



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B

March 14, 2023

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

RE: 1733 16th Street NW (HPRB #23-04)

Dear Chair Heath:

At its regular meeting on March 8, 2023, the Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission (“ANC 2B” or “Commission”) considered the above-referenced matter. With 9 of 9 Commissioners in attendance, a quorum at a duly-noticed public meeting, the Commission approved the following resolution by a vote of (7-0-2):

WHEREAS, the owner of 1733 16th Street NW, the Supreme Council Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Southern Jurisdiction USA, has applied to the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) to amend the previous landmark designation by reducing the boundary of the historic landmark to the former A&T Lot 800 and by establishing a period of significance,

WHEREAS, the building at 1733 16th Street NW is in ANC 2B09 and the Sixteenth Street Historic District,

WHEREAS, the building at 1733 16th Street NW, commonly known as the “Temple,” was built in 1915 on Lot 800,

WHEREAS, the Temple was landmarked as historic in 1964 and identified by its street address but without defining its property lines. At the time the Temple stood exclusively on Lot 800,

WHEREAS, after 1964, the owner of the Temple began acquiring neighboring properties and for non-historic preservation purposes amended the property lines to create an expanded Lot 820 that included Lot 800 and certain neighboring lots,

WHEREAS, in 1978, the Temple was designated as a contributing property to the Sixteenth Street Historic District and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This designation

did not define a property line for the Temple for historic preservation purposes but at this time the Temple sat on Lot 820,

WHEREAS, in 2018, the owner announced plans to develop on part of its property beyond the area formerly included in Lot 800,

WHEREAS, on review of HPRB's initial approval of the project, the DC Superior Court ruled that the property line for the Temple for historic preservation purposes was Lot 820,

WHEREAS, HPRB subsequently issued an order approving the reduction of the property line for the Temple to the original Lot 800,

WHEREAS, HPRB's order was challenged in DC Superior Court. The court noted that HPRB does have the authority to reduce the property line of a historic landmark, but that HPRB did not follow proper procedure in this case. The court ruled that the only question legally before HPRB was a request to expand the historic designation, and that HPRB therefore could not issue an order to reduce the property lines,

WHEREAS, consistent with the court's ruling, the owner of the Temple is now formally requesting that HPRB reduces the property line to Lot 800 to accommodate the owner's construction on the remaining property it owns,

WHEREAS, ANC 2B has reviewed this project to build an apartment building on the owner's property beyond Lot 800 under HPRB and zoning requirements on at least five occasions:

- On November 14, 2018, ANC 2B voted as part of a historic preservation concept review to request that the owner considers changes to the design, including different window treatments in the carriage house, muted brick colors, and to simplify the overall exterior design. No changes were suggested for the proposed footprint of the new building which would extend over Lot 820's property line.
- On May 16, 2019, ANC 2B voted to support the project as proposed to HPRB after requested changes were made to the exterior design. The proposed development extended over Lot 820's property line.
- On May 16, 2019, ANC 2B voted to oppose the request by the Dupont East Civic Action Association to HPRB to expand the size of the historic landmark designation.
- On September 11, 2019, ANC 2B voted to support the request by the owner to HPRB for the division of the then-existing property lines to match the lines of Lot 800.
- On April 24, 2021, ANC 2B voted to not support an appeal to the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) that challenged the previously approved division of the relevant lots for zoning purposes. This previously approved division matched the property line for Lot 800.

WHEREAS, ANC 2B's Land Use Committee (LUC) reviewed the submitted concept plans at its duly noticed monthly meeting held March 1, 2023 and heard testimony from the owner and residents.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 2B supports the amendment to the historic landmark designation submitted by the Supreme Council Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Southern Jurisdiction USA to HPRB that would reduce the boundary to the former A&T Lot 800.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B supports the amendment to set a date of significance as 1915.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B asks HPRB to approve these amendments if HPRB finds that doing so is consistent with DC law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2B requests that the ANC's LUC Chair, the ANC's Chair, the ANC's Executive Director, and the single member district (SMD) commissioner be sent the final decision on this matter as approved by HPRB and/or HPRB staff.

Commissioners Christopher Davis (2B09@anc.dc.gov) and Meg Roggensack (2B01@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission's representatives in this matter.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meg Roggensack", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Meg Roggensack
Chair