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**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD  
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

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Landmark/District: **Kingman Park Historic District** (x) Agenda  
Address: **Kingman Park Triangle Park**  
**(21<sup>st</sup> Street, Oklahoma Avenue and D Street NE)**

Meeting Date: December 16, 2021 ( ) Addition  
Case Number: 21-435 (x) Concept

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The applicant, Friends of Kingman Park (FOKP), returns to the Board for on-going conceptual design review for a sculptural installation (SWEPT YARD) for the triangle park at 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Oklahoma Avenue and D Street NE in the Kingman Park Historic District. When presented in July, the applicants were seeking comments on the project which they had submitted as part of a grant application to the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (CAH). The CAH has since awarded the grant to undertake the installation and the applicants are returning with a revised proposal, based on comments from the Board.

As presented in July, artists Curry Hackett (Wayside Studio) and Patrick McDonough presented a three-part installation proposal for Kingman Park meant to encourage gathering, interaction and contemplation. The three-part plan included an arched gateway marking an entry point to the park; seating consisting of a pair of curved and tiered metal benches facing each other; and a series of historical “portals” or upright panels interspersed along the seating.

In its review of the project, HPO and the Board considered the relationship of the park and the proposed installation to the historic character of Kingman Park—defined by its uniform collection of two-story rowhouses, one-story open front porches, and planted, unfenced front yards—which offer long, open views up and down the streetscapes. The triangle park is a simple, open space which, like the front yards of the houses, allow for views over and across it. Based upon this evaluation, the Board suggested that revisions be made to reduce the scope and scale of the installation, particularly in terms of the number and height of the narrative panels and the scale and treatment of the entry portal. The Board also recommended that the installation be better “grounded” on the site, and that future maintenance be considered.

**Revised Proposal**

The revised plan consists of a sinuous line of disconnected benches arranged in three different heights and configurations, interspersed by narrative thresholds. The arrangement of benches, which essentially wraps itself around the center of the park with the Kingman Park sign in the middle, is set within a bed of planted ground cover. This planted bed is framed by an edge and follows the curving arrangement of the benches. The revised plan has eliminated the entry arch in its entirety, has reduced the height of the benches, and has re-designed the historical “portals” as narrative “thresholds.”

No information is provided on the nature of the historical “thresholds” nor on the materials to be used for the benches and thresholds. The material selection will be dependent upon availability.

### **Evaluation**

The revised scheme reduces the overall height and scale of the proposed installation, offering a more open view to and from the surrounding streets of Kingman Park. The entry portal and the tall historical “portals” have all been removed. The two, continuous, four-tiered benches have been replaced with two and three-tiered benches that are interspersed by even lower “stage” benches and by the narrative “thresholds.” The installation is contained within a planted bed that roots the installation to its site.

The installation has been reduced in overall size and scale as suggested and the revised proposal is in keeping with the character of Kingman Park. The planted bed helps to ground the installation and will help with future maintenance. Alternative treatments – such as pea gravel or other unplanted material – might be worthy of consideration as requiring less maintenance and standing up better to heavy public use.

### **Recommendation**

*HPO recommends that the Board approve the project in concept and delegate any further review to staff as the applicants move through the next phases of the review process with the Commission of Fine Arts, Public Space Committee and other entities, as necessary.*