



FMW Renovation Update

June 17, 2018

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.

He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.

Be grateful for whatever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

— Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī

Sunday ☁️⚡️

Gang of local urchins tags our back garden.



Monday 

Raining, off and on. Blueridge arrives on site, and delicately begins to disassemble our connecting wall and gates.



Some progress is made without heavy equipment.



Patio bluestone is set aside for future use.

Something there is that does not like a wall . . .

— Robert Frost



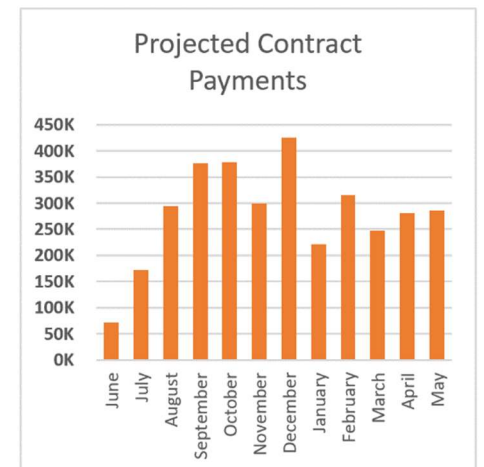
Still handicapped by lack of public space permit.



Wall defeated, expeditionary force establishes beachhead.

Monarc provides us with a rough disbursement schedule, predicting contract payments in the coming months. This does not include the Assembly Room renovation.

On this schedule, we would be half-way through the work and payments in October.



Wednesday 🌤️

Construction entrance established.



Last holdout reviewer on Building Permit has been back from vacation for six days and promises our architect to complete review this afternoon.

A local dealer in antique ironwork sniffs at our discarded gates and declares them “not of interest.” Want one?

Thursday ☀️

The holly trees have gone. They no longer block the scenic garden view.



The brick retaining wall and remaining roses have also gone.

The dig uncovers evidence of an earlier Quaker civilization — a buried storm drain we didn't know we had. Keep it and connect it to the new drains?

No word on the Building Permit, but an exciting rumor of a Public Space Use Permit is in the air, though not in hand.

Without the hollies, the once dark but now doomed Parlor windows take on a new glow.



Friday ☀️

A smashing day.

The Parlor windows now have a garden view.



The dividing wall is starting to go, the upper terrace begins to take shape . . .



In the morning, the architects send us the first SIC (supplemental instructions to contractor). These are modifications to the plans. This is the big one, since it contains the new Assembly Room renovation plans, which will allow us to negotiate a price with the contractor and get a permit for the work.

We also have a conversation with two lighting designers about the Lutron Grafik Eye QS — apparently the deluxe Swiss Army Knife of dimmer switches. Once we are factory trained to operate it, we will have the dimmest lights in the District.

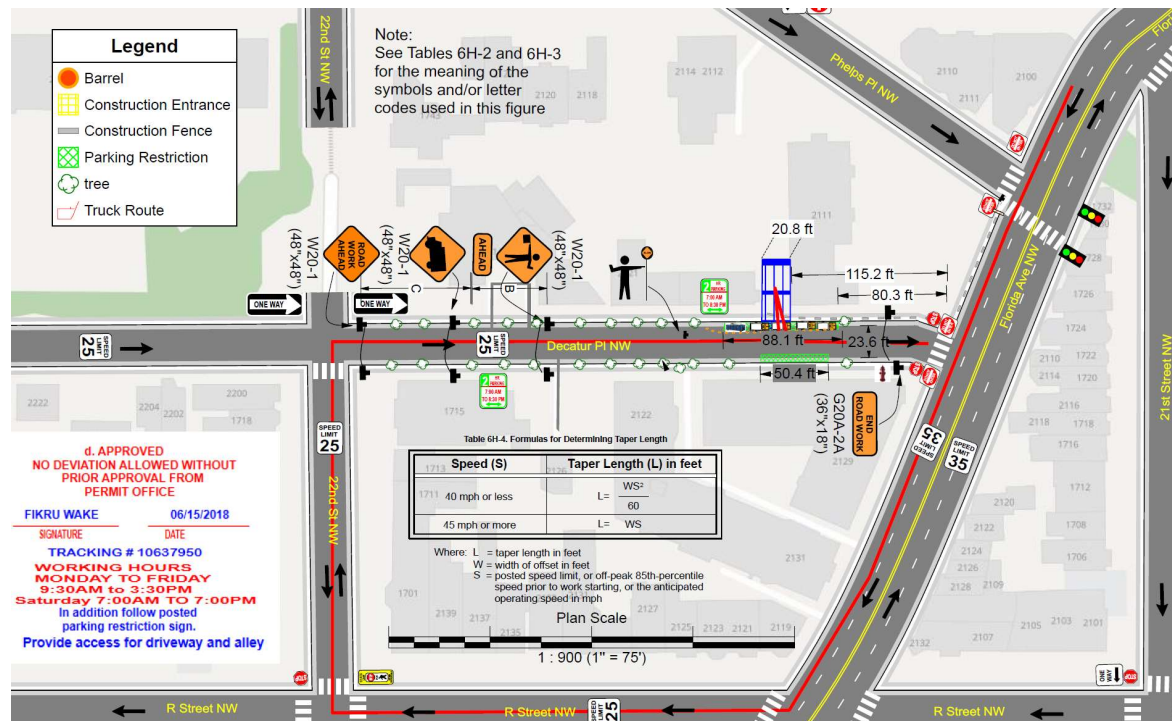
In the afternoon, we again dial the missing reviewer. He picks up the phone and at first seems to have no recollection of the project. Then he looks it up and says we still have not submitted a plat signed and dated by the DC Surveyor's Office. Look again, we say. A few minutes later, he finds the document and in 30 seconds (or one year, whichever comes first) approves the plan.

Review Status:

Approved

Our Building Permit Application now goes into “QA”, which is said to take “a day or two”. Then (Monday? Tuesday?) they will tell us to write a big check and pick up a copy of the Building Permit.

Later that afternoon, Monarc sends us the *approved* public space permit for the construction entrance:



They had to pay, among other things, a \$2,904 Public Inconvenience Fee — the first of several.

This allows them to take a few parking spaces and direct traffic sufficiently to start bringing in trucks and heavier equipment and haul a good bit of the back garden off to wherever migratory real estate goes.

Looking Ahead

The new Assembly Room Terrace will be level with the Assembly Room floor — lower even than the bottom of the concrete trench that now runs along the wall.

That means the concrete walk must be chiseled away, revealing a lower section of the wall than any of us have ever seen. We hope it will be as good-looking as the part we can see. So far, the new areas revealed have been matching stone, which is the best we could hope for. A little difficult to separate, since the old concrete is stronger than the stone.

More demolition and excavation in the coming week. The Hackberry tree and the Quaker House back steps are likely to go. As we begin Week 2, we are, for a change, on schedule.

