

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 5, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MICHELE R. EVANS, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER *MRE*

SUBJECT: GRANT APPLICATION TO THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES, THREATENED SITES PROGRAM FOR FUNDING TO CONDUCT AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION AT THE PROPERTY AT 108 N. QUAKER LANE

ISSUE: Grant application to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Threatened Sites Program for funding to conduct an archaeological investigation at the property located at 108 N. Quaker Lane.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize the submission after the fact of a grant application to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Threatened Sites Program. It should be noted that the grant application was submitted on December 22, 2004, per state-set application deadlines. Due to the constrained time line for the grant submission, staff submitted the grant application, contingent upon City Council approval at its January 11, 2005, meeting.

DISCUSSION: The grant application requests \$10,000 (\$5,000 in FY 2005, \$5,000 in FY 2006) from Virginia's Threatened Sites Program to conduct a further archaeological investigation on the property of a proposed sub-division at 108 N. Quaker Lane (the Cooper-Dawson property). The primary historical and archaeological significance of the site stems from its use during the Civil War. Construction plans indicate that a single family house has been proposed for a site containing the buried remnants of a Union Army encampment. This new single family home development, and the subdivision needed for it, may be considered by the Planning Commission as early as next month. The site is unique for Alexandria in that the locations of company streets and tent sites, as well as a battery, are still visible on the landscape. Civil War historians and archaeologists have indicated that the visual remains of the Union Army Company streets within 108 N. Quaker Lane are some of the best extant examples of these types of features that they have seen in Northern Virginia. Also, previous archaeological work to date has recovered remnants of a Crimean oven used for heating hospital tents.

The Threatened Sites Program of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources awards grants to gather information about the past before it is lost forever. The funding can be applied toward

assessment, excavation, laboratory processing and analysis, and reporting on sites, and the program encourages involvement of volunteers and the public at every possible opportunity.

The funds requested will allow Alexandria Archaeology to forge a partnership with a private consultant to insure that significant historical information will not be lost as a result of the construction of the proposed single-family house. The archaeological work will be accomplished through a coordinated effort on the part of City staff, volunteers, and the consultant. Funding from the grant will be used, along with a possible contribution from the landowner, to pay the consultant for services that cannot be rendered by the City.

FISCAL IMPACT: The City will provide matching funds from within the existing budget, consisting of staff time and volunteer hours.

ATTACHMENT: None. Grant application can be reviewed in the Office of Management and Budget, Room 3630, City Hall.

STAFF:

Jean Taylor Federico, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria

Pamela Cressey, City Archaeologist

Francine Bromberg, Preservation Archaeologist

Barbara Magid, Assistant City Archaeologist