of Honor from the Architectural League of New York in 1917 and the Gold Medal Award from the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1919. The significance of John Russell Pope's contribution to the development of Washington is well documented. Meridian House International, which is adjacent to the White-Meyer House and also designed by Pope, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Extensive remodeling was done in 1934 by the Meyer family. Under the supervision of William Platt, son of the architect Charles A. Platt who had designed the Freer Gallery, the architectural ornament was simplified in many of the house's public and private rooms. The most drastic change was the removal of columns and entablature from the reception hall.

When occupied by the Antioch School of Law in 1972 fire code requirements caused additional remodeling to be done, such as the construction of a fire escape on the exterior east wall of the

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Continuation Sheet**

WHITE-MEYER HOUSE  
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building. Lighting fixtures were replaced and other interior changes were made.

Despite a period of neglect in recent years, the house still retains much of its original detail and character. No major structural changes have been made and the magnificent detail of the building remains. The renovation planned by Meridian House International has been designed by the noted restoration architect Belinda Reeder, and will restore the house to as much of its original design as possible. The ceilings, floor and walls throughout the first floor will be thoroughly repaired, cleaned and refinished and all doors, windows and beautiful period hardware will be restored to full operation.

Although the Meridian Hill area went through a period of neglect in the mid-20th century, it has been revitalized with the help of historic preservation initiatives, development of new and renovated housing for District residents, and the creation of the exciting multi-ethnic neighborhood of Adams Morgan with its variety of restaurants, cafes and shops. Already listed on the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites, recognition of the White-Meyer House as a national historic site will add to the significance of the area and allow a sense of its historic development to coexist with its new ambience.

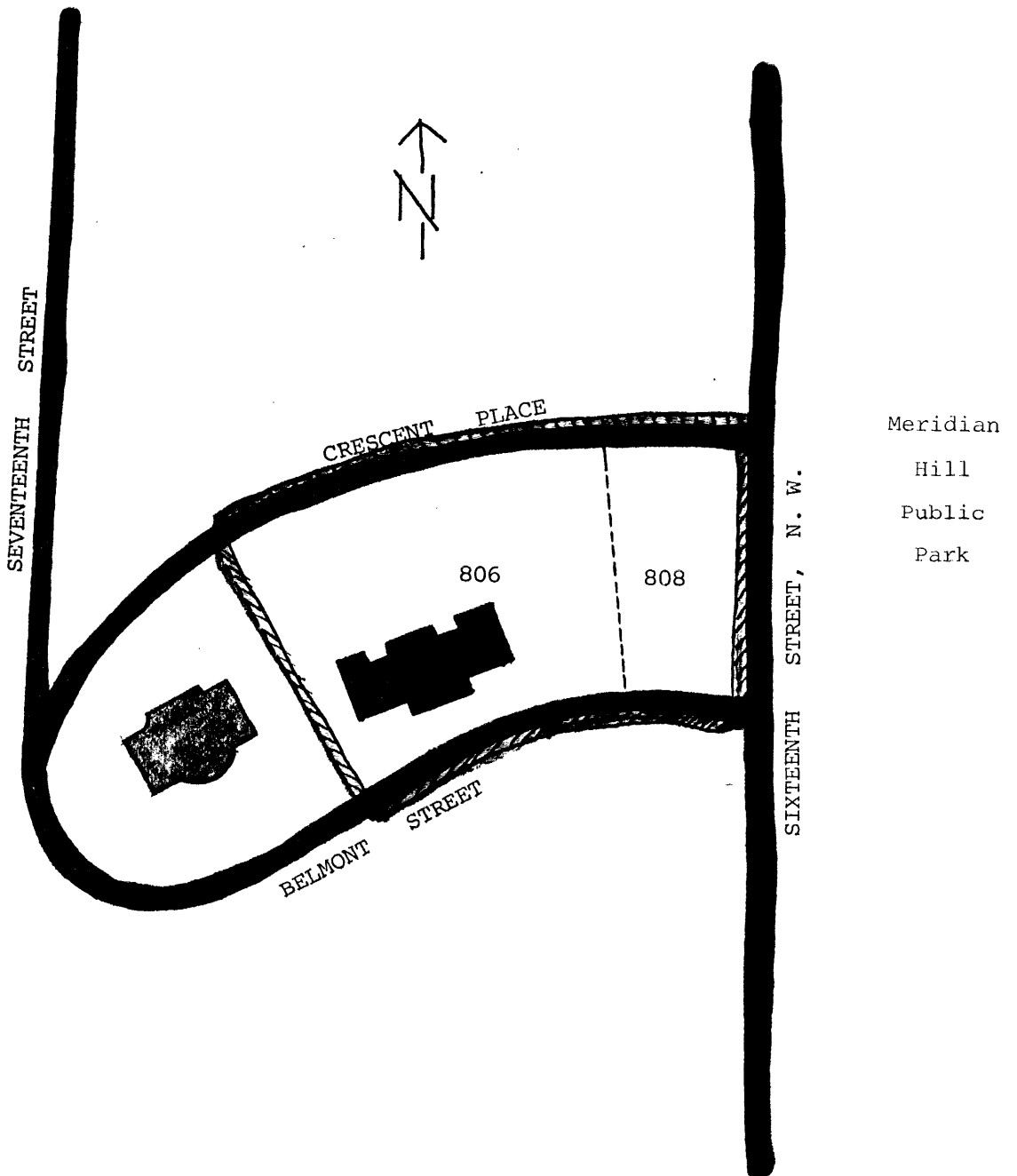
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

WHITE-MEYER HOUSE

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

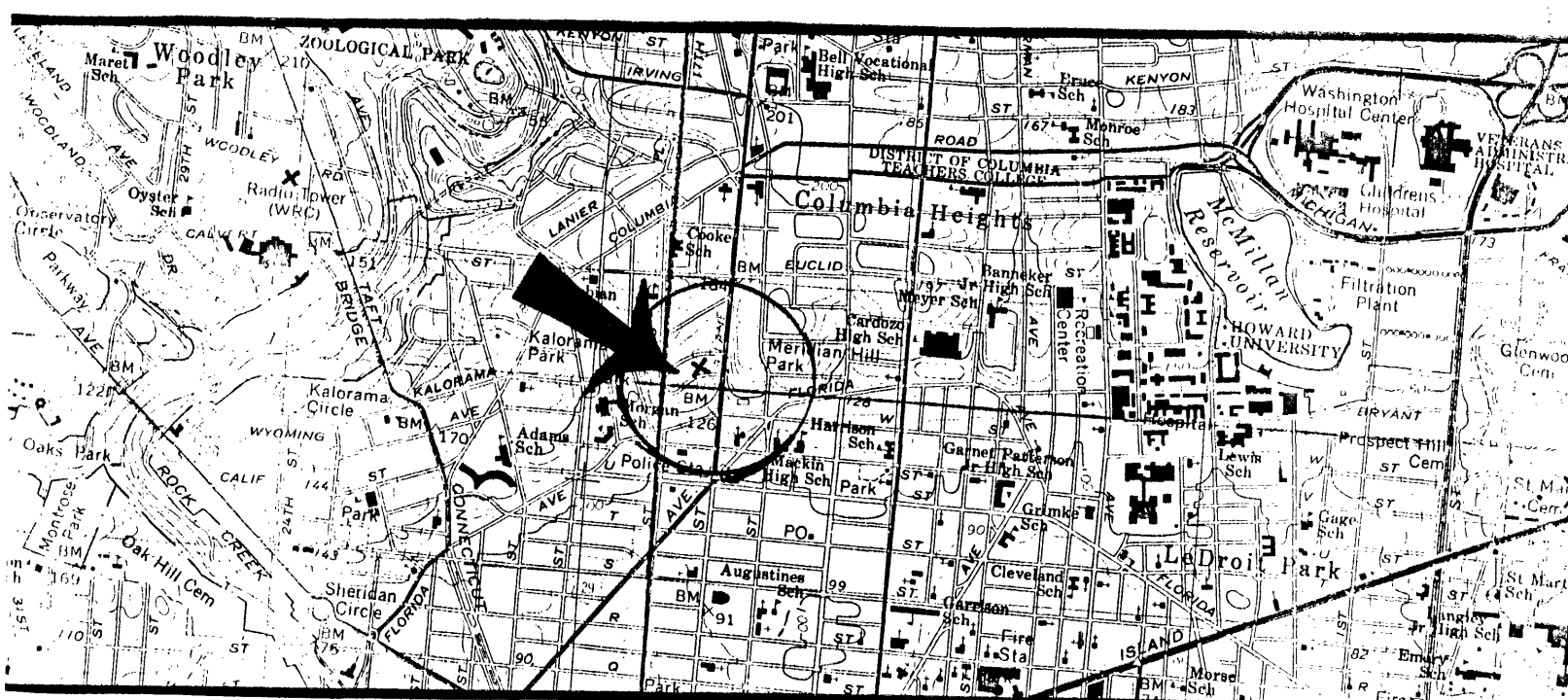
WHITE-MEYER HOUSE

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DETAIL OF USGS MAP

refer to Section 10  
for UTM coordinates



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White-Meyer House

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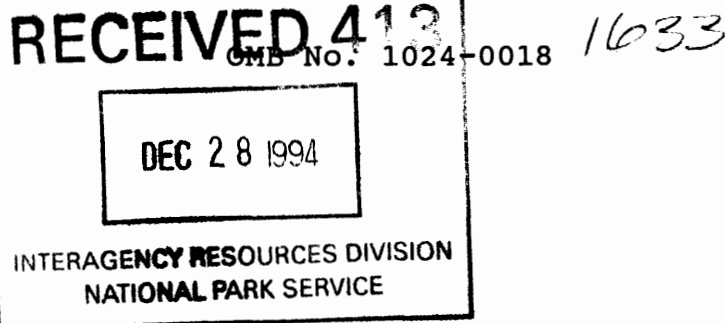
Photodocumentation of the White-Meyer House

1. Entrance to White-Meyer House from Crescent Place, 1986.  
Photographer: John Guntner.
2. Elevated view of White-Meyer House and Meridian House  
International looking south, 1986. Photographer: John Guntner.
3. South facade of White-Meyer House with loggia and balcony,  
1987. Photographer: Nathan Turoff.
4. Library, early view (prior to 1929). Photographer: unknown.
5. Entrance Hall, 1987. Photographer: Nathan Turoff.

Negatives are available through Meridian House International,  
Washington, D.C.

# Exhibit 5





United States Department of the Interior  
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Babcock-Macomb House

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. not for publication N/A  
city or town Washington vicinity N/A  
state District of Columbia code DC county N/A code N/A  
zip code 20008

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally X statewide \_\_\_\_\_ locally. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Robert L. Mallett 12/12/94  
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau



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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: GOVERNMENT Sub: Diplomatic Building  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

20th CENTURY REVIVALS  
Italian Renaissance Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation LIMESTONE  
roof TERRA COTTA  
walls BRICK  
  
other LIMESTONE: trim, panels  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1912-1917

Significant Dates 1912  
1917

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Arthur B. Heaton

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	320740	4310260	3	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Stephen Callcott, Architectural Historian  
organization D.C. SHPO date November 21, 1994  
street & number 614 H Street, N.W., Suite 305 telephone 202-727-7360  
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20001

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Republic of Cape Verde  
street & number 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20008

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Babcock-Macomb House  
Name of property  
Washington, D.C.  
County and State

=====

The Babcock-Macomb house is a two-story tan brick rectangular block capped with a hipped red tile roof with wide overhanging eaves. The building is oriented to the southwest facing Massachusetts Avenue. A slightly recessed enclosed one-story porch is connected to the east side of the house, and a two-story rectilinear ell runs perpendicular to the main block in the rear. A one-story arched loggia runs along the east side of the rear ell, culminating in a one-and-one-half story arched porte-cochere. The front facade is symmetrical, with a strong horizontal emphasis. The building is an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style.

The house is clad in variegated shades of tan brick laid in a Flemish diagonal bond. Additional courses of brick are laid with all vertical or all horizontal stretchers creating a banding effect to accentuate three slightly projecting pavilions on the front facade. The central portico is trimmed with limestone columns, pilasters, entablature and cornice on the first floor. The window sills and lintels are also limestone. The roof is clad in red rounded terra cotta tile.

The central two-story pavilion on the front facade protrudes slightly and is flanked by a narrower pavilion on each side, defined by brick banding. The first floor level of the central pavilion contains a projecting tripartite limestone entrance portico, with two ionic columns marking the central door and an ionic pilaster at each end. Behind the portico is an open recessed porch, with three openings into the house corresponding to the openings in the portico. The central front door is wood, with fifteen lights (3 x 5), flanked on each side by pairs of wood twelve-light (2 x 6) french doors. The portico is capped by an entablature and cornice which projects out slightly farther in the center bay. Above the portico are three pairs of eight-light (2 x 4) wood casement windows with wrought iron balconies. The center window is slightly wider and has a curved balcony.

The side pavilions on the front facade have one window on each floor. The openings on the first floor each have a pair of twelve-light (2 x 6) wood casements. Each opening on the second floor has a pair of eight-light (2 x 4) casement windows.

The side porch was originally open with ionic columns, corner piers, and a classical balustrade. Building permit research indicates that it was enclosed in 1917, with pairs of twelve-light casement windows like those on the first floor front facade. The porch has two bays on the front and rear facades, and four bays on the side. The second bay on the rear facade has a french door. The window openings on the porch are accentuated by bands of decorative brickwork as they are on the front facade of the main house. The balustrade, as indicated on the construction drawings, no longer remains, and was replaced with a simple wrought

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<sup>1</sup> While no photographs of the open porch have been located, its design is documented in the original 1912 construction drawings.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Babcock-Macomb House  
Name of property  
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iron rail.<sup>2</sup> The northwest side facade has two pairs of casement windows on the first floor; and the rear facade has a large twelve-over-twelve round-arched window at the landing of the stair. The remainder of the windows on the side and rear facades are six-over-six wood sash.

The roof has a generous open overhang, supported by decorative wood brackets. Below the brackets is a wide cornice, which according to the architect's original drawings, is of stucco. The cornice has decorative rosettes between the brackets. Below this is a wide band of an abstracted wavy decoration resembling elongated S-shaped flutes; the band is punctuated with undecorated shields near each corner. Below the cornice is a continuous band of vertical brick.

The house has prominent chimneys on each side, which are flush with the side wall, but protrude through the overhanging roof. Each chimney has a decorative checker-patterned brick arch flanked by pairs of eight-light casement windows. Above each window is a decorative concave parapet, with brick and stone trim. Each chimney becomes narrower as it rises out of the dormer, and is terminated by a limestone cornice and three chimney pots.

On the rear of the house is a brick loggia which connects the house to the porte-cochere.<sup>3</sup> The loggia consists of five arches springing from impost blocks with small blue and white rondels with putti in the spandrels. Brickwork defines the columns, capitols, impost blocks and voussoirs of the arches. The arch of the porte-cochere springs from a brick column with a capital and impost block at the same height as those in the loggia. The loggia has a shed roof clad in red tile; the porte-cochere has a hipped roof with red tile.

The driveway, which enters behind the house on 34th Place, continues through the porte-cochere to a detached one-car garage. The garage is dominated by a red tile hipped roof and a large arched central door with six lights. The arch is flanked by two six-light casement windows (2 x 3). The northwest side facade has three six-over-one sash windows; the southeast side facade has a paneled door with a transom.

<sup>2</sup> There is no documentation that the balustrade was ever constructed, however, it is likely that it was removed in the 1917 remodeling of the porch.



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Babcock-Macomb House  
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The Babcock-Macomb house at 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. represents an early Italian Renaissance Revival design by prominent Washington architect Arthur B. Heaton. Constructed in 1912, the carefully designed and sited property conveys the classical elegance of an early twentieth-century suburban residence. As one of the earliest houses along Massachusetts Avenue in the expanding suburbs of northwest Washington, the Babcock-Macomb house established a precedent of design excellence for the avenue north of Rock Creek Park, and the Massachusetts Avenue Heights neighborhood.

The Babcocks and the Macombs

The house at 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. was commissioned by Mrs. Kate Woodman Babcock (1859-1919), the widow of Joseph Weeks Babcock (1850-1909), a wealthy lumberman and prominent Republican representative from Wisconsin's third congressional district. Prior to his congressional service, Mr. Babcock had been twice elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly, and in the early 1890s enjoyed a successful career in the state's lumber industry. When he arrived in Washington in 1893, he was assigned to the House Committee on the District of Columbia. The following year, Babcock became Chairman of the Committee and gained a significant amount of local prominence in that position because of the critical role the Committee played in the development and expansion of the Federal city.<sup>4</sup> In the process, he also made a small fortune from the inside information he was privy to relative to the development of the city. Constance McLaughlin Green states that "Joseph Babcock, Chairman of the House District Committee for some years after 1895, cleared \$400,000 in Washington real estate and utility stocks simply by using [his] advance knowledge of which sections of the city were to get funds for improvements."<sup>5</sup> Babcock would certainly have been aware of the intended plans for the subdivision that would become Massachusetts Avenue Heights before his death in April 1909.<sup>6</sup> However, it was not until 1911 that Mrs. Babcock purchased property in the new subdivision.

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<sup>4</sup> See "Joseph Weeks Babcock," American Biographical Dictionary, District of Columbia, 1908-09. Washington, DC: The Potomac Press, 1908, p. 16; Biographical Dictionary of the United State Congress, 1774-1988, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1989, p. 558.

<sup>5</sup> Constance McLaughlin Green, Washington, A History of the Capital, 1800-1950, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962, p. 180.

<sup>6</sup> Babcock would have been aware that his successors on the District Committee were considering a bill (61st Congress, H.R. 15448) specifically related to the proposed subdivision which would authorize departures from the newly established system of highways plan for the District, necessitated by the unusual topography of the Massachusetts Avenue Heights area.

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Babcock-Macomb House  
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In the fall of 1911, shortly after lots were made available, Mrs. Babcock became one of the first purchasers in the newly-platted Massachusetts Avenue Heights subdivision. From a contract negotiated by Thos. J. Fisher & Co. dated September 27, 1911, it is known that Mrs. Babcock purchased **Lots 21 and 22 (later known as Lot 34) in Square 1939** for \$14,529.<sup>7</sup> A deed for the parcel was registered on October 18th, as was a mortgage for the full amount, minus a \$1,000 deposit. The building permit was issued<sup>9</sup> on June 25, 1912 and the house was probably completed in the following year. However, it appears from City Directories that Mrs. Babcock never occupied the house, choosing to remain in apartments in town throughout the period of her ownership.<sup>10</sup> It is unclear whether the house was intended merely as a speculative investment, or whether once completed, Mrs. Babcock merely changed her mind about living on her own on what was then the outskirts of town. Mrs. Babcock sold the property to Mr. Tucker Sands, a Vice President and Cashier of the National Metropolitan Bank on September 26, 1917. Sands, who lived at 2319 Tracy Place, N.W., also never occupied the house, and rented it for the next two years.<sup>11</sup> It was during Sands' ownership that the side porch was enclosed in 1917.

The house was sold again on September 30, 1919 to U.S. Army Colonel Augustus Canfield Macomb, whose family occupied the house from 1919 until 1982. The sons of Colonel Macomb and his wife Ella Chelle McKelden, Lt. Col. John Gordon Macomb, U.S. Army, Philip Livingston Macomb, and Lt. Comm. Alexander Macomb, U.S. Navy, were members of a distinguished family with ties to Washington dating to the first quarter of the 19th century. The Macomb family could count among its forbearers

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<sup>7</sup> "Contract of Sale," Massachusetts Avenue Heights, Kate Woodman Babcock, September 27, 1911. This and other financial records relative to Massachusetts Avenue Heights are part of the Plumb Family Papers located at the Lyon County Historical Museum, Emporia, Kansas.

<sup>8</sup> See DC Land Records 3473:91 and DC Land Records 3473:95.

<sup>9</sup> D.C. Building Permit #6177, June 25, 1912. A precise completion date for the house is not available.

<sup>10</sup> City Directories for 1912 indicate Mrs. Babcock resided at #1 B Street, N.W., the address she shared with her husband. There is no listing for 1913, but beginning in 1914 and for several years thereafter, she is listed as a resident of the Kenesaw Apartments, 3060 16th Street, N.W.

<sup>11</sup> Sands rented the property to Glenn Stewart, a clerk at the Department of State in 1917; the following year, it was rented to a C.W. Hull, who was connected to the United States Army. No doubt Mrs. Babcock and Mr. Sands were both dabbling in real estate speculation, which was so common in Washington in the late 19th and early 20th century, allowing the house to appreciate in value as the neighborhood developed.

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a number of men who played significant roles in the military and political life of the nation. Included among those were Commodore John Rodgers, U.S. Navy, active in the War of 1812; General Alexander Macomb, the Commanding General of the Army from 1828-1841; and Philip Livingston, Signer of the Declaration of Independence.<sup>12</sup>

Col. Augustus Macomb resided in the house until his death in 1933; his widow continued to live there until 1938. In August 1935, their son Philip purchased Lots 23 and 24 adjacent to the family home, creating the parcel that exists today.<sup>13</sup> Beginning in 1939 and until his death in 1970, the house was occupied by Alexander Macomb and his wife Edna Wilson Macomb. As a widow, Edna Macomb occupied the house until 1982 when it passed out of the family by sale to the Republic of Cape Verde.

Massachusetts Avenue Extended and Massachusetts Avenue Heights

3415 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. was the first house constructed in the newly-platted Massachusetts Avenue Heights subdivision, and one of the first along Massachusetts Avenue extended beyond Rock Creek gorge. As such, the house played a pivotal role in establishing the character of both the avenue and the new subdivision.

The extension of Massachusetts Avenue beyond Boundary Street (Florida Avenue) was dictated by the Highway Act of 1893, and development along the avenue just outside the city limits around Sheridan Circle was steady through the first decades of the twentieth century. Between 1900 and the start of the first World War, the Sheridan Circle/Kalorama neighborhood was one of the most fashionable addresses in the city, with large townhouse mansions lining the newly-laid out streets.

While a small iron bridge crossing Rock Creek was built by a consortium of northwest developers about 200 yards upstream from the present bridge at the approximate location of Normanstone Drive in 1888, it had little impact on spurring development north of Rock Creek gorge. In 1897, designs for an at-grade bridge were prepared by the Corp of Engineers on the alignment of Massachusetts Avenue; the bridge was completed in 1901.<sup>14</sup> However, despite the construction of the bridge in 1901, the area north of Rock Creek was slow to develop, due no doubt to the abundance of building lots closer to the city and a lack of

<sup>12</sup> "Alexander Macomb," Whos's Who in the Nation's Capital, 1938-1939, Washington, DC: Ransdell Inc., 1938, p. 537.

<sup>13</sup> While Philip probably intended to build his own house on the lot, it remains vacant today.

<sup>14</sup> The present replacement bridge was constructed in 1940. Donald Myer, Bridges and the City of Washington, Commission of Fine Arts, 1974, pp. 65-67.

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transportation serving the area to the northwest. As Massachusetts Avenue was never served by a street car line, and the automobile remained a relatively expensive and untrustworthy transportation option in the first decade of the century, development along the extension of Massachusetts Avenue was slow to take off, and would remain largely undeveloped until the late 1910s.<sup>15</sup>

In 1909, a syndicate of investors assembled 288 acres in the area north of Rock Creek gorge.<sup>16</sup> Approximately 70% of the land was held by two parties; American Security & Trust Co. as trustees for the heirs of the late John W. Thompson and the estate of Kansas Senator Preston B. Plumb, represented by Amos H. Plumb. By 1909, American Security & Trust Co. and Amos Plumb began to promote the area. Due to the unusual topography of the area, the investors sought and were successful in receiving an exemption from Congress<sup>17</sup> that required new subdivisions from having to conform to the city's street grid. Once secured, the exemption enabled the developers to maintain and enhance a largely preexisting natural setting of mature trees, rolling hills and ambling creek beds as the basis for their subdivision. After streets were laid out, approximately 140 acres of buildable lots remained for public sale. In 1911, a promotional brochure was produced by Thos. J. Fisher & Co., which touted the new subdivision as the physical, architectural and social extension of Sheridan Circle, "the social center of the city."<sup>18</sup> The brochure went on to note that Sheridan Circle is where,

Scores of successful Americans, whose individual fortunes range from ten to one hundred millions of dollars, within the last five years have built mansions along Massachusetts Avenue and around its newest and most attractive circle.<sup>19</sup>

In a further attempt to convey their conception of Massachusetts Avenue Heights as the next location for many of the city's preeminent residences, the developers state:

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<sup>15</sup> In September 1907, Washington had only 2,200 registered automobiles. "History of the Automobile in the District of Columbia," Records of the Columbia Historical Society, vol 48/49, 1946, pp. 143-153.

<sup>16</sup> "New Residence Section To Be A City Within A Park," The Evening Star, July 29, 1911.

<sup>17</sup> 61st Congress, H.R. 15448

<sup>18</sup> "Massachusetts Avenue Heights," Promotional brochure published by Thos. J. Fisher, 1911.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

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The panoramic view given in this booklet shows Sheridan Circle in its rare residential beauty with the Heights close by, toward which homes of equal magnificence are building. Soon the block or two of intervening space will fill with contemplated mansions for which most of its already has been bought. There the kings of wealth soon must raise<sup>20</sup> their modern palaces, and proceed along the royal avenue of their desire.

As seen in the Babcock-Macomb house, and somewhat differently from lower Massachusetts Avenue, the area developed with a more decidedly suburban character. While promoting the area as the logical extension of Sheridan Circle, the developers also actively promoted the area's verdant, picturesque setting as "perhaps the only section which will be a city within a park, or a park within a city" and likened Massachusetts Avenue Heights<sup>21</sup> to Baltimore's Roland Park, a similarly prestigious suburban neighborhood.

The first lots to sell in the subdivision in 1911 were those surrounding the Babcock-Macomb house, and located on or close to the avenue. However, Baist maps indicate that many of these lots went undeveloped for a number of years. In an apparent effort to revitalize sales and construction activity, a new brochure appeared in 1917, published by John W. Thompson & Co. and titled "Massachusetts Avenue Park." The subdivision had been effectively divided into two sections, with Massachusetts Avenue Park created in the eastern area around Woodland Drive, and Massachusetts Avenue Heights centered on 34th Street. The two parts were promoted somewhat differently and took on slightly different characteristics, with the large, more extravagant villas erected on more irregularly shaped parcels within the Park, with more moderate houses constructed in the regular gridded blocks within the Heights. Building activity was strong through the end of the 1920s, and the character of each area was firmly established by the 1930s.

In spite of the divergent character of the original subdivision's two sections after 1917, the development of lots fronting Massachusetts Avenue continued largely as it was originally conceived. The precedent set by Heaton's Babcock-Macomb house and John Russell Pope's house 1912 house for Mrs. McCormick at 3000 Massachusetts Avenue established the high style that architects and residents were to repeat. Beginning around 1917 and continuing through the 1930s, most of the Massachusetts Avenue streetscape was completed. As hoped for by its developers, the avenue within the Heights<sup>22</sup> did indeed become the social and architectural extension of Sheridan Circle. Although there are some slight variations in

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> "New Residence Section To Be A City Within A Park," The Evening Star, July 29, 1911.

<sup>22</sup> Some of the noteworthy buildings erected on the avenue in this period include: the Williams-Szechenyi House by Clarke Waggaman, 1917; the George Judd House by Heaton, 1923; the H.A. Thrift House by Porter & Lockie, 1926; the British

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scale and siting, the Massachusetts Avenue streetscape in the Heights, of which the Babcock-Macomb house is an important early component, represents a significant collection of high style buildings that are reflections of the skill of their designers and the discriminating tastes of their residents.

Architect Arthur B. Heaton

Arthur Berthrong Heaton, FAIA, (1875-1951) was a noted architect in Washington, D.C. whose professional career spanned over fifty years. Heaton was a native Washingtonian, graduating from Central High School. As a student of architecture, he served briefly as an apprentice in the firm of Hornblower and Marshall, and later with Paul Pelz. Heaton opened his own office in 1900. He went abroad in 1903-04 to study at the Sorbonne, and to tour the great cathedrals and antiquities in England, France and Italy. Heaton remained in solitary practice until his retirement in 1949. His drawings have been donated to the Library of Congress, and form an unusually complete documentary into both this one man's design career, as well as the evolution of architecture in Washington in the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>23</sup>

During the first decade of his practice, Heaton established himself as a well-respected member of the burgeoning architectural community in Washington. One of his first major successes was the Highland Apartment House, designed in 1901-2, reminiscent of McKim, Mead & White's design for the Villard Houses in New York.<sup>24</sup> Its design was recognized by the national architectural journals of the time; an impressive accomplishment for a 26 year old man in his second year of practice.<sup>25</sup> From 1899 to 1906, Heaton designed houses for the newly-developing streetcar suburb of Cleveland Park. In 1908, he was appointed Supervising Architect of the Washington Cathedral, for which he served until 1920. From 1907 until 1929, Heaton and his family lived in Cleveland Park in order to be close to his work at the National Cathedral. Before and throughout this period, he designed numerous residences in the neighborhood. In 1917, Heaton designed Whitby Hall, a building for the National Cathedral School for Girls, and in 1923, he was selected to design the addition to the John Eaton School (34th & Lowell Streets, N.W.), both in the Cleveland Park neighborhood.

Embassy by Edward Lutyens, 1927; the A.B. Houghton House by Frederick L. Brooke, 1932; and the Apostolic Delegation by F.V. Murphy, 1937.

<sup>23</sup> Heaton was a prolific architect, as indicated by the Library's collection of over 500 drawings from his 50+ year career.

<sup>24</sup> James M. Goode, Best Addresses: A Century of Washington's Distinguished Apartment Houses, pp. 47-49. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Press, 1988.

<sup>25</sup> "American Architect and Building News," Vol 91, #1619, Jan. 5, 1907.

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In his residential work, Heaton was steadfast in his adherence to the reinterpretation of historical precedents. He worked in a variety of styles -- Georgian, Colonial Revival, Shingle, Tudor, Gothic, Italian Renaissance, Spanish Mission. Increasingly after the mid-1920s, he worked almost exclusively with Colonial Georgian motifs. As is found in many of his Cleveland Park commissions, Heaton had an early taste for mixing stylistic elements to create eclectic facades, such as the "Tudor Georgian" at 3101 Highland Place (1905).

Heaton's practice resulted in scores of houses, small commercial buildings and apartment buildings. His work includes several locally and federally designated historic landmarks. He had a continuing interest in colonial architecture and made frequent trips to Colonial Williamsburg for inspiration. While considered a traditionalist by his contemporaries, this did not deter him from developing innovative design solutions for new building types where there were no available precedents to follow. Heaton was an early automobile enthusiast (he owned one of the first drivers' permits in the city), and some of his designs, including the Park and Shop shopping Center (3507-3523 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., 1930) and the Capital Garage (1320 New York Avenue, N.W., 1926; demolished), reflect his interest in the automobile, and the need it generated for new building types.

Major projects of Heaton's include the old YMCA building (17th and K Streets, N.W., 1924; demolished), the Methodist Home for the Aged (1924), the National Geographic Society Building (1156 16th Street, N.W., 1930), alterations and additions to the Corby Mansion at Chevy Chase Circle (c. 1914), the Highland Apartments (1914 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., 1902), and the Altamont Apartments (1901 Wyoming Avenue, N.W., 1915). Heaton's Washington Loan and Trust Building (17th and G Streets, N.W., 1924; demolished) received an award of architectural merit from the Washington Board of Trade in 1927. For 15 years (c. 1917-1932), Heaton did major work for the Shannon & Luchs real estate firm, including over 500 houses in the Burleith neighborhood.

Later in his career, Heaton was active in campaigns to clean up slums and improve the city, serving as the leader of the "Renovise Washington" movement during the Depression. This led to his role as a founder and president of the Washington Building Congress. Heaton served as President of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1935, and was active in the Washington Board of Trade.

As the supervising architect of the Washington Cathedral during the time of the Babcock-Macomb house's design, Heaton obviously shared with the developers of Massachusetts Avenue Heights the desire for the area to develop as a grand residential boulevard as it approached the Cathedral grounds. His formal, classically-inspired design for the house continues in the tradition of the avenue, presenting a strongly horizontal symmetrical composition, but with an architectural form and character more evocative of a country villa than that presented by the more urban mansions around Sheridan Circle.

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Architectural Influences

The facade of the Babcock-Macomb house is a formal and restrained rendition of an Italian Renaissance country villa, a style that was extremely popular with the wealthy of the period, who saw it as an embodiment of their cultural sophistication. The style was popularized by Charles Adams Platt, the most successful country house architect of the era. In 1908, Platt designed the Villa Turicum in Lake Forest, Illinois, for Harold F. McCormick.<sup>26</sup> The house was featured prominently in the architectural press of the period. Architectural Record, for example, in an article on the building noted that "the villa and gardens of Italy have excited the admiration of the world for centuries."<sup>27</sup> So popular was this style that the frontispiece of every issue of American Architect during the 1910s featured a prominent building in the Italian Renaissance style. Architectural Record displayed a similar reverence, indicating very clearly that this was the ideal toward which serious architects should aspire.

The Babcock-Macomb house is an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance style as was being interpreted by Platt and others in this period. While the neo-Renaissance country villa Heaton designed was simpler than the Villa Turicum, it was still a very formal, correct, and imposing response to the Beaux-Arts-inspired townhouses around Sheridan Circle. As was found in Platt's designs, the Babcock-Macomb house exhibits an elegant restraint, devoid of overpowering detail or unnecessary elaborateness. Appropriately for a suburban house, Heaton employed classically designed porches, balconies, full length doors and a rear loggia to open the house up to the surrounding landscape.

The brickwork of 3415 is extremely intricate and adds an appealing tactility and contrast to the facade. At the roofline, the combination of the half-round red roof tiles, the wavy scroll of the Vitruvian frieze in limestone-colored terra cotta, and the curving brickwork immediately below all work to create an appealing sense of rhythmic movement.

The intricacy of the brickwork and broadness of the overhanging eaves add hints of the Arts-and-Crafts movement typical of this period and of Heaton's early work, and prevents the house from becoming a dry imitation of historical models. Through publications of the period, Heaton became well aware of the work of a number of Arts and Crafts enthusiasts, most specifically William Price and his colleagues, Wilson Aire and Frank Lawrence Day. Much of Heaton's early work shows an appreciation for the ideas of the Arts and Crafts movement, and application of its aesthetic.

<sup>26</sup> Keith N. Morgan, Charles A. Platt: The Artist as Architect. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985.

<sup>27</sup> "The Renaissance Villa of Italy Developed into a Complete Residential Type for Use in America: The House of Harold F. McCormick, Esq., at Lake Forest, Ill., Charles A. Platt, Architect," Architectural Record, Vol. 31, No. 3 (March 1912).



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While the 34th Place facade of the Babcock-Macomb is more informal than the front, it is nevertheless impressively detailed and picturesquely massed. As is typical of country houses, the high level of detail on all facades clearly indicates that it was intended to be viewed on all sides. The rear's most attractive feature is the arched loggia (or cloister, as it is called on the original plans), which is evocative of early Renaissance designs. The glazed terra cotta roundels depicting children with outstretched hands are replicas of ones found on the Ospedale degli Innocenti in Florence, designed by Brunelleschi in 1420.<sup>28</sup> The cloister runs from the main block of the house along the service wing to the porte-cochere at the rear. This was originally intended to be reached by a driveway from 34th Place, according to the first site plan drafted by Heaton. Apparently, 34th Place was graded too low for this, so a driveway from Massachusetts Avenue was substituted. The garage at the rear of the site echoes the design of the house, with its blind-arched facade and hipped, red-tile roof.

The Babcock-Macomb house is one of the most distinctive residential works of architect Arthur B. Heaton, and one of the very best examples of a freestanding villa in the Italian Renaissance Revival style in the District of Columbia. As the earliest house on this portion of Massachusetts Avenue, located within the Massachusetts Avenue Heights subdivision, it set the tone for subsequent development of both the avenue and the neighborhood.

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<sup>28</sup> Peter Murray, Architecture of the Renaissance, pp. 9-19, New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1971.

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The Babcock-Macomb house at 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. is located at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and 34th Place, on the east side of Massachusetts Avenue on lots 34, 23, and 24 of Square 1939 in northwest Washington. The property is located within an affluent suburban residential area of Washington, D.C., across the avenue from the extensive grounds of the Naval Observatory and Vice Presidential mansion.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 94001633 Date Listed: 2/10/95

Babcock--Macomb House DC  
Property Name: County: State:

Multiple Name

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Patrick Andrews  
Signature of the Keeper

2/10/95  
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

The number of contributing resources recorded in Section 5 of the form has to be amended; the form only lists 1 contributing building, while there are two buildings on the site (the main house and a contemporary garage). The form is officially amended to list 2 contributing buildings.

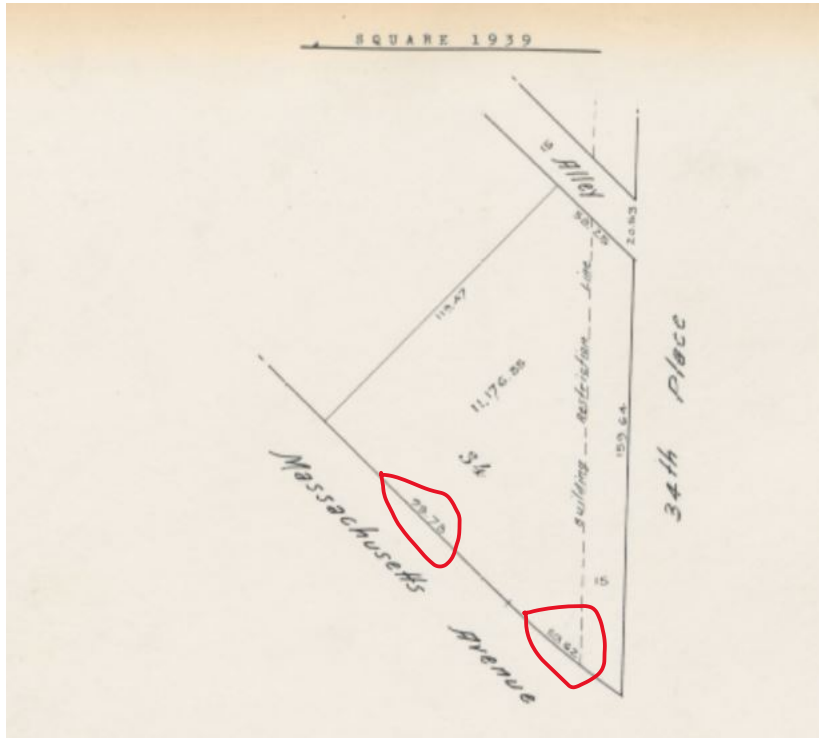
**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

# Exhibit 6

## Babcock-Macomb House Plat Maps

Map of original Lot 34, on which the house was built



Red circled dimensions are annotated here:

93.78 53.63
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[https://dcraonline-rms.dcrd.cra.dc.gov/navigator/bookmark.jsp?desktop=SurDocsGUIPublic&repositoryId=SurveyorDocs&repositoryType=p8&docid=Book{477E69D9-989E-41E9-BD78-F59DA58ADB35}{B418D39E-BBDD-C942-92E4-56C2E7900000}&mimeType=image/jpeg&template\\_name=Book&version=released&vsId={596F428E-E82F-CBD0-81CB-56C2E7900001}](https://dcraonline-rms.dcrd.cra.dc.gov/navigator/bookmark.jsp?desktop=SurDocsGUIPublic&repositoryId=SurveyorDocs&repositoryType=p8&docid=Book{477E69D9-989E-41E9-BD78-F59DA58ADB35}{B418D39E-BBDD-C942-92E4-56C2E7900000}&mimeType=image/jpeg&template_name=Book&version=released&vsId={596F428E-E82F-CBD0-81CB-56C2E7900001})





# Map of the lot subdivision in 2004

**OFFICE OF TAX AND REVENUE**

1. County of Middlesex  
 2. City of Lowell  
 3. Assessor's Office

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS**

1. Division of Consumer Affairs  
 2. Bureau of Consumer Protection

**OFFICE OF THE SURVEYOR**

**SUBDIVISION SQUARE 1939**

**ASSAYERS**  
 JAMES J. ...  
 JAMES J. ...

**EMBODY OF THE REPUBLIC**  
 JAMES J. ...

**RECEIVED**  
 FEB 27 2004  
 OFFICE OF THE SURVEYOR

**RECORDS SECTION**  
 DATE 1-28-04

97.65 53.63

[https://dcraonline-rms.dcr.dc.gov/navigator/bookmark.jsp?desktop=SurDocsGUIPublic&repositoryId=SurveyorDocs&repositoryType=p8&docid=Book{477E69D9-989E-41E9-BD78-F59DA58ADB35}{1A2C0299-0507-CF47-845A-5908B6E00000}&mimeType=image/jpeg&template\\_name=Book&version=released&vslid={CA612DF7-6F75-C70A-86C3-5908B6E00000}](https://dcraonline-rms.dcr.dc.gov/navigator/bookmark.jsp?desktop=SurDocsGUIPublic&repositoryId=SurveyorDocs&repositoryType=p8&docid=Book{477E69D9-989E-41E9-BD78-F59DA58ADB35}{1A2C0299-0507-CF47-845A-5908B6E00000}&mimeType=image/jpeg&template_name=Book&version=released&vslid={CA612DF7-6F75-C70A-86C3-5908B6E00000})

# Exhibit 7

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
OFFICE OF PLANNING  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
801 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, N.E., THIRD FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002**

**IN RE: Application for Subdivision**

**H.P.A. No. 03-586, and  
S-01894**

**IN THE MATTER OF  
EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAPE VERDE  
BABCOCK-MACOMB HOUSE  
3415 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**DECISION AND ORDER**

**BACKGROUND**

Pursuant to District of Columbia Official Code Section 6-1106(c)(2001 ed.), Subdivision, a public hearing was held on February 2, 2004, before Rohulamin Quander, Senior Administrative Judge and the Mayor's Agent for Historic Preservation ("Mayor's Agent"). Further, the administrative review was conducted in accordance with the requirements of District of Columbia Municipal Regulations Title 10, Chapter 26, and in accordance with the D.C. Administrative Procedure Act, D.C. Official Code § 2-501 *et seq.*

Because there was no D.C. Register published on January 2, 2004, the notice of the public hearing was published in the D.C. Register on January 9, 2004, which was five days short of the 30-day notice required under 10 DCMR § 2616.1. However, the Mayor's Agent takes administrative notice of the fact that Advisory Neighborhood Commission ("ANC") 3C, the affected ANC, has had actual notice of the matter that was considered at the public hearing of February 2, 2004, since October, 2003. Additionally, through the efforts of the Embassy of the Republic of Cape Verde ("Applicant"), neighbors of 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., have also had actual notice of this matter since October, 2003. Therefore, the Mayor's Agent granted a waiver from the 30-day notice requirement as allowed by 10 DCMR § 2601.1

Anne H. Adams, Architectural Historian, Shaw Pittman LLP, represented the Applicant. Eileen R. Harris, a representative of the Applicant was also present and testified. The Applicant requested that the Mayor's Agent find the proposed subdivision of the Babcock-Macomb House necessary in the public interest because it is consistent with the purposes of the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978 ("Act"). Because the Babcock-Macomb

House is an individually-designated landmark listed in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites (“Inventory”), a hearing before the Mayor’s Agent is required.

The Applicant is seeking approval of a subdivision that divides the existing Lot 40 in Square 1939 into two new record lots. The Babcock-Macomb House and its garage will stand on one lot. The second lot, to the west of the house lot, will be sold in order to raise funds for the rehabilitation and restoration of the Babcock-Macomb House. Most importantly, the tile roof of the Embassy needs to be repaired or replaced to match the original. Other work to be undertaken will include repair of the windows and doors, replacement of the garage door with a more appropriate door, and extensive interior work.

In considering the proposed subdivision it is important to understand the history of Lot 40 on which the Babcock-Macomb House currently stands. The house was originally constructed on Lot 34 in Square 1939. The two adjacent lots to the west, Lots 24 and 23, were in the same ownership. However, those two lots were never related in any significant way to the lot of the Babcock-Macomb House; there was no structure, garden, or landscaping on those two lots that contributed to the significance of the Babcock-Macomb House. Importantly, as noted in the Historic Preservation Review Board (“HPRB”) Staff Report and Recommendation (“Staff Report”) on this application, dated November 20, 2003, “The landmark application [for the designation of the Babcock-Macomb House] makes no mention of the extra two lots nor ascribes any particular significance to them.” The fact that those two lots are part of the lot on which the landmark now stands is the result of a subdivision in 1988 that combined the three lots into a single record lot. The current lot configuration has no historical significance. The portion of Lot 40 which the Applicant is seeking permission to subdivide as a separate new lot is currently a paved parking lot. The proposed subdivision will have no effect on the boundaries of the landmark.

The proposed new lot line would be located slightly to the west of the original line between Lots 34 and 23, thus creating a slightly larger lot for the landmark Babcock-Macomb House than the one on which it was originally built. In order to enhance the compatibility of potential future new construction on the newly-created lot, the Applicant proposes to create a no-build zone, the restrictions of which will be appropriately recorded among the land records of the District of Columbia. By placing any new construction farther from the east lot line than would be required by the zoning regulations, this no-build zone will maintain sufficient open space between the landmark and any proposed new construction so that such new construction will not overwhelm or overshadow the landmark. Because the area of the no-build zone coincides with the existing driveway it will also provide access to the newly created lot.

Because the Babcock-Macomb House is a designated landmark listed in the Inventory, the application for subdivision was referred to the HPRB for its review and recommendation to the Mayor’s Agent pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 6-1106(b). At its public meeting on November 20, 2003, the HPRB unanimously adopted its Staff Report, which recommended that the subdivision was consistent with the purposes of the Act with the provision of a “reciprocal, non-buildable easement over the existing driveway.”

Anne H. Adams, who has previously qualified before the Mayor’s Agent as an expert in architectural history and historic preservation, testified on behalf of the Applicant. Ms. Adams

testified that the proposed subdivision is consistent with the purposes of the Act because it will create a lot for the landmark Babcock-Macomb House larger than the one on which it was built and has historically stood and it will allow the Applicant to sell a portion of its land that does not contribute to the significance of the landmark in order to raise funds for the rehabilitation and restoration of the landmark. She also testified that, as an additional benefit, the proposed no-build zone will create sufficient open space between the landmark and any proposed new construction to insure that such new construction would not overwhelm or overshadow the Babcock-Macomb House. Ms. Adams submitted a written statement further outlining how the proposed subdivision meets the tests for approval under the Act and describing the area of the no-build zone.

Eileen Harris, testifying on behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of Cape Verde, discussed the nature and amount of rehabilitation and restoration work that needs to be accomplished at the Babcock-Macomb House. Ms. Harris particularly discussed the need to repair to match or to replace the tile roof, repair the windows and doors, and accomplish an extensive array of interior work.

Lynn Skyneer, owner of 3421 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., the property to the west of Lot 40 in Square 1939, testified that she thought she would always have a view of the Babcock-Macomb House. She expressed concern that new construction on the proposed new lot would block views from the windows on the east side of 3421 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Ms. Skyneer further noted that she did not want to look at a solid brick wall from those windows, and that new construction on the proposed new lot would diminish the value of her property.

Having considered this Application in the context of the Act, the Mayor's Agent concludes that this Applicant has met its legal burden, and that the Application should be **GRANTED**.

### **ISSUE**

The issue to be decided is whether the Applicant has met the burden of proof to establish that the requested subdivision involving the landmark property known as the Babcock-Macomb House is necessary in the public interest because it is consistent with the purposes of the Act.

### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

Based on the evidence presented and the record as a whole, the Mayor's Agent now makes the following Findings of Fact:

1. The issue before the Mayor's Agent is the Application for the Subdivision of one lot of real property known as the Babcock-Macomb House, an individually-designated landmark located at 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. and listed in the Inventory.
2. The proposed subdivision will divide existing record Lot 40 in Square 1939 into two new record lots within the perimeter boundary of the existing lot.

3. The proposed subdivision will create a lot for the landmark house that is larger than the lot on which it was constructed and on which it historically stood (the current lot configuration only being achieved in 1988).

4. The proposed subdivision will also create a second record lot, the sale of which will generate funds for the rehabilitation and restoration of the Babcock-Macomb House.

5. While noting that any proposed new construction on the newly-created lot must be reviewed and approved under the Act, the Mayor's Agent accepts the recordation of the proposed no-build zone, which will force any future new construction away from the Babcock-Macomb House and toward the west lot line of the newly-created lot, as an additional means of ensuring that the landmark is not overshadowed or overwhelmed by such new construction.

6. The proposed subdivision will have no effect on the boundaries of the landmark known as the Babcock-Macomb House, and all applications subject to the Act for both lots will continue to be reviewed pursuant to that Act.

7. Consideration of the proposed subdivision must be done in the context of the affected landmark, in this case the individually-designated Babcock-Macomb House, and not with regard to adjacent property which is not part of the landmark.

8. While acknowledging the concerns of the owner of 3421 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. regarding any potential impact on her property of any future new construction on the newly-created lot, the Mayor's Agent finds that such concerns are not within the scope of the Act with respect to the proposed subdivision or with respect to future new construction, where the issue to be considered at that time will be the compatibility of the new construction with the landmark.

9. At such time as approval is sought for any new construction on the newly-created lot, such new construction must comply with all relevant District of Columbia laws and regulations, including the zoning regulations and the Act.

10. The Historic Preservation Committee of ANC 3C voted unanimously to support the proposed subdivision, which vote is entitled to great weight consideration, as provided by D.C. Official Code § 1-261(d).

11. No individuals or organizations applied for party status.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Jurisdiction**

This historic preservation case was referred to the Mayor's Agent for an administrative hearing upon the HPRB's review of and recommendation that the applications should be approved because it is consistent with the purposes of the Act.

D.C. Official Code § 6-1101 sets forth the Mayor’s authority, which has been delegated to the Mayor’s Agent, and the procedures with respect to approving applications for subdivision. In the matter at hand, subdivision would enhance the Babcock-Macomb House by creating a new lot for the landmark house itself that will be slightly larger than the lot on which it was originally constructed and on which it has historically stood. It will also create a new lot, the sale of which will generate funds for the rehabilitation and restoration of the landmark. Such a subdivision can be and is hereby deemed necessary in the public interest by virtue of being consistent with the purposes of the Act. Additionally, the proposed no-build zone, which will locate any future new construction toward the western side of the new lot and away from the landmark, will provide open space to protect the landmark from the possible impact of future new construction on the new lot. Such new construction would require approval under the Act.

D.C. Official Code § 6-1106(b) provides that before the Mayor may admit to record any subdivision of a historic landmark or of a property in a historic district, the Mayor shall review the application and refer it to the HPRB for its recommendation. Under § 6-1106(c) “Within 120 days after the Review Board receives the referral the Mayor shall, after a public hearing, make a finding required by subsection (e) of this section; provided that the Mayor may make such a finding without a public hearing in the case of a subdivision of a lot in an historic district if the Review Board advises him that such subdivision is consistent with the purposes of this subchapter.”

### **Necessary in the Public Interest**

The Applicant is requesting that the subdivision be approved as necessary in the public interest by virtue of being consistent with the purposes of the Act. The standard of review for a subdivision to be admitted to record under D.C. Official Code § 6-1106(e) requires that no subdivision subject to this subchapter shall be admitted to record unless the Mayor finds that admission to record is “necessary in the public interest.”

The term “necessary in the public interest” is defined in D.C. Official Code § 6-1102(10) as “... consistent with the purposes of this subchapter, as set forth in § 6-1106(b) or necessary to allow the construction of a project of special merit.” The Applicant is making no claim that the subdivision is necessary to construct a project of special merit, but rather claims only that the subdivision is consistent with the purposes of the Act.

With respect to historic landmarks, pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 6-1106(b)(2), the purposes of the Act are to “retain and enhance historic landmarks in the District of Columbia and to encourage their adaptation for current use”, and “to encourage the restoration of historic landmarks.” The Mayor’s Agent determines that the Act clearly contemplates the possibility of the subdivision of the site of a landmark and the possibility of new construction on such a newly-created lot, provided such new construction is accomplished in an manner that is not incompatible with the character of the landmark. The Mayor’s Agent has the authority to determine, and so does determine, that the proposed subdivision of the Babcock-Macomb House is consistent with the purposes of the Act.

The Mayor’s Agent determines that the proposed subdivision will allow for the enhancement of the significant character of the Babcock-Macomb House by creating a new lot

for the landmark that is larger than the one on which it was built and has historically stood. By allowing for the sale of a parcel of land that does not contribute to the character or significance of the landmark in order to raise funds for the rehabilitation and restoration of the landmark, the Applicant will be able to substantially rehabilitate the landmark, which has already been adaptively reused by the Republic of Cape Verde as its Embassy.

The Mayor's Agent further finds that it would be ill advised to approve the subdivision of a property and subsequently deny the owner of that parcel the right to construct a building on the newly-created lot that conforms to relevant District of Columbia laws and regulations, including the Act. The Mayor's Agent notes that there is nothing in the Act that requires vacant land that does not contribute to the character or significance of a landmark to remain vacant. The Mayor's Agent also notes that a property owner is not entitled to views across adjacent land that is not owned by said property owner. Further, the Act does not require the consideration of the effect of a subdivision or new construction on the value of neighboring property.

### CONCLUSION OF LAW

Based on the entire record in this matter, including the provisions of the Act and testimony and evidence submitted by the Applicant, the Mayor's Agent concludes, as a matter of law, that the Applicant has sustained its burden of proof that the approval of the subdivision is necessary in the public interest because it is consistent with the purposes of the Act.

### ORDER

The foregoing having been considered, it is this **5th day of February, 2004**.

**ORDERED** that the Application for the Subdivision of 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Square 1939, Lot 40, H.P.A. No. 03-586 and S-01894, be and the same is hereby, **GRANTED**, provided the appropriate recordation of the proposed no-build zone is made, as determined by the Staff of the Historic Preservation Division, Office of Planning, because the subdivision is necessary in the public interest, and it is consistent with the purposes of the Act.

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**ROHULAMIN QUANDER**  
**SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE, D.C., AND**  
**MAYOR'S AGENT FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION**



## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true copy of the foregoing Decision and Order was served this 5th day of February, 2004 by mailing a copy of the same via email and first class mail, postage prepaid, to:

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Certifying Officer