



## **Resolution in Support of Development Proposal for Langston School Building**

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia currently holds title to a parcel of real property located at 33 P Street NW, and is the former site of the John Mercer Langston School (“Langston” or “Langston Building”); and

WHEREAS, the Langston Building is a historically significant building both to the immediate community and to the broader Washington, D.C. community, and is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places but is not listed on the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites;

WHEREAS, the neighborhood surrounding the Langston Building is historically important, having served as the location of a cluster of public education institutions that, in 1925, educated a quarter of the District’s African-American public school students; and

WHEREAS, the Langston Building has been vacant since the mid-1990s, and is in a state of complete disrepair which betrays its historic importance; and

WHEREAS, the Langston Building’s state of disrepair has led to increased numbers of rats and vermin; reports of drug-related activity and prostitution and thereby lowers the quality of life in the neighborhood, and

WHEREAS, the Langston Building is located within the boundaries of the Bates Area Civic Association service area; and

WHEREAS, the community has long advocated for the school to be returned to public use, but there has been no meaningful movement forward on development, and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia’s Office of Planning’s Mid City East Small Area Plan calls for the Langston Building to be considered for innovative and creative uses; and

WHEREAS, the Langston Building’s state of disrepair is such that returning the building to useable condition will require significant financial investment; and

WHEREAS, the D.C. Government has, in the past, issued multiple requests for offers for the Langston Building soliciting proposals for development as a charter school, which have not led to any concrete proposals that the community is aware of; and



WHEREAS, civic leaders, including Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie, have committed to working with the community to resolve the persistent issue of vacancy and disrepair of the building and suggested that the civic association pass a resolution that outlines desirable outcomes and uses for the building; and

WHEREAS, in Spring 2018, a working group ("P Street Schools Working Group"), consisting of members of the Bates Area Civic Association, formed to identify potential opportunities, discuss appropriate and inappropriate uses for the Langston Building, and outline desirable outcomes for returning the Langston Building to productive use; and

WHEREAS, the Working Group engaged with many stakeholders in the investigation process, including the charter school across the street, Mundo Verde, and other community members; and

WHEREAS, the Working Group identified as its highest priority locating a for-profit or nonprofit developer with the means and interest in remediating the Langston Building and returning it to productive use; and

WHEREAS, the Langston Working Group and identified the following considerations as priorities for the disposition of the Langston Building:

1. That the Langston Building be repurposed as an asset of positive social, cultural, and economic impact for the local community; and
2. That the mission of a potential partner be aligned with the local community's strategic priorities and mutually beneficial; and
3. That any initiative undertaken be community driven and community centric, engaging and serving the local community.

WHEREAS, the Working Group identified the National Peace Corps Association ("NPCA") as a potential partner with an interest in purchasing and developing the Langston Building, and whose development plans for the Langston Building would fulfill these priorities; and

WHEREAS, the NPCA's potential proposal ("NPCA Proposal") is to rehabilitate the Langston Building while preserving its historical architectural design elements consistent with the neighborhood in order to construct a community center that would serve as a gathering place for returning Peace Corps Volunteers, an activity hub for integration, interaction and outreach with the local community, a home for a Museum of the Peace Corps experience, and a Peace Corps House whose mission is social services and social justice; and



WHEREAS, the NPCA has access to a significant and affluent donor base, both in the Washington, D.C. region and worldwide, which gives it access to a unique source of funding; and

WHEREAS, the NPCA Proposal is consistent with the District of Columbia's Office of Planning's Mid City East Small Area Plan; and

WHEREAS, on April 2, 2018, at a duly noticed regular meeting of the Bates Area Civic Association, Glenn Blumhorst of the NPCA presented the NPCA Proposal to all parties in attendance, at the conclusion of which the Association conducted a referendum on whether to support the NPCA Proposal; and

WHEREAS, the result of the referendum revealed unanimous support for the NPCA Proposal among all voting members; and

WHEREAS, if the NPCA Proposal comes to fruition, the Bates Area Civic Association has committed to ensure that the development of the site progresses with the interests of residents and the broader Washington DC community in mind;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that in consideration of the priorities identified by the Working Group, the NPCA Proposal and the NPCA's presentation to the Bates Area Civic Association, and the results of the Association's referendum on that Proposal, the Bates Area Civic Association hereby requests:

THAT the ANC, the Mayor, and relevant city offices take all reasonable steps to return the Langston Building to productive use;

THAT the following considerations should serve as priorities for any proposed redevelopment of the Langston Building:

1. That the Langston Building be repurposed as an asset of positive social, cultural, and economic impact for the local community; and
2. That the mission of a potential partner be aligned with the local community's strategic priorities and mutually beneficial; and
3. That any initiative undertaken be community driven and community centric, engaging and serving the local community.



THAT the NPCA Proposal:

1. Is consistent with the priorities identified by the Working Group;
2. Will preserve the Langston Building's historical architectural design elements consistent with the neighborhood;
3. Would benefit the community within the boundaries of the Bates Area Civic Association and in Washington, D.C.;
4. Would represent an excellent disposition of the Langston Building, and
5. Should be given strong consideration.

THIS RESOLUTION was adopted by the Bates Area Civic Association at a duly noticed regular monthly meeting on June 4, 2018 by unanimous vote of the membership.

June 14, 2018

Kyle J. Thomas, President, Bates Area Civic Association