ABSTRACT

In October 2013, Dutton + Associates, LLC (D+A) conducted a documentary study of the Cromley Row project area in the City of Alexandria, Virginia. The study was conducted at the request of the City of Alexandria Archaeology Department for planning purposes in order to aid in the understanding of the potential for the project area to contain eighteenth or nineteenth-century burials associated with a documented Quaker Burying Ground located to the south. The project area is located on the City of Alexandria’s real estate map No. 064.04 on block No. 02, and includes lots No. 01 through 07.

Research revealed that the Quaker Burying Ground was established at its current location in 1784, following sale of the property to the Religious Society of Friends by Thomas West. Meeting minutes of the Friends indicate that the Burying Ground was fenced as early as 1794 suggesting that the boundaries of the Burying Ground were well established and visually marked early in the developmental history of the block. Actual development of the project area does not occur in earnest until the mid-nineteenth century and continues with various episodes of building and demolition into the early-twentieth century. During this period brick and frame townhomes, as well as detached single dwellings were constructed with the most recent being constructed at 313 N. Columbus Street immediately adjacent to the northern brick wall bounding the Quaker Burying Ground. Throughout much of their history, these properties were rental units with tenants and little is known of the occupants and their use of the properties until the turn of the twentieth century.

Construction for the Cromley Row homes will begin approximately 56-feet north of the brick wall enclosing the former Quaker Burying Ground, presently land of the Kate Waller Barrett Branch Library. Historically, this would have included the northern end of 317 N. Columbus Street up to and including land of 331 North Columbus. Between the first new home (labeled #606 on Cromley Row’s Subdivision Plat) and the brick wall there will be parking spaces and the existing entry into the parking lot. Based upon the results of documentary study the project area is expected to contain archaeological deposits associated with the nineteenth century townhouses located at 317 and 319 N. Columbus Street. Given that proposed ground disturbance associated with the Cromley Row development will not begin until approximately 56-feet north of the boundary wall of the Burying Ground, the likelihood that human burials are present within the project is considered low. Following review of the documentary research, archaeological monitoring of an area approximately 6-meters (20-feet) north-south by 18.2-meters (60-feet) east-west was undertaken and conformed the absence of human burial or grave related features in the project area.