



Fairfax County Architectural Review Board

12055 Government Center Parkway
Suite 730
c/o ARB Administrator
Fairfax, VA 22035

November 13, 2021

Walter L. Alcorn,
Hunter Mill District Supervisor
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
1801 Cameron Glen Drive
Reston, VA 20190

George Hadjikyriakou
Association President
Lake Anne of Reston
Condominium Association
Reston, VA 20190

Supervisor Alcorn & Mr. Hadjikyriakou,

As the Chairman of the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board (ARB), I am writing to express the ARB's concerns over the findings of the Lake Anne Infrastructure Cursory Assessment Report, completed this September for the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (FCDPWES) at the request of Lake Anne Reston Condominium Association (LARCA). The results of the report highlight an unfortunate situation for Lake Anne Village Center, a Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and Fairfax County Historic Overlay District (HOD).

Nationally significant for its social history and architecture, Lake Anne Village Center (Lake Anne) represents the vanguard of our nation's history of planned communities. Showcasing the new town movement, Reston featured social, architectural, and land-use development innovations that would influence planning across the country. As the first village of Reston, Lake Anne represents a first among firsts as the nation's first planned unit community zone, and through its reliance on Reston's founder's seven goals, Lake Anne embodies a history to design and develop an inclusive and lived-in community. While this legacy continues throughout the continued development of Reston, it is hallmarked through the unique architectural gem that is Lake Anne, which the County recognized as a HOD in 1984.

Pursuant to Section 8103.4 of the Zoning Ordinance, the purpose of the ARB is to administer the regulations of HODs (Section 3101) and to advise and assist the Board of Supervisors in its efforts to preserve and protect historic, architectural, and archaeological resources in Fairfax County. The recent report represents a call for action to protect a historic and architectural landmark that is both valuable and vulnerable, and as stewards of the County's heritage resources, we have an opportunity to preserve and enhance Lake Anne for future generations.

The cursory Assessment Report conducted by Samaha Associates, P.C. recognizes Lake Anne Village Center as a Historic District listed in the NRHP and notes that the “site has restrictions and protections preserving the history that composes Lake Anne[;]” however, the report does not evaluate those recommendations within the appropriate context of historic preservation and Lake Anne’s designation as a HOD, specifically the relevant standards and guidelines that would aid LACRA in future initiatives to address current conditions in a manner that is responsive to resident needs and preservation of a HOD. Additionally, Fairfax County adopted the 2018 Uniform Statewide Building Code, effective July 1, 2021, Part II of which is the 2018 Virginia Existing Building Code; however, the recent report does not address which building code was used in identifying compliance issues and proposed remedies. This is particularly relevant as the International Existing Building Code accommodations for existing buildings equally apply to historic buildings like Lake Anne. Further, the report does not make recommendations for financial preservation incentives potentially available to National Register properties, such as grants, and critically, Federal and State Rehabilitation Tax Credit Programs.

In response to these deficiencies, the ARB, through the aid of the County’s contracting authorities, has sought quotes for the development of a supplemental report to expand on the cursory Assessment Report. This supplemental report will assess the findings of the original through the lens of historic preservation, including the application of the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, the guidelines the ARB uses when evaluating all land development and construction projects proposed within a HOD, to which many of the identified repairs to Lake Anne would be subject. This information will be critical in aiding in applications submitted for review to the ARB. Additionally, the supplemental report would highlight how the application of these standards could then be utilized to seek financial incentives in the form of tax credits, which would not be available if techniques harmful to Lake Anne’s historic character were utilized. The range of estimates provide suggest such a study would range from \$10,000 to 12,000. While the ARB is willing to lend its support to seeing a supplemental report completed, our limited budget would require us to seek assistance from other sources, including, but not limited to, LARCA, the Department of Planning and Development (DPD); FCDPWES; other County Boards, Authorities, and Commissions; the Board of Supervisors (BOS); and other state and local preservation partners.

More broadly, I highly recommend Fairfax County emphasize training for relevant staff in the updated building codes and their application, specifically the sections for existing and historic buildings as noted above. These sections are less well known among architects and code officials due to a focus on new construction. However, the retention of existing building stock, historic and otherwise is critical to long-term goals of resiliency and sustainability – the greenest building is one that is already built. Moreover, it would be prudent for the County to consider having a code official dedicated to historic buildings like other surrounding municipalities.

In addition to these above efforts, the ARB, with the assistance of DPD staff, have engaged the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) to discuss various opportunities and incentives that LARCA and the County may avail themselves of to assist in allaying the costs and challenges facing future repairs at Lake Anne. These include grant opportunities that LACRA, the County, and others might apply for as well as training opportunities for financial incentives such as tax credits. In concert with these efforts and as part of its efforts to preserve

historic buildings and sites in the County and assist in the review of applications in HODs, the ARB offers its assistance through the expertise of its membership, which includes architects, historians, and experts from other preservation fields. I urge LARCA and the County, where appropriate, to seek our membership's advice and counsel in any initiatives that might be formed to aid Lake Anne.

Invoking "The Dedication of Reston" by Anne Simon, "Reston is sturdy. Belief in the human potential governs its every innovation." Lake Anne is sturdy, and the human potential found in Fairfax County can rise to meet the challenge presented here today. I hope LACRA and the County will rise to this call with the ARB and agree that the protection and preservation of Lake Anne is of importance to the people of Fairfax County.

Should you have any questions or if would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me, or follow up with Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development (FCDPD) staff.

Sincerely,



Christopher Daniel
Chairperson, ARB

Cc: Members, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Barbara Byron, FCDPD
Leanna O'Donnell, FCDPD
Laura Arseneau, FCDPD
Denice Dressel, FCDPD
Christopher S. Herrington, Director, FCDPWES
Cheryl Repetti, Chairman, Fairfax County History Commission
David Edwards, Director, VDHR Community Services Division
Megan Melinat, Director, VDHR Preservation Incentives Division
Elizabeth S. Kostelny, Chief Executive Officer Preservation Virginia,
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