

KALORAMA CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

APRIL, 2025

Our 106th Year

Issue Number 1

Tuesday April 29, 2025 Meeting Information

Please join us for our first in-person meeting of 2025 on Tuesday, April 29 at 7 pm at Good Will Baptist Church, 1862 Kalorama Road. At-Large DC Councilmember Anita Bonds will be our guest speaker.

The first agenda item will be amending our Constitution. 30 minutes will be budgeted for this subject.

In an email to members on April 11, KCA gave notice that amendments to the KCA Constitution will be considered. The Constitution also requires that such amendments be considered twice by the membership with each meeting noticed at least 14 days before the actual meeting.

The nature of the changes I will be proposing are mainly to clarify that the KCA is run by a Board of Directors. The current language is not clear enough on this, as it refers often to an Executive Committee, but also to "Directors". The changes I will propose will clarify that KCA is a Corporation run by Directors. There will be other small changes proposed in various Articles of the Constitution, some occasioned by the pandemic.

The current Constitution is posted on our website at:

<https://kaloramacitizensassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/KCA-Constitution-as-amended-in-2015.pdf>

Anita Bonds, a Democrat, has been an At-Large member of the DC City Council since December 11, 2012, winning re-election in 2013, 2014, 2018 and 2022.



She is currently the Chairperson of the Committee on Executive Administration and Labor and serves on the Committee of the Whole; the Committee on Business and Economic Development; the Committee on Housing and the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety.

From 2007-2011, she was an ANC Commissioner for district 5C01. She served as Chairperson for the DC Democratic Party from November 2006 through September 20, 2018.

Other agenda items may be added prior to the meeting.

DEDICATING THE NEW ANCESTORS PAVILION AT WALTER PIERCE PARK

Nearly 200 well-wishers, including many Kalorama Citizens Association members, gathered at Walter Pierce Park on Saturday, September 7, 2024 to dedicate the new Ancestors Pavilion, honoring thousands of African American and Quaker Washingtonians who were laid to rest in two 19th century cemeteries at the site.

The Pavilion lists the names, ages, and death years of the buried, effectively marking the cemeteries' 8,428 documented graves for the first time in more than a century. A choir from All Souls Unitarian Church, known for its tradition of musical excellence, performed songs that mirrored the spirit of the dedication. Descendants of the buried proudly told their Ancestors' stories before untying the African-textile ribbons that decorated each of the Pavilion's nine signs.

Descendants and their allies proposed the Ancestors Pavilion to the city in 2018. In addition to naming the buried, they wanted the commemorative space to convey a sense of resilience, relevance, and benevolence.



Tawana Thomas points to the name of her ancestor, Eli Gales. photo credit Nancy Shia.

The Pavilion is the crowning touch on the grassroots Walter Pierce Park Archaeology Project. It began in 2005, stopping the city from undertaking major construction in the park before finding out what remained of the cemeteries.

The archaeology project, which found ample evidence of the cemeteries, was led by Howard University biological anthropologist Mark Mack with the support of descendants and allies. After Professor Mack's death in 2012, Dr. Rachel Watkins of the University of Pennsylvania became the project's scientific leader. The KCA has supported the project from its start.

The Pavilion's signs tell the story of the Friends (Quaker) Burying Ground, in use from 1807 to 1890, and Mt. Pleasant Plains Cemetery, an African American cemetery in use from 1870 to 1890. Interspersed among the thousands of names on the signs are historical images that highlight the Reconstruction era, which is when most of the burials in Mt. Pleasant Plains Cemetery took place. Photos also tell the story of the Walter Pierce Park Archaeology Project.

The city funded construction of the Ancestors Pavilion. Independent historians Mary Belcher and Mara Cherkasky volunteered their time to write the signs and provide the images. Descendants and allies also donated their time to review drafts and approve the signs' final content.

The new commemorative space is likely to set a standard for African American cemetery-preservation projects around the nation. To see the WUSA-9 news report on the dedication and for more information, go to: walterpierceparkcemeteries.org

-Mary Belcher

Editor's note: Numerous members, neighbors and friends have donated to a fund established to purchase two attractive wood and iron park benches that will be placed to the right of the Ancestors Pavilion to provide a place for rest and contemplation. If you are so inclined, please use the contributions section at the back of this newsletter to provide support in any amount. And many thanks to those who have already donated.

KCA Resolution in Opposition to the National Park Service Plan Eliminating Reversible Lanes from Shoreham Drive to Ohio Drive on Potomac Parkway

Whereas, the National Park Service is working on plans to eliminate the reversible lanes of the Potomac Parkway in Rock Creek Park from Shoreham Drive to Ohio Drive, and

Whereas, NPS would also build a dangerous "roundabout" at the Shoreham Drive end, add a median between K Street and Q Street, add short, ineffective southbound lanes on Rock Creek Potomac Parkway at Virginia Avenue, (only from approximately where the West E Street ramp crosses above the Parkway, to the Virginia Avenue intersection), widen the multi-purpose trail, which is to the north and west of the parkway, and potentially build a roundabout at E Street and Ohio Drive or install a traffic light there.

Whereas, the Adams Morgan neighborhood, which totally contains the Kalorama Citizens Association membership area, suffered significant traffic congestion during the reconstruction of Beach Drive and the Zoo tunnel through which Beach Drive passes during renovation work in 2017, where northbound motorists using Potomac Parkway during the evening rush hours poured out through Shoreham Drive to Calvert Street and into Adams Morgan via Calvert Street, or alternatively used other exits from Potomac Parkway that led them into Adams Morgan and onto our Main Street, Columbia Road, causing congestion, delays and dangerous driving conditions, and

Whereas, the elimination of reversible lanes on Potomac Parkway and other proposed construction, would visit the same congestion on our neighborhood, which has recently also suffered a diminution of Columbia Road's capacity to carry the same amount of traffic it did before protected bike lanes were installed in 2024, including narrowing and elimination of traffic lanes, significant reduction of parking on Columbia Road, which causes more residents and visitors to circle wider areas through neighborhood streets in their search for parking.

Now then, the members of the Kalorama Citizens Association present and constituting a quorum do hereby vote in opposition to the wasteful proposal of the National Park Service, that would do very little to improve conditions along the Potomac Parkway, eliminating a useful rush hour option, but would visit traffic congestion and dangerous conditions on our neighborhood. KCA does however, favor the widening of the Multi-purpose trail as described in the NPS planning documents.

Dues and Contributions

If your address label says "Please remit 2025 dues" we hope that you will use the enclosed return envelope to pay your dues. They are 25.00 for an individual and 40.00 for two persons living at the same address.

Dues enclosed _____

Currently we are seeking further contributions to enable us to purchase and gift 2 iron and wood park benches to be installed in Walter Pierce Park near the new Ancestors Pavilion. It contains the names of all those known to be buried there. We think the installation of two nice benches near the Pavilion will provide a place to rest and contemplate.

Contribution enclosed _____

**KALORAMA CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 21311
WASHINGTON, DC 20009**

THIS IS FIRST CLASS MAIL

**APRIL 29, 2025 IN-PERSON
MEETING**

**7 PM AT GOOD WILL BAPTIST
CHURCH**

1862 KALORAMA ROAD

**GUEST SPEAKER, DC AT-LARGE
COUNCILMEMBER ANITA BONDS**