



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

DIVISION OF PLANNING & PERMITTING

Livable Frederick Planning & Design Office

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

Steven C. Horn, Division Director
Kimberly Gaines, Director

FREDERICK COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

June 7, 2023

Address: 7127 Autumn Leaf Ln, Frederick **Meeting Date:** June 7, 2023
Applicant: Eric and Gwen Gleysteen **Report Date:** May 25, 2022
Case No.: COA 23-02 **Staff:** Beau Lockard
Request: Input on landscape site plan and potential addition roof design

PROPERTY BACKGROUND

The Samuel Fleming House property was designated to the County Register of Historic Properties (CR # 21-03) on July 7, 2021. The property includes the entire parcel which includes the historic house, a non-contributing garage, and a non-contributing pool house and pool. The property was built in 1771 based on a panel in the north gable with a rear wing addition, which was added in the late 19th century. The property is accessed from Autumn Leaf Ln.



Figure 1: Subject property.

REQUEST

1. Applicant is requesting input on a landscape site plan and a potential addition concept plan.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations to a designated County Register property several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include the *Frederick County Historic Preservation Code: Chapter 1-23*, the *Frederick County Register of Historic Places Design Guidelines (Guidelines)*, and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)*. While this is not a Certificate of Appropriateness review, the Commissioners should keep in mind all applicable guidelines when providing input for the applicant. The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

Frederick County Code: Chapter 1-23-7B

- (1) In reviewing applications, the Commission shall give consideration to the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of the landmark, site, or structure and its relationship to the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of the surrounding area; the relationship of the exterior architectural features of a landmark or structure to the remainder of the landmark or structure and to the surrounding area; the general compatibility of proposed exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture, and materials to the landmark, site, or structure and to the surrounding area; and any other factors including aesthetic factors which the Commission deems to be pertinent.
- (2) The Commission shall consider only exterior features of a landmark or structure and shall not consider any interior arrangements.
- (3) The Commission shall not disapprove an application except with respect to the several factors specified in paragraph (1) above.
- (4) The Commission shall be strict in its judgment of plans for sites or structures determined by research to be of historic, archeological, or architectural significance. The Commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for sites or structures of little historic, archeological, or architectural significance, or of plans involving new construction, unless in the Commission's judgment such plans would seriously impair the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of surrounding sites or structures. The Commission is not required to limit construction, reconstruction, or alteration to the architectural style of any one (1) period.

Frederick County Register of Historic Places Design Guidelines

The *Guidelines* contain a Landscape and Site Feature Chapter (Chapter 5) that should be referred to when reviewing this landscape site plan. The *Guidelines* contain a Building Exteriors Chapter (Chapter 4) and Additions and New Construction (Chapter 7) that should be referred to when reviewing the addition concept plan.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The *Standards* define rehabilitation as “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.” The *Standards* that are most applicable to the application before the Commission are as follows:

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINE ASSISTANCE

Proposed Landscape Site Plan

The following is a list of landscape elements being proposed by the applicant in the landscape plan and what sections of the design guidelines pertain to each element. Since this is a workshop, staff is not offering guidance. The descriptions are written by the applicant with very few additions.

- 1. Fencing:** *Style* – black aluminum to reduce visibility and maintain a cohesive unified approach across the yard; ideally, with this low profile approach the overall property will not feel cluttered or broken up by fencing. Would additionally replace the existing wood stockade fencing around the pool.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 5D3: *Landscape and Site Features, Landscape Features and Materials, Fences.* “Because much fencing can be ephemeral, if the fencing to be

replaced is non-historic, the Commission will advise on an appropriate substitute.” “If fencing is to be installed where none existed, it should be compatible with the overall landscape, including the period, architecture, and intended function.”

2. Retaining walls: *Some Visible Locations* – proposed at the front of the house/property (i.e., the sitting wall along front walk and the wall at the corner of the driveway closest to Opposumtown Pike). *Purpose* – these walls help reinforce the front walk and driveway against slope and erosion as the grade of the property tends to drop more aggressively along that front edge of the property. *Height* – sitting wall at front of house is only planned to be 18 inches tall and would not be expected to rival the view or height of the wrap around porch at the front of the house.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 5D4: *Landscape and Site Features, Landscape Features and Materials, Walls, Including Retaining Walls.* “*Proposed new walls on historic properties will be reviewed by the Commission. New walls should be made of materials that are in keeping with the character of the site or community. Generally, traditional materials are acceptable.*”

3. Pétanque court: *Color of material*– blue/grey/tan stone dust would generally be the target color – no artificial/non-natural colors would be used to lay the court. *Location* – the location of the pétanque court and its flatness likely mean that no one is much going to be able to see it from a public way, especially with planned plantings.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 5D6: *Landscape and Site Features, Landscape Features and Materials, Terraces and Patios.* “*Proposed new terraces on historic properties should be located in rear yards or other less visible areas of the site. The terrace material should be in keeping with the character of the building and site.*”

4. Stone Grill Installation: *Location* – would tend to be more visible from a public way than the flat low-lying pétanque court, but not a problem if we execute the shrub placement indicated at the bottom left of the pétanque court – we can plan to have shrubs planted at the same time the grill gets constructed

Applicable Design Guidelines: 5D4: *Landscape and Site Features, Landscape Features and Materials, Walls, Including Retaining Walls.* “*Proposed new walls on historic properties will be reviewed by the Commission. New walls should be made of materials that are in keeping with the character of the site or community. Generally, traditional materials are acceptable.*”

5. Driveway: *Amount of asphalt* – the current driveway has traffic pattern challenges in terms of vehicles coming and going efficiently; the new driveway design makes sense, allows vehicles to enter and exit the property without having to back out or drive on the grass, and uses the minimum amount of asphalt to accomplish the desired traffic pattern. *Stone culverts* – support and protect the drain pipe that runs under the driveway, which is currently getting misshapen and squashed by vehicles driving in and out of the driveway.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 5D1: *Landscape and Site Features, Landscape Features and Materials, Circulation.* “*Proposed new paths and paving should be in keeping with the character and appearance of existing historic paving on the site or in the neighborhood. Parking and driveway areas that are visible from a public right-of-way should be consistent with the materials of the surrounding streets.*”

6. New Walkways: Material- proposing flagstone and pea gravel for walkways.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 5D1: *Landscape and Site Features, Landscape Features and Materials, Circulation.* “*Historic paving materials used for vehicular and pedestrian surfaces may include brick, stone, or other masonry pavers, concrete, gravel, tile or other mosaic treatments, and asphalt. The patterning and detailing of paving materials impact the character of a streetscape or landscape and should be maintained and preserved.*” “*Crushed gravel is only appropriate on private walks that do not abut a public sidewalk.*”

7. Additional retaining walls/patios/pool alterations at the rear of the property:
Material: patio and pathways are shown to be flagstone with some gravel paths. The retaining walls are stone. The pool patio is currently concrete and is only changing shape not material. Water Feature: A water feature is proposed to be located behind the house (west elevation). The pool patio is proposed to be changing shape from a rectangular concrete footprint to a more oval footprint.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 5D1: *Landscape and Site Features, Landscape Features and Materials, Circulation.* “*Historic paving materials used for vehicular and pedestrian surfaces may include brick, stone, or other masonry pavers, concrete, gravel, tile or other mosaic treatments, and asphalt. The patterning and detailing of paving materials impact the character of a streetscape or landscape and should be maintained and preserved.*” “*Crushed gravel is only appropriate on private walks that do not abut a public sidewalk.*” 5D5: *Landscape and Site Features, Landscape Features and Materials, Water Features.* “*All new water features and pools proposed on properties designated to the County Register will be reviewed by the Commission. Proposed new pools or water features should be appropriate in scale and materiality to the historic context, they should be sited to minimize the impact on the historic property, and they shall be screened from view from the public right-of-way.*”

Addition Concept Plan

The following addition concept plan overview should be reviewed using Chapter 7, on Additions and New Construction, for location, design, and form, and Chapter 4, on Building Exteriors, for the proposed roof and window design. Since this is a workshop, staff is not offering guidance.

1. Location and Scale: The applicant is proposing to place the addition onto, and replacing, the 1980s addition located on the southwest corner of the historic house. It would extend to the south, just past the south porch alignment.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 7A: *Additions and New Construction, Additions.* “*Additions should be located on rear or secondary building elevations and out of view from a public right-of-way. Additions will not be approved on public-facing elevations. Historic walls and other building fabric shall not be damaged to allow for the construction of an addition and the addition should be reversible without loss of historic materials.*” “*Additions should appear subordinate to the main building and not overpower it.*”

2. Siding Material: The applicant is considering continuing with James Hardie plank siding as was used on the secondary structure on the property, but also thinking about stucco; designers are wondering if vertical metal siding is out of the question. The existing building's exterior material is painted stone and brick.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 7A: *Additions and New Construction, Additions.* “The design of building additions shall be compatible and sympathetic to the character of the existing building in massing, form, scale, detailing, and materiality. The addition should be distinguishable from the historic building and not imitate historic features.” 7D: *Additions and New Construction, Material and Detailing.* “The materials and detailing of new construction should complement those found in the neighborhood or other buildings on the site.”

3. Windows, Door, and Skylight: The plan shows nine-over-nine double hung windows on the addition elevation and a door on the east elevation off the porch. The applicant states that they are not proposing a specific approach to windows yet and is looking for feedback. They also want to know about the possibility of adding a skylight to the addition roof.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 7D: *Additions and New Construction, Form and Features.* “Window and door openings, porches, roof elements, and other features of new buildings should be scaled appropriately and create a similar order and rhythm to the historic buildings found nearby. The proportion of solid wall to window openings should also complement that of the neighboring buildings. Primary building entrances should be located and detailed similarly to the historic context.” 4B2 *Building Exteriors, Roofs, Associated Elements.* “New skylights on an historic building should not be located on a primary roof elevation if the roof is pitched or visible. New skylights should sit flush with the roof plane and have frames to match the color of the roof material. Bubble-type skylights should not be used.”

4. Roof Design: The addition plan is proposing a shed roof off the historic 1850s addition roof. It would partially cover the historic 1771 house roof and fully cover the southwest corner at its associated elements, including the cornice. The proposed roof for the addition is designed to retain all the historic elements under the proposed roof. If the addition was removed, all the historic elements would be preserved. No historic materials would be removed or compromised by this design; this roof is designed to be reversible.

Applicable Design Guidelines: 7A: *Additions and New Construction, Additions.* “Historic walls and other building fabric shall not be damaged to allow for the construction of an addition and the addition should be reversible without loss of historic materials.” 7D: *Additions and New Construction, Form and Features.* “The form, pitch, and complexity of new roofs should be consistent with those nearby.”