

Historic Vienna, Inc.



Freeman Store and Museum, built in 1859

131 Church Street, NE • Post Office Box 53 • Vienna, VA 22183

March 24, 2021

Mercury Payton
Town Manager
Town of Vienna
Vienna Town Hall
127 Center Street South
Vienna, Virginia 22180

Re: Louise Archer Elementary School, 324 Nutley St. NW, Vienna Virginia

Dear Mr. Payton,

Historic Vienna, Inc. supports the addition of Louise Archer Elementary School to the Town of Vienna Historic Properties Register. Principal Michelle Makrigiorgos was encouraged by Board Members Mike Berger and Sylvia Taylor to submit an application. The Board is pleased that Mrs. Makrigiorgos submitted the *Application for Registration of Historic Structure, Site or Place by the Town of Vienna* on December 8, 2020. The Board unanimously voted that the application be approved for inclusion on the town's Historic Properties Register. Historic Vienna, Inc. awarded the school its Heritage Preservation Award some years ago, recognizing the school's importance to the history of Vienna.

The application submitted by Principal Makrigiorgos, contains a comprehensive historical background of the school built in 1939, including the lineage of the Vienna Colored School, built in 1890 after the incorporation of the Town of Vienna. We would like to include some additional information.

The original one room Vienna Colored School that was built by the Town in 1890 at the intersection of Lawyers Rd. and Malcolm Road, was later expanded to three rooms. This expanded building was the school in which Mrs. Louise Reeves Archer began as Principal and teacher of grades 5-7 in September, 1922. As the school became overcrowded, Mrs. Archer strongly advocated for the construction of a new school. Under her leadership, the School League (PTA) began raising funds and in 1938, purchased the property on Nutley St, where the current school was built. Included with the application are the floor plans of the school that was constructed in 1939, and the expansions that took place from 1948-1971. As mentioned in the application, after Mrs. Archer's death in April, 1948, a letter written by one of the parents accompanied by a petition signed by 24 former students of Mrs. Archer, was presented to the School Board. The Board carried the motion to approve the renaming of Vienna Colored School to Louise Archer School. A dedication ceremony took place in April, 1950.

The school became integrated in September 1965, under the principalship of B. Oswald Robinson who had succeeded Mrs. Archer. In recommending this application for inclusion on the Town's

Register of History Structures, Sites and Places, Historic Vienna, Inc. would like to highlight, as mentioned in the application, that among the previously African American elementary schools in Fairfax County prior to integration, Louise Archer School is the only elementary school that continues to operate as an elementary school since integration was initiated in the County. The other buildings are either being utilized for other purposes, or have been torn down. This distinction underscores the importance of having Louise Archer School placed on the Historic Properties Register.

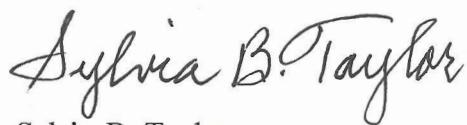
Within the school, the visionary legacy of Mrs. Louise Archer is fostered throughout the entire student body. In the community, former students of Mrs. Archer have enduring fond memories of her excellence as their teacher. Louise Archer School maintains a high standard of excellence in the quality of education it provides for its diverse school population.

Historic Vienna is delighted to recommend the Louise Archer School for the Town's Historic Properties Register. Louise Archer School has significance beyond Vienna, to the history of Fairfax County, and Virginia, as well.

Sincerely,



Anne G. Stuntz
President



Sylvia B. Taylor
Board Member