

Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR

From: Ana Edwards <ourrosewood@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 12:31 AM
To: Robertson, Ellen F. - City Council; rodney@thewiltonco.com; David Johannas; lawmanchem@yahoo.com; egreenfield@rarealtors.com; murthyvg@gmail.com; max.hepp.buchanan@gmail.com; Reid, Lenora G. - DCAO Of Finance And Administration; Newbille, Cynthia I. - City Council; Gray, Kimberly B. - City Council; Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office; Larson, Kristen N. - City Council; Jones, Michael J. - City Council; Addison, Andreas D. - City Council; Hilbert, Chris A. - City Council; Trammell, Reva M. - City Council; Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR; Chen, Kimberly M. - DED; hwilliams@dickinsonwilliams.com; Cyane Crump; Elisabeth Price; Danielle Worthing Porter; Ellen Chapman
Subject: Ordinance 2020-240

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of Richmond City Council,

It is very exciting to see this second ordinance, 2020-240, is before you for a vote and look forward to seeing it passed so that the acquisition of 1305 N. 5th St., a small portion of the original Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground, can go forward. You will see and hear it referred to as Richmond's Second African Burial Ground because it was the one opened after the First African Burial Ground, or "Burial Ground for Negroes" in Shockoe Bottom closed in 1816. What we may never know about the first in terms of who and how many of our African ancestors were interred there, a world of data exists by comparison about the second and the more than 22,000 souls interred there over most of the 19th century.

This city is on a journey to reclaim and reinstitute these burial places of our dead into their properly valued places in our civic and private landscapes. Preservation from further loss and a process for appropriate, skillful, descendant-community-centered stewardship are essential to protecting our at-risk African American cultural resources.

We are also glad to see the preservation and support for improvement and interpretation of such resources have made their way into the city's Richmond300 strategic priorities, including as a centerpiece of the Shockoe Bottom Small Area Master Plan.

Ana Edwards, chair
Sacred Ground Historical Reclamation Project
Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality

Ana F. Edwards Public Historian
M.A. History / Public History of Slavery and Freedom in Early America
Virginia Commonwealth University, Spring 2020

PO Box 23202, Richmond, VA 23223

<https://afedwards.academia.edu/>

SacredGroundProject.net / DefendersFJE.blogspot.com

VaFriendsOfMali.org / VirginiaFriendsofMali.blogspot.com

and Facebook.com/SilverTracksRunningRoses



Virus-free. www.avg.com

Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR

From: LENORA MCQUEEN <lenora.m@prodigy.net>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 9:12 AM
To: Robertson, Ellen F. - City Council; rodney@thewiltonco.com; David Johannas; lawmanchem@yahoo.com; egreenfield@rarealtors.com; murthyvg@gmail.com; max.hepp.buchanan@gmail.com; Reid, Lenora G. - DCAO Of Finance And Administration; Newbille, Cynthia I. - City Council; Gray, Kimberly B. - City Council; Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office; Larson, Kristen N. - City Council; Jones, Michael J. - City Council; Addison, Andreas D. - City Council; Hilbert, Chris A. - City Council; Trammell, Reva M. - City Council; Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR
Cc: Chen, Kimberly M. - DED; hwilliams@dickinsonwilliams.com; Cyane Crump; Elisabeth Price; Danielle Worthing Porter; Ellen Chapman; Ana Edwards
Subject: Re: Support for Ordinance 2020-240
Attachments: 44HE1203_VCRIS_2020-09-29 Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground.pdf

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the City of Richmond Planning Commission, the Honorable Ellen Robertson and the Richmond City Council;

I wish to additionally share important information regarding the history of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground of which 1305 N 5th St. is a small but important part of. The overall burying ground is so much greater in size than the 1.2 acre parcel that is 1305 N 5th St. And though that greater size has nothing to do with the acquisition of the parcel itself., it is important to understand the full history of the burial ground. I ask that you please include the following documents and maps (which includes an official map of the burial ground on record with the Department of Historic Resources included here with my email as an attachment) with my letter of support for ordinance 2020-240 and in the official city of Richmond record regarding this important site. Below are direct links to documents that I ask be included. The documents are too large to included directly in this email letter.

I thank you for your consideration and your support.

Yours truly,

Lenora McQueen

Disappearing the Enslaved: The Destruction and Recovery of Richmond's Second African Burial Ground, Ryan K. Smith
Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum, Volume 27, Number 1, Spring 2020, pp. 17-45
(Article) Published by University of Minnesota Press

https://www.richmondcemeteries.org/wp-content/uploads/Smith_DisappearingtheEnslaved.pdf

https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/127-7231_Shockoe_Hill_Burying_Ground_HD_2020_PIF.pdf



The purple (red-violet) trapezoid indicates the property at 1305 N. 5th St. which is 1.2 acres of the original two-acre 1816 Burying Ground for Free People of Colour and the Burying Ground for Slave. The light purple shape represents the full 31+ acres to which the site grew to accommodate at least 22,000 burials.

On Sunday, December 6, 2020, 10:17:48 PM CST, LENORA MCQUEEN <lenora.m@prodigy.net> wrote:

Dear members of the City of Richmond Planning Commission, the Honorable Ellen Robertson and the Richmond City Council;

I am writing to you in regards to ordinance 2020-240. It is the second ordinance needed for the acquisition of 1305 N. 5th St., which is a portion of the original Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (Richmond's 2nd African Burial Ground). The first ordinance 2020-213 was passed in October, receiving your full support. I am sincerely grateful for the efforts being made by the city to reacquire this very important property, and I ask for your support of ordinance 2020-240.

Yours truly,

Lenora McQueen

Member of the descendant community of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground

October 4, 2020

Re: Ordinance 2020-213

Dear members of the City of Richmond Planning Commission, the Honorable Ellen Robertson and the Richmond City Council;

My 4th great-grandmother Kitty Cary would have been buried in the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground; the now invisible Grave Yard for Free People of Colour and For Slaves at 5th and Hospital Street. She died a little over 160 years ago in the city of Richmond, where she lived in the home of her owner on the south-side of Franklin St., between 6th and 7th. That place today is a parking garage. Elizabeth Fisher, the daughter of her owner wrote a heartfelt letter to her sister Ann in Philadelphia the very same morning that Kitty died in 1857; lovingly, but very sadly informing her sister of the death of their beloved Kitty. The letter brought tears to my eyes as I read of her long illness, and painful death. I was touched by how much love was expressed for her in that letter by Elizabeth. Kitty's daughters who were present were devastated. Her other children and grandchildren unknowing of what had occurred - as they had been sold after the death of their owner a few years prior, splitting up the family. The deceased owner was Elizabeth's father. Elizabeth told of how she had Kitty's body neatly prepared for the grave, "it is what she would have done for me" she said. Kitty was dressed in the garment that she herself had requested for that purpose. Her last words were spoken to her children in an attempt to comfort them as she herself lay dying, seeing them weeping - "Don't cry children, don't cry for me, I am going home" - she breathed her last breath and died.

Elizabeth and her sister Jane who also lived in Richmond intended to follow Kitty's body to the grave the next day. She indicated that their intention was that no respect would be spared for Kitty. My intention also is that no respect should be spared for Kitty, other family members buried there at the burial ground, or for the more than twenty two thousand estimated to have been interred at the Shockoe Hill African Burying at 5th and Hospital Street. In my eyes Kitty holds a place of high honor. And all of those people buried there were probably loved by someone. They were someone's child, someone's mother, someone's father, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, grandparent, grandchild, cousin, husband, wife, friend..... They were someone's someone. They are still someone's someone. They deserve to be honored. They deserve to be remembered. They deserve to have their story told, and no longer hidden. And they deserve to be allowed to rest in peace.

I came to Richmond in October of 2017 to find Kitty (also others in the family). I had only known of the intention of her owner to keep her, the owner being the mother of Elizabeth. I had no idea of what

had actually happened. So I came to Richmond, and I found Kitty. She was in the letter. The excitement I felt when I realized that I could go to the place that she would have been buried. I remember the confusion, and the disappointment upon reaching my destination. I didn't understand the place at all, and I kept thinking that I must be in the wrong place, it can't possibly be this place... And I had hoped that I was in the wrong place. And I left there not knowing until sometime later that it was actually the right place. How sad... That desolate hillside with an abandoned gas station on it and a billboard - It is so disrespectful; with streets, a viaduct, railroad tracks and a highway all run through its grounds. But with all that has happened there, it does not make that place not important. With all that has happened it does not make the people interred there not important. It deserves something better. They deserve something better. Even those whose skeletal remains were obviously moved, and of those who were scattered, they deserve something better, as even today their essence remains.

I have been deeply involved in research uncovering the history of the place where my ancestor Kitty was laid to rest by those who loved her. It has been a horribly sad and disturbing journey seeing the degradation, the disrespect, and the destruction associated with this burial ground. I have no idea if she rests there in peace, or if she fell victim to one of the many atrocities that befell that graveyard. Any number of things may have happened to her, from having her body stolen and used as a medical cadaver, to ending up as street fill. Though even if she herself were untouched, how could she rest in peace? The history of the burial ground is tragic. It's story is yet incomplete, though it is continually unfolding.

The very day after I read that letter for the first time telling of Kitty's death, and while attending a symposium, the President's Commission on Slavery at the University of Virginia, in which I also participated - I learned the first tragic piece of history directly connected to the graveyard. It was a main topic at the symposium - grave robbing for the medical colleges; and this graveyard was one of the main targets. I was absolutely horrified. I later learned of the well at VCU where human remains were thrown away as if they were trash. The medical waste well at VCU that was accidentally uncovered specifically dates to the time of this graveyard. It also dates to the time of Kitty's demise. Grave robbing was only the first of several horrifying pieces of news regarding the history of the burial ground that I learned of. Equally as terrifying as the burial ground's destructive past is its future, as even today high-speed rail and the widening of I-64 threaten to harm it, unless steps are taken to recognize it, acknowledge its full historical boundaries, and protect it. This burial ground is supposed to be a place of eternal rest - a place of honor and memorial, just like at the two burial grounds next to it. The disparity between them is shocking, and quite beyond words.

On any given day a descendant of those buried inside the walls of the Shockoe Hill Cemetery or the Hebrew Cemetery can go and visit the grave of their ancestor which is still to this day lovingly cared for and attended to. That is not true of the African American community who had enslaved ancestors and some who were free people of color and who died between 1816 and 1879 in the city of Richmond. Those ancestors were also buried in the Shockoe Hill Cemetery, but they were interred in the segregated part of that burying ground, which was located outside of the walls. They have been made to appear as if they had simply disappeared, or as if they had never existed at all. I have often wondered when will they who were interred outside of the walls be recognized and honored. When will they be given the peace that they may rest, and that we may rest knowing we have corrected the wrong and are now doing the right thing.

It now appears that a new day may be dawning as this new ordinance(s) is being considered for the acquisition of 1305 N. 5th St., and its inclusion on the Slave Trail. 1305 N. 5th St. is a small portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground but it lies at its very heart. Originally two acres in size, the city approved its expansion to nearly 15 acres in 1850. Later maps suggest an even greater

expansion in time. Research and estimates indicate that more than 22,000 Black Richmonders were buried at this site. The 1305 N. 5th St. property contains all that is left to claim, protect, memorialize and learn from this extraordinary history.

I ask that your vote be in favor of ordinance 2020-213 and the acquisition of 1305 N. 5th Street. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

Lenora McQueen

Member of the descendant community of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground

Snapshot

Date Generated: September 29, 2020

Site Name: Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground
Site Classification: Terrestrial, open air
Year(s): No Data
Site Type(s): Cemetery
Other DHR ID: 127-7231
Temporary Designation: Site 6e-1

Site Evaluation Status

DHR Staff: Potentially Eligible

Locational Information

USGS Quad: RICHMOND
County/Independent City: Richmond (Ind. City)
Physiographic Province: Coastal Plain
Elevation: 130
Aspect: Facing Southeast
Drainage: James
Slope: 2 - 6
Acreage: 31.430
Landform: Sideslope, Terrace, Urban
Ownership Status: Local Govt, Private
Government Entity Name: No Data

Site Components

Component 1

Category: Funerary
Site Type: Cemetery
Cultural Affiliation: African American
DHR Time Period: Antebellum Period
Start Year: No Data
End Year: No Data

Comments: This record has been updated based on historical research provided by Dan Mouer et. al as part of the Preliminary Information Form for the proposed Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District (127-7231). As this is a site in a highly urban context that is difficult to field-verify, this boundary represents the likely historic extent of the cemetery. It does not represent the intact extent of the resource.

August 2020

This site represents the "Grave Yard for Free People of Color and Slaves" identified solely based on historic map analysis. The site was identified based on the Micajah Bates 1835 Plan of the City of Richmond Drawn From Actual Survey and Regional Plans.

February 2018

Bibliographic Information

Bibliography:

Bates, Micajah
1835Plan of the City of Richmond Drawn From Actual Survey and Regional Plans. Electronic document, search.lib.virginia.edu/catalog/uva-lib:1003728#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&xywh=-1404%2C-1453%2C23619%2C17511, accessed January 2018.

Beers, F.W.
1877Map of the City of Richmond. F.W. Beers, Richmond, Virginia. Electronic document, www.loc.gov/item/2005630891, accessed January 2018.
Calhoun, Emily
2013Archaeological and Geoarchaeological Assessment of The Slave and Free Black Burying Ground, I-64 Shockoe Valley Bridge Project, City of

Richmond, Virginia. Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc., Richmond, Virginia

Informant Data:

No Data

CRM Events

Event Type: Other

Project Staff/Notes:

PIF for 127-7231 Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District submitted by Lenora McQueen, Ryan K. Smith, Steve Thompson, Ellen Chapman, and L. Daniel Mouer.

Project Review File Number:

No Data

Sponsoring Organization:

No Data

Organization/Company:

DHR

Investigator:

Jolene Smith

Survey Date:

8/14/2020

Survey Description:

Research and observation as part of the PIF process.

Current Land Use Cemetery

Date of Use

8/14/2020 12:00:00 AM

Comments

This area currently contains extant marked cemeteries (Shockoe Hill and Hebrew Cemetery). It also encompasses since-developed urban land and transit corridors.

Threats to Resource:

Development, Erosion, Neglect, Public Utility Expansion, Transportation Expansion

Site Conditions:

Unknown Portion of Site Destroyed

Survey Strategies:

Historic Map Projection, Observation

Specimens Collected:

No

Specimens Observed, Not Collected:

No

Artifacts Summary and Diagnostics:

No Data

Summary of Specimens Observed, Not Collected:

No Data

Current Curation Repository:

No Data

Permanent Curation Repository:

No Data

Field Notes:

No

Field Notes Repository:

No Data

Photographic Media:

No Data

Survey Reports:

No

Survey Report Information:

No Data

Survey Report Repository:

No Data

DHR Library Reference Number:

No Data

Significance Statement:

Excerpts from the 2020 PIF:

The original core site of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground founded in 1816 (44He1203), for which a request for an extended boundary definition has been submitted to VDHR (Mouer 2020). Research suggests that more than 22,000 African American Richmond residents were buried here, including a majority of all the enslaved and emancipated people living in Richmond from 1816 to 1879 (Figures 7-11). In late 19th- and early 20th-century maps and documents, this burying ground is also referred to as the City's "Potter's Field."

--

There is written and pictorial evidence that considerable damage has been done to some portions of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. For example, a comparison of two photographs in the Cook Collection of the Valentine Museum taken just a few years apart in the late 1880s or early 1890s illustrate that the construction of the Northside Viaduct involved reconstructing portions of 5th Street where it crosses the African Burying Ground (see Plates 6, 7, 8 and 9). Earlier road work on 5th Street in 1883 disturbed numerous graves, leaving some of these exposed in the road cut. Newspapers, official records, and other documents provide evidence of that destruction and the subsequent public outcry.

The later Cook photograph illustrates that, despite considerable damage in the vicinity of 5th Street, much of that Burying Ground remained intact at lower elevations down the slope. These photographs show clearly the "terrace" construction described by Frederic Law Olmstead when he visited and witnessed African American funerals here in 1853. Today the proposed district retains elements illustrative of the important social and cultural history which took place on these grounds. Clearly missing from current visual representations are the complex and changing aspects of racial relations that played out here, as well as

important historical events and trends concerning civic responsibility for burying the dead and tending to the needs of the poor and disabled. Of special interest is the relationship among the district's contributing elements with regard to the rise of efforts toward White supremacy in the late 19th- and early 20th-century era of Jim Crow and The Lost Cause. Shockoe Hill provides one of the clearest physical manifestations of this in the United States: gleaming obelisks were raised to slave owners, while the physical remains of the enslaved were erased or hidden under tens of feet of fill.

--

The first interments for which we have found documentation are those initially buried on the parcel which later became the City Hospital lot which, in turn, was later incorporated into the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground. Two new cemeteries were established for free people of color and slaves in 1816 as a result of years of efforts led by Christopher McPherson and members of the free Black community. The original African Burying Ground along Shockoe Creek had become intolerable from overuse, poor upkeep and its placement at the city's gallows site. Originally this new burying ground on Shockoe Hill was established on 2 one acre plots (Figures 8a and b)). This had expanded to take over 3.3 acres by 1835, as indicated by the Micajah Bates Plan of 1835. In 1850, the city added an additional 9 acres to the African Burying Ground. Before it was closed to further interments in 1879, that "potter's field" had spread down all of the slopes and across the valley floor to the edges of Bacon's Quarter Branch to the North and Shockoe Creek to the East.

A local Jewish congregation was given permission to establish a cemetery on the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground tract for Jewish residents also in 1816. A cemetery for non-Jewish White residents was finally planned in 1820 and began accepting interments in 1822. This cemetery was initially referred to as the New Burying Ground, and eventually came to be known as the Shockoe Hill Cemetery. The superintendent of the Almshouse also served as the Superintendent of the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground, and the City Hospital. According to the 1869 Boyd's Directory of Richmond City, the Hebrew Cemetery was also being managed at that time by the Superintendent (although this may have been a short-term situation based on unusual circumstances). At times, much of the work involved in maintaining the burying grounds and excavating graves fell to the inmates of the almshouse(s).

Surveyor's Eligibility Recommendations:
Surveyor's NR Criteria Recommendations, :
Surveyor's NR Criteria Considerations:

Recommended Potentially Eligible
A, D
Cemetery

Event Type: DHR Staff:HistDist, Contributing

DHR ID: 44HE1203
Staff Name: DHR E-Team
Event Date: 8/12/2020
Staff Comment

44HE1203 is a contributing resource to 127-7231, the Shockoe Hill Burying Ground Historic District, which is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Portions of the mapped polygon may be considered non-contributing, however, due to previous disturbance.

Event Type: DHR Staff: Potentially Eligible

DHR ID: 44HE1203
Staff Name: National Register Evaluation Team
Event Date: 8/12/2020
Staff Comment

This resource is considered potentially eligible for listing, although portions may no longer retain physical integrity due to disturbance. Further subsurface investigation may be required to demonstrate individual eligibility.

Event Type: Survey:Phase I

Project Staff/Notes:
Survey was conducted by Kevin McCloskey, Dr. Mike Klein, Jonas Schnur, and Kerry Gonzalez
Project Review File Number: 2014-0666
Sponsoring Organization: No Data
Organization/Company: Dovetail CRG

Investigator: Kevin McCloskey
Survey Date: 2/4/2018
Survey Description:

Dovetail 2018: The current archaeological study included a Phase IB survey of the preferred alternative limits of disturbance (LOD) (Arlington [Area 1] through Richmond [Area 6]) of the DC2RVA corridor. The DC2RVA corridor has been the subject of ongoing cultural resource investigations from 2014 to present, including a Phase IA archaeological background review and archaeological predictive model (Klein et al. 2015) and a Phase IB archaeological survey of the mainline based on modeling (McCloskey et al. 2016). The archaeological area of potential effects (APE) for the DC2RVA project includes the footprint of physical improvements associated with the project, inclusive of both the rail modifications and any associated roadwork. Since the conclusion of the previous Phase IB archaeological work, a draft environmental impact statement resulting in the selection of a Preferred Alternative has been completed. Additionally, engineering, and design work has been completed for the corridor resulting in the definition of the physical footprint of improvements for the selected Preferred Alternative, including all road modifications, straightening of curves, the addition of wyes, proposed station locations, parking areas, etc. As such the APE studied as part of the current report was defined by the LOD of the Preferred Alternative, specifically defined as an area generally along the existing 123-mile (198-km) CSX Transportation (CSXT) rail corridor. The archaeological study consisted of a pedestrian survey and subsurface testing with STPs placed at 50-foot intervals, supplemented by a metal detector survey, where needed, throughout the APE beyond the limits of previous Phase IB investigations.

Current Land Use Parking lot	Date of Use 3/1/2018 12:00:00 AM	Comments (Calhoun 2018) The site is located in an urban setting on the west side of the CSXT rail line, along Hospital Street in Richmond.
--	--	--

Threats to Resource: Transportation Expansion

Site Conditions: 75-99% of Site Destroyed

Survey Strategies: Historic Map Projection

Specimens Collected: No

Specimens Observed, Not Collected: No

Artifacts Summary and Diagnostics:

No Data

Summary of Specimens Observed, Not Collected:

No Data

Current Curation Repository: n/a

Permanent Curation Repository: n/a

Field Notes: Yes

Field Notes Repository: Dovetail Cultural Resource Group

Photographic Media: Digital

Survey Reports: Yes

Survey Report Information:

Dovetail 2018: McCloskey, Kevin, Emily Calhoun, Kerry Gonzalez, and Mike Klein Phase IB Archaeological Survey for the Washington, D.C. to Richmond, Virginia High Speed Rail Project Preferred Alternative Limits of Disturbance

Survey Report Repository: DHR

DHR Library Reference Number: VA-151

Significance Statement: (Calhoun 2018) The site is a nineteenth-century "Grave Yard for Free People of Color and Slaves" as identified by Bates (1835). According to documentary evidence it was established circa 1816 and likely abandoned circa 1890. No subsurface excavations were conducted within the cemetery area, as such the cemetery has not been delineated. Pedestrian survey of the cemetery area within the current APE indicated a variety of modern disturbances. The APE within the site area is confined to the sidewalks north of Hospital Street, the road itself, and the slope immediately south of Hospital Street. Pedestrian survey of the site location indicates that the disturbance noted within the APE, most notably the grading needed to construct Hospital Street (approximately 10 feet [3 m]) would have disturbed the cemetery location. As such, the portion of the site within the APE lacks subsurface integrity and therefore does not contribute the site's overall NRHP eligibility. However, it is recommended that the site should be considered unevaluated for the NRHP as no subsurface investigations within site location have been undertaken. It is further noted that Calhoun's (2013) recommendation that if the cemetery remains intact, it would likely be located at the crest of the valley slope under the footprint of current Tallys Auto Shop, remains valid. The current survey noted that the crest of the valley slope, to the north of the current APE, appeared visually intact and not subjected to the extensive grading observed in the portion of the site within the APE.

Surveyor's Eligibility Recommendations: Recommended Potentially Eligible

Surveyor's NR Criteria Recommendations, : D

Surveyor's NR Criteria Considerations: No Data

V-CRIS

Virginia Cultural Resource Information System

Legend

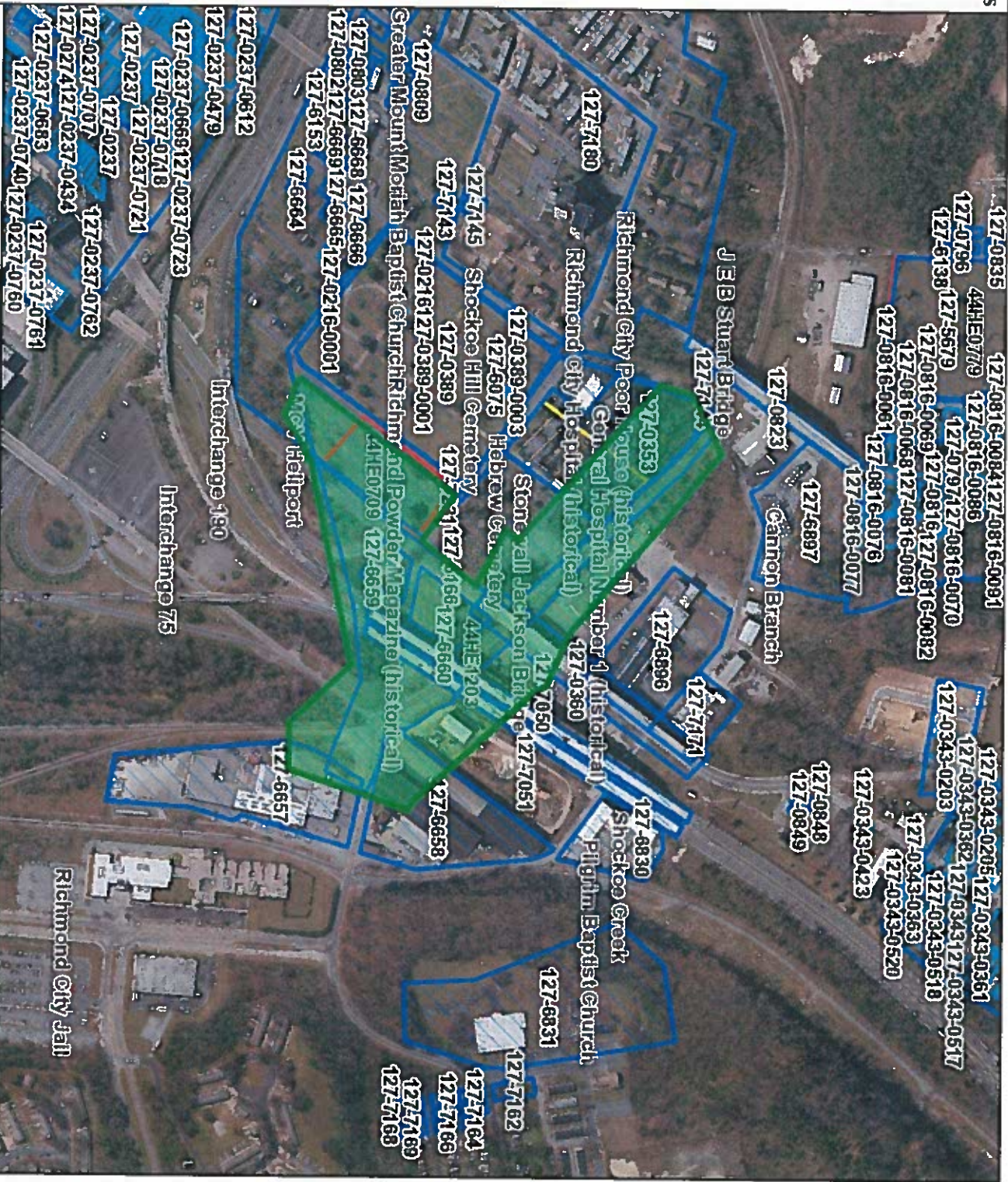
- ☒ Architecture Resources
- ☒ Architectural Labels
- ☒ Individual Historic District Properties
- ☒ Archaeological Resources
- ☒ Archaeology Labels
- ☒ DHR Easements
- ☒ USGS GIS Place names
- ☒ County Boundaries



Feet

0 200 400 600 800

1:9,028 / 1"=752 Feet



Title: Archaeological Resources

Date: 9/29/2020

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.

Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR

From: LENORA MCQUEEN <lenora.m@prodigy.net>
Sent: Sunday, December 6, 2020 11:18 PM
To: Robertson, Ellen F. - City Council; rodney@thewiltonco.com; David Johannas; lawmanchem@yahoo.com; egreenfield@rarealtors.com; murthyvg@gmail.com; max.hepp.buchanan@gmail.com; Reid, Lenora G. - DCAO Of Finance And Administration; Newbille, Cynthia I. - City Council; Gray, Kimberly B. - City Council; Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office; Larson, Kristen N. - City Council; Jones, Michael J. - City Council; Addison, Andreas D. - City Council; Hilbert, Chris A. - City Council; Trammell, Reva M. - City Council; Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR
Cc: Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR; Chen, Kimberly M. - DED; hwilliams@dickinsonwilliams.com; Cyane Crump; Elisabeth Price; Danielle Worthing Porter; Ellen Chapman; Ana Edwards
Subject: Support for Ordinance 2020-240

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the City of Richmond Planning Commission, the Honorable Ellen Robertson and the Richmond City Council;

I am writing to you in regards to ordinance 2020-240. It is the second ordinance needed for the acquisition of 1305 N. 5th St., which is a portion of the original Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground (Richmond's 2nd African Burial Ground). The first ordinance 2020-213 was passed in October, receiving your full support. I am sincerely grateful for the efforts being made by the city to reacquire this very important property, and I ask for your support of ordinance 2020-240.

Yours truly,

Lenora McQueen

Member of the descendant community of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground

October 4, 2020

Re: Ordinance 2020-213

Dear members of the City of Richmond Planning Commission, the Honorable Ellen Robertson and the Richmond City Council;

My 4th great-grandmother Kitty Cary would have been buried in the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground; the now invisible Grave Yard for Free People of Colour and For Slaves at 5th and Hospital Street. She died a little over 160 years ago in the city of Richmond, where she lived in the home of her owner on the south-side of Franklin St., between 6th and 7th. That place today is a parking garage. Elizabeth Fisher, the daughter of her owner wrote a heartfelt letter to her sister Ann in

Philadelphia the very same morning that Kitty died in 1857; lovingly, but very sadly informing her sister of the death of their beloved Kitty. The letter brought tears to my eyes as I read of her long illness, and painful death. I was touched by how much love was expressed for her in that letter by Elizabeth. Kitty's daughters who were present were devastated. Her other children and grandchildren unknowing of what had occurred - as they had been sold after the death of their owner a few years prior, splitting up the family. The deceased owner was Elizabeth's father. Elizabeth told of how she had Kitty's body neatly prepared for the grave, "it is what she would have done for me" she said. Kitty was dressed in the garment that she herself had requested for that purpose. Her last words were spoken to her children in an attempt to comfort them as she herself lay dying, seeing them weeping - "Don't cry children, don't cry for me, I am going home" - she breathed her last breath and died.

Elizabeth and her sister Jane who also lived in Richmond intended to follow Kitty's body to the grave the next day. She indicated that their intention was that no respect would be spared for Kitty. My intention also is that no respect should be spared for Kitty, other family members buried there at the burial ground, or for the more than twenty two thousand estimated to have been interred at the Shockoe Hill African Burying at 5th and Hospital Street. In my eyes Kitty holds a place of high honor. And all of those people buried there were probably loved by someone. They were someone's child, someone's mother, someone's father, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, grandparent, grandchild, cousin, husband, wife, friend..... They were someone's someone. They are still someone's someone. They deserve to be honored. They deserve to be remembered. They deserve to have their story told, and no longer hidden. And they deserve to be allowed to rest in peace.

I came to Richmond in October of 2017 to find Kitty (also others in the family). I had only known of the intention of her owner to keep her, the owner being the mother of Elizabeth. I had no idea of what had actually happened. So I came to Richmond, and I found Kitty. She was in the letter. The excitement I felt when I realized that I could go to the place that she would have been buried. I remember the confusion, and the disappointment upon reaching my destination. I didn't understand the place at all, and I kept thinking that I must be in the wrong place, it can't possibly be this place... And I had hoped that I was in the wrong place. And I left there not knowing until sometime later that it was actually the right place. How sad... That desolate hillside with an abandoned gas station on it and a billboard - It is so disrespectful; with streets, a viaduct, railroad tracks and a highway all run through its grounds. But with all that has happened there, it does not make that place not important. With all that has happened it does not make the people interred there not important. It deserves something better. They deserve something better. Even those whose skeletal remains were obviously moved, and of those who were scattered, they deserve something better, as even today their essence remains.

I have been deeply involved in research uncovering the history of the place where my ancestor Kitty was laid to rest by those who loved her. It has been a horribly sad and disturbing journey seeing the degradation, the disrespect, and the destruction associated with this burial ground. I have no idea if she rests there in peace, or if she fell victim to one of the many atrocities that befell that graveyard. Any number of things may have happened to her, from having her body stolen and used as a medical cadaver, to ending up as street fill. Though even if she herself were untouched, how could she rest in peace? The history of the burial ground is tragic. It's story is yet incomplete, though it is continually unfolding.

The very day after I read that letter for the first time telling of Kitty's death, and while attending a symposium, the President's Commission on Slavery at the University of Virginia, in which I also participated - I learned the first tragic piece of history directly connected to the graveyard. It was a main topic at the symposium - grave robbing for the medical colleges; and this graveyard was one of

the main targets. I was absolutely horrified. I later learned of the well at VCU where human remains were thrown away as if they were trash. The medical waste well at VCU that was accidentally uncovered specifically dates to the time of this graveyard. It also dates to the time of Kitty's demise. Grave robbing was only the first of several horrifying pieces of news regarding the history of the burial ground that I learned of. Equally as terrifying as the burial ground's destructive past is its future, as even today high-speed rail and the widening of I-64 threaten to harm it, unless steps are taken to recognize it, acknowledge its full historical boundaries, and protect it. This burial ground is supposed to be a place of eternal rest - a place of honor and memorial, just like at the two burial grounds next to it. The disparity between them is shocking, and quite beyond words.

On any given day a descendant of those buried inside the walls of the Shockoe Hill Cemetery or the Hebrew Cemetery can go and visit the grave of their ancestor which is still to this day lovingly cared for and attended to. That is not true of the African American community who had enslaved ancestors and some who were free people of color and who died between 1816 and 1879 in the city of Richmond. Those ancestors were also buried in the Shockoe Hill Cemetery, but they were interred in the segregated part of that burying ground, which was located outside of the walls. They have been made to appear as if they had simply disappeared, or as if they had never existed at all. I have often wondered when will they who were interred outside of the walls be recognized and honored. When will they be given the peace that they may rest, and that we may rest knowing we have corrected the wrong and are now doing the right thing.

It now appears that a new day may be dawning as this new ordinance(s) is being considered for the acquisition of 1305 N. 5th St., and its inclusion on the Slave Trail. 1305 N. 5th St. is a small portion of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground but it lies at its very heart. Originally two acres in size, the city approved its expansion to nearly 15 acres in 1850. Later maps suggest an even greater expansion in time. Research and estimates indicate that more than 22,000 Black Richmonders were buried at this site. The 1305 N. 5th St. property contains all that is left to claim, protect, memorialize and learn from this extraordinary history.

I ask that your vote be in favor of ordinance 2020-213 and the acquisition of 1305 N. 5th Street. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

Lenora McQueen

Member of the descendant community of the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground