

ORDINANCE NO. (2017) ###

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE **BERRY O'KELLY SCHOOL CAMPUS** IN THE PLANNING JURISDICTION OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, A HISTORIC LANDMARK

**WHEREAS**, the property located at 512 and 514 Method Road, Raleigh, NC, is owned by the City of Raleigh; and

**WHEREAS**, the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina authorized the creation of the Raleigh Historic Development Commission for the City of Raleigh and otherwise provided for the preservation of certain historic sites and buildings by the passage of Part 3C, Chapter 160A, Article 19 of the North Carolina General Statutes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Raleigh Historic Development Commission has made an investigation and recommended the following property be designated a historic landmark; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources has made an analysis and recommendation that the following property be designated a historic landmark; and

**WHEREAS**, on the 5th day of September, 2017, a joint public hearing was held in the Council Chamber of the Avery C. Upchurch Municipal Complex, Raleigh, before the City Council of the City of Raleigh and the Raleigh Historic Development Commission to determine whether the hereinafter described property should be designated a historic landmark; and

**WHEREAS**, all requirements of Part 3C, Chapter 160A, Article 19 of the North Carolina General Statutes, preceding the adoption of this ordinance, have been complied with.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA THAT:**

**Section 1.** The property designated as Berry O'Kelly School, in the planning jurisdiction of the City of Raleigh, North Carolina, be and is declared a Raleigh Historic Landmark. Said property being more particularly described as follows:

The property located at 512 and 514 Method Road, Raleigh, NC presently comprising approximately 7.65 acres, owned by City of Raleigh, that property described in deed book 3031, page 394 recorded in the Wake County Registry, less that portion of the property along the north property line conveyed to others by recombination as described in deed book 6761, page 32.

**Section 2.** Those elements of the property that are integral to its historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological and/or cultural significance or any combination thereof are as follows:

The athletic/agriculture field, gymnasium building, basketball court, and the approximately 7.65 acres upon which they sit. Along with the already historic landmark-designated agriculture building, these elements and land comprise the remaining resources with physical integrity associated with Berry O'Kelly and the Berry O'Kelly School of the Method community. Method was a community of free African Americans established shortly after the Civil War. The school is

historically and culturally significant for its associations with African American ethnic heritage and for education, as well as for its association with Berry O’Kelly. O’Kelly was born into slavery, but through hard work and talent became a prominent businessman whose work to build up the community of Method and whose philanthropy for the school made him a much revered source of pride for Method residents.

The grounds delineate an area that has been in continuous use by the Method community since 1873. Archaeological remains can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the school and community. While no investigation has yet been conducted to discover these remains, it is likely that they exist and archaeology should be taken into consideration in any ground-disturbing development on the property.

The athletic/agriculture field is a level area measuring roughly 285 x 160 feet. Initially used as an agricultural field for the school’s training program, it is historically significant as representative of the school’s early status as one of six training schools in the state “approved to give special vocational agricultural instruction to the negro race.” It was later converted to an athletic field as the school’s curriculum evolved during the mid-twentieth century.

The gymnasium building is significant architecturally and historically as a substantial state-of-the-art addition to the campus of an African American school while segregation still held sway. The utilitarian brick building features the clean lines of mid-century modern design, with horizontally-proportioned grids of windows in large openings daylighting the interior spaces. A barrel-arched roof supported by metal bow trusses spans the large double-height gymnasium space, flanked on three sides by one-story wings.

Further illustrating the historical trend of a mid-century push by advocates of “separate but equal” facilities, to the west of the gymnasium building and north of the athletic field is a basketball court of poured concrete constructed contemporaneously with the new gymnasium building.

A detailed architectural description and history is found in the 2017 Raleigh Historic Landmark Designation application and report and is hereby referenced.

**Section 3.** No portion of the exterior features of any building, site, structure, or object (including windows, doors, walls, fences, light fixtures, signs, steps, pavement, paths, or any other appurtenant features), trees, nor above ground utility structure located on the hereinbefore described property that is designated in this ordinance may be altered, restored, moved, remodeled, or reconstructed so that a change in design, material or outer appearance occurs unless and until a certificate of appropriateness is obtained from the Raleigh Historic Development Commission or its successors; provided however that the Raleigh Planning Director or designee may approve certificates of appropriateness for minor works as listed in the Bylaws and Rules of Procedure of the Raleigh Historic Development Commission.

**Section 4.** No building, site, structure, or object (including windows, doors, walls, fences, light fixtures, steps, pavement, paths, signs, or any other appurtenant features), trees, nor above ground utility structure located on the hereinbefore described property that is designated in this ordinance may be demolished unless and until either approval of demolition is obtained from the Raleigh Historic Development Commission or a period of three hundred sixty-five (365) days has elapsed following final review by the Commission of a request for demolition (or any longer period of time required by

N.C.G.S. 160A-400.14 as it maybe amended hereafter); provided however, that demolition may be denied by the Raleigh Historic Development Commission in the event that the State Historic Preservation Officer determines that the building, site, or structure has statewide significance as provided by N.C.G.S. 160A-400.14.

**Section 5.** The Raleigh Historic Development Commission shall have no jurisdiction over the interior features of the property.

**Section 6.** All owners and occupants of the property hereinabove described, whose identity and addresses can be ascertained by the exercise of due diligence shall be sent by certified mail a copy of this ordinance.

**Section 7.** This ordinance shall be indexed after the property owner's name in the grantor and grantee indexes in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Wake County.

**Section 8.** City administration and the Raleigh Historic Development Commission are hereby authorized and directed to have erected an appropriate sign on the site hereinabove described setting forth the fact that said site has been designated a historic landmark by action of the Raleigh Historic Development Commission and the City Council of the City of Raleigh provided, should the owners of the hereinabove described property not consent to the erection of said sign on the described premises, City administration and the Raleigh Historic Development Commission are hereby authorized and directed to have said sign located on the public right-of-way adjacent to said property.

**Section 9.** In the event any building, site, structure, or object designated by this ordinance is demolished in accordance with the ordinances of the City of Raleigh, this ordinance shall automatically be null and void.

**Section 10.** Any violation of this ordinance shall be unlawful as by law provided.

**Adopted:**

**Effective:**

Distribution: Department of City Planning  
Development Services Department  
Raleigh Historic Development Commission  
Wake County Tax Assessor  
Property Owner and Occupant (if not the owner)  
Registrar of Deeds