

GOVERNMENT OF ~~THE~~ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD**  
**APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION**

New Designation X

Amendment of a previous designation \_\_\_\_\_

Please summarize any amendment(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Property name **The King David Masonic Lodge #28 Brookland Masonic Lodge**

*If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.*

Address **3501 12th Street NE, Washington, DC 20017**

Square and lot number(s) **Square 3928 Lot 805**

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission **5B**

Date of construction **1911**

Architect(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Architectural style(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Original use: **Social Meeting Hall, Post Office** Present use: **Brookland Masonic Temple**

Property owner: **St. John's Grande Lodge**

Legal address of property owner: **3501 12th Street NE Washington, DC 20017**

NAME OF APPLICANT(S): **Brookland Community Development Corporation**

*If the applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.*

**3501 12th Street NE, Washington, DC 20017**

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) **3418 9th Street NE WDC 20017 (202) 526-4848**

Name and title of authorized representative **Lavinia Wohlfarth, President**

Signature of representative Lavinia Wohlfarth Date **10/19/2015**

Name and telephone of author of application **Lavinia Wohlfarth (202) 297-1125**

Architectural style(s) \_\_\_\_\_

TD  
11/3/15  
#16-01

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

**1. Name of Property**Historic name:   The King David Masonic Lodge No. 28  Other names/site number:   Most Worshipful St. John's Grande Lodge; Brookland Masonic Temple  

Name of related multiple property listing:

  N/A  

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**2. Location**Street & number:   3501 12<sup>th</sup> and Monroe Streets, N.E.  City or town:   Washington   State:   DC   County:   001 District of Columbia  Not For Publication: ☐Vicinity: ☐**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this        nomination        request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property        meets        does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

       **national**             **statewide**             **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

       **A**             **B**             **C**             **D**

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**Signature of certifying official/Title:****Date**

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**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

Name of Property \_\_\_\_\_

County and State \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of commenting official:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Title :**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government**

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Name of Property \_\_\_\_\_

County and State \_\_\_\_\_

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☒

District

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

0

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

0

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

social/meeting hall

social/civic

government/post office

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

commerce/specialty store

social/meeting hall

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian/Renaissance

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

foundation: concrete  
walls: brick  
roof: slag  
other: stone

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph/Narrative Description

The King David Lodge No. 28 is a three story structure situated on a corner lot in Brookland, a NE suburb of Washington, D.C. The entrance to the building is on 12<sup>th</sup> Street. There are seven sets of windows along Monroe Street, and three sets of windows along the 12<sup>th</sup> Street side of building. Not only does Brookland carry its own interesting story centered around Brooks Mansion, but a wealth of historic figures either made their home or lived here for an important period of their lives.

Organized in 1893 as a community institution, the King David Lodge acquired a site in 1909 at 3501 on the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Monroe Street, N.E., and moved from its original location from 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Michigan Avenue, N.E.. “A ‘handsome Masonic edifice of three stories’ was planned – ‘the first floor to be occupied by store rooms, the second by an entertainment hall, and

Name of Property

County and State

the third to be used for lodge purposes.”<sup>1</sup> In a ceremony on October 18, 1911 the cornerstone was laid by Grand Master J. Claude Keiper.

The red brick building was one of the earliest semi-public buildings in Brookland. The foundation of the lodge is concrete, with a slag roof. The building has a rectangular plan measuring approximately 52’ x 124.’ It is a fine vernacular interpretation of Second Renaissance Revival style. From 1890-1920, the Second Renaissance Revival was a movement away from the complex and eclectic Victorian styles to a more ordered mode of expression.<sup>2</sup>

Each floor of the lodge is delineated by a stone belt course. The first floor is distinguished by display shop windows and two pedimented entrances, serving a commercial function. Second story design elements – large windows topped by rounded blind arches and keystones illustrate this floor’s utilization as an entertainment hall. The third story windows are small, due to the more private nature of the lodge activities. The whole building is elegantly capped by a projecting cornice with brick modillions. String courses of horizontally positioned stones accentuate the building’s separation of floors.<sup>3</sup>

Formal stylistic components emphasize its importance within the community as a meeting place. The location on the corner of two principal thoroughfares serves as a physical anchor for the neighborhood commercial center, a psychological point of reference for Brookland citizens and reminder of role which the King David Lodge played in social life of community.<sup>4</sup>

Originally it served the Masonic community but also housed the Brookland Post Office on the ground floor after this post office moved from the corner of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Bunker Hill Road in 1920. On the second floor was a hall with a stage, suitable for community gatherings, dances, and theatrical performances. This made the Masonic hall the social center for many Brookland citizens.<sup>5</sup>

Prince Hall Freemasonry has been practiced in Washington, D.C. since June 6, 1825. Freemasonry can be traced back to England during 1723. No modern day institution has done more for uplifting society and the human race than freemasonry; whose noble incentives have made it a power for untold good. Prince Hall Freemasonry has greatly influenced the advancement of African Americans. Freemasonry had “the most rapid and extensive migration of any society, philosophy, or creed in history; and that, too, without any missionary zeal or proselytizing.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Feeley, Jr., John J. and Rosie Dempsey, *Images of America: Brookland* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 50.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>6</sup> Coil, Henry Wilson, *The Encyclopedia Americana*, International Edition, Vol. 18 (Danbury, Connecticut: The American Corporation, 1980), 387.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

The first lodge in the country dates to 1733 in Boston, and one hundred more lodges were organized over the next forty years. There have been 13 presidents that were Masons, and in 1959, a banner year for Masons, 5 out of 9 Supreme Court justices, 54 out of 96 senators, 189 out of 430 representatives, 6 out of 11 cabinet members, and 29 out of 49 governors were Masons.<sup>7</sup>

This building became a focal point for neighborhood activity as Brookland's population grew, and today serves as a reminder of the pivotal role the members of the lodge had within the community. This property has historic integrity and has not moved from its original location. There was a fire in the hardware store that occupies the lower level of the building in 1979, but only the store burned down; the rest of the building was not affected.

\_\_\_\_\_  
<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 388.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ 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.
- ☒ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Criterion D

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Period of Significance**

1893-present  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1909

1911  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

Freemasons  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Name of Property

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County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The King David Masonic Temple is historically significant for both its association with the Masons and for its architectural influence over the development of Brookland, a suburb of Washington, D.C., in the early 1900's. The Masonic Temple has served as a prominent mark and boundary for Brookland's mainstreet, and has been used as a meeting hall for the oldest fraternity in the world known as the Masons. With only a few minor repairs and renovations, this building has been well preserved for the most part. Currently it also contributes to the local economy by housing a neighborhood hardware store. The architectural style of the temple is of significant importance, for as a Second Renaissance Revival structure, it expresses a sense of power, integrity, and order.<sup>8</sup>

Brookland, a Northeast suburb of Washington, D.C., was founded in 1887 when Brooks Mansion, a country estate, was sold.<sup>9</sup> Brookland has an elevation of two hundred feet above the Potomac River at high tide. Brooks Mansion was the central hub of the community. In 1835, Brooks Mansion, which was then referred to as Bellair, was constructed as a plantation home in the Greek Revival style for Colonel Jehiel, an attorney, and Anne Queen Brooks. There was an orchard, oak trees, greenhouse and gardens on the property and Jackson Downing heavily influenced the construction. When Colonel Brooks died in 1886, and with the growth of trolley cars in the area, the suburb was named after him.

With the advancement of the railroad in 1893, growth in Brookland flourished. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company laid tracks through the Brooks estate and created Brooks Station by Bunker Hill Road, which would later be called Michigan Avenue. The single family homes in Brookland were appealing to middle class families. The community atmosphere was further strengthened by the schools, churches and commercial buildings in the small area.

In September 1893, fifteen community members received an allowance to form a masonic lodge in Brookland, to be known as King David Lodge No. 28. As the number of masonic members outgrew the original meeting place of the town hall, a new site was selected in 1901, a few blocks north of The Catholic University of America, on the outskirts of Washington, D.C. This particular lodge was headed by Grand Master J. Claude Keiper, who chose the site and initiated the building's construction in 1911. The construction of the Masonic Temple was very influential upon the Brookland region. Originally, the railroad station marked the community's commercial center, but after the Masonic lodge was built, the commercial center moved to what is now Twelfth Street. This is believed to be a result of the presence of St. Anthony's Church, which is located at the southeast corner of the 12<sup>th</sup> and Monroe intersection. The Masons wished

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<sup>8</sup> Wohlfarth, Lavinia. Interview. 8 Nov. 2012.

<sup>9</sup> McDaniel, George W., and John N. Pearce, Images of Brookland: The History and Architecture of a Washington Suburb (Washington, D.C.: George Washington University, 1982), 3.

Name of Property

County and State

to locate their temple opposite this neighborhood landmark, which initiated the growth of the commercial businesses along 12<sup>th</sup> street. The addition of the U.S. Post Office within the ground floor of the temple also contributed to the development of the 12<sup>th</sup> Street area and encouraged the repaving of the mainstreet.<sup>10</sup>

On September 22, 1893 Grand Master L. Cabell Williamson, upon the recommendation of Myron M. Parker Lodge, No. 27 (Takoma Park), granted a dispensation to fifteen Master Masons to form a lodge in Brookland, to be known as King David Lodge. By the same instrument he appointed Thomas G. Carmick to be the first Master, George F. Erdman to be the first Senior Warden, and William H. Stalee to be the first Junior Warden.

On November 8, 1893, at the annual communication of the Grand Lodge, upon proper application, a charter was ordered to issue to King David Lodge, No. 28, to hold its meetings in Brookland, D. C., and on December 5, 1893, the Grand Master, assisted by the other officers of the Grand Lodge, constituted the new lodge and installed the officers, after which, according to the official account of the affair, the Grand Lodge, members of King David Lodge, and a very large assembly of brethren, were entertained by the ladies of Brookland with an elaborate banquet which had been carefully prepared.

Twelve names appear on the petition for charter and are as follows: Thomas G. Carmick, George F. Erdman, William H. Stalee, Hiram J. Penrod, J. L. Sherwood, John B. Lord, William S. Daniels. Christian H. Etz, Philip W. Roth, Arthur F. Kinnan, Peter H. Johnston, and Joseph Phillips. The roster of officers December 9, 1893, was as follows: Thomas G. Carmick, George F. Erdman, William H. Stalee, C. H. Etz, Secretary; John B. Lord, Treasurer; J. L. Sherwood, S. D.; H. J. Penrod, J. D.; A. F. Kinnan, S. S.; Wm. S. Daniels, J. S.; Peter H. Johnston, Tiler, and Joseph Phillips, Marshal. The officers for the centennial year were: Isaac S. Pennybacker, W. M.; William C. Parry, S. W., and Laird L. Neal, J. W.<sup>11</sup>

The growth of the Order in the District flourished with fourteen chapters in all being chartered since 1893, twelve of which are still thriving and known, besides the above, as Bethlehem, No. 7; Mizpah, No. 8; Areme, No. 10; Brookland, No. 11; Takoma, No. 12; Temple, No. 13, and Cathedral, No. 14, with an aggregate membership of 3,113 at the last report on October 31, 1910. Adah, No. 6, chartered in 1896, became extinct in a few years, was later revived with the No. 9, but passed away again after a brief period.

<sup>10</sup> McDaniel, George W., and John N. Pearce, Images of Brookland: The History and Architecture of a Washington Suburb (Washington, D.C.: George Washington University, 1982), 3.

<sup>11</sup> Harper, Kenton N., History of the Grand Lodge and of Freemasonry in the District of Columbia, (Whitefish, Montana: Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2003), 241.

Name of Property

County and State

More government workers flocked to the Brookland area in the 1910s and 1920s, and gradually blacks replaced whites in the community, and in D.C. as a whole.<sup>12</sup> Brookland was originally segregated. In 1892 the population consisted of 461 whites and no blacks. However, this had changed by the mid-1890s.<sup>13</sup> The increase of the District's African American population contributed to growth in Brookland. During the 1940s middle and upper class blacks flocked to Brookland. Prominent black architects designed homes in the community, further illustrating the shift in integration.

While Brookland started as a small rural village it grew into a very racially integrated and urban community. The Masonic hall was one of the first buildings built in Brookland, along with the old Brookland School, which is now Luke C. Moore Academy, and Engine Company No. 17 (previously Chemical Company No. 4). All three of these properties are located within a block of each other. The universities in the area (Catholic University of America and Trinity College) also helped to foster a sense of community and served as anchors in the area, and encouraged growth.<sup>14</sup>

Many notable African American citizens called Brookland their home at one point. Deans, department heads, even a college president, as well as other professionals in academia and government officials resided there. Some of these notables also include Lorraine Hansberry author of "Raisin in the Sun;" Harlem Renaissance poet Sterling Brown, and renowned African American painter Lois Mailou Jones. In the 1930s, the African American elite employed Howard University trained architects to construct their homes. The 1950s saw a time when athletes were picked to be college and professional basketball players. Brookland citizens were also civil rights activists in the 1960s and 1970s especially fighting against segregation, equality in public education. The preservation of Brooks Mansion was lobbied for by local citizens.

The Masons have been an enormous attribute to society and had a great deal of influence on the development of Brookland. There are many masonic temples located in Washington, D.C. and the rest of the nation. In 1783 a lodge was formed in Alexandria, VA, chartered from the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. President George Washington was its charter master. In 1789, the second lodge in the D.C. area was formed. Lodge No. 9 of Georgetown, MD was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Maryland. In 1793 the nine master masons constructing the U.S. Capitol petitioned Lodge No. 9. The Grand Lodge of Maryland thereafter chartered Federal Lodge No. 15. In 1811, five out of the six D.C. lodges joined to form the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, which consisted of Federal Lodge No. 1 (Maryland charter 1793), Brooke Lodge No. 2 (Virginia 1796), Columbia Lodge No. 3 (Maryland 1802), Naval Lodge No. 4 (Maryland 1805), and Potomac Lodge No. 5 (Maryland 1806). The Grand Lodge was able to create new lodges in the D.C. area.

<sup>12</sup> McDaniel, George W., and John N. Pearce, *Images of Brookland: The History and Architecture of a Washington Suburb* (Washington, D.C.: George Washington University, 1982), 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>14</sup> Feeley, Jr., John J. and Rosie Dempsey, *Images of America: Brookland* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 7.

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Name of Property

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County and State

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

By special permission of the Grand Lodge, the first meetings of the King David Lodge were held in the Town Hall, however as the group gained rapidly both in numerical strength and influence, the need for new and larger accommodations for the lodge became clear. According to the history of the Grand Lodge and of Freemasonry in the District of Columbia, the lodge, “through the generosity of Bro. John B. Lord, Treasurer and Trustee, and who in 1909 celebrated his fiftieth anniversary as a Master Mason, has acquired an attractive site on the corner of Twelfth and Monroe Streets, on which plans are now being perfected to erect a handsome Masonic edifice of three stories, the first to be occupied by store rooms, the second by an entertainment hall, and the third to be used for lodge purposes.”<sup>15</sup>

At the time of the King David Lodge’s formation, there were only two other Lodges in Washington, D.C. - the new home of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite for the Southern Jurisdiction, on Sixteenth Street, N. W., the M. M. Parker Lodge Building, on Eighth Street, near F street, N. E.; and the King David Lodge Building, at Brookland, D. C.<sup>16</sup>

Freemasonry in Washington, D.C. is associated with the history of Washington building, for an important function of freemasonry has been the laying of cornerstones. This custom dates back to medieval ceremonies. This cornerstone laying ceremony became symbolic as time passed, as it is part of the secret Masonic ritual. These ceremonies in Washington, D.C. date back to the founding of the city. On April 15, 1791, the Alexandria Lodge set the first of the boundary stones that formed the District. Ceremonies also took place for the White House in 1792, the Capitol in 1793, St. John’s Church in 1815, the Smithsonian Institution in 1847 and the Washington Monument in 1848.

The local chapter of the Masons in Brookland helped to unite the community and make it a stronger neighborhood.<sup>17</sup> “‘Freemasonry has exercised a greater influence upon the establishment and development of this (the American) Government than any other single institution. Neither general historians nor the members of the Fraternity since the days of the first Constitutional Conventions have realized how much the United States of America owes to Freemasonry, and how great a part it played in the birth of the nation and the establishment of the landmarks of that civilization.’ – Heaton, Masonic Membership of the Founding Fathers.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Wohlfarth, Lavinia. Interview. 8 Nov. 2012.

<sup>16</sup> Harper, Kenton N., History of the Grand Lodge and of Freemasonry in the District of Columbia, (Whitefish, Montana: Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2003), 241.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Blackwell, Russell, The Architects of America: How the Freemasons Designed the Republic (New York: Algora Publishing, 2012), 143.

Name of Property

County and State

The Masons are the oldest, formally organized fraternity in world history. They are a group of individuals who are sound in mind and body, and believe in God. They also believe that all men and women are children of God, since He is the Creator. Other Masonic beliefs include the affirmation that each person must take responsibility for their own life and actions. They strongly believe that no one has the right to interfere or impose upon another's beliefs or philosophies. Masons think each person must learn and practice self-control, that faith must be the center of one's life, and that everyone has the responsibility to be a good citizen and to make the world a better place to live. Honor, integrity, and community service are essential to Masonic life.<sup>19</sup> "No institution of ancient or modern times has done more for the uplifting of the human race and the upbuilding of what is known as society, than Freemasonry. The secret order of Freemasonry is one of the most inspiring and elevating influences of civilization and its power for good is as limitless as its lessons are far reaching."<sup>20</sup>

Freemasonry is described as "a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols"<sup>21</sup> Masons are non political and their goals have been to "promote the welfare and dignity of mankind through constructive brotherhood."<sup>22</sup> Freemasonry is "an oath-bound fraternal order of men, originally deriving from the medieval fraternity of operative stonemasons. Generally conceded primacy among fraternal orders, it is disseminated over the civilized world. It has no central authority, being divided into more than 100 grand jurisdictions, each autonomous, in addition to which there are a number of large and widespread concordant organizations or so-called higher degrees. The main stem, variously referred to as Craft, York, Symbolic or Blue Masonry, consists of three degrees (Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason); it is directly descended from the fraternity and lodges of operative stonemasons and cathedral builders of the Middle Ages; which gradually over some 200 years lost their operative character and became entirely speculative. Freemasonry is cosmopolitan and though selective in membership, somewhat democratic, bearing upon its rolls the names of noblemen, statesmen, scholars, and others of high rank, along with a much larger number of the middle class. It admits men of every nationality, religion, creed, and political persuasion; the qualifications for membership are few, such as belief in a Supreme Being, good moral character, a fair degree of intelligence, and absence of injury or defect in body which would prevent the candidate from performing his duties as a Mason. By long-continuing custom, the society refraining from solicitation of candidates; all who enter must do so of their own free will and accord. The essential teachings of the craft are few and simple, illustrated by the symbolism of such working tools as the plumb, square, level, and compasses, though extensive embellishments and refinements have been adopted in higher degrees and are often emphasized in Masonic

<sup>19</sup> Wohlfarth, Lavinia. Interview. 8 Nov. 2012.

<sup>20</sup> Grimshaw, William H., *History of Freemasonry: Among the Colored People in North America* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1903), ix.

<sup>21</sup> Walker, Wendell K., *Collier's Encyclopedia* (New York: MacMillan Education Corporation, 1979), 503.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Name of Property

County and State

literature; as a result the doctrine has become in places highly spiritual, though the fraternity rejects all suggestion that it is a religion or rivals any religious sect.<sup>23</sup>

The masonic lifestyle has attracted many important, prestigious, and eminent men that can justify the worthiness of the fraternity. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, and John Hancock all called themselves Masons. As can be seen, the addition of these assets to the Brookland community did a great service in improving the area and its citizenry.<sup>24</sup> Some notable black Masons include former Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry, the first African American U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, and musician Duke Ellington.

Not only is the masonic historical group a significant societal benefit, but the Second Renaissance Revival building itself is of great aesthetic value to the Brookland community. Renaissance, or Second Renaissance Revival, was a movement away from the eclectic and complex Victorian styles to a more ordered mode of expression. It was often used for larger public buildings, emphasizing scale and volume. The architecture of this particular building illustrates its use as a civic building. The structure is sited prominently on the corner, visible from the mainstreet, and it is taller than the other buildings in the vicinity. The lodge's architectural style dominates and contrasts with those of the other smaller retail and commercial spaces.<sup>25</sup>

Since 1911, the structure has undergone few changes. The ground floor changed from a U.S. Post Office to the Brookland Hardware store. In 1927, a request was proposed for the removal of the double hung windows on the second floor, to the now existing plate glass windows. A large store show window was also an addition from the original plan. However, despite these small changes, the Masonic Temple still remains as an anchor for the commercial center of the Brookland mainstreet.<sup>26</sup>

African American masons bought the lodge in 1926. Presently however, the Brookland Masonic temple is owned by a rather obscure, clandestine group. There are different types of lodges, some for whites, some for blacks, and some are more secretive than others – this lodge falls into the latter category. Prince Hall Masons, which are traditionally African American, do not recognize the lodge, nor is the lodge recognized by the Masonic Grand Lodge (traditionally Caucasian masons), even though the lodge is currently in use for meetings.

Prince Hall was the pioneer of African American masonry yet not a lot is known definitively about his life. He was born in Bridgetown, Barbados, British West Indies, in 1748, and he died in 1807. Rumored to have been born to a white father, Englishman Thomas Prince Hall, and free mulatto mother “of French descent” his family fled for America to escape the trouble in

<sup>23</sup> Coil, Henry Wilson, *The Encyclopedia Americana*, International Edition, Vol. 18 (Danbury, Connecticut: The American Corporation, 1980), 386.

<sup>24</sup> Wohlfarth, Lavinia. Interview. 8 Nov. 2012.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

Name of Property

County and State

Barbados.<sup>27</sup> Hall was a Methodist minister at one point, and established a leather dressing shop in Boston. Active in the church and his community, Hall was referred to as “the leading African in Boston.”<sup>28</sup>

In 1765, Hall came to Boston and by 25, was a property owner and voting citizen. During the British Embargo and occupation of Boston on March 6, 1773, Prince Hall along with fourteen other blacks were initiated into the craft by Irish Military Lodge No. 441, a British military lodge attached to the 38<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot. Hall’s first African Lodge No. 1 was created one month before the Battle of Lexington, and was the first organized body of black Masons in the country. The hall grew and he became a Grand Master in 1791. Hall was initiated into Freemasonry in 1775 and joined the Revolutionary Army in February of 1776. Freemasons thought their lodges were not merely fraternal gathering places but models of the universe. Hall was the founding Grand Master of the African Lodge and tried to transform the secret practices, signs and symbols of the Masonic temple into a template for race consciousness. He was a strong advocate for education for blacks. In 1784 black Masons were granted a charter from the “Modern” Grand Lodge in England to meet as African Lodge, No. 459. Prince Hall was the first Master of this lodge. Hall chartered lodges in Rhode Island and Philadelphia as well. Once Prince Hall died, African-American Masons decided to honor him by calling their organization Prince Hall Freemasonry.<sup>29</sup>

At the time of the American Revolution there were only about 600 African Americans in Boston. After 1827 when Prince Hall grand lodges declared independence from other Masons, lodges were founded in Maryland in 1845, New Jersey in 1848, Ohio on 1849 and California in 1855. Between 1917 and 1920, Freemasonry in America grew by approximately 25% and more than 100,000 members were initiated every year throughout the 1920s.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Brooks, Joanna, “Prince Hall, Freemasonry, and Genealogy” *African American Review* 34, no. 2 (2000): 200.

<sup>28</sup> Tabbert, Mark A., *American Freemasons* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 38.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 168.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Blackwell, Russell. *The Architects of America: How the Freemasons Designed the Republic*. (New York: Algora Publishing, 2012).

Brooks, Joanna. "Prince Hall, Freemasonry, and Genealogy." *African American Review* 34, no. 2 (2000): 197-216.

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Feeley, Jr., John J. and Rosie Dempsey. *Images of America: Brookland*. (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011).

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Walker, Wendell K. *Collier's Encyclopedia*. (New York: MacMillan Education Corporation, 1979).

Wohlfarth, Lavinia. Interview. 8 Nov. 2012.

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### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- \_\_\_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- \_\_\_ previously listed in the National Register
- \_\_\_ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- \_\_\_ designated a National Historic Landmark
- \_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

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Name of Property

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County and State

\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

\_\_\_\_ State Historic Preservation Office

\_\_\_\_ Other State agency

\_\_\_\_ Federal agency

\_\_\_\_ Local government

\_\_\_\_ University

\_\_\_\_ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** \_\_\_\_\_

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927    or    ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Easting: \_\_\_\_\_ Northing: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Property

County and State

|          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Square 3928, Lot 805

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the masonic hall.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Kiren Jahangeer, Graduate Student  
organization: George Mason University  
street & number: 9930 Wood Wren Court  
city or town: Fairfax state: VA zip code: 22032  
e-mail: kiren610@gmail.com  
telephone: 703-967-2397  
date: 3/30/2013

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs

Name of Property

County and State

to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: The King David Masonic Lodge No. 28

City or Vicinity: Washington

County: 001 District of Columbia State: DC

Photographer:

Photo from: Feeley, Jr., John J. and Rosie Dempsey. Images of America: Brookland. (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011).

Date Photographed: 1925

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Image of The King David Masonic Lodge No. 28 in 1925

1 of \_2\_.

Name of Property: The King David Masonic Lodge No. 28

City or Vicinity: Washington

County: 001 District of Columbia State: DC

Photographer: Kiren Jahangeer

Date Photographed: November 8, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Image of The King David Masonic Lodge No. 28 in 2012

2 of \_2\_.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.





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