

STAFF REPORT
for
DECEMBER 2, 2020 HRC MEETING

Case #: COA2020-126
Staff: Michelle M. McCullough

Applicant: James and Judy Lester

LOCATION

District: Old Salem Historic District
Streets: 823 South Church Street
Buildings: Anna Johanna Vogler House, OS#95
Status: Contributing
Local Historic
Landmark#: 35

REQUEST(S)

- Installation of site improvements including stone steps and a retaining wall, construction of a new outbuilding, site work/landscaping work, extension of the picket fence, and resurfacing of the driveway

APPLICABLE SECTIONS OF DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Forsyth County Design Review Guidelines for Local Historic Landmarks and 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 FINDINGS

Commission staff finds that the work is not incongruous with the character of the Local Historic Landmark and Old Salem Historic District because:

- 1) The project requests removal of existing wood steps that are severely deteriorated. The new steps are proposed to be constructed of Rocka Carved Stone, 48" x 15" x 6", and installed in two locations, from the rear yard to the first terrace and from the first terrace to the second terrace. The color will be similar to the house/garage foundation stone. The steps will not be visible from Church Street. The proposed new rock steps replace completely deteriorated steps with a new design that is compatible in location, pattern, spacing, configuration, dimension, scale, texture, and material with the character of the Landmark building, site, and District. Stone is a historically appropriate material. (*Site Features and Plantings*, Landmark Guideline #5 and *Walkways and Steps*, Old Salem Guideline #3)
- 2) The proposed outbuilding is sited on a lower terrace at the rear of the lot, approximately 15'-20' below street level. The roof line of the proposed outbuilding will be below that of the principal building. The proposed outbuilding does not compromise or diminish the character of the Landmark site and there is no loss of significant site features. (*New Construction and Reconstruction*, Landmark Guidelines #1 and 2 and *New Construction Accessory Structures*, Old Salem Guidelines #1, 2, and 3)
- 3) The proposed outbuilding is an 8'x10', one story building no taller than 16'. It will not visually overpower the Landmark site or significantly alter the historic relationship of built to unbuilt area of

the Landmark setting. (*New Construction and Reconstruction*, Landmark Guideline #3 and *New Construction Accessory Structures*, Old Salem Guidelines #1 and 2)

- 4) The proposed outbuilding will have a stone or stone veneered foundation or piers; wood clapboard siding; and a wood shake shingled gable roof. The paint color will match the existing garage on the property. A single door will be located on the south gable end. The design of the proposed outbuilding is compatible with the Landmark building in massing; form; proportion; height; roof shape; relationship of solid areas to openings in the exterior walls; location; spacing; scale; size of doors openings and details; and material. (*New Construction and Reconstruction*, Landmark Guidelines #5-7 and *New Construction Accessory Structures*, Old Salem Guidelines #1 and 2)
- 5) The proposed outbuilding is not a documented reconstruction. The design is compatible with, but differentiated from, the Landmark building by being simple in design; different in wall surface material, (wood not brick); but similar in foundation material (stone). (*New Construction and Reconstruction*, Landmark Guideline #8)
- 6) There will be limited excavation or site grading, and no loss of mature trees. The application proposes to use fill dirt on the south side of the lot to create a gentler slope between the two lowest terrace levels. The area will be seeded with grass. (*New Construction and Reconstruction*, Landmark Guideline #9 and *New Construction Accessory Structures*, Old Salem Guideline #1)
- 7) The project requests removal of an existing inappropriate railroad crosstie retaining wall at the rear of the driveway and installation of a new stone veneered retaining wall approximately one foot behind the existing wall. The stone will match the existing stone foundation of the garage. The new wall design is compatible in location, size, scale, materials, design, and configuration with the Landmark building, site, and District. The new wall will not obscure, damage, or destroy any original or significant building or structure features. The new wall will be constructed out of stone, a traditional and appropriate material for the Landmark site and District. (*Fences and Walls*, Landmark Guidelines #7 and 8 and *Walls*, Old Salem Guideline #4)
- 8) The project requests to extend the current picket fence and install a fence gate at the entrance to the driveway, which will replicate the historic fence line. The fence and gate will use similar materials, construction techniques, and paint color, as the existing fence. The location and configuration are compatible and appropriate with the Landmark building, site, and District and will not obscure, damage, or destroy any original or significant building or structure features. The fence and gate will be constructed out of traditional materials and at heights that are consistent with the heights of other historic fences on the Landmark site and District. The new fence and gate will screen the driveway and parking area. (*Fences and Walls*, Landmark Guidelines #7 and 8 and *Fences*, District Guidelines #5, 6, 8, 9, and 10, and *Driveways and Parking Areas*, Old Salem Guideline #5)
- 9) The project requests to repave the current inappropriate asphalt driveway with pea gravel exposed aggregate concrete. The new material, pea gravel, is compatible in size, shape, appearance, color, and texture with the Landmark site and District. (*Walkways, Driveways, and On-Site Parking*, Landmark Guideline #5 and *Driveways and Parking Areas*, Old Salem Guideline #1)
- 10) The project requests installation of plantings and landscape features in the rear and side yards, along with the lower terraces. The new site features and plantings are in locations and configurations that are compatible with the Landmark building, site, and District and maintain the historic context and setting of the Landmark site and District. (*Site Features and Plantings*, Landmark Guideline #8 and Significant *Landscape Features*, Old Salem Guideline #3)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the preceding findings, staff recommends that the Commission approve COA2020-126 at the Anna Johanna Vogler House, located at 823 South Church Street, Local Historic Landmark #35 in the Old Salem Historic District (PIN#6835-32-4072.00), with the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant shall immediately stop construction and contact staff if during the project any archaeological resources are discovered;
- 2) The applicant shall receive, prior to commencement of the work, all other required permits or permissions from governmental agencies;
- 3) 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,
- 4) 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.