

To: B.A.R. – Old and Historic District; Case # 2020-00060  
From: Joyce Stevens, 630 S. Fairfax St.

I am contacting the members of the board regarding an application to install small cell antennas and associated equipment on a utility pole at the corner of S. Lee and Franklin St. Staff recommends approval of the certificate of appropriateness as long another utility pole is used. Here is their rationale.

“In this case, given the importance and sensitivity of the Justice Hugo Black property, staff recommends that the applicant pursue installation on another nearby pole which is not directly in front of the historic house viewshed. Staff believes that there are three nearby poles which could still meet the needs of the carrier but protect the viewshed in front of one of Alexandria’s important historic resources.”

Staff suggested three alternate locations (below). One of them (center) is at our driveway.



I am requesting that the Staff and Board review and reconsider this recommendation.

Importance - The Historic District, by definition, is composed of significant and historically diverse properties. While we recognize the importance of Justice Black's house, the location of a utility pole approx. 140 feet from the front of the house does not affect its view shed or importance.

Staff recommended approval of the cell antennae as long as it was installed somewhere else, in front of someone else's house. In other words, a property of lesser significance, lesser importance than 617 S. Lee.

Our home and garden at the corner of S. Fairfax and Franklin Streets was the home of John F. Parker and his family when he was appointed Principal of the "Snowden School for Negro Boys" in 1875. Is the viewshed from John F. Parker's property less important and significant than 617 S Lee?

Before our garden was installed, artifacts (buttons, bullets, etc. currently in the possession of Alexandria Archeology), indicate our lot was a Civil War encampment site and the corner is registered with local and state offices. Is this Civil War site less important and significant than 617 S. Lee?

211 Franklin St., next to our driveway, was the home of Anthony Boarman (Bowman) who served in the US 1<sup>st</sup> Colored Heavy Artillery during the Civil War. His daughter, Caroline, and John F. Parker were two of the founders of the historically black St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Is the viewshed from 211 Franklin St. less important and significant than 617 S. Lee?

Viewshed - The utility pole in the original application (below) is located approx. 140 feet from the front door of 617 S. Lee and I find it hard to believe that this distance creates a real issue regarding the viewshed. You will also note that the property is enveloped in tall trees and bushes which provide significant screening.





In a community, everyone is expected to bear some burden for unsightly utilities. I believe we have done our “fair share” in tolerating the mess that is currently on numerous poles surrounding our historically important property. Staff suggested three other suitable poles. One of them, at the end of our driveway, is directly in our viewshed. I request that, either the original pole location is used for the new cell equipment or, at least, do not add the cell antennas and equipment boxes on the pole at the end of our driveway. Thank you for your consideration.

- Joyce P. Stevens

The viewshed from our house, 630 S. Fairfax St.

