



## **ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3E**

**TENLEYTOWN    AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PARK    FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS**  
**CHEVY CHASE                                      WAKEFIELD                                      FORT GAINES**

c/o Lisner-Louise-Dickson-Hurt Home 5425 Western Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20015

[www.anc3e.org](http://www.anc3e.org)

### **Resolution Opposing Application to Designate Chevy Chase Playground and Field House as a Historic Landmark, HPA 18-08**

**WHEREAS**, *Historic Washington Architecture* (the applicant) has filed an application with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (HPO) seeking historic preservation status for the Chevy Chase Playground and Field House located at 5501 41<sup>st</sup> Street NW (lot 0001 in Square 1744 and lot 0001 in square 1745) in what is commonly referred to as Chevy Chase Park or Livingston Park (the park).

According to the exhaustive application the field house at the park was one of 6 field houses built between 1931 and 1936 utilizing the same design, 5 of which are still standing.

Also, according to the application, the field house was comprehensively renovated and expanded as recently as 2011 and the layout of the parks recreational facilities have been substantially changed numerous times since the park originally opened in 1923.

According to the application Albert Lewis Harris, the architect who designed the Field House, designed numerous buildings in and around Washington DC and Baltimore, MD between 1908 and 1933, many of which are still standing and in use. The recreation center at Palisades Park which was also designed by Albert Harris utilizing the same design not only is still standing but was granted Historic Preservation Status by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) in 2016.<sup>1</sup>

It has been ANC 3E's experience that in many other instances within the boundaries of ANC 3E historic preservation status, or even the threat of historic preservation status, has negatively impacted the flexibility of architects and planners to maximally utilize land with optimal site plans and design buildings for the best possible uses while driving up costs and delaying construction with little to no benefit to users of protected properties.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, based on our assessment of the application, in light of the fact that not only were 6 other identical buildings constructed based on the same plans but 5 of those buildings are still standing and one of those five is not only located in Ward 3 but already

<sup>1</sup>  
<https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Historic%20Landmark%20Palisades%20Playground%20Recreation%20Center%205200%20Sherier%20Place%20NW%20HPA%2017%20037.pdf>

has protected status we believe this status is unnecessary and ANC 3E opposes this application.

Furthermore, this building was just extensively renovated 8 years ago and is very unlikely to require significant modifications in the next couple of decades.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the application's title references both the Field House and the Playground but makes no case whatsoever for preserving the playground – either its layout/site plan or any of the actual equipment therein. In as much as ANC 3E expects HPRB is likely to approve this application we strongly urge HPRB to limit the scope of its approval to the field house only and not preclude any changes to park uses, site plans or designs or subject any future changes to the park to the additional burden of HPRB or HPO review.

ANC 3E approved this resolution at its meeting on October 10, 2019, which was properly noticed and at which a quorum was present. The resolution was approved unanimously by a vote of 0-0-0. Commissioners Jonathan Bender, Greg Ehrhardt, Amy Hall, and Tom Quinn were present.

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ANC 3E  
By Jonathan Bender, Chairperson