



July 18, 2019

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Marnique Heath, Chair
Historical Preservation Review Board (HPRB)
1100 4th Street SW, Suite E650
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VIA email: steve.callcott@dc.gov

RE: HPA 17-07: 201 East Capitol St SE. Amendment of existing nomination to include 1980s wing and interior.

At its regularly scheduled, properly noticed, meeting on July 9, 2019, with a quorum present, Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 6B voted 7-2-0 to send the following comments in regard to the amendment by the DC Preservation League.

ANC 6B Recommends that the Historic Preservation Review Board not amend the existing designation of the Folger Shakespeare Library, at 201 East Capitol St SE, as nominated by the DC Preservation League in application 17-07.

ANC 6B does not make this recommendation lightly. Over the last year and over two different terms, commissioners have become intimately familiar with the existing interiors and exteriors of the Folger Shakespeare Library. We greatly respect both the work of DCPL and the stewardship of the original Paul Cret building by the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Application 17-07 presents the case for extending the period of significance for the existing landmark to 1983, to incorporate both the interior and exteriors of the 1983 Hartman-Cox rear addition. ANC 6B believe this nomination fails to meet the threshold, in this case, of such a designation for multiple reasons. Namely:

- 1) The interiors of the 1983 addition are disjointed from the existing building and in many ways detract from the original landmark and do not meet the extremely high threshold for interior landmarking. Placing a historic designation on the interior space of the addition would unnecessarily hamstring the Folger Shakespeare Library as they work to ensure that their building is can continues to be accessible and available to a broader audience of visitors. **(DC Significance Criteria D, E, F)**
- 2) The exterior of the 1983 addition, while cleaner, functional, and attractive, does not meet the thresholds for landmarks. The rear exterior orientation of the addition simply precludes the building from *significantly* contributing to the characteristics of architectural styles, architecture, building types, construction, engineering, or design of the District of Columbia. **(DC Criteria B, D, E)**

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3) While the work of Hartman-Cox is notable in the District, the portfolio simply does not rise to the level of a master nor is it easy to put that work into a historical perspective. The threshold for work of a master should not be productivity in the District but a body of work that is able to be comprehended and compared within DC and across the country and world. We expect in the future this may be possible with the work of Hartman-Cox but it's not possible now. **(DC Significance Criterion F; DC Historic Perspective)**

4) The addition is simply too young to place into proper perspective. Other landmarked buildings of this age have been standalone buildings of obvious individual significance due to location and use. An addition to a landmark building, whose interior use may change in the future, cannot be properly placed into perspective. **(DC Historic Perspective)**

We thank you for considering our views and giving them great weight.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Commissioner Corey Holman, ANC 6B's Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Committee Chair, at 301-664-4132 or 6b06@anc.dc.gov.

Sincerely,



Chander Jayaraman
Chair, ANC 6B

cc:

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