

Memorandum of Understanding: National and Local Historic Designations

It is the purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding to define the mutual understandings and procedures for National Register listing and local historic district designations of Arlington Public Schools (APS) buildings. These understandings and procedures govern the actions of the Arlington County Historic Preservation Program (HPP) staff, Arlington Public Schools staff and the Historic Affairs and Landmarks Review Board (HALRB) when APS buildings are considered for historic designation.

Historic Designation Understandings

Listings in the National Register of Historic Places (commonly referred to as simply the National Register) and local historic district designation are among Arlington County's strategies for conserving the County's irreplaceable historic resources.

The National Register of Historic Places is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior to promote, coordinate, and support local, state, and private efforts to preserve historic and archeological resources that define the nation's history. Listing on the National Register is purely honorific. It places no legal or regulatory requirements on APS.

Local historic district designation protects historic resources and settings through regulatory measures. The local ordinance creates an overlay zoning district on Arlington's official zoning map for all designated sites and neighborhoods. Such designation may restrict exterior modifications of APS buildings and other exterior elements (i.e. paving, signage, tree removal, fencing and walls.) There is no review of interior changes or maintenance of designated properties.

The effects of local historic designation on APS are described below:

- APS must comply with zoning and historic district ordinance provisions for designated properties.
- Designated properties are subject to design review for permanent exterior changes affecting historic elements.
- The County design review process will guide APS designers to create a design sensitive to the historic character of the designated facility and adjacent properties, when the school is part of a neighborhood district.

National Designation: Process

Anyone can initiate nomination requests for historic designation, including APS, the HPP staff, or the public. The HPP staff will process all nomination requests for APS properties according to the established guidelines of the National Register of Historic Places, and the following procedures:

1. HPP will receive all valid requests to nominate a school property for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.
2. The HPP staff will contact the Superintendent immediately on its receipt of the request.

3. APS staff will assist the HPP staff in preparing research on the history, historical context, significance, historic associations, and any important event(s) or person(s) associated with the property.
4. Upon completion of the research phase, HPP staff will prepare a draft nomination package for the School Board's review.
5. The School Board will determine whether it will support, not support or conditionally support the nomination.
6. If the School Board votes not to support the nomination, the prepared documents will be placed in the HPP files as research information.
7. If the School Board votes to support the nomination conditionally, APS staff will be responsible for communicating any proposed changes to the nomination to the HPP staff before it is forwarded to the State Review Board.
8. If the School Board supports the nomination, HPP will send the nomination to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for review by the State Review Board and submission to the National Register.

Local Designation: Process

Any Arlington resident or organization may request that the County consider a school building or site for local historic district designation. Requests would be forwarded to the HPP staff who would forward the request to the HALRB. The HALRB will take the following steps:

1. Upon receipt of the request, the Chairman of the HALRB will request HPP staff to notify the Superintendent that it has received a request for local historic district designation of an APS property. HPP staff will also be requested to notify the President and Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Commission (NCAC) representative of the civic association in which the property is located, as well as the Presidents and NCAC representatives of contiguous civic associations, if the property is located near a civic association's border with another association(s).
2. The Chairman will request HPP staff to forward a copy of the request to the Survey Committee of the HALRB for study and report to the full HALRB. The Survey Committee will research and evaluate the recommended site using the criteria listed in the Arlington County Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board Rules of Practice and Procedure, as well as those cited in Section 31A of the County Zoning Ordinance.
3. APS staff will meet with the Survey Committee and provide assistance in its research.
4. The Survey Committee will prepare a report that outlines the history, historical context, significance, historic associations, and any important events or persons associated with the subject of the request.
5. The Committee will report to the full HALRB and either recommend proceeding with the nomination or report that the property is not historically or architecturally significant and does not warrant local Historic District designation, thus ending the request for designation process.
6. The HPP staff will send a copy of the Survey Committee report and recommendation to the Superintendent for School Board review.
7. If a site is recommended for nomination by the Survey Committee, APS staff will analyze the report to determine what effects local designation might have on the future use of the

- property and discuss the analysis with HPP staff. HPP staff will in turn report to the full HALRB discussions with the APS staff concerning the application.
8. The School Board will determine whether to support, not support or support conditionally the local historic designation.
 9. APS staff will report the nature and substance of the School Board's action to the HALRB before the HALRB meets to consider the Review Committee's report.
 10. If the School Board supports the recommendation, HPP and APS staff will work with the HALRB to develop specific design guidelines for the school to list what exterior features will require design review and which features are exempted.
 11. The HALRB will schedule a meeting at which it will consider the Survey Committee report, the APS staff analysis, the School Board's action, proposed guidelines for the recommended district (if any), and all public testimony. Notification of the time and place of the meeting will be made to APS staff as well as the affected civic associations. Notification will also be posted at the property's site for the information of the general public.
 12. HALRB will vote publicly on whether to recommend the requested site/building/district for local historic district status. This action will contain a specific description of the design elements of the building that will be regulated and the scope of such regulation.
 13. If the vote of the full HALRB is to recommend that the local historic designation be granted for the proposed site, HPP staff will forward all information concerning the application to the Planning Commission and request that the Commission hold a public hearing on the designation.
 14. HALRB will meet to consider any modifications the Planning Commission may have requested in the HALRB recommendation.
 15. HALRB will forward its recommendation to the County Board for final decision.

Procedure for HALRB Review of Locally Designated Schools

Since the process for APS school improvements already includes extensive review through the Building Level Planning Committee and Use Permit process, any subsequent proposed building modification to the local historically designated property will proceed as follows:

1. If the APS Capital Improvement Plan proposes a modification to a designated facility or site, School staff will notify the HPP Staff.
2. If a BLPC is required under School Board policy, the School Board will include a member of the HALRB or its designee on the Building Level Planning Committee for the proposed project. The School Board may additionally appoint representatives to the BLPC from interested local preservation groups, e.g., the Arlington Historical Society or the Arlington Heritage Alliance.
3. BLPC members participate in the review of a proposed project throughout the design development process. When an element of the design may affect a protected element, HPP staff will offer guidance as to the level of HALRB review required.
4. If historic preservation issues emerge during design development, HALRB, HPP staff and APS staff will work toward resolution in a timely fashion. Before the application for a building permit, the HALRB will issue a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) for the project based upon the resolution of these issues.
5. Prior to permitting, HPP staff will be provided a set of elevation drawings for review for consistency with the provisions of the local designation and approved CoA. HPP staff will

advise APS staff of compliance or any required changes within 5 days of receipt. This approved set of drawings will be contained in the permit review set of drawings.

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