



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5E

www.anc5edc.org

ANC 5E RESOLUTION NO. 2018-004

IN OPPOSITION TO BLOOMINGDALE BEING DESIGNATED A HISTORIC DISTRICT

WHEREAS an application to designate the District of Columbia's Bloomingdale neighborhood as historic is pending before the Historic Preservation Review Board (Case 17-17); and

WHEREAS the application for historic designation has been submitted listing three criteria,

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 or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction,

The commission finds that while these noteworthy criteria are pertinent to specific properties (such as the individual homes that were companion cases to the landmark U.S. Supreme Court *Shelley v. Kraemer* case which outlawed racially restrictive housing covenants), they are not pertinent to the entire neighborhood, which contains houses and buildings that neither make a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, nor are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past (save those homes that share such a distinction), nor embody distinct architectural aesthetics as compared to other neighborhoods in the District of Columbia such as LeDroit Park, Bates, Edgewood, and Eckington (the latter of which recently rejected historic designation); and

WHEREAS the commission questions the applicability and legitimacy of a historic designation for the entire swath of Bloomingdale given the extensive amount of historically-incompatible construction that has already been completed on Bloomingdale residences. The fact that nearly every block in Bloomingdale has made historically incompatible additions such as "pop-ups" and "pop-backs," the former being public-facing, it is a specious argument to say that the entire neighborhood's historic integrity needs to be preserved since so many houses have already been significantly altered so as to render them incompatible with the aesthetics of the period for which this application has been filed. These alterations are not aberrations; they are commonplace. Moreover, materials used by existing residents to renovate the exterior of their homes would not qualify under historic district criteria. It is fair and un-prejudicial to allow Bloomingdale residents the flexibility to renovate their homes with materials that meets their budget; and

WHEREAS the commission fully supports the Bloomingdale Historic Coalition and the District of Columbia Historic Preservation League working together to preserve individual properties that meet the three criteria, with the consent of each property's owner(s), rather than offer a wholesale designation of the neighborhood; and

SE01 Edward Garnett
SE01@anc.dc.gov
202-596-9027

SE03 Hannab Powell, Treasurer
SE03@anc.dc.gov
202-549-1586

SE05 Bradley Thomas, Chair
SE05@anc.dc.gov
202-670-0151

SE07 Bertha Holliday
SE07@anc.dc.gov
202-491-3996

SE09 Dianne Barnes, Vice Chair
SE09@anc.dc.gov
202-409-7155

SE02 Patricia Williams
SE02@anc.dc.gov
202-709-9375

SE04 Sylvia M. Pinkney
SE04@anc.dc.gov
202-269-4180

SE06 Katherine McClelland, Corresponding Secretary
SE06@anc.dc.gov
612-408-5828



SE08 Horacio Sierra
Recording Secretary
SE08@anc.dc.gov

SE10 Nancy Jones
SE10@anc.dc.gov
202-594-7850



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5E

www.anc5edc.org

WHEREAS residents throughout the neighborhood have raised concerns about imposing such a restrictive process as historic district on residents without broad and overwhelming community support given that the Historic Preservation Office only needs to notify residents of an application for Historic Designation but not survey residents to objectively gauge whether support for the designation is broad; and

WHEREAS residents throughout the neighborhood have raised concerns about the added costs of making home repairs and renovations in a historic district since stricter requirements will be in place when changes/additions are made to public-facing facades and rooflines, which is what is covered by historic designation; and

WHEREAS DC's Historic Homeowner Grant Program has limited funds each year and covers only twelve targeted Historic Districts out of more than 50 Historic Districts in the city, there is no guarantee that Bloomingdale will be added to the list of targeted Historic Districts; and

WHEREAS residents have also raised concerns about the impact designation would have on reducing their ability to modify their homes to meet their changing needs; and

WHEREAS residents are concerned about adding another level of bureaucracy (including time and money) to the permitting process whether the modifications be something minor such as a window or door or something more substantial such as a porch, balcony, turret, conical roof, or other architectural embellishment; and

WHEREAS this commission believes there are alternative ways to celebrate and preserve Bloomingdale's history without the aforementioned negative impacts on residents such as a special zoning designation, which was the initial favored recommendation based on public outreach done by the Bloomingdale Civic Association. For example, the Bloomingdale community and the Bloomingdale Civic Association have celebrated, recorded, and preserved its history through projects such as the "Worthy Ambition: LeDroit/Bloomingdale Heritage Trail," the Bloomingdale Oral History Project, and the Bloomingdale Village Square Project. Furthermore, citizens, the Bloomingdale Civic Association, and the ANC work together to evaluate and support worthy applications for Historic Preservation on a case-by-case basis; and

WHEREAS many residents are concerned that historic designation has unintended consequences of aiding gentrification that increases housing costs, and, consequently housing and rental prices that drive out long-term residents and dissuade low-middle-income individuals and families from renting and buying in the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS it has not been shown to the satisfaction of this commission that a majority of the neighborhood supports this change; and

WHEREAS the Bloomingdale Civic Association (BCA) voted 79-60 in support of historic designation during their March 19, 2018 publicly noticed meeting, this ANC commission finds that the more comprehensive postcard survey of property owners they conducted December 2017-January 2018, which demonstrated that a clear majority of homeowners oppose historic designation (282 in opposition and 234 in support), should be

5E01 Edward Garnett
5E01@anc.dc.gov
202-596-9027

5E03 Hannah Powell, Treasurer
5E03@anc.dc.gov
202-549-1586

5E05 Bradley Thomas, Chair
5E05@anc.dc.gov
202-670-0151



5E07 Bertha Holliday
5E07@anc.dc.gov
202-491-3996

5E09 Dianne Barnes, Vice Chair
5E09@anc.dc.gov
202-409-7155

5E02 Patricia Williams
5E02@anc.dc.gov
202-709-9375

5E04 Sylvia M. Pinkney
5E04@anc.dc.gov
202-269-4180

5E06 Katherine McClelland, Corresponding Secretary
5E06@anc.dc.gov
612-408-5828

5E08 Horacio Sierra
Recording Secretary
5E08@anc.dc.gov

5E10 Nancy Jones
5E10@anc.dc.gov
202-594-7850



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5E

www.anc5edc.org

given greater weight as a form of direct democracy that does not burden would-be voters based on income or limited voting hours. The commission finds that the will of the greater Bloomingdale public (those who did not have to pay dues and attend a meeting on a Monday night) should be given greater weight in a democracy where voting rights of any kind should not be restricted based on an individual's ability to pay membership dues and attend meetings, especially in a diverse neighborhood where many long-term homeowners are low-middle income residents, are retired, and/or work at night.

WHEREAS the commission recommends the Historic Preservation Office and the District of Columbia Council work together and create a new method of gauging community support such as a public referendum on a regularly scheduled Election Day; and

WHEREAS Title 10A of DC Municipal regulations requires the Historic Preservation Review Board to give great weight to any written recommendations of the affected ANC; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC5E at its duly noticed Public Meeting held at Friendship-Armstrong Public Charter School, on April 17th, 2018 resolved and voted to oppose designation of Bloomingdale as a historic district and strongly recommend the District of Columbia's Historic Preservation Review Board vote to deny the application of Case 17-17.

The Commission authorizes its staff to notify, by any and all appropriate means, all appropriate officials of the District of Columbia of its vote and determination in this matter, including but not limited to officials of the Historic Preservation Review Board, the Historic Preservation Office, the Mayor, the Council of the District of Columbia, and all concerned neighborhood residents and businesses.

ANC5E is comprised of ten sitting Commissioners of which 9 were in attendance with six constituting a quorum. After being properly moved and seconded, the motion to adopt this resolution passed, with 8 commissioners voting for, 1 voting against, and with 0 abstentions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bradley Thomas, Chair

Horacio Sierra, Recording Secretary

CC: Historic Preservation Office
Historic Preservation Review Board
Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie
Mayor Muriel Bowser

5E01 Edward Garnett
5E01@anc.dc.gov
202-596-9027

5E03 Hannah Powell, Treasurer
5E03@anc.dc.gov
202-549-1586

5E05 Bradley Thomas, Chair
5E05@anc.dc.gov
202-670-0151

5E02 Patricia Williams
5E02@anc.dc.gov
202-709-9375

5E04 Sylvia M. Pinkney
5E04@anc.dc.gov
202-269-4180

5E06 Katherine McClelland, Corresponding Secretary
5E06@anc.dc.gov
612-408-5828



5E07 Bertha Holliday
5E06@anc.dc.gov
202-491-3996

5E08 Horacio Sierra
Recording Secretary
5E08@anc.dc.gov

5E09 Dianne Barnes, Vice Chair
5E09@anc.dc.gov
202-409-7155

5E10 Nancy Jones
5E10@anc.dc.gov
202-594-7850

