

**Minor Work Approval and Other Requests Report
Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission**

March 3, 2021

The following Minor Work applications have been reviewed and approved by Commission staff from January 14, 2021 to February 10, 2021.

1. **COA2021-007**
W.R. James House
146 Piedmont Avenue, Winston-Salem
West End Historic Overlay District #504
Contributing
Request: Installation of exterior lighting and mailboxes

West End Historic Overlay District Design Review Standards: Standards 1 and 2 of the *Exterior Lighting* section and Standard 7 of the *Architectural Details* section

Staff Comments: The applicant requests permission to install five glass and metal wall lights, one on the side of each exterior door. A glass and metal light will be installed flush on the underside of the front porch ceiling. The location, design, size, and scale of the fixtures are compatible with the special character of the property and District. The applicant also requests permission to install three simple metal mailboxes on the wall near the front entry doors. Upon consideration of the proposed work, staff believes the work as proposed meets the *Standards* for the District and is in keeping with the character of the District.

2. **COA2021-008**
P.H. Hanes Knitting Building
675 Main Street, Winston-Salem
Local Historic Landmark #121
Request: Installation of window film

Forsyth County Design Review Guidelines for Local Historic Landmarks: Guidelines 1, 2, and 7 of the *Utilities and Energy Retrofit* section of the Landmark Guidelines

Staff Comments: The applicant requests permission to install window film on the interior of all the windows to gain a higher energy star rating. The film blocks UV rays by 99% and has a solar energy absorption rate of approximately 60%. The film is not highly visible when installed. Upon consideration of the proposed work, staff believes the work as proposed meets the *Guidelines* for the Landmark and is in keeping with the character of the Landmark.

3. **COA2021-009**
Middleton House
2770 Chatham Farm Road, Winston-Salem
Local Historic Landmark #111

Request: Removal of two dying trees, one tree that is hazardous to the historic building, and one to restore the historic landscape. Redesign of the circle driveway in the rear of the property.

Forsyth County Design Review Guidelines for Local Historic Landmarks: Guideline 7 of the *Site Features and Plantings* section and Guidelines 7 and 9 of the *Walkways, Driveways, and On-Site Parking* section of the Landmark Guidelines

Staff Comments: The applicant requests permission to remove two trees that are dying. The City's Urban Forester reviewed five trees on the property. The second and fifth trees reviewed are dying and advised for priority or immediate removal. The Urban Forester's comments on those two trees are below:

The second tree to be assessed was 39.5" dbh a White oak in the front yard. Ivy had been removed from the trunk to reveal a sizable column of decay at the base of the tree. The issue was most likely caused by some form of mechanical injury in the past. The decay is extensive and the open column measures over forty percent of the of the tree diameter. There is an inequitable distribution of weight on the house side of the tree. This coincides with the decay which is also situated on that side of the tree. When considering the extent of the decay and potential to cause significant damage to an immovable target (the house), this tree should be given priority for removal.

The fifth and final tree is a 32" dbh White oak located at the rear of the property at the driveway. Staff had seen large hornets traveling in and out of the trunk. I pulled back some Ivy to reveal a large open cavity that extended from one side of the trunk to the other. A 36" probe was inserted and disappeared completely without resistance. Structural cracks can be seen extending up the trunk from the cavity. The cavity can be seen from opposite sides meaning there has been tremendous loss of support wood. The structural cracks indicate a tree that is failing. While not an immediate hazard to the house, it is a hazard to intermittent targets using the driveway. This tree should be given priority for immediate removal.

There are two more trees that are requested for removal, in the Urban Forester report they are tree three and four. Both trees are volunteer and grew after the original landscaping plan was created. The first is an American Holly that is next to the house in the rear of the property. The tree branches are laying on the windows, siding, and roof of the historic structure and the root system is in direct contact with the house's foundation. This creates a hazardous situation for the historic material of the home and staff would recommend removal. The Urban Forester also comments that this is a great example of a tree planted in the wrong place. The second tree is located in the center of the driveway circle. It is a Shumard Oak that is less than 50 years old and not included as part of the original landscape plan. There is a large Magnolia tree adjacent to the Shumard Oak that appears to have been planted as the centerpiece for the driveway circle. The Urban Forester states that the construction near the Shumard Oak tree will negatively impact the health and vigor of the tree. Removal of the Shumard Oak tree would be restoring the historic landscape. Below are the comments from the City's Urban Forester on these two trees:

Tree four is a 14.5" dbh American holly (Ilex opaca). The tree is healthy and growing with vigor. However, it has been planted too close to the house. The back side of the tree is growing against the side of the house and significant mold and mildew can be seen on the outer wall due to poor air circulation, damp conditions and a dense tree crown which does not allow sunlight penetration. This is a classic example of a great tree planted in the wrong place.

Tree three is a 23.75" dbh Shumard oak (Quercus shumardii). This tree is situated behind the house in the driveway median. It is most likely between 30-50 years old. The tree is currently in good health, but I have concerns for its long-term viability. In speaking with construction staff, they will need to make grade changes to accommodate water runoff. They are proposing a change of grade between 12-18" within the critical root zone of the tree. They will be removing soil to allow water to drain away from the home. This will severely and negatively impact the health and vigor of the tree. If this is to take place, the tree will not likely survive the process.

The applicant also requests redesigning the teardrop shaped circle drive into a true circle drive. Staff has reviewed the only original landscape plan associated with the property and the circle drive was not part of that plan. It was installed after the house was moved and reconstructed. The recently approved addition covers a portion of the teardrop driveway. The redesign of the driveway into a true circle and removal of the Shumard Oak will protect the significant site feature, the Magnolia tree, and will be more compatible with the historic building and new addition in location, configuration, materials, and scale. Upon consideration of the proposed work, staff believes the work as proposed meets the *Guidelines* for the Landmark and is in keeping with the character of the Landmark.

4. **COA2021-011**
Boys School
Moravian Church Offices Southern Province
500 South Church Street, Winston-Salem
Old Salem Historic District #24
Contributing
Request: Installation of internet receiver

Old Salem Historic District Guide to the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Process and Design Review Guidelines: Guidelines 4 and 9 of the Accessory Features section of the District Guidelines

Staff Comments: The applicant requests permission to install an 8" in diameter internet receiver in the middle of the flat roof. It will not be visible from the street and will have no impact on the character of the historic building. Upon consideration of the proposed work, staff believes the work as proposed meets the *Guidelines* for the District and is in keeping with the character of the District.

5. **COA2021-014**
Median across from 418 Old Salem Road, Winston-Salem
Old Salem Historic District
Noncontributing
Request: Replacement of three dying Hornbeam trees.

Old Salem Historic District Guide to the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Process and Design Review Guidelines: Guideline 4 of the Significant Landscape Features section of the District Guidelines

Staff Comments: The applicant requests permission to remove three damaged, dying Hornbeam trees in the median across from 418 Old Salem Road. All three trees are in poor health and are either damaged irreparably or dying. The crowns are in poor health and are in a state of decline. Dead limbs can be seen throughout each tree. The tree on the West side of the median has a primary leader which has uprooted and cannot be salvaged. Given the condition of the trees it makes little sense to keep them. Even if pruned their aesthetic integrity will be ruined and they will contribute little to the district. Mr. Renegar, the City's Urban Forester and applicant, suggests the trees be removed and replaced during the next planting season with new Hornbeam trees. Upon consideration of the proposed work, staff believes the work as proposed meets the *Guidelines* for the District and is in keeping with the character of the District.