

**STAFF REPORT  
for  
NOVEMBER 4, 2020 HRC MEETING**

**Case #:** COA2020-117  
**Staff:** Michelle M. McCullough  
  
**Applicant:** Samantha Smith  
Old Salem Museums and Gardens

**LOCATION**

District: Old Salem Historic District  
Streets: Various  
Buildings: N/A  
Status: N/A  
Local Historic  
Landmark#: N/A

**REQUEST(S)**

- Temporary installation of string lighting

**APPLICABLE SECTIONS OF DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES**

*Old Salem Historic District Guide to the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Process and Design Review Guidelines (Please refer to the applicable sections of the **Guidelines** as detailed in the staff comments.)*

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION/ELEMENTS**

*Please refer to the information provided with the application.*

**STAFF FINDING**

Commission staff finds that the application is incongruous with the character of the District because:

- 1) The applicant requests permission to install string lights throughout the Old Salem Historic District. String lights are not compatible with the character of the District because the design, material, and finish would not have been found during the period of significance. The location of the proposed string lights would not be in an area that is unobtrusive and would therefore detract from the character of the District. The Guidelines state that string lights are not permitted in the Inappropriate Treatments section of the *Lighting* section of the Guidelines. (*Lighting*, District Guidelines #4 and 5)

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the preceding finding, staff recommends that the Commission deny COA2020-117 in the Old Salem Historic District.

If approved, staff suggests the following conditions to guarantee that the lights are uniform in appearance to minimize the impact to the character and historic fabric of the District:

- 1) The lights shall be clear, incandescent, steady, white lights. Blinking, LED, rope, and icicle lights are prohibited;
- 2) The lights shall be attached to the building with temporary fasteners, excluding the use of nails, hooks, screws, and the like, so that no damage comes to any historic feature or material;
- 3) The applicant shall receive, prior to commencement of the work, all other required permits or permissions from governmental agencies;
- 4) Commission staff shall review and approve any revisions or deviations to any portion of the as-submitted work, that qualifies as a minor work, prior to commencement of that portion of the project; and,
- 5) The applicant shall submit the Certificate of Appropriateness Request for Certification of Completed Work form and photo documentation of the completed project to HRC staff within ten (10) days of its completion.