



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown, and Hillandale
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February 6, 2023

Ms. Marnique Heath
Chair, Historic Preservation Review Board
Office of Planning
1100 4th Street SW, Suite E650
Washington, DC 20024
historic.preservation@dc.gov

RE: Historic Preservation Review Board Concept Application for a Subdivision to Combine Lot 252 in Square 1278 with a Portion of A&T Lot 807 and Construction of a Swimming Pool at 3321 and 3323 Q Street NW (HPRB #23-162)

Dear Chair Heath,

On January 30, 2023 ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by eight commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution by a vote of (8-0-0) with regard to the above-referenced matter:

ANC 2E expresses no position on the proposed subdivision of 3321 Q Street NW and 3323 Q Street NW. However, the commission does have a strong interest in the manner in which any proposed swimming pool is constructed on the property.

The 3300 block of Q Street NW has an important place in the history of Georgetown. It served as a burial ground in the 18th and 19th centuries. Researchers believe it was largely used by Georgetown's black residents, both free and enslaved, at a time when they were not permitted to use the much larger Presbyterian Burying Ground across the street to the south.

For over a century, residents of this block have uncovered human remains during excavation projects on their properties. Thus, there is very good reason to believe that any excavation to construct a swimming pool at 3321 Q Street NW will also uncover human remains from the site's previous use. In addition, the relevant property lots are adjacent to the Dent Place NW lot that was once owned by Yarrow Mamout, a Georgetowner who rose from slavery to become a prominent investor. Yarrow was believed to have been buried near the lot lines, and as a result, his remains may also be found on the subject properties.

COMMISSIONERS:

Kishan Putta, District 1 Topher Mathews, District 2 Paul Maysak, District 3
Joe Massaua, District 4 Mimsy Lindner, District 5 Gwendolyn Lohse, District 6
Elizabeth Miller, District 7 John DiPierri, District 8

The commission believes strongly that any such excavation at 3321 Q Street NW should therefore be completed in the most careful and respectful manner and in acknowledgement of the likely fact that such construction is being performed on the final resting place of generations of Georgetown's black residents.

Specifically, the commission expresses a desire that the applicant works proactively with the DC Archeologist of the Office of Planning to develop a plan for excavation prior to undertaking any work. This plan should entail, at the very least, identifying any burials in the impacted area, avoiding those graves if possible, and, if necessary, responsibly disinterring any human remains under the close supervision and approval of the relevant DC Government agencies. Additionally, any such disinterment should be completed in close consultation with any interested local cultural and spiritual organizations, including allowing them reasonable access to the site for research and enrichment purposes.

The commission acknowledges that the applicant has expressed their intent to pursue this course and it exhorts them to follow through on such commitments. The commission believes that if done well, this project could serve as a model for best practices to be used in other construction projects on this block and in other areas of the city where our modern lives abut history and those that came before us.

Commissioners Topher Mathews (2E02@anc.dc.gov) and Elizabeth Miller (2E07@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission's representatives in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Miller', with a small star-like mark above the 'i'.

Elizabeth Miller
Chair, ANC 2E