



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3C
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS • CLEVELAND PARK
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04- Beau Finley; 05- Emma Hersh; 06-Angela Bradbery
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ANC3C Resolution 2020-001

**Regarding a Historic Preservation Review Board Application (HPA 20-095) for
Washington International School**

Whereas, Washington International School (WIS), 3100 Macomb Street, has filed for concept approval with the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) for a new academic building; and

Whereas, WIS is located on a 20.6 acre D.C. landmark, which the Mayor's gent has described as "one of D.C.'s unique cultural assets" and "extraordinarily rare and important architectural and landscape resource" (order in re. The Tregaron Estate, March 30, 2006); and

Whereas, development at Tregaron is subject to a Mayor's Agent decision in 2006 that approved a subdivision for eight houses (8), only two (2) of which were built, in exchange for a tri-partite agreement that ten (10) acres would be conserved in perpetuity for community use and enjoyment, and a detailed list of additional benefits and responsibilities accruing to the parties; and

Whereas, the 2006 Mayor's Agent Order also approved new construction for WIS, including a soccer field and adjacent ground level basketball court, but created an easement zone of open space from the western property line across the rear lawn and around the mansion to the east that was to remain open, conserved space; and

Whereas, on July 26, 2018 the Mayor's Agent decided that an application submitted by WIS to the HPRB, and unanimously rejected by the board, to build a new 21,500 square foot academic building on the north ridge was not a project of special merit, (in the matter of: Washington International School. July 26, 2018); and

Whereas, in that order the Mayor's Agent quoted the May 23, 2017 HPRB staff report, explaining that prior WIS construction proposals were approved "because they were organized along the axis of the historic service buildings in the zone where construction was intended by Platt [Charles Platt, the noted architect of Tregaron], because they had limited or no visibility from the mansion or from the exterior of the property, and they did not intrude on areas that were original important landscape or wooded buffer zones"; and

Whereas, WIS continues to seek to improve its facilities to enhance its educational program which is highly valued by its students and parents, but which poses a substantial challenge on the Tregaron landmark; and

Whereas, the WIS proposal includes a 42,000 square foot building that would be partially below ground and would be sited to the west of the mansion where the circular service court and dacha are located and extending to the south into a portion of the easement area; and

Whereas, the dacha, which has long been acknowledged to be inconsistent with the landmark and ill-sited, would be relocated to a wooded, secluded area to the east of the mansion; and

Whereas, the original 4-square garden that was predominately covered by the dacha would be reopened, although its use and relationship to the greenhouse and the property would be altered by raising it above ground to better serve the proposed academic building that would surround it on two (2) sides; and

Whereas, the proposed academic building, which would be closer to the mansion than the dacha, would appear as two wings beginning at the academic way and terminating near the penalty area of the southern end of the soccer field; and

Whereas, the northern wing would feature a curvilinear wall to mask that the floor levels in the academic building are not the same as the residential floor levels in the mansion; and

Whereas, the length of the wings vary depending on the story level and with an open subterranean level extending the farthest into the rear lawn and the easement; and

Whereas, the height of the proposed building is 42 feet from the soccer level and including the penthouse level in comparison to the mansion's height of 49 feet to the ridge or roof and 33 feet to the eaves; and

Whereas, the 2006 Mayor's Agent Order approved and required expansion of a cultural landscape report for the Tregaron landmark, which serves as guidance for restoring and rehabilitating the property, and the plan includes a planted west grove near the proposed southern wing:

Be it resolved that Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3C (ANC 3C) supports WIS' goal of improving its facilities and supports the goal of protecting the historic landmark, and congratulates the school and the Tregaron conservancy on almost two decades of collaboration to further both distinct and mutual goals;

Be it resolved that ANC 3C believes there is an unusual amount of guidance on future development at Tregaron based on the Mayor's Agent Orders, and that the included landscaping descriptions should be a significant feature in the proposal and in the assessment of the proposal's compatibility with the landmark;

Be it resolved that ANC 3C supports moving the dacha and appreciates the intention to expose the 4-square garden, but urges the applicant to work with the historic preservation office to better incorporate the garden into the site and restore features of the garden;

Be it resolved that ANC 3C believes the proposed location although very close to the mansion is not inherently inconsistent with the landmark, but in order to ensure the project's compatibility and the prominence of the mansion the HPRB may want to address its height and simplify the massing, and explore whether an excavated feature in the easement area is an appropriate choice;

Be it resolved that the Chair and the Commissioner 3C09 are authorized to represent the commission on this matter.

Attested by



Nancy J. MacWood
Chair, on February 19, 2020

This resolution was approved by a voice vote on February 19, 2020 at a scheduled and noticed public meeting of ANC 3C at which a quorum (a minimum of 5 of 9 commissioners) was present.