



## FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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### DIVISION OF PLANNING & PERMITTING

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### FREDERICK COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

## STAFF REPORT

March 6, 2024

**Address:** 7127 Autumn Leaf Ln, Frederick

**Meeting Date:** March 6, 2024

**Applicant:** Eric and Gwen Gleysteen

**Report Date:** February 23, 2024

**Case No.:** COA 24-02

**Staff:** Beau Lockard

**Request:** Remove temporary roofing and associated substructure from second floor that was part of COA #22-09; install new porch subfloor and Duradek vinyl flooring; install simple, white wooden railings with square balusters around the new second story porch; install a storm door on the exterior second floor door that leads to the new second story porch.

### 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 19<sup>th</sup> century. The property is accessed from Autumn Leaf Ln.

Previous applications for Certificates of Appropriateness (COA) filed for this property include:

Case Number	Date	Owner	Decision
A-COA #21-06	10/22/2021	Eric and Gwen Gleysteen	Approved
Removal of a silver maple tree located between the house and the garage.			
COA#21-08	9/1/2021	Eric and Gwen Gleysteen	Approved

Alter the façade of the former garage to include removing the first-floor window and door, infilling the garage doors, reframing the façade to center two new windows and door, and remove existing siding on the entire structure and replace it with hardie-plank siding. The replacement windows will be either vinyl-clad or aluminum-clad and have either simulated divided lites with the grilles attached to the exterior glass or be one-over-one windows with no grilles. The corner moldings and window trim will be smooth cement boards. The lights will be a contemporary design.

COA #22-09	8/3/2022	Eric and Gwen Gleysteen	Approved
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Replace asphalt shingle main and porch roof with standing seam metal roof, and removal of non-contributing sunroom.

COA# 23-02	8/9/2023	Eric and Gwen Gleysteen	Approved
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Install a new four-foot-tall black aluminum fence, with ball caps on all posts, for approximately 173 linear feet, east-west, south of the historic house. Install landscape screening for the first 25 feet closest to Opposumtown Pike.



*Image 1: Subject Property*

## **REQUEST**

A Certificate of Appropriateness is requested to:

1. Remove temporary roofing and associated substructure from second floor that was part of COA #22-09.
2. Install new porch subfloor and Duradek vinyl flooring. Applicant wants Commissioners' input on the color/texture of the material.
3. Install simple, white wooden railings with square balusters around the new second story porch.
4. Install a storm door on the exterior second floor door that leads to the new second story porch.

## **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)*. 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 Building Exterior chapter (Chapter 4) and a New Construction chapter (Chapter 7) that should be referred to when reviewing this COA application. For this case, please refer to Chapter 5, Section F, Subheading 4: "The Commission will review all proposed porch alterations on a case-by-case basis." Further analysis of how this request meets the *Guidelines* is provided in the Evaluation section below.

### **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:

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.

### **STAFF EVALUATION**

The applicant is proposing to install a new second story porch on the south elevation where the modern 1980s sunroom was located prior to its demolition associated with COA #22-09. Currently the location has a temporary roof that needs a long-term solution to protect the building from future water damage. There is some evidence that the area where the sunroom was located was previously a second story porch, though it is unclear if that porch was built with the late 19<sup>th</sup> century west addition or if it was added later. The brick addition underneath the proposed porch is not part of the historic addition and its exact construction date is unclear, though likely mid- to late-20<sup>th</sup> century.



*Image 2: Southwest Corner of Samuel Fleming House, Current Day*

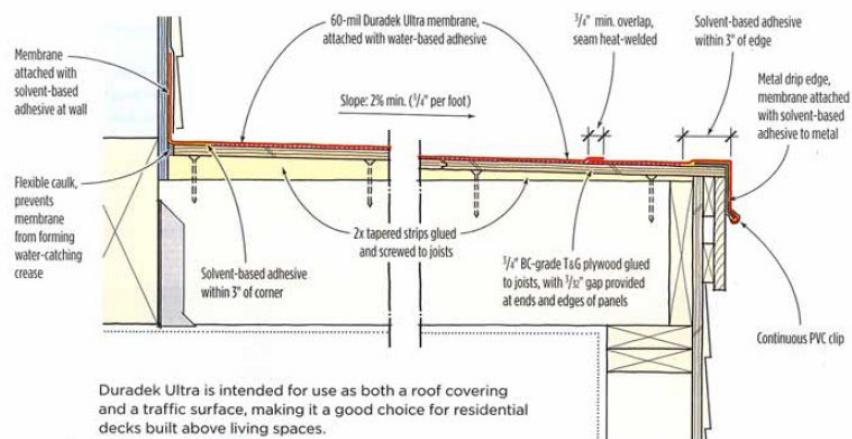
The oldest image provided by the applicant of the south elevation shows a deteriorated second floor structure and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century addition has a second-floor exterior door opening (Image 1). This could indicate that a since demolished two story porch was present on this elevation when the 19<sup>th</sup> century addition was added. Two story porches on secondary elevations are commonplace on farmhouses in Frederick County.



*Image 3: South Elevation of the Samuel Fleming House, Exact Date Unknown.*

The applicant is proposing to use Duradek vinyl material as the flooring material for the proposed porch. This is designed to keep the rooftop porch waterproof. The applicant has included a product brochure and color guide for the Commissioners to review. At this time, a material color has not been chosen but Staff suggests Classic Steel. Commissioners are welcome to provide their own view on the color options provided by the applicant.

#### Duradek Details



*Image 4: Diagram of Duradek's Construction*

While vinyl is not a traditional material, the flooring is not publicly viewable. The south elevation is only partially visible from Opposumtown Rd. and since it is on the second floor, it is not visible from the public right-of-way. The waterproofing nature of the material also protects the historic house much better than the previous sunroom. The necessary slope to direct water away from the historic house does not leave enough room for a traditional wooden porch with joist supports. The specific measurements will be provided in the presentation during the HPC meeting. The addition underneath the proposed porch is not considered a contributing part of the historic house. It was not part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century addition and may have been added in the mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> century, but that specific date is not known at this time.

Staff is suggesting that the Classic Steel color be used because the vinyl material matches sheet metal in thickness, massing, scaling, and rhythm better than a wooden texture. This historic house also has gray standing seam metal roofs, so the color reflects that while being a noticeable difference, as to not create a false sense of history, and create a usable, waterproof porch.

The proposed railing is a simple, white wooden railing with square balusters and is the most visible aspect of the proposed porch. This simple design is common for second story porches on farmhouses in the area. The applicant is also proposing a storm door for the second-floor entrance onto the proposed porch. Storm doors help weatherize a historic house and improve the thermal performance of the historic door/opening.

Staff analysis of the *Guidelines* for this project is as follows:

Guideline	Met?	Comments
4F2: Building Exteriors: Porches: Porch Elements	Mostly	The <i>Guidelines</i> state that “historic documentation or physical evidence should be used when replicating a missing porch feature.” There is not an image of an intact porch in this location. However, this elevation of a farmhouse is a commonplace location for a two-story porch in the County and the exterior door opening on the 19 <sup>th</sup> century addition provide circumstantial evidence that a porch could have been located here. Image 3 also seems to show a collapsed 20 <sup>th</sup> century porch that may have replaced the one that was built with the 19 <sup>th</sup> century addition.
4F2: Building Exteriors: Porches: Porch Elements	Somewhat	The <i>Guidelines</i> state, “new porch elements should be in kind replacements that match the material, size, texture, and finish of the original element.” Without documentation, it is not known what material the porch may have been, though it was likely wood, based on local examples. The vinyl flooring could match a historic metal material in massing, size, texture, and color and specifically the current metal roof that exist on the historic building. While a wooden color/textured may seem more appropriate, Staff believes that it

		would not match the historic material in massing, size, and rhythm as well as emulating a historic sheet metal material. It is important to note that the elevation for this porch is not visible from the public right-of-way and since it is on the second story, the material won't be visible exempt when someone is on the porch.
8A1: Considerations for Contemporary Use: Alternative Materials: Alternative materials for Historic Buildings and Ancillary Structures	Yes	The Guidelines state that when the Commission reviews alternative materials, they will "consider the location of the feature and its visibility from the public right-of-way." While this vinyl material would not be appropriate for the highly visible front porch of the house, this is a no visibility area. Also, the waterproofing of this porch material will protect the building as a long-term solution for the current temporary roofing.
4F3: Building Exteriors: Porches: Steps and Railings	Yes	The Guidelines state, "If railings are required to meet current building codes...new railings should be designed simply and in keeping with the historic character of the building." The proposed railing is simple wooden square balusters painted white to match the trim of the existing windows and doors of the house.
4C7: Building Exteriors: Openings: Weatherization, Storm Windows and Doors, Screen Doors	Yes	The Guidelines state that "storm doors are appropriate for residential buildings," and that "a storm door should be simple in design, use clear glazing, and have trim painted to match the historic door." The product specs provided by the applicant show a simple storm door with clear glazing and white trim, which matches the other exterior doors of the historic house.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Commission **approve** COA #24-02 as a test for the vinyl flooring material as an alternative material when the necessary roofing slope needs a thin waterproof/walkable material. It can be found under the criteria for Application Review in Chapter 1-23-7(B) (1) that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource, is compatible in character to the landmark and the surrounding area and is consistent with the *Guidelines* and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* #9 and #10.