



MARY FORCE STEAD
PLAYGROUND
DEDICATED NOVEMBER 12, 1953
TO THE MEMORY OF
MARY FORCE STEAD
1852 - 1895
WIFE OF
ROBERT STEAD
1856 - 1943
WHOSE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT
MADE PROVISION THAT IT BE
ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED
IN HER HONOR
FOR THE PERPETUAL USE OF
"THE CHILDREN OF WASHINGTON"
OPERATED BY THE
D.C. RECREATION DEPARTMENT

THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 2ND 2018

PROJECT NARRATIVE

The Stead Park Community Recreation Center project has two main components - the renovation of and addition to the existing historic building and the renovation of the playgrounds to the east and to the south of the building. The playing field and splash park that were built in 2014 and the basketball court are to be left more or less in their current condition.

The existing historic building is a carriage house / stables that was built in 1888 by Henry Hurt whose house once stood in the open space between the carriage house and the P Street sidewalk. When it was built and up through the first early part of the 20th century the north façade of the carriage house directly abutted a public alley that ran from 16th Street to 17 Street, as did Church Street farther to the north. At that time, the center of the square was fully developed and wood frame houses stood on both sides of Church Street in the area now occupied by the playing field.

The building became a recreation center around 1950 and shortly thereafter was re-named after Mary Force Stead in whose name her husband Robert Stead had established a trust that was intended to perpetually benefit the children of the District of Columbia.

The modest sized building has been altered most significantly in that the center carriageway, which was originally open, has been infilled with a brick wall at the front and rear. Several original masonry openings in the south facade have been modified or removed. The original roof structure is still intact and its ornately ornamented gable is in reasonably good condition. In 1990 an architecturally undistinguished service wing was added to the rear providing more program space mainly on the second floor. In 2008, when the playground was renovated, the area between the building and P street was changed in several ways which resulted in the building, which sits about 100 feet back from the sidewalk, becoming almost fully obscured from the street.

The charming little building presents two significant challenges to its expansion and renovation. Despite its noble facade and its ornamented gable this building was once a secondary building, subservient to the presumably much larger and grander house of Henry and Annie Hurt. With the main house no longer standing, this carriage house, 127 years old, is now the primary historic resource on this site, thus gaining in importance as an historic resource and its diminutive size makes the addition of a larger structure to the rear more challenging. Secondly, being a carriage house it has relatively low ceiling heights of 8'-0' on both the first and the second floor, which are not ideal for a public recreation facility or community center.

The current design proposes to make the historic carriage house the visual and physical center of the Stead Park Recreation Center complex. In order to respect the diminutive size of the existing historic building the proposed addition consist of two parts more or less equal in floor size, a lower two-story addition directly behind the carriage house and taller story addition to the west directly behind the basketball court. The project is made up of the following components.

CARRIAGE HOUSE, FRONT COURTYARD STREET ENTRANCE

- Restore the carriageway opening in the center of the building and have this serve as the new entrance to the expanded recreation facility. The restored opening on the south side would be in-filled with a glass-paneled wall system, with center, double entry doors.
- The interior of the entryway would have a Wall of History on the west side that could contain a display cabinet with archaeological artifacts from the site, photos and documents about various subjects such as the Stead and Hurt families, the earlier days of DPR and this recreation center and the Dupont Circle neighborhood, etc. On the east side there would be interactive Dashboard containing educational information about the building operations and sustainable design initiatives as well as a schedule of programming events, community notices, etc.
- The original masonry openings on the south façade would be restored to recreate the original historic façade.
- The area between the building and the street would be designed as a formal, axial, open space with two rows of trees framing the view of the building and with stairs at the south side leading directly to the street, thus opening up the view of the building from the street and establishing its presence as the heart of the Stead Center complex.
- At the front entrance to the site there will be an information kiosk or electronic signboard with programming and event information. Two flagpoles will stand on either side of the signboard with the flags of the United States and of the District of Columbia

ADDITION – EAST SIDE

- The east half of the addition, directly in back of the historic carriage house, is two stories and measures 60 ft. by 38 ft. and is the same height as the existing building. The main entrance (old carriageway) to the building leads directly into this room is designed as a large assembly area on the first floor with a mezzanine above on three sides and looks out to the playing field to the north through a 20 ft wide, two-story opening directly opposite the carriageway entrance. Thus immediately on entering, one can see all the way through the building to the playing field, fifty feet away. A large skylight in the roof of the mezzanine will fill this assembly area with light and further relieve the low ceiling height.
- This assembly area is intended to be used intermittently for community meetings or larger program events and on regular basis as an indoor playground, when it is raining or cold outside. At about 2,000 net SF in size the room can accommodate seated assembly of 250 persons seated in chairs for a lecture, ANC meeting or a concert, 150 people at tables and chairs (bridge) or 400 people at a barn dance. A room of this size could help Stead Park become a gathering place for the community.
- The mezzanine area can be used for discrete smaller gatherings or to contain game equipment such as ping-pong tables, foosball tables or even shuffleboard. Ample storage space is provided on both floors for storage of play equipment, tables and chairs and HVAC equipment.
- The demonstration kitchen is located on the west side of the entranceway with access both to the first floor assembly space and the exterior front courtyard
- The carriage house retains a bathroom on the first floor that could be accessible when the building is closed and retains the west stair to the second floor. The remainder of the spaces on the first and second are administrative office spaces with a meeting room in the central space above the main entrance.

ADDITION – WEST SIDE

- The west half of the rear addition is about the same size as the east side is also two stories above grade with higher ceiling heights and one story below grade. All three floors contain flexible activity rooms of varying sizes, which face north, overlooking the playing field.
- The first floor room can be either one large space or divided into two smaller rooms for separate activities. On the second floor and basement levels there are three separate activity rooms with fixed or flexible partitions.
- Along the south side of this half of the building in the area once occupied by the public alley is a circulation and service zone on all three floors, containing the entrances to the activity spaces, bathrooms, a stair at the west end and an elevator at the east end.
- The elevator is positioned so as to be able to access all levels of the east and west additions as well as the lower and upper roof thus providing full accessibility to all parts of the building.

AGRICULTURAL GREEN ROOF

- The roofs of both the east and west addition could be set up as roof-top farm garden that would serve as an activity for children and adults alike. It would also benefit the energy performance of the building by reducing both the heat entering the building and the heat reflected into the surrounding environment as well as reducing storm water runoff (a major issue for Washington DC). The roof could be installed and maintained by Up Top Acres and the programming of the children's activities could be assisted by City Blossoms, in conjunction with DPR and the Friends of Stead Park.

SOLAR ARRAYS AT BASKETBALL COURT AND PLAYGROUND

- In order to provide a renewal energy source for the building a solar photovoltaic array supported on a lightweight steel structure is located over the basketball court. This open roof system would allow natural ventilation and daylight but would also provide shade on the court in the summer when the court is used throughout the day by children for organized play activities. The structure array would be outfitted with lighting to allow nighttime use of the court.
- On the playground "solar trees" to provide additional renewable energy as well to provide shading for those seated on the integrated benches.

PLAYGROUND

- Because space is limited in the area available for playground use, vertical playground elements, which can accommodate more children per square foot, are an ideal solution. The Walholla by Carve/Goric is an extraordinary vertical playground and could be the signature piece of equipment for Stead Park. Its location along the P Street sidewalk is an efficient use of the playground space and its directly visibility from the sidewalk will make it a sign for the park.
- Another innovative piece of equipment is the Carousel by Goric, which allows people in wheelchairs to access and use the equipment directly without getting out of their wheelchairs.
- Other vertical playground elements are available for Kompan and Goric and other manufacturers and should be selected in consultation with DPR and the community.
- Traditional swing sets remain very popular and a six-swing unit is shown at the north end of the playground. The actual final layout of the equipment will be resolved once all of the elements have been selected in consultation with the community

SENSORY GARDEN

- Henry Hurt, the builder of the carriage house, was a prominent businessman and well-respected citizen. He also was an avid gardener and so much so that remarks on such appeared in his obituary. The 1945 survey that shows the carriage house also shows the perimeter wall around the property as "a brick garden wall 8 feet high". Having seen other discrete gardens at other DPR facilities – at Guy Mason and Chevy Chase, a garden in memory of Henry and Annie Hurt could be a fitting addition to Stead Park and would help animate and beautify the P Street sidewalk in front of the park. Annie Hurt had also established the Hurt Home for the Blind in Georgetown after her death. And thus evolved the idea of a "sensory garden" that would be of interest to all but especially to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, children and adults alike, along the street including the landscape areas in front of the basketball court and the playground and the tree box space. Initial, informal contact with the still extant Annie and Henry Hurt Trust about possible financial support for this idea has been very positive.

LEED CERTIFICATION AND NET ZERO

- This project would be an excellent candidate for the LEED Platinum certification and also try to achieve a Net Zero building, one whose energy consumption does not exceed the amount of renewable energy generated on site.
- The additional costs are appropriate and justified given the high visibility and the intensity of use of this DPR facility and that they will yield cost saving over the life cycle of the building due to lower energy cost and fewer maintenance needs. While providing a healthier and more pleasant building for the users, the implementation and operation of this strategy and discipline can be documented and observed on a interactive Dashboard inside the building and serve as valuable educational tool for children and adults alike on the merits of sound environmental stewardship.

ACCESSIBILITY

The site will be fully accessible according to ADA standards. The existing ramp at the east side of the property along the P Street sidewalk provides access from the sidewalk into the site. All of the playground surfaces will be covered with surfacing suitable for wheelchair travel and soft enough as a fall surface. The basketball court and front center courtyard as well as the rear track around the field are also wheelchair accessible. The first floor of the building will be accessible at grade and the elevator will provide access to all the levels of the building, the mezzanine level, the west addition second floor level and both the lower and the upper roof levels.

In summary the renovation of the front part of the site and the building along with the rear addition to the building will provide a fully integrated playground and recreational facility with generous light filled spaces to fit any size of activity or even that might be desired in a recreational or community center.



VIEW OVERHEAD



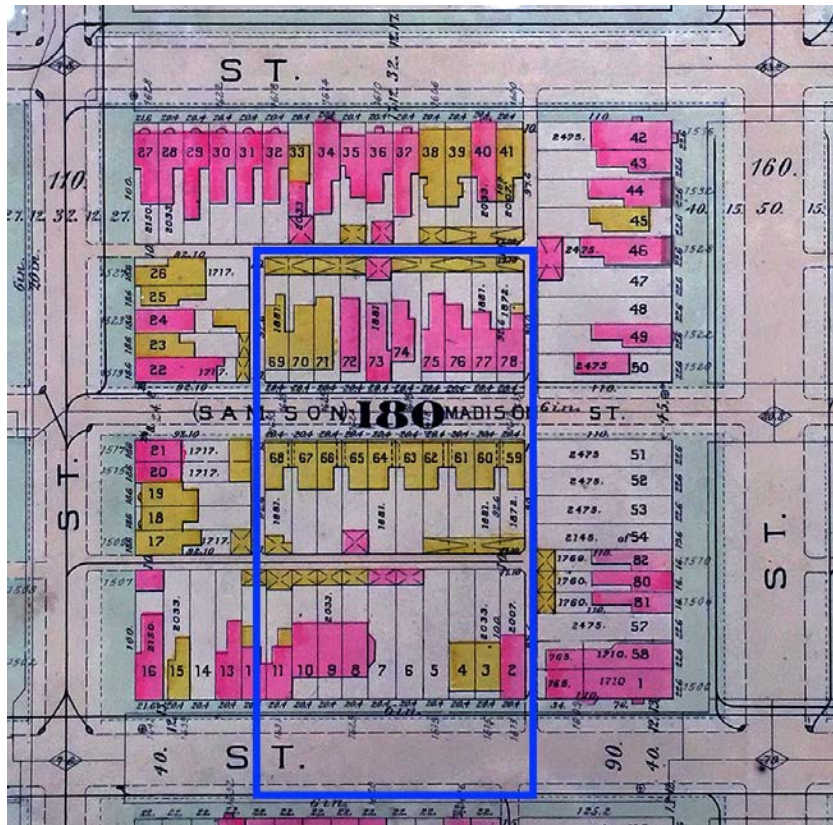
AREAL VIEW FROM NORTH



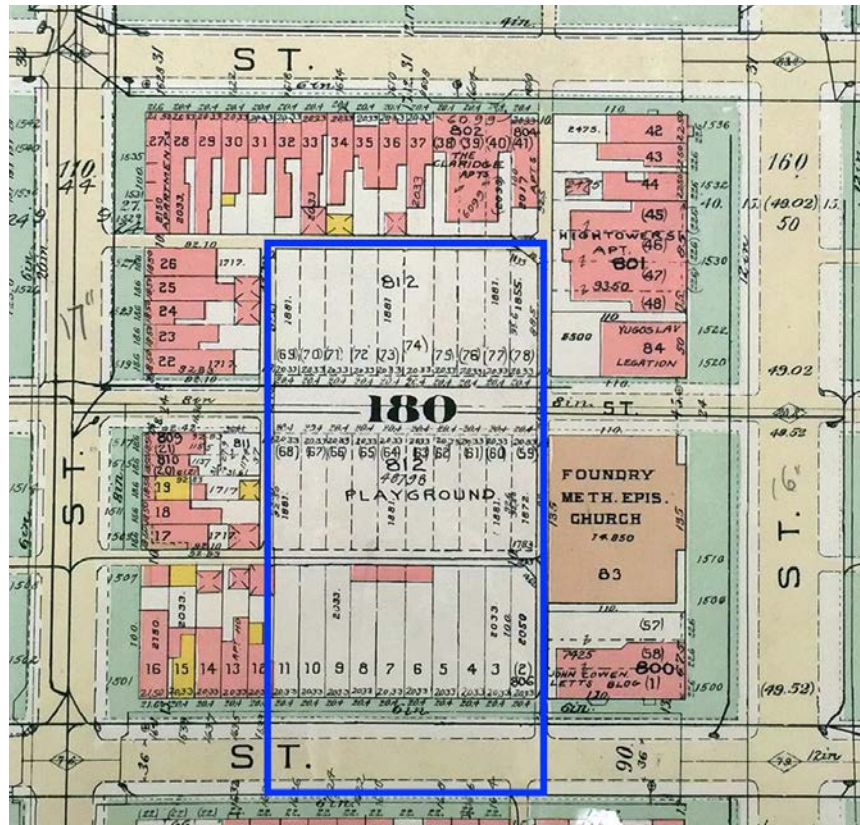
AREAL VIEW FROM EAST

Stead Park Recreation Center

1625 P Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036



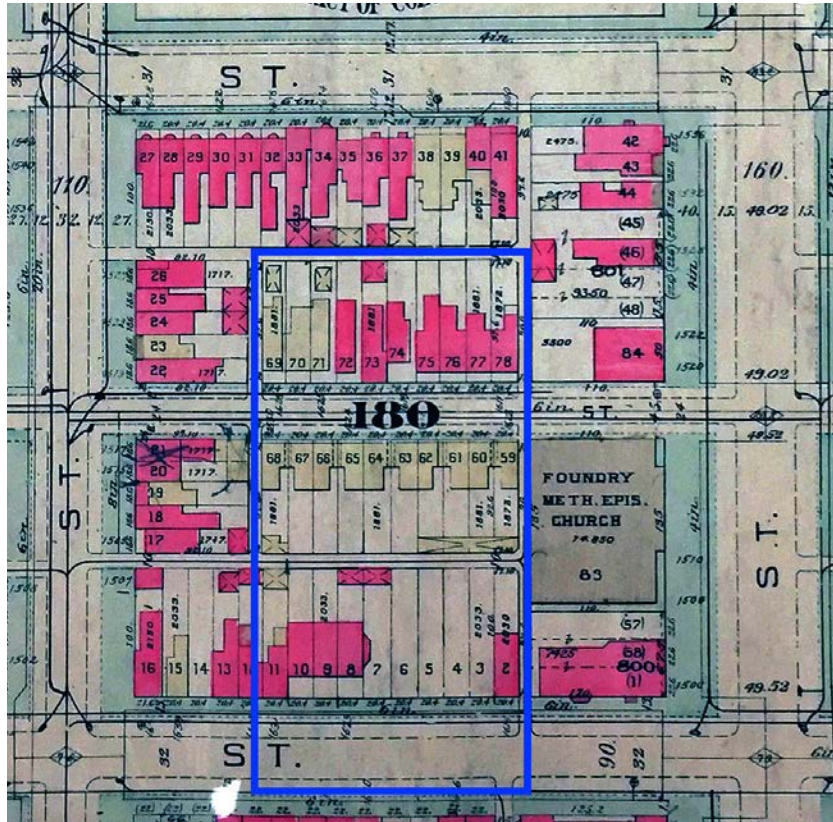
1903 BAIST SURVEY



1957 BAIST SURVEY



2015 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



1924 BAIST SURVEY



2010 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



BUILDING MAXIMUM EXPANSION OUTLINE

HENRY HURT DIES FROM APOPLEXY

(Continued from First Page.)

from business his one sport was bass fishing on the Potomac river on Saturdays during the summer, when the stock exchange was adjourned, but for two years he had been obliged to give this up.

While still in the employ of the Washington and Georgetown Railway Company Mr. Hurt met and later married Miss Annie Young, who survives him. They never had children, but adopted a daughter, who is now married.

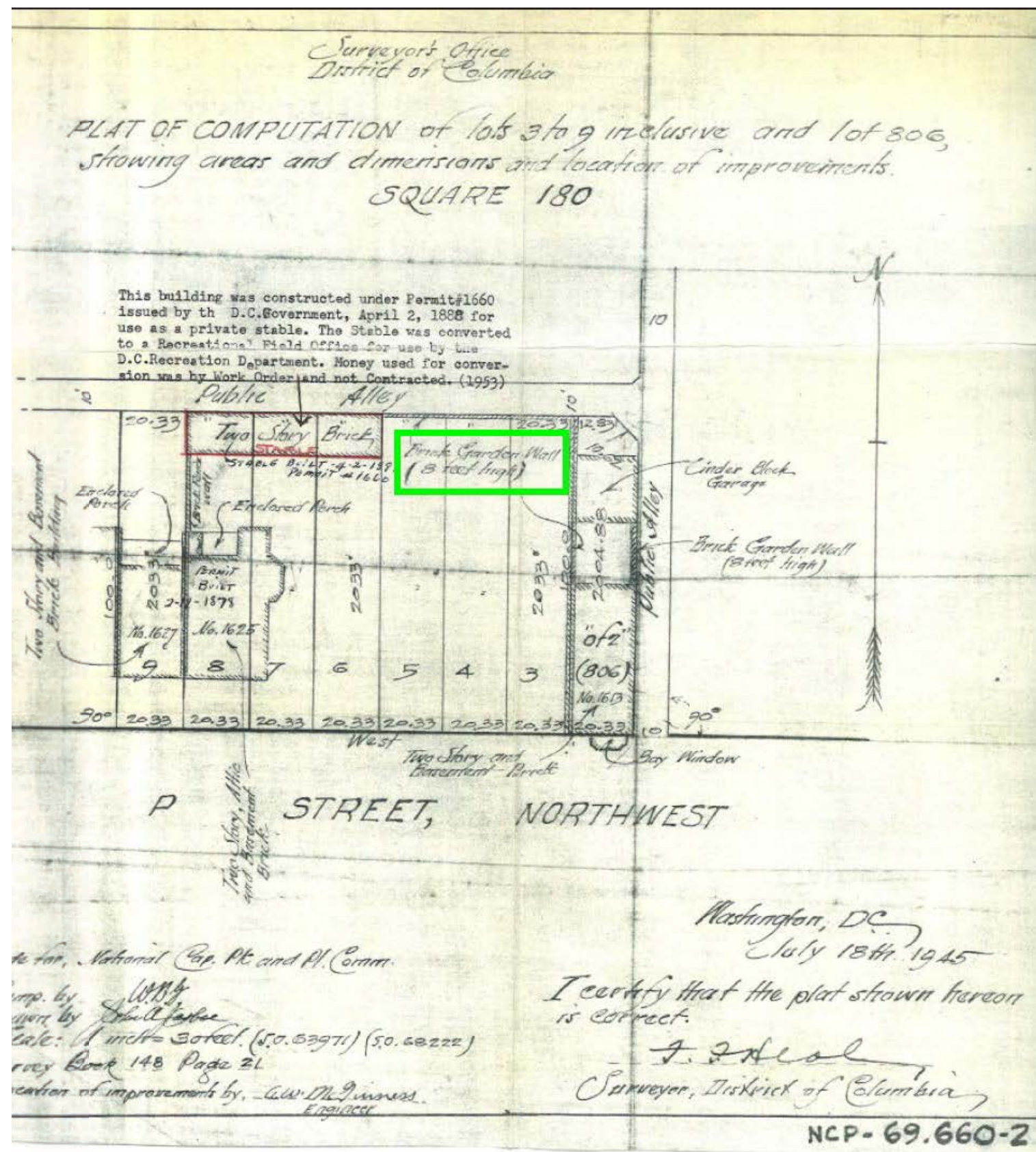
Delighted in His Garden.

Mr. Hurt was a pioneer resident of the northwest section of the city. He had lived on the site of the present residence on P street for nearly half a century. The present home, at 1625 P street, with its wide, well kept lawns to the east and its old stables to the rear, forming a vista through which the Cairo apartment house is framed as in a picture, never fails to attract the attention of visitors to the city who pass along P street.

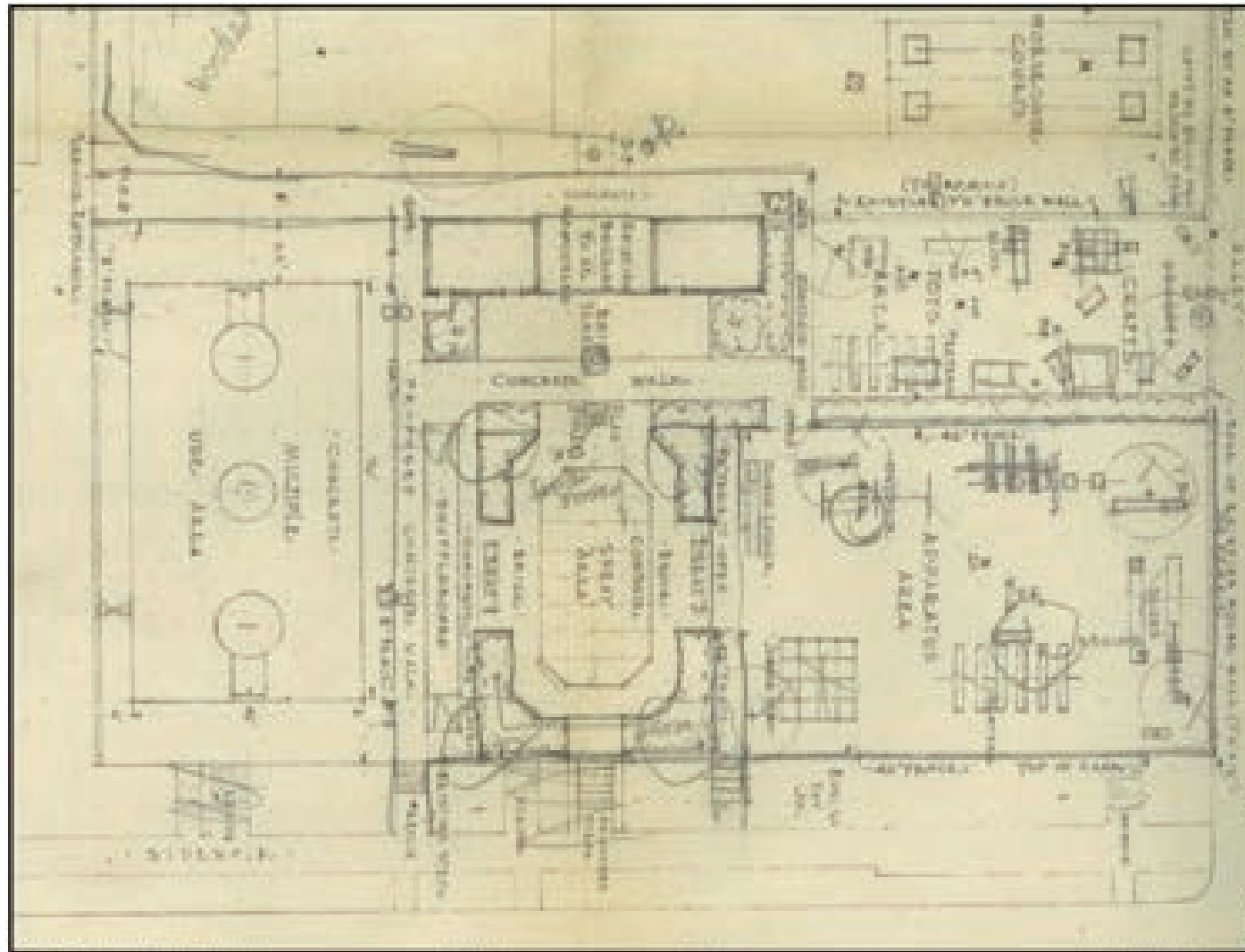
The gardens to the east of his home were Mr. Hurt's delight of recent years. The cultivation of flowers and vegetables was his hobby, and he personally attended to every detail.

Business men of Washington were saddened by the death of Mr. Hurt; every one seemed to have a good word to say for him; all were greatly surprised at the suddenness of his passing. Although about a month ago he had a slight attack, he seemed to have recovered and as late as Saturday was on change attending to business.

HENRY HURT OBITUARY (PARTIAL- JANUARY 21, 1916)



PLAT OF HENRY HURT HOUSE, CARRIAGE HOUSE AND GARDEN.



DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR STEAD PARK - 1952
SOURCE: NATIONAL PARKS AND PLANNING COMMISSION



STEAD RECREATION CENTER - 1953
SOURCE: EVENING STAR



VIEW FROM P STREET, WEST END



VIEW FROM P STREET, CENTER OF SITE



VIEW FROM P STREET, EAST END



P STREET SIDEWALK LOOKING EAST



P STREET EAST ENTRANCE



P STREET SIDEWALK LOOKING WEST



SOUTH-WEST VIEW OF EXISTING BUILDING



SOUTH VIEW OF EXISTING BUILDING



SOUTH-EAST VIEW OF EXISTING BUILDING



NORTH-EAST VIEW OF EXISTING BUILDING



NORTH VIEW OF EXISTING BUILDING



NORTH-WEST VIEW OF EXISTING BUILDING



BASKETBALL COURT



SPORT FIELD



SPLASH PARK



MULTI-PURPOSE AREA IN FRONT OF BUILDING



NORTH PLAYGROUND



SOUTH PLAYGROUND