



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Mr. Jeff Eastman  
Secretary, Urban Design Commission  
900 East Broad Street, Room 500  
Richmond, VA 23219

8 October 2014

Dear Mr. Eastman,

At its 7 October 2014 Quarterly Meeting, the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR) considered the proposed modifications to Lee Circle, part of Monument Avenue. The Monument Avenue Historic District is listed on the Virginia Historic Landmark Register and the National Register of Historic Places, and is a National Historic Landmark.

CAR was given the opportunity to comment on the plans in conjunction with its role specified in Section 114-930.3(d)(2) of the City Code, whereby the CAR may "Assist and advise the city council, the mayor, the chief administrative officer, the planning commission, the board of zoning appeals, property owners and individuals in matters involving historic resources relating to appropriate land use, zoning, and other issues". The CAR relays its comments through this letter, and will do so in person through its representative to the Urban Design Committee which meets 9 October.

The proposed plans were presented by Tom Flynn of the City of Richmond, Department of Public Works (DPU); Monument Avenue resident Alice Massie and Monument Avenue Preservation Society (MAPS) President Bill Gallasch were also present. We applaud the DPU's inclusion of neighbors in their design. Discussions with Ms. Massie and Mr. Gallasch helped us to understand the history of traffic and pedestrian safety issues at Lee Circle.

While we would prefer that Lee Circle remain unaltered, we recognize that the number of automobile and pedestrian accidents in this location remains unacceptably high, despite many years of efforts including increased signage and clear lane painting, all aimed at addressing the traffic issues without making physical changes at the circle. Input from neighbors helped greatly in understanding the history of attempts to address the traffic situation at Lee Circle. With that in mind, CAR submits the following recommendations:

- That the constructed modifications reflect sensitive, minimal design.
- That the applicant provides pedestrian access to the central island of the roundabout, as the circle was historically used for a variety of gatherings.
- That, whenever possible, the location and orientation of the proposed crosswalks respect the symmetry of the original plan and strong geometrical relationship to the central circle.
- That the applicant minimizes signage at the intersection.
- That the applicant leave physical remnants of the original design in place (such as curbing materials) so that the original design can be read and, if desired, the alterations may be reversed in the future.
- That the applicant consider implementing lower speeds on Monument Avenue to generally improve safety at all traffic circles.
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Once again, we applaud DPU for its close coordination with neighborhood representatives, and we thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. C. Green". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Bryan Clark Green, Ph.D., LEED AP BC+C  
Chair, Commission of Architectural Review