

Submitted: March 18, 2021
Approved: March 18, 2021

**MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING NO. 1-2021
Thursday, January 21, 2021**

The City of Rockville Historic District Commission convened at 7:00 PM Via Webex

Commissioners Present:

Alan Tabachnick, Chair
Laurie Kawa, Nancy Light, Anita Neal Powell, Mercy Shenge

Staff Present: Sheila Bashiri, Preservation Planner
Andrea Gilles, Comprehensive Planning Manager
Marlaine White, Senior Assistant City Attorney

I. COMMITTEE/ORGANIZATION REPORTS

A. Peerless Rockville – Nancy Pickard, Executive Director

- Ms. Pickard announced that on Wednesday, Jan 13, 2021 David Bernhardt, the Secretary of the Interior, designated the Freida Fromm-Reichmann Cottage as a National Historic Landmark, Rockville's first National Historic Landmark and one of very few in Montgomery County. Ms. Pickard provided a brief history on Freida Fromm-Reichmann and her work at Chestnut Lodge. Peerless restored and continues to care for this special property. Watch for upcoming events to celebrate this designation, including the installation of an historic marker.
- Next speaker program will be the archaeology of Josiah Henson Park, part of the Glenview Mansion Speaker series, and it will feature Montgomery Parks Senior Archeologist.

B. Lincoln Park Historical Foundation – Commissioner Anita Neal Powell, Executive Director

- Ms. Neal Powell was invited to participate as a panelist in the 49th anniversary of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. The program was held on Dr. King Jr.'s birthday, Jan 16. Ms. Neal Powell's remarks were centered around preserving the history of blacks and African Americans in Rockville and Montgomery County, including the African American walking tour in Rockville, with roughly 21 sites. When the program becomes available, a link to access the recording can be made available.

C. Public Comments/Open Forum

- No one signed up to speak in general nor on an agenda item. The Chair closed the public comment/open forum.

D. COMMISSIONER AND STAFF REPORT/COMMENTS

Commissioner Comments

- No Commissioner Comments

Staff Reports

- Ms. Bashiri provided a reminder about the tax credit program and will be sending out information at the end of the month about what needs to be provided with the application. Usually, the deadline to submit applications is April 1. There will be a tax credit workshop before the deadline to assist with organizing the necessary information.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of minutes from Nov. 19, 2020

Motion: Moved by Commissioner Kawa, Seconded by Commissioner Neal Powell

Roll Call: 3 yes and 2 abstentions (Commissioners Light and Shenge were not yet on the Commission).

III. EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

HDC2021-01007

Applicant: Joseph Richardson and Carolyn Hoch

Address: 203 Forest Ave

Request: Evaluation of Significance for Historic Designation

Staff Presentation:

Staff provided a presentation outlining the request and recommended approval based on the proposal meeting Architectural, Design, and Landscape Significance Criteria a) and b) of the adopted HDC Criteria for Historic Designation.

Commissioner Questions:

Several Commissioners commented on the distinctiveness of the property. Ms. Bashiri provided some context and background on inquiries about the property while it was on the market.

Property Owner Comments:

The property owners were in attendance and confirmed that the purchase did go through, and they appreciate the recognition of the work they have done so far on the property (landscaping and plantings) to address the overgrown plantings. People in the area have often stopped and asked about the house and have expressed their admiration for the property. The proportionality of the property is very nice, and the property owners are looking forward to being able to further work on the property.

Peerless Rockville Comments:

Nancy Pickard read a statement into the record in favor of designation of the property and the Evaluation of Significance. Additionally, Peerless Rockville believes that the property has very strong integrity not only in the building itself, but also for the land, and the lot played an integral part in the city's development. Ms. Pickard stated that Peerless also felt that the property met, in addition to the others mentioned by staff, HDC adopted criteria under historic significance a) Represents the

development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the city. Ms. Pickard also provided the rationale behind that addition.

Community Comments:

Ms. Bashiri read into the record the letters received from community members:

- From the owners in support of historic designation
- Don Handley in support of historic designation
- Margaret Wagner in support of historic designation

Commissioner Discussion:

- Commissioner Shenge asked whether the other houses in Rockville built by the builder of the subject house were designated. Ms. Bashiri responded that not all, but that some of them are.
- Commissioner Kawa commented about being in support of designation.
- Commissioner Light commented that the way the house is situated transports someone back to how Rockville may have been.
- Commissioner Neal Powell offered her appreciation that the owners wanted to designate the property.

Motion: Commissioner Light moved to approve based on staff recommendation and the additional recommendation made by Peerless Rockville. Seconded by Commissioner Kawa

Roll Call: Unanimous approval.

Ms. Bashiri explained the next steps in the process.

VI. DISCUSSION

A. OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

B. NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

V. ADJOURN

Commissioner Kawa moved, and Commissioner Neal-Powell seconded. Unanimous vote to adjourn at 8:04.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Bashiri